Backwards from ninety : the autobiography of Marie Mathilde Brinker, 1848-1873. 1970

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The Autobiography of Marie Mathilde Brinker

1848-1873

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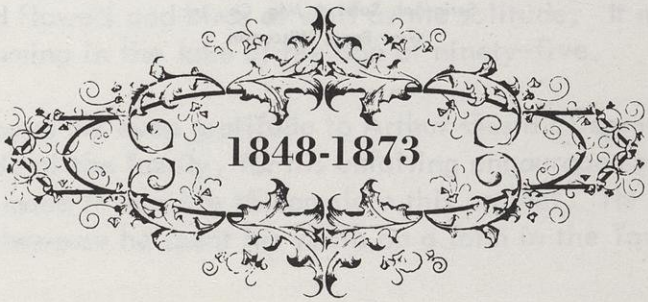

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FOREWORD

In 1937 when my mother, Mrs. G. A. Kuechenmeister, needed something to occupy her very active mind, she was reminded that she had always promised to write the story of her life. It was suggested that now might be a good time for her to dictate it. She very readily agreed. Although in a few years she was able to take up her regular duties, the dictation was continued until about 1946. During this time one of her brothers and three of her sisters passed on, at which time the dictation was carried on intermittently.

The story is practically the way she dictated it. Dates were checked, some passages clarified, some of the episodes were shortened and only about two which were of no particular interest were omitted. Some items which were questioned as to their correctness were always found to be correct.

My mother has always been to me "my most unforgettable character". After taking the dictation about her childhood days, I could understand her better as an adult. When we spent our summers at Cedar Lake almost every sunshiny Sunday afternoon, after her excellent dinner had been eaten and the dishes washed, most of her numerous family would gather on the front porch. Not so Mother. She would take a little tin pail and go to the woods, roaming around all afternoon, picking berries, enjoying the wild flowers and birds as well as the solitude. It might be added that she was still swimming in the lake at the age of ninety-five.

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Arthur Gustav Degnitz, a distant relative on my father's side of the family, for his unfailing encouragement, enthusiasm, and assistance which made it possible to complete this project. He was able to be particularly helpful because he spent his youth on a farm in the Town of Farmington.

Martha Marie Kuechenmeister

BACKWARDS FROM NINETY

Chapter I

Mathilde Brinker Bound for America

It was during the troublous times in Paris, France, when Louis Phillipe had been overthrown and different parties were trying to reconstruct the government, all to put themselves at the head of it, that I was born.

When my father, having dabbled in politics of the times, found himself a marked man* to be put out of the way, some friends helped him by putting a cape and a slouch hat on him. They led him to a boat bound for America, handed him a purse containing a ticket and some money.

After a long and tedious journey on the ocean he reached New York. He soon found work in his trade as a tailor. Having been there about a year, long enough to establish some kind of a home for us, he wrote Mother to sell out in Paris and to follow him. (1851)

We were two little girls, a sister about 18 months, who learned to walk on the boat and I, a little over 3 years old. As I remember we took the boat at Havre. Upon following Mother on the gangplank and seeing the water on either side of me, I gave a yell and threw up my arms which held a doll, which fell into the ocean. I can yet see it swimming away on top of the waves. While I cried "ma poupeé, ma poupeé" some of the sailors came running with long poles to save her for me, but all in vain. Mother had to console me that little sister would let me play with hers.

I do not remember much about this trip, but Mother told me I had traveled first class, for a young tobacco merchant bound for Havana came to get me every morning and keep me with him all day, where I helped entertain the people with my little French songs. Evenings he would bring me back to sleep with Mother and little sister. What I do remember is that sister Marie learned to walk on ship-board and I helped to keep her from falling.

* In 1850 when Louis Napoleon, nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte became ambitious to become emperor of France, he became active against this movement.
See Kuechenmeister and Brinker Families, page 26

As we neared New York I remember seeing fish that looked as though they had the heads of pigs, which I later learned were porpoises. On landing we took a train to the city. On getting down we were on the opposite side from where my father was waiting for us. When I did not seem him immediately, I said, "Maintenant, ou est-il donc, mon papa? J'aime bein le voir." (Now then, where is he, my papa? I would really love to see him.) After the train had passed, there he was, glad to see us.

Chapter II

Memories of Paris

I was born August 15, 1848, in the Rue de Gallon No. 21. My parents were Claus Heinrich and Anne Marie Amélie Wilmes Brinker. Since we left Paris when I was but three years old, there is not much that I remember of the city.

My father often called me an "old revolutionist" because months before I was born, in February when Louis Phillipe had to abdicate, Mother, not wishing to miss the excitement, went with father following the crowd to the Tuileries to see what was happening at the palace. And there was enough! The mob inside the palace and on the balconies among other things were ripping pillows and feather beds, shaking out the feathers until the air was filled. The infuriated crowd pushing and yelling, she left for home, not wishing to see any more.

One thing my father often told about was my first adventure. He had taken me out for an airing as Mother was in bed with a little sister twenty-two months younger than I. It was the latter part of June, the month which is so beautiful in Paris. At the corner of the street Father had met an intimate friend, with whom he was discussing the politics of the day. The fine weather must have inspired me to take a little trip all by myself. Suddenly Father missed me and started to look for me. He was wild with excitement as he rushed down the street looking to the right and to the left, behind and before. Passing a large confectionery something induced him to look inside, when to his amazement he saw me standing on the counter, pointing to different kinds of candy. Beside me stood a richly dressed young woman who confessed having found me wandering about by myself. She was asking me what kind of candy I liked best, telling me I could have as much as I wanted. When Father claimed me as his child, she offered to pay any price whatsoever if only she could take me home and keep me. He curtly told her he had no children for sale. He was glad he had found me and could take me back to Mother with a clear conscience.

It was years after, when we were living in the wilderness in Wisconsin, when one morning Mother was making the beds in the old block house which we now called home, that I asked her if she knew where the fountain of aquatic animals was -- fish, frogs, turtles, etc. -- which spat a lot of water into the air? I must have been about seven or eight years of age at that time. Mother looked at me in astonishment and said, "It cannot be that you remember that" and told me it was at the Place de la Concord in Paris. She said, "You could not have been more than three years old at the time you saw it." I then told her she had visited with a woman beside the fountain, while I had played with the woman's little girl, who was of my own age. And when I could even tell her that we both wore white

dresses, mine with a blue sash and the other with a pink sash, she was assured that I did remember. We both wore little black velvet bonnets and black velvet sacks.

Although I, of course, do not remember anything of an epidemic of cholera when I was fourteen weeks old, my parents often spoke of it. At that time I had an older sister Elise, four years old, a very beautiful child and a brother Henri, going on two, who both died of that dreadful disease and were buried the same day, in the cemetery of Pere la Chaise. During this time Father went around smoking camphor cigarettes which the doctor recommended and he always thought that these had saved his life. The fact that Mother was nursing me saved both of our lives, the doctors claimed.

Chapter III

In New York

The first thing I remember about New York is being in a little wild woods, which may have been the beginning of some park. I was playing hide-and-seek behind trees with my father. Mother was taking care of Marie. I was having a very good time when Father got tired and decided to let us go home alone, while he went to see some friends, probably to talk about state affairs. I don't remember how I felt about it, but I know that Mother did not like it. She did not like New York anyway. There were too many fires for one thing. One night upon awakening and jumping out of bed, I found Mother and Father in the front room quite excited, watching heavy smoke with sparks of fire blowing past our windows. Mother had other objections too. She did not like the way people disposed of their garbage, which often stood in pails or other receptacles in front of their doors all day long, from which odors emanated just a little too strongly.

We lived on Broadway in a frame house. Our first home was upstairs. One day I was sitting on the stairway a step or two down, when little sister Marie came into the hall and wanted to know why I could go downstairs and she couldn't. I started to instruct her by showing her how to put one foot on one step and the other foot on the next step. She succeeded by rushing down the whole length of the stairway, landing on her face at the bottom. Mother had washed that day and was at the bottom of the stairs, having just emptied the washboiler. She picked up the bleeding child. With Father having just come in for supper, there was some excitement.

At supper that evening we had wild strawberries, which Mother had bought from a woman who peddled them from door to door, and if I mistake not, there was wine on the table. I can still see the fancy glasses. Although we had strawberries and wine, we were all very sober on account of the accident.

One day a friend of my father brought us a three quart tin pail of honey, which for a long time gave us bread and honey, which we, of course, enjoyed very much.

Later on we lived downstairs, still on Broadway (Brudway, as my mother called it). There was a family living upstairs who had a girl about my own age, on whom I used to call occasionally. One day I again escaped upstairs and found my little playmate tied to the bookcase so I had to stay right there while playing with her. After awhile Mother, missing me, came up and found me there. On the way down I asked Mother why the little girl had to be tied to a piece of furniture. Mother said because she was always running away, going where she was not supposed to go. She informed me she thought it would be a good thing to do this to me, since I had not asked permission to go visiting.

At this time we were talking nothing but French at home. Father had learned to talk some English by this time and Mother had studied it in Paris. Both, of course, were able to talk German, Father having been born in Germany and Mother having learned it in school. After we had been in New York a short time, an Uncle and an Aunt arrived from Paris -- Oncle Jacques Redding and Tante Anna -- my mother's sister. They often came to see us. I do not know what work my uncle was engaged in. There was often exciting conversation -- probably about which land could be bought very cheaply in Wisconsin. Not any of them liked New York.

Mother took us children walking one evening and on the way home we passed a candy store. I was determined to have some dragées (sugar almonds). For some reason or other Mother thought I should not have them. It may have been that she had no money, because Father would not always give her any as he felt she did not seem to know how to spend it wisely. She had a time pulling me along screaming, "Mais, je veux des dragées, Je veux des dragées." (But I want some dragées, I want some dragées.) Mother came of a wealthy family, the members of which had always had all the money they needed and could get everything they wanted, which made it hard for her not to have things now as she had had them at home.

I remember taking walks with Father on Sundays when I was all dressed up in a new hat, coat and shoes. We sometimes visited French people and there was always the talk about land farther west that could be gotten cheaply.

Chapter IV

On to Wisconsin

After an eighteen months stay in New York, we were finally preparing to leave. There had been some meetings with a lot of excitement and at last a company had been formed with my father, who had been the main instigator, at the head of this project. My Uncle and Aunt Redding, a Monsieur L'Esprit, his wife and daughter, and two young Frenchmen -- Marcellin Audier and Francois Bernard -- comprised the company. Altogether, counting the children, we were eleven in number. The L'Esprit daughter Louise was about seventeen years of age.

There was some commotion before all had their traps and belongings together, but of that I remember little. Nor do I remember anything about that trip. Father told later on that in the train from New York to Buffalo we were packed in like sardines and that I had a jolly good time getting acquainted with the people. They were all people who had been enthused and worked up by agents to buy land in the middle western states. Since in those days the route from Buffalo to Wisconsin was usually made via the Great Lakes, we probably came that way.

In Port Washington we took lodging in what was called a hotel -- a small frame house. The first thing I remember there is that the older people all went into Lake Michigan for a bath. It was a cold, dark, and dreary morning. We two little ones stood aside shivering and watching them. The next morning the men of the party had all gone. The women and we two children were left in the hotel.

It was in the early fall of 1852 when we reached Port Washington, then located in Washington County. (Ozaukee County was formed March 7, 1853.)

To pass the time, Mother and we children went walking a great deal about the village. There were not many streets and the streets were short. The small frame houses were surrounded by crude picket fences. The flowers which I enjoyed looking at in the front yards were nasturtiums and sweet peas. When I discovered the first ones by peeking through the pickets, I remember that I exclaimed, "O, les jolies petites fleurs." (Oh, the pretty little flowers.)

We had to stay in Port Washington until the house in the woods was built.

Then the older men came back and announced that there was a home all ready to receive us. They had hired two oxteams hitched to two lumber wagons upon which all our belongings were piled -- bedsteads, trunks, bundles, and bags. Someone lifted me on to the last wagon and seated me on a bag, my back towards the big horned animals and my feet dangling down.

It was a bright sunshiny morning when we started. We were soon out of town on a road leading through immense forests. It was in the late fall. The trees were still full of leaves -- all the colors of the rainbow. Along the side of the road were many thornapple trees covered with fruit, some of the fruit was large and some small, some bright red and some green. I must still have had an impression of the beauties and decorations of a beautiful city like Paris, France, but to me just then the beauties of the wild were the grandest one could imagine. I kept clapping my hands and singing, enjoying myself to my heart's content.

Dwellings were far apart. Here and there one came to a small clearing with a one-room loghouse, a stable built of the same material, large enough to hold a cow and a calf; a strawstack beside the stable and a pig or two in the yard.

The roads were terrible -- big roots of trees crossing them, here and there a creek without a bridge over it. The men must have been walking ahead while the women may have been on the first wagon. Mother was walking ahead of the wagon on which I was seated. I can still see her struggling over roots and stones and creeks carrying Marie.

It must have been that, long before we had reached our destination, I had fallen asleep. Who picked me up and carried me to the door of the house I do not know. When I was put down at the door, I gave one loud scream. I was looking into a long dark room with a lighted candle on a table way at the other end. I wanted to get over to Mother badly but the way was a dark one, the floor looked black and I thought it was a big hole. Somebody carried me over the dark space and Mother gave me a piece of bread with syrup, which caused my troubles to disappear. After this, it was for a long time mostly bread and syrup, instead of bread and butter and honey.

Chapter V

Our Home In The Wilderness

This, our house, was by no means just a log cabin. It had a hall and three good-sized rooms downstairs, partitioned off with smooth new boards. One door from the hall led to the kitchen as mentioned before and a door to the right led to a room which the company planned to use as a General Store. From this hall a ladder led up to the attic. The kitchen had two windows to the north, and two doors on the south, one leading to the store and one to a bedroom.

There had to be a lot of furniture made -- benches, tables and shelves for the store, because the only furniture we brought were bedsteads. All this, Francois Bernard, who was a cabinet maker, had to make. Besides that he made the candy for the store, and whenever he was doing this work, I naturally liked to hover around him. It was twisted stick candy he made and whenever a stick broke, he would hand it to me. This was a forbidden pleasure, but as often as I could I was there on the spot, even though I knew if caught there would be punishment in store for me.

While this work was going on, the merchandise and groceries were beginning to arrive. During this time the things not being wholly finished we moved up attic. I remember the bed I slept in was in the southwest corner and the bed in which Mother and Father slept was in the northeast corner. This bed was enclosed by a framework from which were suspended sheets. There were two windows in the attic.

For a while the cooking, eating, and sleeping was being done upstairs.

It was not long before a little brother was born up in that attic. (Born November 4, 1852 and named Henry).

That night there were a few candles burning, which someway lit up that roomy attic. Louise L'Esprit was in bed with me when I awoke hearing the cries of the baby. Boldly sitting up in bed, I saw the midwife, old Mrs. Beger, put the baby in a pail for his first bath. I wanted to see more, but my bedmate pulled me down and covered my head with the quilt.

Mother so far had been the main cook. She must have been missed terribly while she was in bed, for there was a great commotion. Madame L'Esprit was past middle age. She was addicted to snuff. One day she was helping Tante Anna prepare the midday meal. Her share was to cook the potatoes. When they came to the table it was discovered that a piece of snuff had dropped into the kettle. One can imagine the dissatisfaction of the men.

The kitchen stove was a tiny affair. The boards of the floor were just laid on the rafters. In walking on them they had a way of hopping up and down. So one day, chasing back and forth, having a good time making them squeak and crack, the small stove, full of hot coal, toppled over. The fright almost proved fatal to Mother who was still in bed.

That was the time Father broke down crying beside Mother.

There was no store in Waubeka, it seems to me; the nearest place to buy provisions being in Port Washington, nine miles away. All these people while still in New York and planning about having a store in the wilderness had had dreams of doing well.

At last the store was in order. It was not much of a store, but all the money these people had brought had been put into it. There was no lack of customers, nor was there complaint of too high prices. The trouble was that the goods disappeared all too fast, but no money came in to pay for the next installment. In about three months the little store was empty. Most of the customers had paid with farm produce, which, of course, we had needed and consumed.

During the fall two cows and a calf had been bought. None of the company could milk a cow except my mother, who as a girl had learned on a vacation spent in the country in Belgium, near Arlon. The first time Mother was milking the cow, Uncle Redding had to hold the tail, so it would not hit her on the head. They did not keep the cows long, however, there being no stable and no feed. We only kept the little calf (a heifer) which was entrusted to a neighbor's care.

The winter had been long enough and hard enough to disillusion all members of the company. Spring opened warm and sunshiny, for I remember running around the house outside, picking up acorns, which had fallen from two big oaktrees standing in the yard.

In the early spring Uncle Jacques met an old Bavarian in the yard near the door. He had brought us a peck of potatoes in a bag. Uncle wished to relieve the old man of the potatoes, which had probably been ordered, but he clung tenaciously to them, all the while saying something which Uncle could not understand. In despair he called to Mother, who found the old man saying, "Geld, Geld" (Money, money). When Mother told Uncle he wanted his money before delivering the potatoes, Uncle became furious, exclaiming, "Sapristi, le brigand" repeating it a number of times, "Sapristi, le brigand" (My goodness! Such a robber!) The money was, however, given and the much needed potatoes turned over. Since we were strangers and French at that, the rumor had probably been circulated to look out for such.

One day Louise and I enjoyed a warm breeze outside on the north side of the house. I must have made some smart remark, for she turned around and looked at me saying, "I can't see how you can think out things like that."

The Company had bought on July 30, 1852 an "80" in Fredonia, in Sections 21 and 29 in Township 12 in what was then Washington County. On March 7, 1853 Washington County was divided and the Eastern part became Ozaukee County. The deed was in the names of Heinrich Brinker, Jacques Redding, Marcellin Audier, Francois Berhnard, August Motte and C. Rau.* Of the last two, where they came from or where they went, I have no recollection. The sum paid for the eighty was $280.00. Later on, after my father had bought out the other members of the company he purchased another forty in section 20 of the same township.

Every bit of the land purchased was covered with forest, not one bit of it had been cleared. There was high land and low land, also marshes and a creek flowing through the forty on which the house was built.

The old Fond du Lac Road passed along the north side of our house, one twenty of our land on one side of it and another twenty of our land on the other side.

By spring (1853) all hopes of making a living by means of the store had vanished. None of the men were farmers. Not one, before he had arrived in the wilderness, had ever wielded an ax. Francois, as said before, was a cabinet maker, L'Esprit and Redding had worked in the city, Audier was a druggist and my father was a tailor.

What else could be done but to separate and each one look for another means of livelihood. Young Audier taught school for a term or two in the neighborhood. Francois, who was a jack of all trades, went to Appleton and was said to have started a furniture store later on. My father, Uncle Redding and the family L'Esprit went to Chicago to find employment, while Mother and we children remained on the land.

Father immediately found work in his trade as a tailor. My Uncle, after a year or so in Chicago, joined a company and went West in covered wagons. In Nebraska, Tante Anna, never having been any too well but always rather delicate, died of hardship and was buried there. Uncle Jacques reached Denver where he engaged in mining on or near Pike's Peak. Years after he wrote to my father saying that he was doing well and would make his will in favor of us children. It was during the Civil War and Father being in business trouble neglected to respond. Later on I wrote to Uncle to his last known address, Pike's Peak, Colorado. My letter returned unopened with the words "Gone to Panic" on the envelope. Whatever that may have meant. I tried in different ways at different times to locate him but without results.

* This deed and other papers in the Ozaukee County Historical Society, Port Washington, Wisconsin.

The L'Esprits stayed in Chicago. I never knew what Mr. L'Esprit's occupation was. In 1863 when attending school in Chicago, my Father and I called on Louise who was well married and established and had one little daughter. She was taking care of her father, her mother having died soon after they reached Chicago. Louise called on us soon after which was the last time I saw her.

Marcellin Audier opened a drugstore in Port Washington where he did very well. He married a girl of Louxemburg descent from Holy Cross and brought up a large family.

During the first spring weather, Mother was so hungry for something fresh that when she found some mushrooms she prepared them. Not being quite sure whether or not they were nonpoisonous, she ate them but would not give us children any.

Chapter VI

Our Neighbors

Half a mile east of us on the Fond du Lac Road lived a Yankee family -- Homer Johnson, his wife and an only son, Franklin, of about my age. Our land had been bought from him.

Southeast of us, on a side road, lived the Hempsteads, who were Hanoverians. This family consisted of father, mother and a son named Adolph. This is where the women and we children made our first call a few weeks after we had settled. Adolph was about my own age and became my first playmate. As we got up on the hill where their house was located, in passing their garden I noticed the cornstalks still standing, grim and cold. This was my first introduction to agriculture in the wilderness. The Hempsteads already had a clearing of about five acres.

To the west of us along the Fond du Lac Road lived two Roussard families, who were Nassauers. Their land adjoined one of our forties. First came Christian Roussard and then his parents who were always called the "old Roussards." A deaf and dumb son was living with his parents and a younger daughter.

It was here we received our first invitation to spend a Sunday afternoon. All of us went dressed up in our best Parisian clothes. I can still see the hats my mother, my Aunt Anna, Mrs. L'Esprit and Louise wore. They were bonnets and had white lace ruching with sprays of flowers underneath and were tied with bows of ribbon under the chin. Since it was a warm sunshiny spring day, they wore light dresses. My mother wore a beautiful black silk lace cape and the others wore different colored silk shawls. Marie and I had on light blue merino dresses and white leghorn hats with light blue ribbons tied around the crown.

It was a good sized loghouse which we entered. How many men were along I do not remember, but my father was of the party. A lively time was enjoyed. The refreshment served before leaving was thick sour milk served in soup plates and eaten with soup spoons. We children had it served in saucers and ate it with teaspoons. As this was a refreshment we had not had all winter it was fully enjoyed and with grateful hearts to these kind people, we returned home.

There were other people who did not live far from us, the Prechtels, Niederstedts, Begers and Meyers, all of whom were Germans, some from Saxony, others from Bavaria, Pomerania, etc. There were many more, whose names I do not recall, which shows that we were not among the very earliest settlers.

During the first winter we had a visit from some of the Yankee women who lived in or near the little settlement of Waubeka. If I remember correctly there were three, one of whom had a very young baby, only about a month or two old. After she was

seated, she unwrapped a big shawl and showed the baby to us children. It was dressed in a low-necked, short-sleeved long pink calico dress. To me, the cutest living thing I had ever seen. This was the first English conversation I remember ever to have heard. I could, of course, not understand a word, but was very proud that my mother could, in an understanding way, visit with them. She, after they were gone, criticized the light way in which the child had been dressed and the way such a young child was being carried around on a cold wintry day. Of course, she thought that French children were more sensibly garbed, wearing a white gown (which reached a little below their feet) and a little short jacket with long sleeves and a high neck, and then wrapped in light woolen blankets.

Chapter VII

The First Summer (1853)

Father had bought out the other members of the Company, as I mentioned before, thus acquiring the two forties and later purchased another forty. He purchased this land for hunting, not for farming. Mother and we children remained on the land. Mother shed many a tear for it was not the life she had been used to.

I, as a child, enjoyed it to the full. Playing in the woods with Marie and Adolph Hempstead, our little neighbor; discovering new flowers, animals and birds which I had never seen before; learning the names of different trees, climbing them and falling down; wading in the creek and catching crabs and what not all, kept us busy and happy from early morning till late at night.

Mother was a good cook but she had never learned to bake, for that is one thing women in Paris do not do. They leave all that to the baker. So she had to depend on neighbors who could supply her with bread. She also had to depend on the neighbors for milk, eggs, butter and other foods.

A family, living about a mile west in a small settlement called Little Kohler, (the original name probably was Koller as shown by names on tombstones in the church cemetery) by the name of Meyer, who had the largest clearing of anyone around, kept two or three cows, chickens and pigs. Mr. Meyer had been a baker in Germany. He had a big stone oven outdoors where big loaves of bread were baked. He was perfectly able and willing to supply us with whatever we needed in the way of provisions.

This was fine in a way, but there was no delivery to the house. Everything had to be called for. This meant that Mother take three little children with her. One had to be carried and two toddled after her. Even these trips I enjoyed for we often met painted Indians. Going was all right but coming home with a basked loaded with bread, butter, cheese, and sometimes milk, which we often got at a neighbor living nearer, was quite a different thing. Once, I remember, when within a quarter of a mile from home, a terrible thunderstorm overtook us. Mother quickly gathered us under an immense oak tree, where we were somewhat sheltered. She must have had some presentiment of evil for she moved us back into the road and we walked on. Suddenly we heard a terrific crash and in a few days after heard that a big oak had been struck by lightning. The next time we passed that way we found it had been the very tree which had sheltered us for a little while.

There were many of those trips that summer. Once I remember meeting a group of Indian warriors right on the road where the forest was thickest. They had sun, moon and stars of different colors -- green, red and blue -- painted on their cheeks.

They were tall and strong. After we had, tremblingly but safely, passed them I asked Mother why they painted those figures on their faces. She said she had heard or read that that was a sign of preparation for war. Off and on there were many Indians around at that time, some camping a short distance from our place. Most of them were friendly and often brought us fish and meat and would take anything in return such as money, flour, etc. In our experience there was never any trouble between the Indians and the white men, and this was true in the entire region far and near.

There was a little store in Little Kohler where we could get some groceries such as coffee, surgar and dried apples. I remember the first time we walked to Farmington, a distance of three miles, where the Klessigs kept a general store. When we passed the Catholic Church in Little Kohler, which was the only church in our locality, I asked Mother in French, "Comment dit on pour eglise en allemagne?" (What does one say for church in German?) Mother answered, "Pour eglise on dit en allemagne "Kirche". (For church one says in German "Kirche".) So one more word had been learned, for playing with German children, I was fast learning their language.

Another time on the same road to the same store, while on a hill with dense forests on either side, I happened to notice the clear bright horizon gleaming in the distance. This, reminding me of the ocean we had crossed not so long ago, I set up a yell. Mother, on inquiring what that was for, was told that if we would continue walking on, we would walk straight into the deep waters and be drowned. Poor little Mother had a hard time explaining that there was no ocean there but that it was the sky. I still insisted that I was right and only felt better after she had made her purchases at the store and we children had each received a stick of candy from kind Mrs. Klessig.

On our way home from these excursions, we often called on people along the way for a short rest, where a refreshing drink of water was always given and sometimes some flowers or a plant were added to our load.

At times Mother would take an hour or so off in the afternoon to take us children for a walk through our newly gained wildwoods, where she would be surprised and delighted to find some of the flowers which also grew in France, such as violets, cranesbill, ferns, mayflowers or hepaticas which we learned to call in German "Kasselblüemchen."

On one of these occasions upon returning home, we found an immense mud turtle right against the door. This to us children seemed like a monster, who might at any moment jump at us, kill us and swallow us. Mother tried with a long stick to get it away from the door, but it just would not move. It stuck out its neck and moved it from side to side towards the crack and under the door, as though it were fascinated by the odor emanating from the inside. In despair she finally hurled a heavy stone at it, which cracked its shell and she finished killing it with more stones, then moved it away so we could get into the house. After we had calmed down, Mother dissected it

and found eighteen beautiful white eggs in it, the size of those of a pigeon. She spoke of turtle soup but she did not quite try it. The turtle must have come from the sinking marsh which was located behind the hill on which our house stood.

Sometime during the summer Father paid us his first visit, spending a two weeks vacation with us. He had been gone so long that we had to renew acquaintance with him. In his bag he had brought some plaything for each of us children, some newspapers for Mother, which would give her some idea of what was going on in the world. After a few days of straightening out accounts, in the neighborhood and in the stores, he took his gun and went hunting, his one great hobby -- the one reason for which he had bought all this land.

On a Sunday Father decided to visit some of his neighbors and get better acquainted with them. Wishing to take me with him, Mother dressed me in my light blue merino dress and my leghorn hat with long blue streamers. So Father and I started out.

The first place we stopped was at the Homer Johnson place. They were very sociable friendly people. Franklin, the little boy of my own age, was asked by his mother to kiss me, but he shyly held back, only standing there and staring at me. When Father told me to go and show him how to do it, I kissed him so quickly that he had no time to retreat. The older people all laughed and applauded. The half hour's visit over, we started out again. Another half mile east, where the Sheboygan Road crossed the Fond du Lac, lived a Canadian-French family named Quinnet (pronounced Kinney). We entered there. Here Father was more at home because he could speak French more fluently than English. They had three little girls, the oldest Meline, the next Octavia, two years younger, and a baby girl, Mathilde. We must have spent about half the afternoon there and returned home.

Mrs. Johnson was sort of an invalid and at times had to spend days in bed. She suffered mainly from sick headaches. Once they were going to spend a whole day away from home to see a doctor in Port Washington. We, having no animals to take care of, they asked Mother to stay at their place during that time and take care of their chickens, pigs and cows. Early that morning Mother got all three of us children cleaned up, and up to the Johnsons we went. We reached there just in time to say "Goodbye" as they left with their oxteam. We all enjoyed this day. Theirs was a one-room house --bedroom, living room and kitchen combined, but clean as clean could be. There was a good-sized cupboard where food was kept. It was fun to see Mother milk the cow, feed the pigs and the chickens, and she enjoyed having the pump near the back door.

There was wheatbread and butter for us for lunch and when Mother looked around to see what she could prepare for dinner, in the pantry she found plenty of eggs and a big dish of dumplings, which must have been prepared the day before.

We children were probably good because everything was so new to us and so different. I have no recollection of how or when we went home. All I know is that we had a most enjoyable day.

So passed the summer, most pleasantly for us children, while Mother spent her time working and preparing for the coming winter, which came upon us all too soon.

Chapter VIII

The Second Winter (1853-1854)

During cold weather it was soon discovered that Mother could no longer take us with her on the food securing expeditions. Since we could not be left alone, she hired a little girl about fourteen years of age named Katie Prechtel, who lived about a half mile southeast of us, beyond the Hempsteads.

She was a very dependable child and stayed with us all that winter, helping Mother with the work, taking care of the baby, and entertaining us when Mother was gone.

On one of these occasions she made starch by cutting potatoes in small pieces, letting them stand in water, the mealy part settling to the bottom of the dish. Then she poured off the water and boiled it, thus making starch. Now she proceeded to starch our dolls' clothes which she had washed before. Thus, we were being entertained so fully that mischief or making trouble had no way of entering our minds. This incident, both entertaining and educational, I never forgot.

During the long evenings of this winter, after baby Henry and Marie had been put to sleep, Mother, Katie and I would sit along one side of the table, with our backs towards the kitchen stove, Mother sewing, Katie mending or knitting and I shelling beechnuts, which in those days one could sweep together under the trees and gather in bags full. We were well supplied with them this second winter. I had a little tin plate of a toy set, which after being heaped with the nut kernels, would be passed to Katie, the next one to Mother and the third one I would enjoy and then I'd begin all over again.

Sometimes when the last candle had been used up and on account of the weather no other could be obtained from the store, the little container of oil or fat, which hung in the corner of the room would be taken down and the wick which hung over the side of the container would be lit. It gave too dim a light to work by. On such evenings Mother would tell us stories, sing songs to us accompanied by her hand harmonica, which she had brought to the wilderness with her, or teach us little dances which she had learned as a child in her home across the ocean.

These were pleasant evenings spent inside the warm blockhouse while outside a blizzard raged, the wind howling through the branches of the bare trees, and at times wolves joining in the chorus.

During the fall, while visiting a neighbor, a big cat had been offered us, which became my one live pet at this time. Mother was not so willing to accept it, thinking, I suppose, that there would be another mouth to consume milk. But I had fallen in love with the cat at first sight, and begged so anxiously that she finally let me pick it up and carry it home. Mother did not like cats and I was never allowed to fondle it, but it was a pleasure to have some living animal in the house to look at and play with, when the weather was too cold and the snow too deep for amusement outside. It was a Tomcat which in German is called "Kater", so it was called by that name.

One calm cold night Mother was awakened by a terrible noise of something forcing itself through a broken window in the hall. A loud crash from a fall on the floor, then a growling sound and something being dragged along the floor. Mother was scared half out of her wits, being sure it must have been a bear or some other wild animal which had entered. All she could do was to barricade the door leading into the kitchen with a chair, flatirons, pail of water and whatever other heavy articles she could find. She lay awake until morning. After daylight, when she arose and everything was perfectly quiet, she cautiously opened the door and found nothing worse than the cat calmly sleeping in the corner and a goodsized rabbit in the middle of the floor with its head eaten off. This furnished us a good dinner. The broken window was not replaced all winter, which gave our hunter a chance to bring in his game, which he did every other night for the rest of the winter until March. (His share was never more than the head of whatever he brought.) This proved him to be even a better hunter than the cat of Mrs. Hart of colonial days, whose cat was reported as having brought in one rabbit.*

In those days there were no meatmarkets. One could only buy a few pounds of fresh meat when somebody had killed a pig in the fall or the winter, or beef on special occasions, or if the Indians came around with venison, which was very seldom.

Of rabbits, squirrels, ducks, partridges and pigeons there was always aplenty when Father was at home so we had come to like this fare. So we indeed appreciated what our Kater was doing for us.

When Christmas came, Father could not be with us, for the weeks before the holiday season were always the busiest time for a tailor in the city. However we celebrated in a way -- with an apple for each, a stick of candy and a cooky man, which Mother had baked. Nobody in that neighborhood could afford Christmas trees. A little more elaborate meal or two at this season had the result of putting me to bed for a few days.

* COLONIAL DAYS & DAMES, By Wharton

Two or three weeks later Father came bringing Marie and me each a doll and some toy for baby Henry and also a gift for Mother. Father, as usual, spent most of his winter vacation hunting, getting his feet wet, and taking colds. With the cat bringing in fresh meat, we were especially well supplied at this time.

Father was so pleased that we were learning German but afraid we would forget our French. Evenings when he was at home he would speak French to us and after the two younger ones were in bed, he would make me sing all the little French songs I knew, one of which was the old favorite, "O, Claire de la Lune." (To the Light of the Moon).

I do not remember being allowed to go outside and playing in the snow these first few winters. But many a time I stood before the window watching the snowflakes coming down and also the snowbirds flying around trying to find something to eat. It was seldom that anybody passed. An oxteam, an Indian or a white man on horseback were wonderful objects to see. Our little friend Adolph Hempstead called off and on which always gave us a pleasant afternoon.

So the winter passed and spring at last came.

Chapter IX

The Second Spring (1854)

The spring came wet and muddy. Again Mother had taken us with her, this time to Waubeka. On our way home, on the log bridge built over the creek and marsh, we were sinking over our shoes in the mud, when two men passed us, looking at us pityingly. They spoke to Mother. She then recognized them as Catholic priests. During the conversation it developed that they were from the same locality in Arlon, Belgium, where my mother had been born. They were greatly astonished that one of the children coming from that family should have drifted to this kind of a wilderness. (Mother's Father, Piere Wilmes, had been a man of wealth, so he had been able to give his children all the advantages of that day, including education. However, he lost his fortune, after which the family became widely separated.) To do a kind deed, one of the priests took out his portfolio of religious cards with colored pictures and gave each of us one. We never met either of them again but always remembered them.

Mother had been brought up a Catholic and had brothers and uncles who were priests. My father was brought up by a Catholic priest in whose home he must have seen and heard more than was good for him. Just at this time neither of my parents were attending church.

Soon sunny weather followed, bringing the bluebirds and the songs of others, the trees taking on their spring foliage, the woods all round us covered with flowers, the mandrakes sticking out their heads, one of the most interesting plants to us, which for years we called the "little men". At this time, roaming the woods almost from morning to night and with so much to do, the days seemed almost too short.

Early this spring Mr. Meyer, whom we called "der alte Meyer", brought us six chickens and a rooster. The chickens were now laying eggs around in the woods. One of my tasks, which gave me a lot of pleasure, was searching for and finding these eggs.

On one of those expeditions I found a fallen linden tree with the bark removed. The trunk was in layers of sheets with the thickness of heavy cardboard. These sheets were white, could easily be separated one from the other, were soft enough to be cut with a dull kitchen knife into squares, lengths or any other shape desired. These sheets I would take home and with the addition of sticks from the brushpile amused myself for hours at a time in making play furniture -- tables, benches, bedsteads, and other things.

Another way of amusing ourselves was getting on a teeter-totter, which was a board laid across a log. I would sit on one end and Marie on the other, teetering up and down, singing, "Sixpence for a spool of thread, A penny for a needle, That's the way the money goes, Pop goes the weasel." Sometimes we would change the words and sing "All around the 'libbety' (liberty) pole, the monkey chases the weasel, That's the way the money goes, Pop goes the weasel." We also sang "Yankee Doodle". This was the first English we learned, probably from Adolph Hempstead.

It was always hard for Mother to get us into the house for washing and combing. I especially hated to be interrupted when deeply interested in any pleasant occupation. However there was never any escaping this ordeal. One rainy morning, after our faces were clean and our hair combed, Mother said, "Now run in the bedroom, look in the glass and see how nice you look." I got there first, moved a chair to the wall and was admiring myself. When Marie came I said, "J'ai des yeux gris et tu as des yeux bleus." (I have gray eyes and you have blue eyes.) Whereupon she answered, "Non, J'ai des yeux bleus et tu as des yeux gris." (No, you have blue eyes, I have gray eyes.) How long we kept up the dispute I do not know. It must have been quite amusing to Mother, who probably settled it in the end.

I had now passed my fifth year. Mother had several times mentioned my going to school, asking me whether I thought I would like to go. Not knowing what going to school meant, I could give no answer, but it did get me to thinking about it. Somehow I had heard that you had to be good and obey and knew that at times when Mother had asked me to do things I had responded by saying, "Non, je ne veux pas." (No, I do not want to.) which I knew very well was not being good. But then again, I had at times heard Mother tell the neighbors what a patient child I was.

So to school I went willingly enough.* It was Katie Prechtel who took me. I sat beside her on a hard bench along the side of the room with my back along the side of the log wall. After a long wait, the teacher sitting on a chair in the center of the room, called me to her. I stood in front of her, she opening the book to the alphabet on the first page. The main attraction for me was a row of green glass buttons

* This district school later became known as the Flag Day School. On the marker at the school the legend reads:

"Here at Stony Hill School, Bernard J. Cigrand, 19 year old teacher and his students held the first recognized observance of the Flag Birth Day on June 14, 1885 with a flag ten inches high, carrying 38 stars, standing in a bottle on the teacher's desk. After thirty-one years of crusading by Dr. Cigrand, President Woodrow Wilson on June 14, 1916, proclaimed the national observance of Flag Day."

down the front of her dress. When she said "A", I said "A", but somehow I could not take my eyes off those glittering buttons. I repeated "B" and "C". Then she said, "Look at the book." This I also repeated, which brought a loud laugh from both sides of the room, from the boys and the girls. This showed me I was doing something wrong and I took my eyes from the fascinating green buttons and fixed them on the book. At recess I was not interested in any of their loud, boisterous plays. There was so much I did not understand. I just patiently stood it. After recess, a long hour and a half until noon -- nothing to do, nothing to say. At noon a bread and butter sandwich with a hardboiled egg and a drink of water out of a dipper from a wooden pail which stood near the door. Then again on that hard wooden bench, sitting beside my good Katie. Then one more recitation of ABC's. Now my tasks were ended. Trying to pass time by swinging my legs and trying to do something with my hands, Katie would kindly remonstrate by giving me a little push or putting her arm around my shoulder.

It was a bright sunshiny day and the door was wide open. The tree not far from the door, on which a woodpecker was hammering, in some way relieved my little burdened mind. Had I been furnished with even a slate and pencil it might not have been quite so long a day. But at last it came to an end. We were on our way home. About half way a group of those noisy boys were having some excitement in a fence corner, brandishing sticks and throwing stones at something on the ground. When we came up to them, Katie leading me up to the object on the ground, a poor mutilated toad, not yet dead, the tears came to my eyes. After that long harrassing day I could stand no more. I wept the rest of the way home and by the time I got there, I had definitely decided never to go to school again. It seems Mother did not blame me and did not urge me to go again that summer.

Chapter X

The Second Summer (1854)

I had been at school one day, and although it had been disappointing, yet in some way I felt wiser for the experience. I now commenced to better enjoy the little errands I had to do for Mother, one of which was going down the hill to fetch water from the well, which was about a quarter of a mile away. The well was in the meadow. It was about six feet in depth, at the bottom of which was the spring. It was lined all around with heavy stones and narrow enough so that I could easily get down by stretching out hands and feet and holding on to the opposite sides. I could easily climb up the same way with my three quart pail filled, hanging on my arm.

This was some help to Mother, for going up the hill with two heavy iron bound buckets filled was no easy task. Of course, she never climbed into the well, but with a pole which had a hook at the end, she would dip up the water with a small tin pail, and in this way fill her buckets. This also was laborious.

I had by this time learned that when a hen had deposited her egg, she was silly enough to cackle at only a short distance from it. But a few had managed to keep their nests a secret until the little chicks were hatched. Then they came home, bringing us a surprise of ten or twelve chicks, which gave me another task -- that of feeding and in a way caring for these little chicks, a duty I surely never shirked.

There were also the berries to pick -- in the spring the wild strawberries in the meadow. Next came the red and black raspberries, later gooseberries of various kinds (some with prickers and some without) and still later the blackberries, which grew along the roadside so plentifully in these early years that people from near and far came and picked buckets full. In later years I heard people say they had picked them by the barrel full. Too bad that in those years canning fruit was not yet known in these parts. Some people dried the blackberries in the sun, but by the time they were ready they must have been so fly-infected that they were not sanitary. Yet in those days people ate a lot which was not sanitary and lived through it.

It was always interesting to see people passing by, going either east or west, whether whites or Indians. But more of a pleasure was it when one or the other would enter the yard to ask for a drink of water or an Indian would ask for a piece of bread. If the latter, he would turn his bread on either side, to see whether there was butter on it. A sort of a scowl would pass over his face if there wasn't. It happened at times that Mother had no butter in the house.

One morning we had the pleasure of seeing a woman, gowned in a bright red dress with yellow flowers and green leaves, pass through our gate and come to the door. She seemed to us children like the personification of brightness coming. She was Irish one could see at a glance. She introduced herself by saying that her name was White and that she was on her way to Port Washington to meet her husband, who was captain of one of the steamers on Lake Michigan. Her dog Carlo had followed her, but since she could not take him, she would pay for his board upon her return. Of course Mother was most willing to do her this favor.

After two weeks Mrs. White returned, gowned in a black silk dress, a coat and a new hat. She, of course, expected to pay for and take her dog home with her. But the dog and I had become such friends that I hated to part with him, so after Mother and she had some discussion, she kindly consented to leave him with us as a gift. I do not know what breed of dog he was, but he certainly was not a mongrel. His color was reddish brown with darker rings all over his short-haired smooth skin. Our cat sometime ago had mysteriously disappeared, probably on one of his rabbit hunting expeditions, perhaps caught by a fox of which there were all too many around. So Carlo in a different way supplied us with a pet.

This summer my father brought a friend from Chicago to spend his vacation with us. During that time I had to help Mother a little more with the work in the kitchen. A regular duty was to get up a little earlier mornings, get washed and combed, take my little tin pail, run across the road into the thick forest, where blackberries grew as thick as a thumb, of which, in a few minutes, I could have my two-quart pail filled. Besides the fresh eggs, bread and butter and coffee, the berries helped to make the breakfast a delicious one.

Even the first summer we had raised our own muskmelons around a big maple stump on the hill facing the east. The ground had needed but little cultivation with a hoe and the plants had spread out luxuriantly bearing to capacity the longish yellow and the round roughskinned nutmeg kind. Both were delicious and when fall came, those which had not yet ripened were all gathered and put on the stairs of the cellarway, taking their time ripening. We must have had melons until the beginning of cold weather. The second spring Mother had ventured in planting a few other vegetables such as onions, parsley, carrots, garlic and leek; also peas, beans and lettuce, which helped in saving a few pennies.

While father would be hunting, his friend Mr. Wiedemann would take us children out on long trips through the woods, for that was what he had come for -- to enjoy the fresh air, learn about the ways of birds and have a general change from city life. We surely enjoyed these trips immensely, for there were some things about plants and trees of which he knew more than we did.

Upon one occasion he took us through Waubeka over the river. He had taken a big water bucket along, for he must have known there was a large patch of blackberries in that part of the woods. We picked until our pail was heaping full. Then on our way home, again going through Waubeka, which consisted of only a few houses at that time, he took us to the tavern of the place, which was run by a Mr. Lewis. I was very much embarrassed, for among the thorns, thistles, and hedges we had passed through, the front of my denim skirt had been ripped from top to bottom and I had a sorry time holding it together with one hand. We were all thirsty. For himself Mr. Wiedemann ordered a large glass of beer and there being no lemons, he ordered for both Marie and me a glass of water with a lump of sugar. Our drink was cool and refreshing, his, there being no ice, was warm and stale.

Again Father and his friend had left us. Mother needing some groceries -- coffee, sugar and a few other things, and thinking I was old enough (six years of age) now to begin doing errands, sent me on my first trip alone to the store in Waubeka. Upon starting on my way, I felt proud and big upon having such a responsibility entrusted to me. On reaching the log bridge over the marsh an immense deer from the left side of the willow shrubs and trees crossed the bridge about twenty feet ahead of me. It was the first time I have ever seen one, a beautiful animal holding its head in the air with its big white horns. It had not scared me for I knew that this animal was harmless. I never again saw a deer in our neighborhood.

No other incident happened on the way and in due time I reached the store, the proprietors being one of the Race brothers, John, and the other, one of the Cooley brothers. It was a new store with very little in it -- the shelves and counters still quite bare. The proprietors were busy opening a barrel of green apples. After they had waited on me and my parcels were safely packed in my little basket, a stick of candy in my hand, I persisted in standing in the doorway. After asking me whether there was some thing else I wanted, and upon my giving no answer, they put their heads together whispering. They must have found it was the apples attracting me and in order to get rid of me, I was given one, something I had not tasted since Christmas. Both candy and apple were divided equally among Henry, Marie and myself upon reaching home.

There was an older store in Waubeka at this time, owned by a man by the name of Cassell, but after this it was always the Race and Cooley store which got my trade.

The Homer Johnsons by this time having sold out to Carl Meyer, one of the sons of "Old Meyer", had moved out West and the Niederstedts then moved onto the Carl Meyer farm on the same road west of us. Mr. Niederstedt became a very intimate friend of my father and often went hunting with him.

The Carl Meyers had two sons, Carl and Ernst, who later became intimate playmates of ours. Mr. Meyer held some state office in Madison. We and the Meyer children having something in common, since both of our fathers were away from home, hardly missed being together a day. By this time also we had learned the language of the neighborhood, namely German.

The post office which had previously been in Waubeka, now removed to the home of the Meyers, which stood at the corner of the road going south to Waubeka, about half a mile from Waubeka and from us. Mother liked this arrangement for the mail coming in once a week or so and the post office being only half a mile away made it more convenient for her.

Although we liked to see someone on horseback, we were afraid of the big strapping boy about thirteen or fourteen years of age who carried the mail between Waubeka and Little Kohler. Upon seeing us he would put his right hand in his pocket, draw out his penknife, motioning that he intended to cut off our ears, which would cause cold chills to run down our backs.

I dearly loved the birds of which there were many kinds. My one desire was to hold a live bird in my hand. One morning desperately chasing a wagtail along the side of the road, I had reached the hill, when to my surprise, from the narrow road beyond, emerged an Indian on a pony, followed by another and still some more. I was not afraid, yet not foolhardy enough to stand there and endanger myself to be picked up and taken along. I turned and ran as hard as I could towards the house. In the yard near the road was a big oaken stump behind which I knelt. The Indians came along in a long file, how many I do not know -- wrapped in blankets of different colors, mostly red and yellow; some ragged, some whole. Some of the women had papooses strapped on their backs; others carried a little one before and one behind them on the pony. All of their belongings hung on either side of the ponies in bags and bundles.

This was an exciting experience for me and I could see that the Indians were amused at my hiding behind the stump. This was the latter part of August, so they were probably on their way to a warmer camp for the winter.

The Indians often camped not far from us, but I never visited an Indian camp. Father often told us about having visited their camps. He liked the Indians and they (taking him to be a Frenchmen) were friendly to him. Some of them knew a little French and they let him know that they too knew a little. Their greeting always was "Bojoo" (Bonjour) and they had several other expressions resembling French.

Sometime after this, on a Sunday morning, Mother recalled that she had lent a book to a family by the name of Rehm who lived about a mile and one-half away from us. I being willing to go, she got me ready to get it. Outside the door, it having started to rain, she opened the umbrella and handed it to me. I bravely started out. To me it was a most enjoyable trip, to be walking along in the rain. Sheltered under a light roof was indeed a pleasure, for it was only a warm slight drizzle. One mile east on the Fond du Lac Road came the turn north on the old Sheboygan Road, a short distance to the Rehms.

They lived in the only frame house for miles around. It was still new, a good sized building with three rooms on the main floor. They were a fine people, Mr. Rehm, a bachelor, was the oldest son and owner of the farm. His mother lived with him and at this time two sisters were staying there. I had been here before visiting them with Father and Mother, when Father had been home on a vacation, so had no fear of coming again. I was greeted at the door in a friendly way and they seemed pleased to have me come. Much praise was given me for courage in daring out on a rainy day. After I had told them what my errand was, I was relieved of my umbrella, wraps and headgear. As it was nearing their afternoon coffee hour, I was asked to partake of it with them. I have never forgotten the enjoyment of that coffeecake and coffee with sugar in it, for at home we children were seldom given coffee and never with sugar.

The Mother, a venerable woman, always wore a dark dress and a headgear made of black silk lace and ribbons. They had been well-to-do people in the Fatherland.

On the way home it was still slightly raining, but secure from the rain under my umbrella, the book tucked under my arm, my only regret was that all the way home not one person was met to see what an important child I was. But this was in a way made up, when Mother, glad to see me home, gave me my share of praise.

Chapter XI

The Third Fall (1854)

The fall of 1854 had arrived. A few nights of frost had given gorgeous color to the immense forests. The birds in patches of color -- blue, black and yellow -- were migrating to a warmer clime. Soon also the wild ducks and geese could be heard by day and night quacking on their way to their winter home. Great flocks of passenger pigeons would swoop down on the stubble fields to pick up the last kernels of grain for their lunch. Then away, not to be seen again until the next spring.

There were no orchards here in those days, so there was no cultivated fruit to be gathered -- just wild plums, wild crabapples and thornapples, which added their color to the scene. Wild grapes were scarce, still along the river banks there were some. I have often thought since, how much jelly and jam could have been made, but well I remember that when this subject -- jellymaking -- came up, with a sigh would be said "O, that would cost so much sugar." But there were the nuts. Of beechnuts there were a plenty, as mentioned before. The hazel nuts, one had to know where they grew and I had made that my business. Behind the hill, along the side of our sinking marsh was the biggest patch. So one fine morning I set out. The bushes were much taller than I, but supple and slender. Way on top hung the nuts. All I had to do was to bend the bushes, pick the nuts and put them in the bag. When the bag was filled I found it too heavy for me, so Mother was called upon to take it home.

Cold weather came on. When the gay leaves had dropped off the trees, the region round about looked bare and gloomy. When the winds blew cold and blustery, it was hard to bring in the wood, fetch the water from below the hill and feed the chickens. Still one could get accustomed to even the weather.

The Prechtels had sold their place and moved away, so we no longer had Katie to call upon when needed. An Irish widow, Mrs. McLaughlin, with her three children, Susan, John and James, had moved into that place.

Mother had by this time learned to bake bread, and had made arrangements with nearer neighbors to get milk and other necessaries. There was the new store in Waubeka and the Post Office was nearer, still she, off and on, had to make the longer trip to Farmington for things she could not secure nearer home. And as there seemed no one else to take Katie's place when she took that trip, I was the one that was left in charge of the two younger children.

This proved to be an unenviable ordeal. It was usually right after the noonday meal that Mother would leave, so the first hour sister and brother could easily be amused with our dolls, playdishes, and some other playthings. But they soon tired of

even the improvised puppet show I would put on. Nor were my little stories more successful in entertaining them. Then I would put water in a dish and sprinkle the window panes, telling them that as soon as the drops were dry Mother would come. This had been the method employed by Katie and, as I remembered, had usually been successful in bringing Mother home. When the drops were drying I sent them to the other window, telling them they could probably see her better from there. Then I would quickly sprinkle the pane anew.

At last their patience ended. Marie opened the door and ran out. Henry followed up to the big stump near the road. They stood yelling their loudest, "Mama, mama, come, come." This seemed to have the desired effect, for Mother hearing them half a mile away, and thinking something awful had happened, hastened her steps and reached home almost out of breath. She found her two babies with their hands and feet almost frozen and I in tears. O, wretched day! This was the first but not the last that we endured.

The days were getting colder and shorter. Some weeks after this day, towards evening, Mother had gone for milk to our nearest neighbors, the Hempsteads. She had had the kitchen partitioned off into two rooms, so as to keep it warmer. We children had gotten everything messed up. Henry had gotten hold of the washdish, Marie had put some water in it. With the clothesbrush he had blackened the stove, scrubbed part of the floor and now was busy scrubbing a bench, when suddenly the door opened and -- Father entered! He looked at us. When he saw what his little son was doing, he burst out laughing. Then Mother entered. I can still see the disgusted look on her face, but when she saw how Father was taking it, she took off her things and soon got busy putting things to rights again.

This time Father had surprised us by coming earlier than usual, for it was weeks before Christmas time. It was a short visit for he had to be back before the holidays.

Whenever he came home from hunting between meals, Mother prepared a lunch of coffee, bread, and butter, and egg omelet for him, which had a savory odor. The two little ones would make it their business to keep near him with a look of expectancy on their little faces. He would cut two pieces of bread and butter in squares, heap egg on top and give each one a piece. Mother would always remonstrate, saying they were not hungry and that it was not their mealtime, but Father would say he could not see their little hearts bleeding. He did not seem to know that mine was also bleeding, but I was the big one, supposed to have a lot of common sense.

As mentioned before, Mother did not like this wilderness, and as callers came in she did not hesitate to let them know how she felt about it. Those who had come here years before would tell her of the hardships they had gone through, and tell her how grateful she ought to be with people living so close and ready to help and able to provide her with necessities.

They would tell that the first comers had not known the kindness of the Indians as they did now, and that there had been more wild animals, such as bears, wolves and wildcats. There had been no roads, nothing but Indian trails, and that when a member of the family had to go for provisions miles and miles away, the anxiety of the members left behind was at times almost unendurable with the thought that the father, son or brother might be lost. And, as it happened, some of them had at times been lost for days.

This should have been a consolation to Mother. I'm sure it was to me. It made me feel I could roam the woods as much and as far as I wanted to -- that there would be no danger of being stolen by an Indian or killed by a wild beast.

As to the doctors of pioneer days -- Dr. Neumann had become our family doctor since he was the nearest, about a mile and one-half west of us. Although his professional services were not needed very often, he would pay us a friendly call frequently and Mrs. Neumann had also become a family friend. They had two children, Mary and Carl, but neither of them belonged to the doctor. Mrs. Neumann had been married to the doctor's brother and had had Carl by this marriage. Mary, older than Carl, was the daughter of another brother. This brother and his wife had died soon after coming to the wilderness, so Mary had been adopted by them.

There was another doctor, Dr. Hess, who had a higher reputation than Dr. Neumann, living in Farmington, Washington County. He and his wife were very fine, highly educated people, who had come to this part of the country from Boston. The time we became acquainted with him was when children had to be vaccinated and the gathering was at our house. This occured twice. Henry was the only one of us to be vaccinated for Marie and I had been vaccinated in Paris. At the second gathering the vaccine was taken from Henry, whom the doctor praised for being the healthiest child he had seen for a long time.

Then there was another doctor -- Dr. Horsch -- mainly a surgeon, but who also played the part of dentist and claimed to cure anything that came along. He had come from Luxemburg, a principality just across the line from Belgium, not far from Arlon where my mother was born and had lived as a child. She had known him there for he had been their family doctor's helper, driving the doctor about and taking care of his horses and stable. Having a somewhat ambitious mind, he had had eyes and ears open, learning all he could from his master, so with the little money he had saved and the little education he had gained, he had established himself about five or six miles north of us and started his practice.

At this time he was still walking to and from his patients in hot or cold weather. When he had a patient in our neighborhood he never failed to call on Mother. This was often in the winter, when he wanted to warm his feet and when a cup of hot coffee would encourage him to trudge on his weary way. At such times he never failed to say, "Ach, Brinkersch, Brinkersch, wenn ich doch einmal ein Pferd koennt haben."

(Oh, Mrs. Brinker, If I could only have a horse.) Poor old Horsch! He went around dressed in denim, both pants and jacket and wore heavy boots. It might be added that the broken legs he set never walked straight again.

Chapter XII

The Third Winter (1854-55)

Fall had gone and another winter was in sight. The outside of the house had been plastered but not the inside, so a man by the name of Deuscher was engaged to do that work. While he was plastering between the logs in the main bedroom, the soft stuff tempted me to make figures with my fingers.

The first one I tried was a man -- body, head, arms and feet. Then I made smaller figures to represent children. This was my first attempt at creative art. I do not know how long I would have kept at this and how many decorations there would have been on the wall, had not the plasterer reported me to my mother, thinking, no doubt, that I was spoiling the looks of his nice smooth work. Mother immediately stopped my artistic efforts, but those crude decorations of mine were left as long as the house stood and I admired them even if no one else did.

Many years later, I heard Dudley Crafts Watson* lecture very frequently and almost invariably he mentioned a child at the table who tried to make figures with his pudding or ice cream. When the Mother would reprimand the child, he would always tell her that that was a mistake, because the child was showing an artistic bent which should be encouraged instead of being stopped.

This always reminded me how often I had been reprimanded for not being able to resist soft material such as this plaster; or even mud had tempted me to make figures. Always some punishment in sight, as a slap or a scolding, would often keep me from indulging in that pleasure.

This winter of 1854-55 was cold and seemed a long one. There was much snow and many blizzards. We missed our hunter the cat and the rabbits he had caught for us, but Indians came often to the house, bringing venison or bears' meat.

One morning a group of squaws came, among them two or three young girls, one of whom was the most beautiful young thing Mother had ever seen, she thought. They were selling venison. Mother took all they had, paying them with money. Mother, for a long time, could not forget this beautiful young girl. She regretted that these young girls, leading the life they did, could not retain their beauty very long.

In spite of what kind neighbors had said about the safety from wild beasts in the neighborhood, Mother woke me one night, when the dog in the hall was barking his fiercest, took me to the window to look towards the road to see three good-sized wolves on the other side of the loose enclosure of the yard. It was a quiet, bitter-cold

* Dudley Crafts Watson, a popular lecturer, was head of Layton School of Art and Layton Art Gallery in Milwaukee.

night, the full moon shining brightly. I can still see those beasts, black and menacing with their dark shadows plainly pictured on the white frozen snow. There was no gate to the enclosure (made of two slabs fastened to poles, one at the top and one at the bottom), just an opening leading into the yard. Why the beasts did not enter and come nearer to the house, I do not know. It may have been the loud barking and the knocking of Carlo's tail against the door.

There were immense swamps not many miles from us and later on we learned that wolves and bears still lived there.

Mother tried to keep me awake, but when I fell asleep in spite of the wolves, she put me back to bed, made herself a cup of tea to keep up her courage to defend her home in case of necessity.

Although we now knew that wolves were still to be feared, we had something to be grateful for, for the traditional wolf never came to our door. It is true that at times three meals of potatoes had to satisfy us, or as it happened instead of potatoes, dumplings had to do for a noonday meal. Even water soup, not quite a prisoner's meal, for it was always made tasty and nourishing, with brown butter, cream or milk. We were never overfed, yet never went to bed hungry.

During the winter there was seldom fresh fruit to be had except apples around the holidays. But dried apples and prunes could be had at anytime, although the latter were too expensive for most people.

The next time Mother had to make the long trip to the store in Farmington, she decided to leave early in the morning, a little after breakfast, thinking it would not be such a strain on the little children and that she might be back by noon. For a lunch she had left a plate of bread and butter, which was to be given them whenever they got hungry. They clamored for it before she had been gone an hour. I gave it to them piecemeal with the addition of water, sweetened with brown sugar.

While enjoying our lunch, some time was spent quietly and for awhile after there was more contentment. Of our old games they were tired. The suggestion that we get on our hands and feet and play animal brought a laugh amongst their tears and when I tried it, they must have thought it too "dumb" and would not lower themselves to the animal stage. Finally when they were moving towards the door, I got there first, leaning hard against it with my back. When the sprinkling of the water against the pane did not succeed in bringing Mother, there seemed nothing else to do but let them go to the stump near the road. Mother arrived before they were quite frozen. Anyway they could still yell. After their little hands and feet had been rubbed and warmed and a warm meal served, Mother told us of her own adventure that morning.

The night before there had fallen several inches of snow, evenly spread all over. When she had gone along the road through the forest about a quarter of a mile from home, across the road lay something under the snow, which appeared to be a fallen log. She hit against it with one foot and almost stepped on it with the other. When it jumped up right before her, it proved to be an Indian -- a very young man, about seventeen or eighteen years of age. He barely looked at her but ran into the woods and was gone. He must have been tired and fallen asleep on his way. All the same, it gave Mother a good fright and it took her some minutes before she could go on.

By this time the wolves had ceased coming to prowl around the house at night, but there were still bears. There was a family by the name of Muehlberg which lived about a mile or so northeast of us from the main road. North of their place was an immense marsh. One morning when Mr. Muehlberg was chopping wood near the house, Mrs. Muehlberg was feeding the chickens. Suddenly their fatted pig in its sty gave a terrible squeal. Mrs. Muehlberg, looking to see what was the matter, saw an immense bear on top of the pig. Mr. Muehlberg, having seen it before, stood with his ax in his hand petrified with fear. She ran, grabbed the ax out of his hand, jumped into that sty behind the bear, lifted the ax and split his head. The pig by this time had been killed by the bear.

When people asked her how she could have done it, her answer always was, "I don't know. I didn't know what I was doing."

This winter the Muehlbergs had two barrels of meat instead of one, for the bear had proved to be very fat. Mrs. Muehlberg, after this, was always considered a heroine.

We were not allowed to play out of doors in the snow, so it must have been hard for Mother to have us around her all day. Still I do not remember that we ever bothered her by asking, "What shall we do next?" Even at this age, Marie and I knew how to use needles, scissors and thread.

Besides our pasteboard and china dolls, we made rag dolls and sewed clothes for them. Not so very artistic, it is true, but very satisfying to ourselves. At other times we cut men, women, children and animals out of paper. Henry would be building houses, barns or fences with the firewood. True, at times we had to do something for exercise, which might be playing hide-and-seek or chasing each other from room to room, which did at times become boisterous and end in an accident. Such as one evening, we were running races up and down the long kitchen, Marie fell face forward against the iron trunk which stood at one end of the room. When Mother picked her up, her nose was bleeding profusely and that was the end of our fun for that evening. Another time, in the afternoon, I stumbled over Henry's building, when he jumped up picking up one of the sticks of wood, and hit me. I, holding up both hands against my face, my thumb got the weight of the blow, which broke the nail. The nail came out. The new nail grew in in two parts, and has remained that way always.

We were not allowed to play with fire, but once our little two year old boy got hold of the poker and stuck it into the front of the stove. When he pulled it out, he saw that it was red hot. He pointed it at us two girls. Marie got out of his way quickly so he went for me. Again shilding my face with both hands, my arm bore the brunt of it and received a scar which I carried for years.

So time went on. Christmas came, again giving us pleasure with an apple, a stick of candy and a cooky man; a day in bed for me after the dissipation of the holidays. Then a few weeks later a second visit from Father this winter. From his bag Marie and I each got a larger and more beautiful china doll than we ever had had before, and a toy gun for Henry.

Father was very tired. The trip from Milwaukee to Port Washington was made by sleigh with some politicians. It had been a very interesting ride to him, for he was always greatly interested in politics. But from Port Washington he had had to foot it -- a distance of somewhat over nine miles. Even here he had had an interesting experience. On the side of the road leading through the forest, he had seated himself on a log and was smoking. While looking at the stars, dreaming his pipedreams, suddenly beside him a moccasined foot crossed the log, followed by another. When he turned, a full-fledged Indian sat beside him. Silently they looked at each other for awhile. Then the Indian pulled out his pipe, showed that it was empty and that he had nothing with which to fill it. Father handed him his pouch, then some matches. For awhile they smoked the pipe of peace together.

When Father arose, the Indian did, also. When handing the pouch back Father told him to keep it. They silently walked together several miles. When reaching a small store, where drinks were sold, Father asked the Indian to go in with him for refreshments, the Indian refused saying, "No give to Indian."

So Father went in alone, had some kind of a drink and brought the same to the Indian who was around the corner of the house. Again they walked quietly together, when suddenly the Indian had disappeared and Father finished his trip home alone.

Some years later, when there was an Indian encampment along the river near Waubeka, Father on a hunting trip passed through it. Suddenly from a group of Indians, one jumped up from amongst them, holding out his hand to Father saying, "You no remember me." Father told him he did not remember him. Then the Indian reminded him of the pouch of tobacco and the drink. This, of course, pleased Father.

Chapter XIII

The Third Spring (1855)

Then Spring came. Again the "little men" (mandrakes) as we called them, emerged from underneath their winter covering of leaves. Also the violets and mayflowers showed up, leaves and buds almost together. Every morning we would run to the woods to see what else had appeared during the night.

One afternoon going to the south side of the house, where Mother the summer before had had quite a good-sized bed of bachelor buttons, we saw that many of these plants were coming up from seeds scattered the year before. We called Mother to see what we had discovered. While we were all enjoying the grand surprise, a group of squaws, both young and old, suddenly emerged from the forest close by, offering fish for sale.

Mother bought a good sized pickerel, paying them the price they asked. Then, entering the house, found little brother Henry with his head in the tub which contained the rinsing water. It had been her washday and when we had called her, she had been ready to empty the last of the water. But, we calling her, in a hurry to see what we wanted, she put the tub on the floor. The baby, seeing his chance to enjoy the water, had tumbled in head first. Mother pulled him out by the feet, let the water run out of his mouth, then laid him on the floor, working over him until he came to.

It was an anxious hour, but when it was over, all his little misdemeanors were gladly forgiven.

Now, the weather being favorable, I could again do the errands and Mother could stay at home with the children. In crossing the bridge one day to go to Waubeka to the store, the meadow to the right was flooded and the blackbirds having just arrived in great flocks, wading around in the water, picking up pollywogs, was a most interesting sight to me. I especially noticed that they walked instead of hopped like most other birds. I made many of these trips this spring and spent much time watching the birds along the way.

A little later, one morning in May, there was some confusion in the house. All at once a middle-aged woman named Mrs. Zimmerman, who had sometimes helped Mother, appeared with a small bundle, tied in a blue cloth under her arm. After bustling around, putting things to rights, she announced that Marie and I had better leave -- that we were wanted at the Hempsteads. I was perfectly willing, but Marie did not like the idea. We took the shorter way, crosslots, and all the way Marie was sputtering and weeping, pulling at shrubs and weeds, which came in her way.

When we reached our destination, we soon forgot our troubles, playing with Adolph around the barn and chicken coop.

For dinner we had potatoes boiled in their jackets and cottage cheese, as much as we wanted.

In the afternoon he took us to their meadow, showing us where the spring was, where they got their water. That was so different from our spring, because it was right on top of the ground, with a rail fence built around it. He told us this was to keep the pigs and cattle out, which were allowed in the meadow.

There were many birds, but mainly bluebirds and it was here that we learned how and where different birds built their nests. There were many stumps around and in many of the hollow stumps we found bluebirds' nests containing light blue eggs. In some of the wild gooseberry bushes were the nests of the early yellow birds (not canaries) with white eggs. Adolph told us that the gray birds, of which there were many, built their nests on the ground, preferably on a hump, a little above the ground. The robins preferred as he told us, to build on a high stump, sometimes in the crotch of a tree, sometimes higher and sometimes lower.

It seemed to me, I had never seen so many kinds of birds and so many of each kind as on that afternoon. The bluebirds were my favorites. There were so many of them that at times the air was literally streaked with blue, as they flew back and forth.

When evening came we were very tired and would have been very glad to go home, but were told we would have to stay there overnight. Where they put us to bed I do not remember, for they had only two rooms, a kitchen and a bedroom and only one bed in the bedroom. There was a wooden floor in the kitchen but none in the bedroom. Where or how we slept that night I do not know, but we lived through it.

The next day, about one o'clock, word came that we might come home. Reaching there, an air of mystery seemed to be about the place. Mrs. Zimmerman met us and leading us into the bedroom, surprised us by showing us a little sister who had come. Then, after taking a good look at the little sister, we saw Mother in bed, pale and anxious looking.

Then we were commanded to go back to Hempsteads. This time Marie seemed reconciled. We went and had another day of playing with Adolph, when towards evening we were called home again. This time it was to greet another baby, a little brother! The children were named Emilie and Charley.

Some weeks after, it must have been the last week in June, the three of us -- Henry, Marie and I -- looking down the road toward the east, saw below the hill, a man dressed in gray, walking along wearily. Who could it be? Was it our father?

We did not know. So we decided to cross the road, get into the woods, hide behind a tree, and wait to see whether the man would go into the house. If he did, we would then know that it was Father.

As he reached the place, he entered the yard. Then we knew. Waiting a little while we followed. We had not recognized him at first, because in that gray suit and hat he looked wonderfully young and handsome.

As we entered we found him looking seriously at the babies. This time he did not greet us as warmly as at other times. He must have felt the house was filling up too much with such as we were. The feeling I had was that we older ones were not as important anymore. I felt this all the more, because he had brought no presents for any of us.

During his short stay we all realized we had better be good and prompt in obeying. I, for one, after this, found very little time to sew for and play with my dolls. There were more errands to do, more wood to be brought in and more water to be fetched from the spring.

Mother must have known how to care for the twins because they were so good. Once in a while I had to sit with my back to the wall and hold one, while Mother was nursing the other. Once, while Mother had a caller, I was holding the little boy, when I got interested in what the woman was talking about. Unconsciously loosening my hold of the baby, he fell forward on the floor. Of course, he cried just terribly. I was punished with a severe scolding and was not for a long time allowed to hold one of them.

At times when the babies slept and all my little chores had been done, I would run off into the fields and have a good time all by myself. The recreation that took most of my time was climbing up on a stump, imagining myself a bird. I would swing my arms up and down and jump. At these times I used to wonder whether it would not be possible for a human being to learn to fly. Sometimes I would wander far into the forest, trying to lose myself, but this never happened. I always found my way back home.

Before leaving, Father had advised Mother to find someone to help with the housework. In this she did not succeed at once. There were no telephones, no way of advertising except in telling friends and neighbors when they called on her. In helping, people were certainly very accomodating.

For much of the produce needed, I could only go to put in an order for potatoes, cabbage and other bulky things. It was on such an errand that I went on a warm morning, to Meyers with Marie and Henry. The weather was hot and the road was dusty.

We arrived there. The little boy, going on three years was almost exhausted. But Mrs. Meyer kindly gave him a bowl of skimmed milk, which refreshed him, and after a good rest we started on our way back.

Near the Meyers in Little Kohler there was also a small grocery store, the owner was named Blom -- usually called "der alte Blom". At times one could secure things here which could not be obtained at any other store near by. He also dealt in articles made by the Indians, such as baskets etc.

As said before, our dear good father had brought us no presents on this last trip, but all the same he was not forgetting us, for one fine afternoon came a loaded wagon up the hill, drawn by two horses. To our surprise they entered the yard, the driver telling us that everything was for us. As things were unloaded we discovered that there were two bedsteads, two tables, (a small square one with drawers and a round one), a kitchen cupboard with doors, a lounge, half a dozen cane-seated chairs and a number of wooden ones for the kitchen; also a large cradle made especially for the twins.

On the load had also been a good-sized green wagon for us children which delighted us greatly and became a source of great pastime for us.

There were also pieces of heavy woolen carpet, a box of candles, skeins of heavy thread, bunches of it, and other minor articles.

All the furniture beautified the three dingy rooms of our blockhouse.

This was a great day and Charley Meyer, our little friend, had come to enjoy it with us. It induced Mother to take her white curtains, from Paris or New York out of the box and put them up in the two bedrooms. The pieces of carpet with their bright red flowers were both a decoration and a comfort for me to sit on when I held one of the babies, and later on for the babies to sit on.

After a time, as luck would have it, a young girl about fourteen years of age, named Annie Mueller, applied for work at our house and was readily accepted. She could wash dishes, peel potatoes, carry a big bucket of water up the hill, besides help me gather wood. During the winter Mother had always hired a man to chop wood, but during the summer there was so much lying about that we always gathered it ourselves. This had for the last few summers been my job. I'm sorry to say, though, that I had not always been dependable because I would often drop my bag, chase a chipmunk or follow a bird. So I would at times forget that Mother was waiting for the wood to cook the dinner, until reminded by hunger that it must be getting late. Then I would pick up my bag with very little wood in it, reach home, find them sitting around the table and eating, which invariably meant as punishment no dinner for me.

Our Annie stayed with us until fall. The only fault Mother found with her was that when she needed one of us, we would both be gone together. When out to pick mullen top leaves for winter tea (which was very much used for colds) we would sometimes stay away too long and come home with very few of the yellow blossoms, which plainly told the tale of time wasted in play. Still she stayed with us and was a help until it was time to go home to get ready for school.

Chapter XIV

The Fourth Fall (1855)

And now, too, Mother was getting Marie and me ready for school, for Marie had passed her fifth year in June and I my seventh in August. The term of school did not begin until very late in the fall. There were only three months of school as a rule. For some reason there was no school in our district this winter. Instead, school was held in a vacant frame house in Waubeka.

Mother had visited the school to learn what books we would need. So one morning in late fall, when it was already cold, our little friend Charley Meyer, came to escort us on our new venture.

The schoolroom was filled with pupils, both young and old, probably because two districts had merged. By recess we were sure we had been there half a day, so at noon all three of us started for home, without having eaten our lunch.

When we reached home, Mother opened the window and put out her head calling, "What are you coming home for already? It is only noon." "No, no" we said, "It is evening and school is out," and we burst into tears. When she saw we had not eaten our lunch and we told her we couldn't eat, again I would have liked to say, "Never again school", but didn't dare.

The next morning when Mother was again getting us ready for school, combing Marie's hair, she was crying and fussing terribly. I was taking new courage, determined to stick it out to the last. Again Charley came and again we walked the mile to the place of learning. On the way we decided to stay all day. He told us he had almost gotten a licking the day before for coming home at noon.

At recess, while the other children were having a hilarious time jumping on tables and benches and yelling, we three huddled together in a corner. At noon, when lunches had disappeared, those who did not go home or play outside, but stayed indoors, were playing kissing games. When they threatened to kiss us, we shrank even deeper into the corner. They never got us to play kissing games.

So we stayed the whole afternoon for one more recitation. Still our little slates and pencils were some pastime and consolation. After this we seemed to be "broken in" as the saying goes.

We were all three in one class and when I kept at the head, being the one who learned to read first, the other two wondered how I could do it, not realizing that I was almost two years older than they. Besides I had had one more day of schooling!

Mother in those two years had taught me the French alphabet and some simple French reading, which helped me a little, I suppose.

Soon we learned to like school. The teacher was a married woman, whose name I do not remember. Somehow she got us through that little primer and taught us to write figures and to count up to fifty. We thought we learned a lot.

All those three months our little Charley boy came to call for us that half mile out of his way.

The schoolhouse, being close to the Milwaukee River, when the river was frozen over, all the older pupils would be on the ice skating. Those who had no skates would just be sliding, wearing off the soles of their shoes. We, who were not allowed to play in the snow or go on the ice, would look out of the windows and watch the fun when someone would tumble over and roll around on the ice. Charley, who perhaps would have liked to mix with others on the ice, was too faithful to leave us girls alone. But on our way home, wherever there was a frozen puddle, Charley would exercise his powers of sliding and we would stand by, holding his book and slate, and enjoy seeing him have a good time.

Some of the pupils who attended school were Almedie Turner and her two younger brothers; her cousin, Solvandra Daggett and Albert, her twin brother; Emline Daggett, an older sister of the twins; Melina and Octavid Quinet (Canadian-French) and one, Daniel Webster Lynch (later a prominent doctor at West Bend), who lived with the tavern keeper, Lewis.

When the last day of school had come, Mother with tears in her eyes said, "Three months to learn and nine to forget." She might have helped us with our English but she had found that her pronunciation, learned in Europe, did not always agree with the American pronunciation.

The first day we attended this school, the teacher changed my name Mathilde to Matilda and Marie's name to Mary. From now on Marie will be known as Mary.

Mother had bought a live fatted pig to be killed at our home. That was a sad hour for me when that poor pig was being killed. Its squealing was more than my poor little nerves could stand. Putting both hands over my ears, I ran into the woods until I could hear it no more. Then I sat down exhausted against a tree.

I pondered over the wickedness of grownups and decided I would eat none of that meat. When I returned home I told Mother what I thought of the whole performance, but she just looked at me with a dubious smile on her face. Needless to say, I never kept those promises made to myself, for the roasts, sausages, and headcheese during that winter were indeed too savory to resist.

There was a peddler, somewhat past middle age, who once or twice a year stopped at our place. Mother always bought a few things of him. Not only that, he would get her to sell some of her finery from Paris, such as a beautiful white shawl, a silver backcomb and other things too numerous for me to remember. (In the museum at Madison, Wisconsin, in later years I remember seeing a shawl that reminded me of the one Mother had had. The shawl, exhibited there, was worn by a governor's wife in a painting.)

Not only was the peddler welcomed for the business Mother did with him, but he always brought news to us from the outside world. One time it was a gruesome story -- a crime that had been committed recently near West Bend, Washington County. Of this story I can only tell that it was a terrible affair. A rather shiftless fellow had attempted to murder a man and his wife, who had however escaped, while a boy had been killed and burned in the house, which the murderer had set on fire. The murderer was caught on his way to Milwaukee, put in jail in West Bend and soon after lynched by an infuriated mob.*

This was not good news to tell a woman who lived alone with her children in a lonely place.

During this fall, something rather exciting happened. A young girl, named Margaret, whose relatives lived in our neighborhood, came to see Mother. She was in great trouble as it seemed. She was of good family but none of her people would take her in. She told Mother her sad story -- how she had been working near Milwaukee at a saloon called "Der braune Hirsch" (Brown Deer). The man for whom she had been working had deceived her and when he found she was in trouble had denied it. Being a married man he could not marry her nor would he help her in any way. So what could she do but come back to her people who also refused to help. Mother had work and trouble enough of her own, but could not bear to see the poor girl thrown out in the cold, so the next day Margaret moved in with us.

Sometime before, Mother had a visitor and noticed that I was listening to their conversation, and had told me to find something to do outside, which I was very reluctant in doing. She then ordered me to be quick about it, which I was, but felt deeply hurt. Outside, after a while, I heard the cackling of a hen across the road, the sound of which I followed and finding her nest with a dozen eggs in it under a log, thought it would be a good way of getting even with Mother not to give her those eggs. I sat there on a stump full of satisfaction quite a while even after I had seen the visitor depart. Then, thinking better of it, I gathered those eggs in my apron and took them to the house as a peace offering to Mother.

* This is known as the DeBar Tragedy, History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties, 1881. Page 356.

When Margaret moved into our house, I was aware I had better not be caught listening if I wanted to learn what it was all about.

Charley Meyer, who had been with us the day she moved in, had told his mother that the fattest woman he had ever seen, had come to live with us. Other remarks from our neighbors floated in.

The first evening Margaret was with us, we had pumpkin soup for supper, a French dish. After supper she helped Mother with the dishes. Then she took out some pink calico, cut out something which after a while I could see was a tiny dress. Later on, when neighbors came in (maybe out of sympathy or curiosity) many remarks were made, which I pretended not to hear or notice, I finally came to some conclusion as to what was going to happen. I was wise enough not to let anyone know what I had learned.

The birds again were migrating, the forests had put on their glorious robes. My rose garden was full of seedberries instead of blossoms and Mother was getting our clothes ready to send us to school.

The long kitchen had again been partitioned off to make an extra room for Margaret.

Later on one morning, after everything had been settled and seemed to be going on in an orderly way, Margaret began to complain. Mother then moved her into her own room and by some signal to the neighbors the doctor seemed to have been summoned.

We children, much as possible, were kept in the bedroom Margaret had previously occupied. In some way we were fed and taken care of until evening. After the little ones had been fed and put to bed, Mary and I, who had been put in Margaret's bed, on account of noise and commotion, could not fall asleep. Mary kept threatening to get up and see what was the matter. I had a time keeping her in bed, persuading her it would not be wise to do that. Finally it may have been at midnight, she managed to get up and when I followed I found her looking through a crack in the door.

We saw Mother in the kitchen, walking the floor with a quiet little baby in her arms. After this things quieted down and we went back to bed and slept. The next morning we were told a baby boy had come, had breathed but a few minutes and then died.

Margaret stayed with us until she had fully recovered. During this time her relatives all came with as much help and words of kindly sympathy as they could give. So did friends and even strangers. I especially remember one woman, who had been a teacher before she was married. She had been a Keefe, a cousin of the Mary Ann, who later became our teacher. She was very beautiful and a Roman Catholic. She

felt deeply for Margaret and expressed the wish that she could have a baby. She did not seem to think that Margaret had done anything wrong at all or that there was any disgrace in it.

Margaret, of course, after all her suffering, wished her baby might have lived, but as to other persons, most of them agreed that it was a blessing the child had been taken.

Soon after Margaret had left us, her brother-in-law brought a full quarter of fresh beef, of which Mother immediately cut off a good-sized piece for a woman who had recently lost her husband through an accident -- a tree which he had been chopping down falling upon him.

Mary and I took that meat to the woman, who was poor and had three children. This woman, Mrs. Schlosser, lived about three miles and a half from us. She looked sad and thanked us for the gift, which, of course, came in handy.

Southwest of us there was a family named Keefe. Old Keefe was a good farmer, a good husband and father. His one fault was that he needed to go on a spree once or twice a year. He never indulged himself in this way during the busy summers, but in winter he would go to Waubeka, spend a whole day in the tavern and by night be on his way home. Reaching our home about midnight he would pay us a call, hardly able to take another step. Otherwise he was a good man, so my mother did not fear him. She would offer him a chair near the stove, prepare a cup of good strong coffee and offer it to him with sugar, which would somewhat sober him, when with many thanks and excuses he would start on his way home.

After the first time, this was a regular occurance for years. As a rule he would have a pound of coffee in his pocket, probably to appease his wife. In these days the coffee beans were bought green. One time there must have been a hole in his pocket, for after that visit at our home, when we went to school the next morning, coffee lay strewn along the road, way up to Meyers and around the corner to Waubeka.

As many people did not use the regular coffee, but made it of rye, wheat or barley, there was a scramble for several days picking up the coffee beans Old Keefe had strewn along the way. Some of the children even missed school that day picking them up and for weeks after, Old Keefe and his family were the talk of the town. From the amount people claimed the children had gathered, he must have had more than one pound in his pocket.

Chapter XV

The Year 1856

When school closed it was about the end of February.

It must have been about this time that the walls of the barn and stable were built. The roof was put on later. This was all done in one day, but I remember nothing about the logging, until the men came in in the evening and Mother gave them a parting entertainment by singing, which she accompanied on her handharmonica.

We children used to prepare our afternoon lunch by getting up a few potatoes from the cellar, washing them clean, cutting them in round slices and laying them on top of the stove. We would keep turning them until they were brown and crisp on both sides. Whether they were always thoroughly done, I'm not sure, but they tasted good.

Then came Father's visit bringing the little presents with him.

And then followed the muddy season, the song of the whipperwills announcing that spring had come again. When the birds would begin to sing, we would stand at the open door, enjoy the soft evening breeze while listening to their glorious music.

One day came the happy news that in our district would be a three month's term of summer school beginning in May. The teacher was a young girl named Mary Ann Keefe (a daughter of old Keefe) who lived a mile and half from us.

This summer Charley did not have to escort us, for Miss Keefe would pass our place at the regular time. We would go out to join her and walk to school with her. In passing the Meyer house, Charley and Ernst would join us. We all carried our lunches in small tin pails. Our lunch usually consisted of bread and butter sandwiches, sometimes with the addition of a hard boiled egg.

We used the same little primer we had used during the winter, for either we had not learned the lessons correctly or had forgotten them.

The Turner children, the Daggets and the Quinets were again our schoolmates, as well as some of the other "Yankees" (as the Americans were called) and Irish boys and girls, among them Michael Liddy. To those were added many German pupils. Those of whom I have any remembrance being Barbara Hesse, Liberta Deuscher and Margaret Schlosser. The boys were, of course, Charley Meyer and his younger brother Ernst, Michael Neuens, and Carl Neumann.

During this term no kissing games were played in school, for the teacher stayed during the noon hour; and at recess and the noon hour we all played out of doors. We joined those groups which spoke German. When the beechnuts from the previous year were sprouting under the trees on the ground, all groups joined in eating those sprouts. These sprouts grew as thick as lettuce and were tender and sweet. Then when the wild strawberries ripened along the roadside, all joined in picking and relishing them.

We all liked our teacher. She seemed to have a way of making those school hours interesting. Besides she was very handsome with dark eyes, black hair and a fair complexion with rosy cheeks.

In spare time we used our slates for drawing -- little outside scenes, a garden, a house, a fence; and also scenes inside, such as a room with table, beds, a chair with a woman sitting in it, children grouped about, etc. This kept us from whispering or having the hours drag along in monotony.

On our trips to school we seldom met anyone. But one sunny morning, having come to the crossroad, past the Meyer house, along came the Indian called Old Jim on his pony. This morning his red face was redder than ever, the feathers above his brow stood up straight and stiff. As he passed us, he lifted up his right arm, bowing low, which I realized was a compliment to Miss Keefe, in the Indian fashion, saying "How beautiful you are." Then urging on his pony, he seemed to be fairly flying, his long black hair waving in the breeze. He galloped toward his camp, a mile or so distant. Old Jim was a good Indian, very much liked in this neighborhood and he seemed to like us palefaces. His one fault was that he was passionately fond of firewater and would at times indulge himself too freely. For years he camped with his people in the same woods. He and my father, who never failed to visit this camp, were great friends.

I think it was this same summer, that upon visiting the camp, Old Jim took my father to his wigwam, introducing him to his squaw and his twin boys, two or three months old, of whom he was very proud. When Father told him that he too had twins, a girl and a boy, Old Jim expressed the wish that some day one of his sons would marry that little girl, upon which Father and he heartily shook hands.

Father was also well acquainted with Chief Waubeka, whom he met on his hunting trips. Waubeka was the last Chief of the Sauk tribe in this area. This Indian village on the Milwaukee River consisted of members of several friendly Indian tribes as well as the Sauks.

One fine morning we got up and heard a lot of shooting, which seemed to come from Waubeka. Asking Mother what it was all about, she said she did not know. After dinner, the dishes washed and things picked up, she took us to the garden to do some weeding. We heard music in Waubeka but Mother kept right on weeding her vegetable garden, while we older children took care of the little ones. After awhile, when

people were going by towards the village, Mother thought it must be some kind of holiday. Mrs. Jahnke with her children, with whom we were well acquainted, stopped at the fence and asked Mother if she didn't know it was the Fourth of July, the greatest holiday in America, and that she ought to get ready and come along to celebrate.

Mother could not get sufficiently enthused to leave her garden which needed so much to be weeded, but was willing to let Mrs. Jahnke take Mary and me along, so after a hurried preparation we went. There was a dance. Mrs. Jahnke took us into the hall and we, with her and the girls, found seats on a bench along the wall. There we sat in our plain dark gingham dresses, sunbonnets, cotton stockings and heavy shoes, when in trooped the Yankee girls -- Solvandra Dagget, Almeda Turner, and five or six others, all in white fluffy dresses with silk sashes of different colors, white lace-trimmed pantalets showing beneath the dresses, and beautiful white straw hats; their hair curled, giving us a look of scorn sitting there against the wall.

When the music sounded gayly they started to dance among the older people. This was indeed a gay show; but how badly I felt, just to be an onlooker and not in the midst of it! After this we knew there was such a day as the Fourth of July.

The twins by this time had learned to walk. They had been named Emilie and Charley. They named themselves Mimi and Tala. They called me Tata. Henry was Nenni and Mary was Beiya to them. When Emilie went to school, they renamed her Emma.

It was about this time, when we went to pick berries, I would take the twins, about fourteen months old, along. Charley on my back and Emilie who was the stronger by the hand. Mary, Henry and the Meyer boys, whenever they were with us, would go on ahead to find the blackberries, which usually grew in clusters around a stump, where the sun could penetrate. Then they would pick and eat but would leave one cluster for me and the babies. This we would keep up until we all had had our fill.

Often weary and worn we would turn towards home, one or the other weeping with thorns in his or her bare feet, which Mother having had an hour or so of peace, would wash and bind. Sore feet were our main trial in those days, since during the hot weather we always went barefooted. Then the foot would swell and fester and for a few days cause the most terrible pain.

Otherwise we were a very healthy family, except Henry, who once in a while, eating too hearty a supper, would have a few bad days. It was upon such an occasion when Mother had tried all her home remedies upon him and finding no relief, became anxious and dispatched me to get the doctor, who lived a mile and half southwest of us. It must have been about four o'clock when I started. I went as fast as I could,

yet it must have taken me sometime to get there. Dr. Neuens was not at home, but Mrs. Neuens said she would tell him and he would come as soon as he could. She and the children kept me there waiting a while, and feeling sorry I should have to go back that long distance, she sent Carl with me to show me an Indian trail leading through the dense forest, which would be only about half the distance I had come.

Carl took me some little distance to a fence. I jumped over the fence and was on the trail. I did not know where this would take me and when it was getting darker and darker, the little verse which I had learned somewhere came to mind,

"I do not fear while God is near,
Thru the dark night or in the light.
Why should I fear, When God is near,
In the dark night, or in the light."

When I emerged from this trail it was from our own woods onto the road, very near our house. Just as I had come out of the woods an owl gave a terrible screech, the first I had ever heard. I did not know what sort of an animal might be after me, but being on the open road near home, I knew I was safe but started to go as fast as I could.

The doctor soon came and found the little brother not in any danger. He advised Mother to feed him on bread and milk for a few days, which proved to be good advice.

This summer on his vacation, Father brought home two friends, one Mr. Wiedemann who had visited us before, the other August Butzke. Wiedemann was here for a rest and a change, while Butzke had come for the purpose of locating a farm. Father and the latter tramped over the countryside, but did not find anything that pleased Butzke. He left shortly after. I heard later that he had bought a farm in Fond du Lac County, near Beechwood.

In the spring of 1856 when my Father was at home one morning two men came to see him to talk about putting a mortgage on his farm in order to buy railroad stock. The men were there a long time because Father wanted to know all about it. Mother was busy inside but having heard part of the conversation finally, when she noticed Father was being favorably impressed by this came out and had them give her an explanation of the whole business. Then she advised Father not to have anything to do with it. Father did not believe women knew much about projects of such importance but Mother was so worked up about it and so insisted that he drop the whole matter, that for once he obeyed. The project was the building of the Milwaukee and Lake Superior Railroad.

The plan adopted for the raising of funds was that the farmers were to mortgage their farms in return for stock, these mortgages to be used by the company as security upon which to raise money.*

* History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties, 1881, page 500.

Father had reason later on to be thankful that he had obeyed Mother for shortly after, the company was dissolved and the unfortunate farmers had to pay their mortgages. Many of them lost their farms as a result.

When Father and his friend had left, Mother, having been very busy cooking for them, hired a girl (who had applied for work) in order to catch up with her sewing, knitting and mending. This girl's name was Lizzie Bach. She was of the family Bach who were all musicians. The oldest of the family, Christian Bach who lived in Milwaukee, was a composer. Another brother, Henry, who lived not far from us, played in bands. The youngest, George, was just beginning to play in a band. There were two other sisters, Mrs. Niederstedt and one Gretchen. The mother, who was very poor, lived with the various children by turn. Lizzie must have been fifteen or sixteen years old. She was full of music and I would go along with her when she went to fetch water or wood. She would teach me to waltz or to dance the polka, also to sing the tunes of the dances. This would sometimes bring the water or wood home later than it should have done, but we made up time by working a little faster.

This summer, too, Father had bought us a cow named Strauss. Why she had received this name, I do not know, unless it was a shortening for the German "Blumenstrauss" (bouquet). She wore a very musical bell. Owing to having an animal meant, of course, that before winter the stable would have to be roofed. This stable was in line with the house, but with a wide space between. When the roof was put on, it became attached to the house. Father had had this done, because he wanted the buildings to be like those in Germany. It was not according to Mother's taste but she was consoled, because they intended to build a new house later on.

Having a cow, meant of course more work, but also it saved running to the neighbors to get milk, butter and cheese. The neighbors also had sometimes been impatient with us, for sometimes when we had called for cottage or handcheese, and they were out of the article, I had heard Mrs. Meyer remarking, "I wonder if they think we are always loaded up with things," or something like that. Such remarks always did hurt. All the same the neighbors were kind. Often when they had aplenty of something, they would share it with us by bringing it to the house. Once I remember, at a time when meat was scarce, Mrs. Meyer came bringing us an immense dish of boiled fish in a big bowl, which seemed the best meal we had ever had. At another time I had been sent to the Hempsteads to deliver some message, when upon turning toward the door, Mrs. Hempstead called to me to wait a minute, then gave me a large square piece of dried apple kuchen, which seemed to me the best I had ever eaten. As a rule I took things home to share with my sisters and brothers, but this time I selfishly ate it.

Although the cow was a great asset in giving us plenty of dairy food, the work she made, except the milking fell upon my shoulders. Upon leading her out to the woods in the morning, I soon learned I had better watch to see which way she was

going. Then, in the evening, I would listen for the sound of her bell, thus taking my first music lessons. Sometimes she was near, sometimes far, but I always brought her home safely.

When the days were hot in the summer, we took our baths in the creek, a tributary of the Milwaukee River, which ran through our meadow. Mother would give us some old underwear to serve as bathing suits for us older children while the twins went in naked. Here in the cool flowing water the little ones would tumble around and the older ones pretended to swim. There was only one place which was quite deep, where only I could venture to practice swimming and sometimes almost drown, but always pull myself out again by taking hold of a root or a shrub growing along the shore. For hours at a time we enjoyed the cooling off, yelling and screaming, having the grandest time, which the neighbors did not so much enjoy. Mother heard of it and warned us not to be so noisy the next time. When we had cooled off sufficiently, we would sit on the grass, let the sun dry us and enjoy the scenery round about.

Along the shore of part of the creek, where low willows grew, in which the red winged blackbirds built their nests, one immense willow tree, the most perfect I have ever seen, stood close by. The interesting part of this tree to us was that every spring from the same branch an oriole built its nest and reared its young.

As a rule, we would bring a little pail with us and catch crabs to take home and cook for lunch. Once we had a lot of frogs, dressed them in linden leaves, laid them on their backs in bark cradles, as we called them, when suddenly a very terrible storm came up. Quickly we undressed the frogs and let them hop back into the water, picked up our wet bathing clothes, our pail with the crabs, the two babies and ran a race with the wind and the black clouds over us. The rain came down in torrents when halfway home. We reached there thoroughly soaked, but all still very much alive.

There was no Sunday School in those days, so the first place after being dressed for Sunday we would go about a quarter of a mile west along the road. To the left there was a hill we called "der gruene Berg", (the green hill) where the Indian trail joined the road. There we would sit down and admire the opposite side of the road, where hazel shrubs grew thick and behind which was a group of wild poplars with trembling leaves -- green on one side and silvery on the other. I, for one, never ceased admiring those trees. Here we used to sit and listen to the songs of birds and watch them flitting by, and also watch the little chipmunks which would come down a tree to see what we might be. One or the other would at times come quite near and when they found we were alive, scamper back up the tree and scold us.

All of this was a queer Sunday lesson but on our way home, in some way we felt that God was over all. All the religious instruction we had had was from Mother. The first little prayer which I remember that she taught me was in German:

Wenn ich des Abends zu Bette geh'
Vierzehn Engelchen mit mir geh'n.
Zwei zur Rechten, Zwei zur Linken,
Zwei zu Kopf, Zwei zu Fuszen,
Zwei die mich decken, Zwei die mich wecken,
Zwei die meine Handchen, dem Himmel gen strecken.

(When I go to bed at night,
fourteen angels go with me.
Two on my right, two on my left,
Two at my head, two at my feet,
Two who cover me, two who awaken me,
Two who lift my little hands to the heavens.)

As I grew older, I made up my own prayers as I thought they were needed. Of course, I had also been taught that God knew all and saw all and much more.

During the week days the green wagon from Chicago was a source of amusement. At first we just used it to cart the younger children around. Later on we would go along the road until we reached the top of a hill. The one sitting in front held up the handle, while the last one gave the wagon a push and let the thing run down the hill by itself. This was lots of fun but dangerous business, for many a time there were tip-overs at the foot of the hill, giving us blue spots and sore heads. Still again and again we risked our lives in the same way.

Mother never knew about these risks. Sometimes she asked where a sore spot had come from. The answer would merely be "I don't know." Had she known there would have been some correcting!

Sometimes, often in the morning or towards evening, I strolled off by myself. In the morning, after taking the cow to the woods, I would stay longer than necessary to admire what I called my rosegarden. This was not far west from our home, where a road running north and south crossed the Fond du Lac Road. There at the corner of the woods, trees had fallen so as to form almost a perfect square, between which wild rosebushes had grown, making a perfect garden. To me this garden was the most beautiful sight when full of blossoms early in the morning. In the evening too, when the blossoms were half closed, I used to think they were even more beautiful than in the morning when fully opened.

Then there was the sinking marsh. In spring all around it grew the beautiful wild iris. In the morning the dew sparkled on them, which even enhanced their beauty. All summer the hummocks in the marsh were covered with water, in which lived the frogs and what not. I was often tempted to wade in that water, but having been warned many a time that if I did I would be swallowed up, I dared not attempt it.

There was a road between the hill on which we lived and the marsh. A tree from the side of the road had fallen into the marsh, so this at least was something across which I could take a trip partway into the marsh, and this I often did.

One spring evening, when I was taking my trip on this log, a wild duck flew up from a hummock some distance to my right. The same duck did the same thing evening after evening, although I did not know it was the same until one evening later she flew up with a dozen or more little ducks. Then I knew I had found a wild duck's nest and was sorry I had not seen the nest before so as to count the eggs. All the same, I had the pleasure many a time of seeing the mother duck with her young swimming about in the marsh.

Talk about art galleries and museums in big cities! To me there is nothing to compare with the beauties of the wilderness of those years long ago. The idle hours that I spent in the wilderness may to some seem time wasted but to me it seems an education gained.

Again a three months term of school had begun. This fall we had a male teacher, a long lank Yankee named Wendell. With our new First Readers, we expected to do great things, but alas, not much attention was paid to either us or our books. The pupils from the village (where Mr. Wendell boarded), the older ones, especially the Yankee girls, took up most of his time and attention. Later we learned that he was a fiddler and that there were many gatherings at night where there was fiddling and dancing. So our time was mostly spent with our slates drawing pictures.

There were older German girls, who formed a group by themselves. They also seemed to have a good deal of unoccupied time and after a while got me to sit with them. Two of them were the daughters of the German minister named Geidel. Another girl, about the same age, was Bertha Stechmann. Instead of studying they would undo my braids and twist my hair into curls around my head and then see what effect this had on my looks. With this, of course, there was quite a bit of whispering and commotion, which drew the attention of other pupils. Then the teacher would order me back to my own seat.

There may have been one or two recitations a day for us, but I do not remember any progress made.

One morning before leaving for school, I thought that my doll would help pass time there nicely, so into the bag with book, slate and pencil she went. So then again, the older girls, my newly made friends, seated me with my doll between them. It was a great pastime undressing the doll, re-arranging her clothes, giggling, whispering and disturbing the other pupils, who ought to have been studying. Mr. Wendell noticed that something radically wrong must be going on behind that desk. So the doll was discovered and taken and I, in tears, put back in my own seat.

At recess during this term we little ones had a good time, because these older girls took an interest in us and saw that we were amused. During the noon hour, when the weather allowed, we all, young and old, girls and boys, went to the swamp to gather gum from the trees which could be found in hunks on the bark of the tamaracks. So all would come back to school with mouths full of the stuff and with cold wet feet. In the afternoon some could not resist the temptation of chewing, which of course, was forbidden. When caught by the teacher, they would have to give up their precious find. This happened to me quite often.

When the last day of school came this winter, our wading on cold mornings through snow and slush on many a day, had not furthered our education very much, but instead I returned with a bad reputation and my doll lost.

Chapter XVI

The Year 1857

This year of 1857 when Father came home after the holidays, he told Mother that he had applied and received his citizenship papers on October 16, 1856, and was now a full fledged American, of which he seemed very proud. I did not know what citizenship meant, but to see how happy Father was about it, I knew it must be something good.

This should have kept the Yankee children from calling us "little Dutch" but am sorry to say it did not, which, of course, we did not like. Among the older people in a general way, because having come from Paris, France, we were considered French, and often when met by someone, a kind hand would be put out and a kiss bestowed on me and called "little French girl" which in a way would lessen in my sight the stigma of "Dutch".

Whenever Mother left us alone she arranged the stove so that it retained the heat and it had been strictly impressed on us that it would be dangerous for us to meddle with the fire. Somehow she must have been worrying about that for one time she thought it might be safer to let the fire go out and put us all to bed. So, with our shoes off, Mary and Henry occupied one bed, while the twins and I the other. Mother had probably expected we would go to sleep and be warm and safe.

This was in the afternoon so I tried to get the babies to sleep, when Henry and Mary started to kick away the covering and fuss. I, calling to them to stop the noise and behave, got my little charges to squeal and howl. Soon the occupants of the other bed were running around in their stocking feet and opening doors to see whether Mother wasn't coming. This meant, of course, that we'd better all be up. After awhile we put on our shoes again and as our feet were icy cold, I thought that I would try to start the fire. Finding the kindling wood, I put it in the stove and put in some sticks of wood on top of that, struck a match and lit it. It seemed to start nicely but after a while went out again. I kept poking it from the front of the stove for a long time, the others standing behind me constantly watching. It seemed for hours that we poked and blew but no heat came from that stove, only tiny little flames which would come and then go out.

When we were chilled and trembling with cold, in despair I opened the small side door of the stove, stuck in the long hooked poker, stirring things up. Thinking the fire had started, I pulled out the poker, when a bunch of lighted kindling fell out on the floor. Henry and Mary with the babies following ran out into the yard screaming, "Fire, Fire!" Mother at the foot of the hill started to run up her fastest. By the time she reached the house I had put out the fire by pouring a dipper full of water on it and stepping on it. So when she entered she saw it had

been a false alarm. She found nothing more than my face and hands black with soot and a mess on the floor. She was glad it was no worse and realizing that putting us to bed when she went away was not so wise after all.

During the past years the twenty acres on which the house stood had been cleared. The big oak trees, one to the southwest and the other to the northeast of the house, to our sorrow had also been felled. These, during the hot summer months had always given us their cool shade and in the fall their many acorns had been a source of great pleasure to us. One beautiful linden, in front of the house, had been left us, in the shade of which the babies and I would sit and amuse each other. As a rule there was always a log ready to be chopped into wood, which I would use as a seat at noon, where I ate my dinner in nice weather. Somehow I could not bear to eat in that kitchen where the food had been cooked and the smell of it was thick.

Father had rented the farm to a man named Yerk and now the family was going to move in. To begin with Mother had to take them into the house. She gave the smaller of our bedrooms, the entrance of which led from the hall, to them. There they had to put their kitchen stove, their bed, a table a bench and a broken chair; also a few chipped and cracked dishes, knives, and forks, besides a wooden box with their few Sunday clothes.

There were four of them -- Father, two sons, William and Fritz, and a girl, Clara, about my age, not quite nine. The boys were about fourteen and eleven.

The Yerks were very poor. That little girl was the housekeeper. Every time the father and sons came in for a meal, by the noise and commotion one could imagine what kind of housekeeping it was. As there was only one bed, some of them must have slept on the floor. The mother had died when the little girl was born.

The contract between Father and Mr. Yerk was that half of whatever he raised would be his and during the winter he would have to clear five acres of the land -- of the twenty acres still in woodland across the road. He was allowed to keep one cow and raise one pig every year.

Old Yerk was a hard working, honest man. When he moved in it was early spring. He started right in cultivating the land and planting potatoes and corn and sowing rutabagas, cabbages, turnips, carrots and beets. He also got the meadows in order for hay. Between times, especially in the morning when the weather was suitable, stumps were burned and stones picked up, where they were too thick, which was in many places.

At the burning of stumps I liked to put in a helping hand and I soon became proficient in lighting fires.

We now got a yoke of oxen and a wagon, something I had always wished for; and fences were built around the fields. They were the zig-zag rail fences. To me it seemed we were catching up with the neighbors.

Another change had come. We now had a girl playmate, instead of just boys as heretofore. Poor little Clara! She was much neglected. Her hair was in a terrible condition so I felt it my duty to teach her how to wash it and then I would comb it for her. After a while my mother noticed I was doing a lot of scratching and then she had to do some hairwashing. Upon consulting the neighbors she was advised to use vinegar on my head. Soon all the heads of our family had to be treated in this way, Clara's included. Then I was admonished to keep away from the Yerks as much as possible. This I did for a short time, but feeling Clara needed a lot of advice, I had a way of slipping in off and on.

One day, when I came just as she was washing her dishes, I found she had no towels with which to wipe them. I told her it was very necessary for her to have some. When she told me she did not know where to get them we looked around. At last she mentioned there was nothing for her to tear up, (since they had no sheets) but the case over their featherbed. That, I said would be good. I would make a great many towels. So, finding the shears, we immediately went to work, cutting out large and small towels. This cover was colorless. Whatever color it may have had was buried under ages of dirt. We now had plenty of towels with which to wipe dishes. Whatever towels we did not use, I showed Clara how to fold and put away. If the poor girl thought she was learning how to be a correct housekeeper, she found out, at the return of her father for supper, that she was mistaken, for if ever a child got a mauling, she got it that evening. Mother wondered what it was all about, but I was wise enough to not know anything about it.

One may wonder that Mother did not go in to interfere, but probably she thought it best to mind her own business.

One day, later in the spring, when Mother had just finished washing, a hen that found her way up attic, was cackling her loudest. She had made her nest near the chimney, where she laid an egg every other day or so. Thinking she had again performed her duty, I scrambled up the ladder to get it. When I reached the top rung, flames of fire all around the chimney greeted my sight. I yelled "Fire, Fire!" and tumbled down the ladder. It must have been a holy day, for the Yerks, being Catholics, had all gone to church.

Luckily the fall had not hurt me, for I was on my feet instantly. Mother told me to run as fast as I could to summon the Meyers. When I reached the bridge, three or four men came running down the opposite hill as fast as they could, their hair flying in the breeze. It was Post Office day and they had seen the flames, which had already reached the roof.

It was a hot windy day. Before they reached the house, Mother had done as much as she could, carrying the water from the washtub up the ladder, trying to extinguish the flames. Two of the men immediately took the tub down to the well, filling it and carrying it up the hill. The others put the ladder up against the roof of the house and carried the water up by the pailful. By this time other neighbors had come, so one man could stay on the roof, while the others took the water up. The fire was soon extinguished. If it was the cackling of the geese that saved Rome, it surely was the cackling of a hen that saved our home.

After the house was safe that afternoon, exhausted I tumbled on the bed and fell asleep. That night Mother stayed up all night and I with her part of the time. Needless to say, she had provided herself with plenty of reserve water in case of need.

The wind kept on increasing and the following night every stump far and near, high and low, was on fire, even the tops of dry trees round about were flaming.

On a cold Sunday evening after supper in March, Margaret with a sister and a friend and a good-looking middle-aged man, whom she introduced as her husband, called. Of course Mother was pleased at the good news. She congratulated them and wished them many years of happiness. This man was a German, who had been teaching in the neighboring districts and had made a good reputation.

He and Mother had a good time discussing literature, history and politics. The first thing we knew he was on his feet giving a regular talk on the trend of the times.

The pleasant surprise of Margaret's marriage with a reliable man, as it seemed, had relieved Mother of her trouble for the time. But after they had left, her anxiety again loomed big, for we had not heard from father for some time. He had been expected home before this. What made it worse was that Yerk, on one of his evening visits, had brought bad news. He had heard that there had been a bad fire in Chicago. Mother, knowing that Father could be foolhardy in times when help was needed, now became even more anxious than before.

She was just getting the little ones ready for bed, when there was a rap on the door, and almost at the same moment the door flew open and Father entered with his bag over his shoulder. He looked pale and tired. After throwing his bag on the floor and having kissed and greeted us all, he dropped on the bench with a groan. Taking off his coat and cap, he started to pull off his boots. This was not so easy for his feet were swollen and with many a sigh and groan and with Mother's help he finally succeeded in getting them off. As usual he had walked all the way from Port Washington. After a warm foot bath, he was ready for a good hot meal. Then he told that the fire in Chicago, which had been a big one, had not been near where he resided, and that he had had nothing whatever to do with it. That he had not written when he should have, was because from week to week he had expected to leave but business coming up, he had been deterred.

Having had three months of school the past winter, there was no school in our district this summer. But the district three miles west of us had its summer school taught by Miss Ann Tolleth. We lived just between the two school houses and as it was the same distance to both, Mother arranged to have us attend school west of us this summer. To this school went also Adolph Hempstead, Charley Meyer, the McLaughlins (who now lived in the Prechtel house) -- Susan, John and James. Here we got acquainted with the German children belonging to this district -- the Begers, the Neumanns and a girl, Maria Niederstedt, who was related to the Bachs. Her father, being a special friend of our father, we got so we felt she was related to us.

Most of these children came to school barefooted, but Mother insisted that we wear shoes, at least, if not stockings. On a hot day these shoes seemed a burden to us, so when near the schoolhouse we would take them off, stick them inside the Niederstedt fence and feel we were more in style with the other pupils.

We liked the teacher, Miss Tolleth, since all were treated alike. As the Germans were in majority here, the Irish soon learned that language.

During the summer, having to help their parents in the fields, the older children did not attend school. As there was not much difference in our ages, during our recess and noon hours, we all played together and had good times.

There was one day during this summer I had a good chance to become acquainted with the "school ma'am" as we called her. For some reason Mary stayed home that day and when I reached school I found that all the other children had done the same, so all that day alone I sat. Recess and noon I spent by myself out of doors. At the regular time my lessons were recited and the rest of the time I spent writing figures and drawing pictures on my slate. The other hours were spent by the teacher in doing fancy work. It seemed a day as long as a week and I was glad when four o'clock came.

On our way home from school, we would find our shoes and put them on again. Often Mariechen, as she was called, would insist we would go into their house with her. Her mother was a Bach, so Mariechen often had presents from her uncles and aunts, some of whom resided in Milwaukee. Dolls, boxes and baskets. One time it was a leghorn hat with a large brim, the kind called a "flat". This had been given her by her Uncle Christian Bach. It was trimmed with a blue ribbon around the crown, tied in the back in a bow, with long blue streamers. In front it had a narrow ribbon of the same color fastened to the wide brim. This ribbon was held by the wearer to keep it from being blown away. Mariechen put it on to show us how it looked. It was very becoming to her and she was very proud of it. This reminded us that we had had hats something like it but had outgrown them and were now, like the other children, just wearing sunbonnets, which Mother had to make by hand.

This summer Mother had decided she would not again neglect the Fourth of July, so when the day came, we all in light dresses were ready to celebrate. Mother, with a basket filled with a good lunch, and dressed in her best light summer clothes, we started out early in the afternoon for Waubeka. This year there was no shooting, no music, no dance, nothing going on here -- no celebration, so we walked through the village, crossed the bridge, walked up the hill, and sat down in the shade of some trees, enjoying looking down upon the Milwaukee River, with the beautiful scenery all about, while Mother unpacked her lunch basket. We took our time consuming the lunch.

We took a long rest, then walked along the road, passing and admiring some of the new frame houses of the Yankees. All was quiet. Nobody seemed to be at home, so there must have been a celebration somewhere else. When we reached home again, it was high time to get the cattle, milk the cows, eat supper and put the little ones to bed. It must have been a pleasant change for Mother, to us children a never-to-be-forgotten afternoon. What the day was all about, was still a mystery to us, although Mother tried to explain what the Declaration of Independence meant. We accepted what she said and let it go at that, just so we had a holiday.

On a Sunday, a few weeks after the Fourth, with Clara and Fritz Yerk, we started out to take a walk to Waubeka. Reaching there and seeing nothing to entertain us, we walked through the village and turned west, following the road along the river, which was shaded with shrubs and trees. We had gone far enough to be pretty nearly tired out, especially Fritz and I who had to carry the twins off and on. When we reached the dam, Fritz thought that by crossing it, instead of going back to the bridge, we might save a quarter of a mile and then take the back road through the woods for home.

To me, with all those children, it did not seem a very wise plan, but Fritz insisted that we try it. So Clara and Mary went ahead with Henry between them. Fritz, with little Emily by the left hand, started next. I, leading Charley by the right hand, followed close behind. It was on a board about a foot wide that we were walking. Wet and slippery it was, but there was not much water running over it until we had crossed somewhat over half the distance, where more water commenced to rush over it with greater force. Here little Emily slipped off the board and Fritz let go of her hand. I quickly grabbed her hand before it went under water and pulled her up. Now I sternly commanded Fritz to pick her up and carry her over, while I went back to Charley. The others had already reached the opposite shore. By remaining calm and cool in the face of danger, which fortunately was one of my traits, the child was saved. I now walked to the bridge, thanking God all the way for having saved little Emily. Then I walked the quarter of a mile on the other side and reached the gang.

I found them sitting in the sunshine, Emily's clothes wrung out, hanging on the bushes to dry. She was wrapped in Mary's white petticoat, smiling and comfortable. When her clothes were pretty nearly dry we dressed her again and started for home. My one worry was, what would Mother say, for we had all been wearing the pretty clothes she had made for the Fourth of July. Mary and I were in light lavender calico, Henry in his little blue suit, little Emily and Charley in yellow (hers being a dress and his a little pair of pants with a blouse and belt). The twins had on the leghorn hats which had belonged to Mary and me. And now were we a sight -- the long blue streamers on Emily's hat were twisted and stained. I stretched them and brushed the sand off the hat as much as I could.

It wasn't so early when we got home. I undressed the children and got them into their everyday clothes. Mother was busy getting supper, so she did not notice or took for granted that after a long trip it might be expected that we would come home all messed up. Anyway, she had had a long afternoon of rest.

Usually before going for the cows in the evening, Mother gave me a piece of bread and butter, that is, if they happened to be far away, but one evening the bread was still in the oven and the bells were ding donging far away. As it was late, I hurried off towards the sound which was towards the river in a southeasterly direction. This took me beyond the Hempsteads, where I entered the woods. Walking along about a mile, I reached the river, then found to my dismay that the cattle were on the other side of the river. This had never happened before. I had not as yet learned to swim and knew the water was too deep to wade across, so what to do was a question. There I stood with my dog beside me. So I commenced to call each cow by name, then Buck and Jim, the oxen, the dog giving a low yelp each call.

Sure enough, one by one they appeared along the edge of the river. And keeping on calling, they entered the water and waded across, then went on ahead, the dog and I behind. Slowly we wound our way through the woods toward home.

About half way home I felt I was getting weak with hunger. The mandrake fruit was not quite ripe and I had never eaten any before, but it being the only thing at hand, I thought I would try one. Squeezing it a bit and thus softening it, I tried it. It didn't taste so bad and since it seemed to help, I tasted another and another -- I don't know how many. Reaching home, Mother had a bowl of nice hot milk ready for me, but being filled with the seeds of the mandrake, I could not eat, so Mother did the milking herself that night. When she came back in she ordered me to bed. That night I suddenly dropped out of the clouds and found Mother sitting beside the bed and tying a cloth with liniment around my head. I had been delirious, flying above the clouds. The next morning was Sunday. I was all right except a little shaky. Mother let me sleep until noon, when I got up and had my bowl of milk. In the evening I was able to go for the cattle, but never again mandrakes!

This fall proved that Old Yerk was worth all he got. I can still hear the rumble of the potatoes rolling down into our cellar from the opening in the back of the house. I fell through the small trap door in the kitchen floor as they were rolling in. Luckily I was pulled up uninjured. Besides potatoes there were turnips and beets put in. Each family had a large barrel of sauerkraut. Besides this, we had onions and carrots aplenty, as well as corn and pumpkins.

The stable was now in two compartments with a space between. The part next to the house was used for the cattle, oxen and cows. We now had two cows and the Yerks had one. The other compartment had been arranged as living quarters for the Yerks. Part of it was partitioned off with boards for a bedroom and the other part served as a kitchen and living room. It was not very prepossing having just a ground floor and only a half window toward the east. One advantage it had however was that there was more space than in their former quarters.

Clara could not bake bread, but she had an older sister, Gertrude, married to a well-to-do farmer. Gertrude would come once a week to see them, bring them some bread and their laundry. She was only nineteen years old but a very fine housekeeper.

The Yerks were very much pleased and well satisfied with their new abode. We had visited the place where they had lived before they came to us, which had been on the farm of Gertrude's husband. It was a small blockhouse -- old and dilapidated. This had probably been the original house of the old people. Gertrude lived in a spacious new house with barns and stables near by.

On this visit we had seen, for the first time, men threshing grain by hand with flails on the floor of the barn. As I remember the flails were long, heavy poles with a heavy flat piece of board fastened to one end with strong leather straps. The bundles of grain were opened and laid on the floor with all the ears toward the middle. The men stood facing each other beating the grain with the flails. At intervals they would lift the bundles, shake them and lay them down again; then the bundles were shaken again and the straw removed. The grain with the chaff was swept together and put in baskets ready to be winnowed, which operation we did not see. This was a very interesting visit which I have never forgotten.

Now we were again reminded of school. One afternoon as Mother returned from the store, she handed me a new book -- a First Reader, larger than the one I had. I was so pleased, I could do nothing else all afternoon but look at the pictures and try to read the stories. There was one lesson, which showed the picture of a mother and daughter beside a small tombstone. The title was "Little Oscar's Grave". This especially drew my attention and reminded me of an older sister and brother, who were buried in the city of Paris, whose graves we could not visit. Mother had often told us about them.

Later on Mother was informed that if we brought a Speller to school we would have the chance of learning to spell also, so the next time she came home from the store, that book was also given to us. So when the school opened, we entered fully prepared, not only with slate and pencils, but with books also. This must have induced Mr. Wendell, the same teacher we had had the winter before to pay a little more attention to us.

Charley Meyer, Mary and I and a few other little dunces were put in one class. There must have been about six or seven in that class. Twice a day, once in the forenoon and once in the afternoon, we stood in a row in the middle of the room and read. Once a day we were the Arithmetic Class in easy addition. This gave us a chance to be seen and heard at least.

Shortly before the closing of school every afternoon, two classes in spelling would recite, our class first. This meant all the members of the lower classes would stand in a row to spell. The pupil that had been at the head of the class the day before, would go to the foot and wait his or her chance to gradually get up to the head again. Once, during the winter, when I stood at the foot of the class and the word "blue" had passed from head to foot and come to me, and had been spelled every possible way but the right one, I tried it "b-l-u-e" which was correct, so I walked all the way to the head again. It wasn't that I knew it was correct, but had just guessed and happened to be right. From then on, of course, I had the reputation of being smart, which in order to keep, induced me to do a little more serious studying.

After our spelling class was seated again, it was interesting to listen to the spelling of the next class, and see who was going up and who down.

Again our main amusement this winter during the noon hour was to go to the tamarack swamp to gather gum.

The Yerk children went to the Little Kohler German Catholic School. They would come home and tell us what they were learning. So evenings when we got together we would teach them a little English, while they would teach us to read their little German books. What I liked best were the songs they sang in their school, one of which I have never forgotten:

"Freut euch des Lebens, Weil noch das Laempchen glueht,
Pflucket die Rosen, Eh' sie verblühn."

(Enjoy your life, while the little lamp glows,
Pick the roses, ere they wither.)

Chapter XVII

The Year 1858

This winter Yerk was clearing the five acres across the road from us. The cattle went every day to eat the twigs off the trees as they were hewn down. Mornings and evenings they got a portion of hay which was in the loft above the stable. There the hens had discovered that nice soft nests could be made in which to lay their eggs. To me it was lots of fun to find the eggs, but one evening I had an accident which might have been serious. Under the hay was a floor of narrow boards not placed close together but several feet apart. At one place the hay, all but a thin layer, had been taken down. This happened to be right above where the oxen were fastened. Not aware of the little hay that was left, I stepped on this place and down I went, landing between the big horns of the beasts. They being frightened, commenced to rear and stamp, but luckily, I, trembling and very much frightened, got away without so much as a scratch.

Soon after this, there was a sad occurrence. There was an epidemic of throat trouble among the children in the region. We were not affected by it, but our dear little friend, Mariechen Niederstedt succumbed. This was the nearest to the loss of a dear friend Mary and I had ever come and it cast a dark shadow over us for a long time. For the rest of the winter I never went to bed without laying awake a long time feeling great sorrow over the thought that I would never see that little playmate again -- pondering over things she had said, the many kindnesses she had shown us. For one thing I was grateful -- we had never had a quarrel, not even a disagreement.

One evening, it must have been in the month of January, after we children had gone to bed and were asleep, Mother came and woke me. She told me there was a man and his two sons here, who wanted me to come and help him find his cattle. When I was up and dressed, I found they had told Mother they knew I could tell by the different sounds of the bells to whose cattle those bells belonged. Mother put on my short jacket, mittens and my hood and I went out with them.

We walked west along the road for some distance, then turned south along the old Indian trail on the crisp frozen snow. The man lifted me up on a high stump to listen for the bells. Upon listening closely, I found there were two bells sounding a good distance away -- one a deep bass "Ding dong" usually carried by an ox, the other, "Bing, bing" a cow's bell. It was late so evidently everybody else's cattle must have been in the stables. I assured them these must be the bells of their cattle and told them in which direction -- southwest -- they must go to find them. The father thanked me and told his youngest son, a boy of about fourteen, to take me back home and then to go home himself (which was about a mile and half from where we lived) while he and the older boy would go and get the cattle.

A few days later the man, whose name I have forgotten, came and told Mother that I had been right. He thought it just wonderful that I could distinguish so correctly the different sounds of the bells. I had surely made a reputation. I have mentioned before that from the cow bells I took my first music lessons. By this time, I knew I had really learned something worthwhile.

Along the road to Waubeka, the snow had piled up along the sides of the road higher than the fences and had settled down hard and solid. So whenever I was sent to the village on an errand, it was on these piles of snow that I walked rather than in the middle of the road. To amuse myself on the way, I imagined that under these snow hills lived little white folks in little white houses with everything white -- dishes, beds, stoves, and other furniture -- regular little cities with gardens, trees and everything white. On the way home, my basket with a pound of coffee, sugar, and a few pounds of dried apples, I would resume my imaginary flight of what these little snow people were doing. This I kept up until spring.

When the weather was mild and the snow began to melt and flow in rivers downhill, what had become of my little white folks? Well, one fine night they had packed and gotten into boats and rowed away to some country where there was plenty of snow. The birds, the chipmunks and the rabbits had taken their place.

So the winter passed and in early spring for the first time we were making maple syrup and sugar. It was, of course, the Yerks who were leading the way. Old Yerk had made the troughs into which the sap flowed and all the spouts. A big kettle was bought by us and set up in the woods. Yerk tapped the trees and we children helped to collect the sap. Every drop had to be saved because the syrup and sugar were to be divided between the two families.

Mother and the babies came off and on to see how things were progressing and Mrs. Schade (Gertrude Yerk) came almost every day to see that things were done in a clean way. This was an enjoyable time. There was plenty of dry wood lying around which we children gathered and kept the fire going underneath the kettle. Eating our lunch out of doors in the woods was also great fun.

I am sorry to say that something unpleasant had to happen during this enjoyable time. The woodland was not yet fenced in, so some of the neighbor's pigs got in and gorged themselves with the sap from the troughs and died.

The sap was boiled into syrup in the big kettle in the woods and taken home. Our share of the syrup, which was to be made into sugar, was boiled some more on the stove, which gave us children pots and pans to lick. This was our share of the work and left us sweet and sticky. When the syrup had reached a certain thickness, it was taken off the stove, poured into a dish and stirred for a time, then poured into molds -- some cakes with scalloped edges.

At the end of the season, the sap, when it was not running so freely, was used for vinegar. This sap was boiled for a few hours in the big kettle in the woods, then carried home in pails and poured into a barrel until it was filled. A small hunk of sour dough was put in, the barrel covered up and the contents left to ferment. This was the first vinegar we had ever made. How long it took until it was fit to use, I do not remember. In after years, Mother always had a few jugs of the old to use, until the new was fit. The Yerks also had a barrel of vinegar. The sugar and syrup was equally divided between us, as said before.

The sugar season over, spring came in earnest. The frogs in the marsh behind the house again were giving us their concert; the whipperwill its song in the evening. This spring we discovered that warm weather not only brought us the song of birds but also snakes. They were not dangerous creepers but we hated them. We had seen them before, but never in such numbers. One morning, playing on the south side of our house, they commenced to crawl out from the ground one after another, until we had counted eighteen, both big and small. They came out, sticking out their tongues at us in a threatening way. We knew they were not poisonous or dangerous, still they were not pleasing to look at. We got the boys to clear them off the premises and for some time we kept away from that side of the house.

Easter again had come. Up to this time before the Yerks had come we never got more than one Easter egg apiece and no Easter rabbit ever brought our eggs. We knew they were chicken eggs and that Mother colored them in coffee grounds, and onion peelings, which she began to save a week before. The two mixed gave the eggs a nice brown color. Mother would not use anything else for a dye because she knew this was safe. Nor would she give us more than one hard boiled egg for she had heard of children choking after they had eaten two.

The Yerks dyed their eggs with the roots of some tree, which colored them a bright scarlet. We would exchange some of our eggs for theirs.

At Christmas we were never deluded by stories about Santa Claus or the Christ-kindl. We saw Mother bake the cookies and other things and knew that Father brought the presents from Chicago. But we had always been told that on Easter morning the Easter lamb was in the sun and could be seen by looking through a piece of smoke glass, so we always had a piece of glass handy to smoke and looking through it at the sun, we actually could see the lamb or something like it! A good part of the Easter forenoon was always spent in this way.

Yerks, being Catholics, had been fasting, almost starving themselves the week before Easter, so after coming home from church the day was spent mostly in feasting and resting. Strange to say it all agreed with them, for I do not remember any of them ever having been sick.

Spring also brought a scarcity of food. How often did I hear the neighbors and my mother say, "One hardly knows what to cook these days." For the sauerkraut barrel was empty; the dried peas and navy beans had all disappeared. So had most of the vegetables kept in the cellar -- such as turnips, rutabagas and beets. True, there were still plenty of potatoes which, with onions, could be prepared in various ways. There were different kinds of weeds, such as dandelions and a weed called "mellen" by the German women, which before the garden vegetables appeared, were used by some. Dandelions made excellent salad and the mellen weed could be prepared like spinach and tasted somewhat like it.

Later when we were sure no more snakes were coming out of the ground, we again decided to play on the south side of the house. This time it was to be a wedding or a christening. There were two small handy stumps and we had a broad board (which we had used for a table before) which we hauled out and swept and placed upon the stumps. The table was not so very even, one stump being higher than the other, but that didn't matter. Then we gathered all our broken dishes. This sort of a "Fest" gave something for everyone to do, for some had to fetch water, some to set the table. To stir up the mud cakes for the banquet was usually either Mary's or my part of the business. Some had to go to the sandpile (which we pretended was the store) to secure the dark and light sand we used as sugar to decorate our mud pies and cakes. Sticks had to be prepared for knives and forks. When all was ready we sat around the table on the ground, which was not inconvenient for the table was not very high.

We were enjoying our meal, pretending to eat, when an unpleasant interruption occurred. Father had come home a few days before and this morning early had gone hunting. All at once he was coming down the hill with his gun and dog. When we saw him coming we all jumped up and scattered. At the house we found a commotion and found Mother explaining to him that we had not been eating the mud, as he thought, but that it was just play make-believe. He was scandalized that we big girls could not find something better to do than to be playing with mud. He thought we ought to be learning to knit and sew instead. Mother then showed him the little stockings I had knit the last two years for the twins. She said she could not keep us working all the time and that children needed some play; that in our play we also amused the younger ones, which gave her some time to do her work in peace. Whether this all satisfied Father, I do not know. He, being away from home so much, had different ideas of bringing up children.

Sometime after this occurrence, Father again being in Chicago, I went to the Meyers to see if a letter had come. When I entered I noticed there was somewhat of a disorder. After waiting a little while, Mrs. Beger, the mother of Mrs. Meyer, came out of the bedroom. She told me there was no letter for us this morning, but she had something to show me. She went back into the bedroom and brought out a little baby, telling me it was Charley's little brother. He was a tiny little fellow with plenty of sores on his little face. So this was the news I had to bring home from my trip to the Post Office.

On a Sunday nowadays Mother would sometimes visit friends who lived at some distance. While she could trust us older ones to remain at home, she would still take the baby with her. During such times there would be a grand time for the twins weren't babies any more but two years old. Sometimes while she was gone we took out her clothes and dressed up in them. We would wash Emilie's face, hands, and feet, dress her up in Mother's white petticoat, make a wreath of flowers and ribbons, put it on her head and then set her on the fence towards the road as an angel for she had fair skin and abundant light blonde hair. With her bare arms dangling, looking at her from a distance she represented to us a typical angel.

We would have liked to dress Charley, her twin, up the same way and have two angels on the fence instead of only one, but he refused and ran away down the hill. We wanted Emilie to sit on the fence until someone came along to see her but we were much disappointed for no one ever came. In order to keep her there we had to give her lumps of brown sugar off and on. Someone had to be on the lookout all the while to see when Mother would be coming down the hill from Meyers to give us time to hang her dresses up on the wall behind the curtain and to fold her petticoat and put it back in her trunk.

This summer Henry, who was five years of age, was going to attend school which was being held in our district. A few weeks before school opened, we girls were busy telling him what school was like -- that he would have to be a good boy and how nice it would be for him to learn to read and to use his slate. Poor little boy! Mother had made him a nice little suit, consisting of a pair of blue denim trousers and a blue checked gingham blouse with a belt. With his face and hands washed so clean, his blonde hair combed so smooth and a new straw hat, he certainly was a good-looking child.

The first day of school he sat alone on the front seat, being the only ABC pupil. At recess Mary and I took him between us and tried to amuse him by making him take notice of the older boys, who were playing, but his only answer was looking at us with tears in his large dark blue eyes. Back in school on that otherwise empty seat, looking out of the open door, watching the birds flying about wherever they wished, the little red chipmunks gayly chasing up and down the trees, he may have been thinking of the nice big chips in the yard at home, with which he always amused himself building houses and barns. When suddenly it got too much for him, he jumped up, got out of the door like a flash, Mary after him and Charley Meyer after her. I, thinking that they would bring him back, watched out of the window.

Instead of turning, when Henry got to the Fond du Lac Road, he ran straight on, following the Sheboygan Road and would surely have been lost had the other two not caught up with him and brought him back. I now took him beside me on the seat against the wall, whispering encouragingly that it would soon be dinnertime and we could then eat our bread and butter and hard boiled eggs, for he always had a good appetite and I thought that would be encouraging. He lived through the long afternoon.

I do not remember who the teacher was. This, her first day, she may have been very busy arranging her classes, probably a good excuse for paying no attention whatsoever to the little newcomer. Needless to say, Henry would not go to school again this summer.

After school we helped burn stumps and brush in the new clearings. In the meadows we picked the strawberries. This was very annoying to old Yerk, because, as he said, we trampled down the hay so much. But as the strawberries only grew in patches and I knew where these patches were, since I had marked them mentally earlier in the spring, when they blossomed, so not much of the hay was damaged.

One afternoon when there was no school, we found Fritz sleeping in the sunshine on the south side of the house. With small sticks or pieces of straw we tickled his face until he awoke and told him we were planning to go to the woods to catch a chipmunk and we needed his help. Clara seldom went with us on these expeditions, but this time we induced her to come along. Then with the twins, Henry carrying his little ax, we started out. The object of this trip was to catch a live chipmunk, so there was some chasing done. Finally we managed to drive one into a small ironwood tree. Here it was that Fritz and the ax came in handy. Fritz was ordered to chop down the tree. This he did. Then he chopped off the top of the tree, while I stuck my apron into the hole in the bottom so the chipmunk could not get out. After he had chopped off the upper branches, finding there was another hollow at the top I sat there to prevent the chipmunk from escaping. From the lower end it could not be reached because the tree was too long, so it had to be cut in two. Then again my end was plugged up while Fritz put his hand in to draw the animal out. This he did, but with a terrible yell. The chipmunk was fastened to his hand for it had bitten with its sharp long teeth through the nail of his thumb. He shook it off in a hurry and ran home crying. Poor Fritz! The chipmunk, of course, escaped and we never again attempted to catch a live one.

The rest of us remained in the woods along the road looking for more adventure. Even our dog Carlo that day seemed in the spirit of it, for soon he came up to me with a white and brown checked egg in his mouth. I took it from him. He looked at me as if to say, "Follow me." He turned west, I followed. Then he led me a little ways into the woods to a brushpile out of which flew a partridge. When I looked there was a nest of twelve eggs, the size of pigeon eggs. I just touched and fondled them, then left, followed by my dog. This was the first nest of this kind, thanks to the dog, I had ever seen. From the egg the dog had brought me, which of course had been broken, I could see it was a newly laid egg. After this, at least once a week, I paid a visit to this nest. One day, later on, the partridge flew up and all her little chicks after her. They flew a little ways and then dropped down and hid among the leaves on the ground. Neither Carlo nor I tried to catch any of them.

That day we seemed to be up to mischief. The whole gang went up to the Roussard farm. Their farm adjoined ours and the house was right near our woods. There they were putting up a fence and we commenced annoying the boy, Joe Wagner, who was building it, the twins climbing up the rails and Henry trying his ax on them. Joe finally had to chase us away and as it was going on to supper time we went home.

We had gradually gotten away from playing with our boy playmates, since we had Clara right at home and had become acquainted with the girls at school, but on occasions Charley and Ernst would induce us to come and play with them in their woods and fields. On a certain day they were showing us how big the wild plums and crab-apples around the edge of their marsh were getting to be. Henry, who had the gift of music, could whistle very well, so Charley who wanted to whistle, was taking lessons from Henry all that day.

Then, when we were admiring the wild roses, which grew in big patches around there, Charley suddenly remembered the cultivated rose bush his mother had near the house and wanted me to see it. As we entered the gate and Charley was going toward the rosebush, his mother opened the door and said to him in a cross way, "Now don't you pick any of those roses for her," which meant me, of course. "Ach," said Charley, "I wasn't going to pick any for her, I'm just going to show them to her." This was the first cultivated rose bush near or far. It had big pink blossoms and was called the blush rose. They seemed wonderful to us and after admiring them a long time, we left without picking any.

Of the five acres Yerk had cleared during the winter, the brush piles had all been burned but the logs were still there. So when Father came home about the middle of July he arranged for a logging bee, that is for the burning of the logs.

The logging bee meant for the neighbors coming together with their teams of oxen, their logging chains and crowbars; gathering the logs and putting them on a pile. This was hard work for there was a great deal of lifting to be done, piling the logs one on top of the other -- three, four, or five layers. There was quite a bit of rivalry among the men as to who could accomplish the most.

It was a hot day and with the flames shooting up into the air, right across the road from the house, the heat was greatly intensified. I had just found on the opposite side of the house a shady place to sit with the babies when Mother called me in, saying Father had just come and feared the whiskey would not hold out and that I should be sent to the village to get some more. This meant my getting washed, combed and dressed clean, of which I was rather impatient. While Mother fastened my dress, I wanted to know why the men needed whiskey. Mother told me they needed something to give them strength to do the hard work.

I was soon on my way to the village with a big-bellied round quart bottle with a short neck. The bottle filled at the grocery store, where they kept whiskey in barrels, I was soon on my way back. Just out of the village I felt terribly hot, dry and weak. Remembering what Mother had said, that whiskey made men strong, the thought came to me, why not try it? So I did -- just one swallow. I waited awhile but no strength came, rather the opposite. Well, perhaps I hadn't taken enough. Out came the cork and another swig. No good results, and another -- and still another. When I reached the Meyer fence, where the raspberries were getting ripe, -- inside of me a terrible burning and dizziness in the head. Thinking ripe raspberries might help to cool me off, in some way I got over that fence. Picking a few raspberries as I went along, I neared the corner. Thinking I might be caught inside the fence, I tried to get over on the roadside again. I tumbled off the fence, the bottle dropping out of my hand, which however was not broken. Then I sat down on a stone and seemed to be getting weaker, which made me think I could not have had enough of the stuff.

After imbibing several good swallows, I again took to the road. At the corner I turned, still having enough sense to know where I was. Reaching a wild cherry tree, I noticed that the bottle was not quite full anymore. As I had heard that wild cherries in whiskey improved it, although these were not quite ripe, I thought they would be good for the whiskey anyway, so several fists full went in. This did not seem to fill the bottle, so when I reached the bridge over the creek, I leaned over and with the hollow of my hand dipped up some of the water and poured it into the bottle. That did not seem to fill it either. Then I gave the contents a good shaking. In tasting it again, I found it tasted no better than before. Giving up in despair, I put the cork back and walked on.

Suddenly I saw Mary coming her fastest down the hill opposite. She reached me at the end of the bridge. A few feet away from me she stood still and so did I. With a wildly disturbed look on her face she said, "What's the matter with you? How you walk!!" Upon which I dragged out, "What's the matter with you and everything else? What's the matter with Mother's house? It doesn't stand still anymore -- it leans from one side to the other." The bottle dropped from my hands, rolling towards Mary. She picked it up, turned and ran towards home, while I in a leisurely way, zigzagged my way towards the same place.

When I reached home, Father was standing outside the door. Without saying a word he let me pass by. Mother stood beside the kitchen table, which was near the bedroom door. She let me pass into the bedroom without saying a word. Then I dropped on the little bed on the floor where the twins usually took their afternoon nap. This was the last I remembered until late the next morning, when I awoke in my own bed.

After breakfast all by myself, Mother made me stand beside her and gave me, as she thought, the much needed lecture. The one thing I remember is the example of the redheaded Tolleth family. The parents of eight children both drank to excess. They

were a bad example and much talked about in the neighborhood. This made such an impression on me, needless to say, I vowed to myself never to indulge in liquor again.

Only the Tolleths were real drunkards. Old Keefe, who has been mentioned before, went on a spree not oftener than once or twice a year. Hempstead, our nearest neighbor, never could come home sober from an election or the Fourth of July. On one of these bouts, on his way home, he had broken a leg and walked lame ever after. There were others who did no worse than that.

The Yankees, living in Waubeka, were temperance people, who were not liked overmuch by the other class and so had their share of ridicule. There was a song among the Germans "Wer niemals einen Rausch gehabt, Der is kein braver Mann." (He who has never been tipsy, is not a gallant man.)

At this time, after my disgrace, had anyone come along with a temperance pledge, I would willingly have signed it.

Some time after this, on a Sunday Afternoon, Father announced that he had some business to attend to in Port Washington the next day and since he was going with the oxteam, he would like to take Mary and me along. Mother was sorry she had not known this in the morning, for then she would not have let us wear our Sunday dresses, which were now soiled. Father looked us over and thought they were all right. They were yellow cotton dresses with tiny brown figures.

The next morning we started on our trip. We liked nothing better than to take a ride in the big wagon drawn by Buck and Jim. William, the elder of the Yerk boys went along as driver, walking beside the oxen. Father and we two girls sat on the seat. In the back were several bags of something to be sold. How proud I was that we were the owners of a yoke of oxen and a wagon still quite new! Nine miles was a long way to go, but not too long for me.

There were no eating places in the village of Port Washington at that time, so Father took us to a friend's home, whose name I do not remember, and she served us with a piece of white bread spread with grape jelly and we had a drink of water. Then we went to look at the Lake, where Father left us playing with the pebbles on the shore, while he was transacting his business.

On our way home, some miles from Port Washington, we stopped at a house where some Luxemburgers lived, with whom Father was acquainted. Here we were served with bread spread with cook-cheese and given milk to drink. The rest of the way proved to be rather dull since we were very tired. The next morning when I got up, I was too sick to eat breakfast, although Mary was all right. Mother thought it was the irregular eating of the day before, which had caused my illness.

In the latter part of August, again on a Sunday, George and Lizzie Bach came to visit us. Their object was to get some wild cherries to put in whiskey. In clearing the twenty acres on which our house stood, two beautiful cherry trees had been left standing, one below the hill south of us and one near the well in the meadow, east of the house. It was these trees, which supplied the neighborhood with cherries for their whiskey every year.

It was a beautiful sunshiny afternoon when we went down to the tree near the well. Those cherries away on top of the tree were the ripest, so George climbed to the very top of the tree with his pail. Then he filled the one which Lizzie had brought, each being a three quart pail. He also filled the one quart pail which Mary and I had brought.

All the while up there he was singing different songs in German, the ones I remember were:

"O, du lieber Augustin, Augustin, Augustin,
O, du lieber Augustin, Alles ist veg.
Geld is rug, Mehl ist veg, Alles ist zum Kuklik veg.
O, du lieber Augustin, Alles ist veg."

(Oh, You dear Augustin, Augustin, Augustin
Oh, You dear Augustin, Everything is gone.
Money is gone, Flower is gone, everything to cuckoo is gone.
Oh, You dear Augustin, Everything is gone.)

and,

"Zu Lauterbach hab' ich mein Strumpf verlor'n
Und ohne Strumpf geh' ich nicht Heim,
Da kehr' ich hald wieder zu Lauterbach hin,
Und hol' mir ein Strumpf zu mein Bein."

(In Lauterbach I lost my stocking,
And without my stocking I shall not go home,
So I shall again return to Lauterbach
And get a stocking for my leg.)

George must have been about fifteen or sixteen years old at this time and ever after, whenever we met, he claimed that that had been the happiest day of his life. (During the Civil War, while I was at school in Chicago, Bach's Band was playing at McVickers Theatre with Christian Bach as leader. Several times tickets were sent us by Christian Bach and George for special plays given at that theatre, and once for a circus where they played.)

In September a comet had appeared in the sky a little to the west of our place. It had been Father who had called our attention to it, so almost every evening before going to bed, we ran out and looked at this appearance in the sky. Of course, other people were taking notice of it and almost everybody believed it was a sign of something dreadful to come. Most people, on account of the slavery question, believed it a sign of war, which we children accepted. This comet let Father to give us our first lesson in astronomy. He pointed out the Big and Little Dippers, telling us they were also called the Big Bear and the Little Bear and a great deal more, which by this time I have forgotten.*

So again summer had gone and the fall had come with the gathering of the crops and the passing of all the birds, except some kind of a woodpecker and the little pee-wee, which stayed with us during the winter.

Grain had been sown in our fields for the first time this last spring and this fall it was to be thrashed -- wheat, rye, and oats -- the latter was needed to keep the oxen fit for work. By this time the thrashing was not being done so much by flail.

There was a man by the name of Zeiser, an American, who went about with his thrashing machine. So weeks before we children were anxiously looking forward to the time when the thrashers would be at our place. Great preparations were being made. A few days before the thrashers came, a sheep was bought and had to be butchered. The only thing I did not like about the farm was that animals had to be killed. It used to just about wring my heart to know that a chicken was going to be killed. What we children did enjoy the day before was baking. Mother baked -- bread, biscuits and coffee cakes of different kinds. The shelves were filled with good things to eat.

The evening before the thrashing was to begin, the machine was brought and installed. The boss and two other men came. Where they slept, I do not know, it must have been in the loft on top of the grain. The machine was run by horsepower -- eight horses were being used. A round central drum was set in the front yard, four bars extending from it, to each of which a span of horses was hitched. The machine proper, which merely thrashed the grain, stood in front of our door, between the stable and the house. Between the horses, on the central piece stood the driver with a whip in hand. When he started the horses going around and around and around in a circle, the thing commenced to zoom. One of the men handed the bundles to the one who fed the machine, then the grain came out right in front of our door, where a man received it in a bushel measure. This man handed it to one, who carried it into our attic, while another measure was immediately held under. In the back yard five or six neighbors were employed in forming the straw into a stack.

* Donati's comet of 1858 was visible to the naked eye for about four months.

At noon the horses were unhitched, fed and watered and around an improvised table in the kitchen, loaded with food, the men had their meal. Mother had a woman helping her, while the threshers were here. They took an hour and a half off to rest the horses and themselves.

Then the zooming began again. We had the three men who ran the machine stay with us two nights. Besides giving the men three meals, they had to be served with two lunches, one in the middle of the forenoon and one in the afternoon with whiskey added to "give them strength".

Zeiser, the man who owned the machine, was a sort of a wild fellow, who liked his whiskey a bit too much. Some of the neighbors whose dogs had followed them (probably to share the bones which would be thrown out) during the afternoon of the second day had a fight. Some of the men who were standing around and Zeiser, who probably had had "one too many", suddenly threw himself among the bunch of fighting dogs, hitting, kicking, and pretending to bite. This separated the dogs, while he, dirty and tousled, arose as a hero.

Up in our attic bins had been temporarily made with boards of which we always had plenty. The bins for wheat, rye and oats were all well filled, half of which belonged to us and half to the Yerks. From now on, instead of buying our flour, we went to the grist mill, which was in Waubeka, to have the grain ground into flour. The pay for the milling, the miller took in the form of flour and bran. The Yerks just had their rye ground, the wheat they would sell, while we, who had always had both kinds of flour, kept on having the same. The bran was used for both cows and pigs.

This fall when potatoes and other vegetables had been stored in the cellar we felt we were well prepared for the coming winter.

The house cleaning was now being done and again the kitchen was partitioned off to give another bedroom.

This fall Mary, Henry and I as well as Charley and Ernst Meyer were attending the Little Kohler school (Neumann District) west of us, where the teacher was a Mr. Haskell, a middle-aged man from New York City. How and why so fine a man should have come to this region nobody knew. Rumor had it he must have done something which forced him to leave his former home. His clothes and manners were far superior to those of anyone else in these parts. He taught us how to bow, explaining that if we ever got into high society we would have to know how to do so. He taught us to say "Yes sir" and No sir" and when we did not understand, not to say "What?" but to say "Sir?" He knew how to keep us busy all day for there were classes not only in reading, spelling and arithmetic, but also in geography, although we did not have books in geography.

The first time Mr. Haskell asked us in what country we lived, we said "America". Then he asked in what part of America; there was no response. He showed us where the United States was and also that we lived in Wisconsin, pointing to it on the map. Next he showed us Ozaukee County and Fredonia, the township. As time went on he taught us a great deal more.

There were others who came to school from other districts who had already been teachers -- like Marion Keefe and two of her cousins. During that winter there was always a good attendance, the little schoolhouse being rather crowded.

Henry had to accompany us to school, which he did not at all like. Every morning he tried to get out of going. Mother had mistakenly started bribing him with a little package of brown sugar. So now he would start up kicking every morning until the gift of sugar came to him. One morning, after half way to shcool, he amused us by asking whether his new overcoat, made just like Father's wiggled in the back like Father's did when he walked. Mary and I had to fall in line behind to see whether it did. Upon telling him it wiggled just like Father's, he felt quite cocky and proud.

This was an especially cold winter with much snow. It was hard to go to school and hard to come back. Usually at noon we would find our lunches frozen stiff and all around that long stove, we would be standing, thawing out our bread on top of it. Then we could see the differences in the breads. The Irish, the Regans and the Keefes had pure wheat bread, light and fluffy, probably salt rising bread, with plenty of yellow butter on top. The Germans had pure rye bread made with sour dough, not so fluffy, with lard or pork gravy on it. Ours was half and half, also raised with sour dough. Whichever it was, it did not seem to make much difference, for we were all a healthy lot.

At noon and at recess, the Germans instead of learning to speak English from the Irish, the Irish learned to speak the German from us, so it was that language which predominated here.

This winter I was the only pupil in the lower classes to start to write with pen and ink in a copybook. All the older pupils who wrote in copybooks sat around a large table on the west side of the school room. The teacher had given me the only small desk opposite this table against the wall on the east side of the room, with a window behind me. I was quite proud to be able to write like the older pupils. The writing lesson was usually held right after the dinner hour. One day the penmen decided to have me sit with them instead of alone behind my little desk.

Right after school had been called, a boy had asked, "Please may I get water?" The teacher giving his consent, the boy soon returned with a pail of fresh water. Then someone asked to pass the water. At the table I was seated between John Keefe and his sister Catherine. John had several times complained that the ink was getting low

in his inkstand so when the dipper of fresh water came around to me and I had had my drink, when John wasn't looking, I poured some water into his inkstand. Meaning to pour in just a drop or two, I poured in until it overflowed, then gave a yell, while those who saw what I had done laughed. When the teacher saw what had happened, he told me to pick up my writing material and go back to my own place. I was glad not to get any worse punishment.

School usually closed at four o'clock. With a mile of tramping through deep snow during those short winter days we never reached home until after dark. We would get there cold and hungry. Mother usually had the table all ready set and the vegetables, potatoes and meat hot on the back of the stove. How good it tasted! And how we would eat! There never was any complaint, except from Henry whenever navy beans were served. Everything else he ate but navy beans he objected to. Mother had one strict rule -- whatever was cooked had to be eaten, like it or not. After the meal, there was still a long evening to spend around the table with books and slates.

Sometimes during this winter when Mother thought it too cold for us to go to school and the snow too deep, Mary would stay home, but I would wade through. At such times I stopped in at the Jahnkes, about a third of the way to school, and get warmed up while they were eating their breakfast. Then we would go on together, they having just a square cotton cloth folded three corners over the head and nothing around them. They would wrap their hands in their aprons. On the way I would pass my muff from one to the other, to let them warm their hands, for I had mittens besides.

Chapter XVIII

The Year 1859

Some weeks after Christmas Father paid his usual visit, bringing us his gifts -- boxes, scarfs, penknives and a nice big warm shawl for Mother.

During the winter Yerk, besides clearing another five acres, made baskets. He had cut the willows around our creek and had treated them by putting bunches in the creek and now evenings he sat beside the stove, after chopping down trees all day, weaving a basket about the size of a bushel basket. I used to like to sit beside him and watch him weave, thinking how smart he was. These baskets were useful on the farm.

While Fritz and Clara were attending school, Yerk would have to do the needed cooking and take care of the cattle and stables besides.

The school we attended was but a short distance from Little Kohler where the little store kept by Blom was. This store was famous for slate pencils he kept, which had a streak of red in the lead, so whenever any of us had an extra penny we would run to the store during the noon hour with half a dozen companions to spend it for one of those pencils. This was always a great event. The pencil would have to be tried to see how much red it would put on the slate.

One time, when I had come to school alone, Mary Neumann, the daughter of Dr. Neumann, where the teacher boarded, insisted I'd go home with her for dinner. It wasn't the good warm dinner so much that gave the thrill as the pride in sitting beside the teacher at the table.

The Beger girls -- Mina, Laura, and Augusta -- whose father was the only man in this neighborhood at that time who had an apple orchard, would each bring an immense big apple for lunch. Having finished her noonday lunch and having kept her apple for dessert, Mina, who was about my age, would at times take me by the hand and whisper, "Come along." We would run across the road into the woods and behind a big tree. She would take the first bite out of her apple, then hand it to me to do the same and it was not a small bite that I took! This we kept up until the apple had been devoured. Then we went back to school and mixed in with the others until school was called.

This winter the logs were being prepared for a new house for Yerk, for the part of the barn in which the Yerks lived was needed for the cattle. Besides it was not a very comfortable home for anyone to live in.

The comet of the previous year at this time had become of more vital interest. The end of the world had been prophesied by most of our friends and neighbors. To me this had become too stale a subject, so I had made up my mind not to believe in it, but now that this sign in the sky (believed to foretell something dreadful to come) was being talked about so much, I was not so sure but what some of these older people might be right. It has been a very dry hot summer. We had had no rainfall for weeks at a time and whenever on an errand to Waubeka or Little Kohler, I had noticed cracks in the road, which at first had meant nothing. But now, I was beginning to think whether this might not be a beginning of the earth opening wide and swallowing up all of us.

I commenced to ponder, think how dreadful this would be and finally decided if anything had to come, war would be the lesser evil.

A baby had come to the Hempsteads, but a few days later both Mother and baby died. There had been many babies in that family which had not lived beyond a few days. There was a spot, not in any marked way, behind their house near a path, upon which Adolph was always very careful we should not step on while playing. He would always remind me that there were buried his little twin brother and sister. Poor Mrs. Hempstead! She had had a hard life, but it was worse for the boy, who was left for the father was not the kindest of men. Adolph was attending the same school as we but after this was not very regular in attendance.

Some miles north of us there lived an old Frenchman about whom there was some mystery. He was a real Frenchman and well educated, but the woman with whom he lived and called his wife was of the servant type. They had a small farm of about twenty acres and lived in a small two room block house. They kept about a dozen chickens, one pig and a cow. There seemed to be some regular income for they always had enough to live on. The story was that he had left his former wife, had taken their servant and come to the wilderness of Wisconsin. They seemed to be very happy and content. He, too, whenever he went to the village, either going or coming paid us a call. If he happened to come in at mealtime, he would share it with us. Mother always enjoyed the visit with Monsieur Henry, for he was a highly intelligent man. The conversation was usually about history, literature and the politics of the times, as well as about the happenings round about. We children were always glad when he came, for he had a kindly way of noticing us. No one ever could find anything wrong about him or his wife, as he called her. The only thing queer was that there was such a vast difference between them.

The visits with Monsieur Henri and the Quinets were the only chance Mother had to enjoy to visit in French. But once three strangers called at the door and asked for a drink of water. When Mother handed it to them, one of them answered in French, saying "Merci, Madame," and when she answered, "Il n'ya pas de quoi," (You are welcome) all three started a conversation.

She asked them to come in but they said they were just traveling through and were in a hurry to get to Port Washington. They had been told that she could speak French, so they had come to see whether she really could and now they knew she could. They all had a good laugh and bade her "Au revoir." To Mother it had been a pleasant little interlude for they had been nice, pleasant, decent-looking men. They were in their shirt sleeves and were carrying their coats on their arms.

Sometime in the spring had come the last day of school. We were now having a longer term than at first. We were to have some kind of an entertainment and I was on the program. Mother had ripped one of her dresses from Paris to make each of us, Mary and me, a dress for that occasion. It was a brown worsted with a small tan figure on it. We thought we looked very fine in these new dresses, wearing our black beads, our hair in two braids hanging down our backs, and our shoes blackened. We had reached school in time that morning so when the older girls, the Keefes and the Regans were coming, we ran out to meet them, to let them see we were ready for the occasion. During the forenoon we had our usual classes, so it was in the afternoon we had the program.

To the boys, in general, I had one objection. It hurt me that they could rob the birds of their eggs and even kill their young. The boys with whom we played from little up, Adolph, Charley and Ernst, were never guilty of this cruelty, except that Adolph once showed me his collection of bird's eggs. I myself once coming down the road from Meyer's in a wild gooseberry bush in a fence corner had found the nest of a gray warbler with a red patch on her head. The nest contained five blue eggs with little black spots on one end. It seemed the most beautiful thing I had ever seen, and I could not resist the temptation of possessing it. All the way across the bridge I carried it, when a wagon drawn by a team of horses came rumbling down the hill, seemed to stir my conscience. Thinking the people on that wagon would see what I had done, I got behind a brush pile in Meyer's clearing, which adjoined our land. There I hid until the team had passed, then moved back upon the road but could not take one more step towards home. I turned and walked back to that gooseberry bush, put the nest back in its former place as nearly as I could. After this my one worry was would the poor little bird come back to her nest or had she left, thinking it was gone for good.

The next day I went back to inspect. As I neared the place, the bird flew out from the bush. This eased my conscience. Later on I had the happiness of seeing these birds hatched and still later to see them fly from the nest.

In the field across from the schoolhouse there were many hollow stumps which in the springtime contained the nests of bluebirds. It was in this place that I had seen the boys commit their depredations.

The choice of a piece for the last day had been left to me, so in looking through all the books of my schoolmates, I had found one entitled "The Birds". Thinking this poem might help reform some of these bad boys, I chose it. While committing it to

memory, I kept thinking how awful it would make them feel and that it could not help but make them desist from their wicked ways. The teacher, Mr. Haskell, had not spent any time in helping us with our exercises. He did not even know what we were going to give. That afternoon I was fully prepared to give my lecture of reformation, the first two verses of which I still remember:

Don't kill the birds, the little birds,
That sing about our door,
Soon as the smiling spring has come
And chilling storms are o'er.

The little birds, How sweet they sing,
O, let them joyous live
And never seek to take the life
That you can never give.

Whether those naughty boys took that lesson to heart I never knew, but I often hoped that some of them did.

The teacher praised both my selection and the earnest manner in which I had delivered it. That evening when we said goodbye to him, he wrapped me in his long cape, which he usually wore over his suit, and gave me one good farewell hug.

Before Mr. Haskell left for his vacation, he called on us. Wishing to show Mother how he had taught us to bow and recite, he had Mary and me stand before him and go through that performance. The questions he asked were on geography, those which he knew we knew by heart. Mother was quite impressed with what we had learned and let him know she approved of his methods of teaching. He told her we had been good obedient little pupils and that by our behavior he could tell we came of a good family. Mother knew he was a gentleman and could not help but wonder why he had come to this part of the country.

During the winter when Yerk had been clearing his five acres he left one beautiful straight young linden standing. This spring when it was in full blossom he felled it. Clara and we went with baskets to pick the blossoms. We picked baskets full, then took them home for Mother to dry for tea to give us when we had colds in the winter. Thus, she had linden as well as camomile tea. I do not remember having to take any of it at any time, but everybody around was always well supplied with this kind of remedies for it was not always easy to get to the doctor and besides the doctor cost money.

Besides these teas, Mother made liniment called Eau de sedative (sedative water) which she used for rheumatism, headaches and any other kind of a pain. She got the ingredients for this at Audier's Drugstore in Port Washington. She also made Pomade Camphre, (camphor pomade) with pure lard heated and camphor gum added, which was dissolved in the hot lard, then stirred and left to congeal.

From the time we came into the wilderness, people came to us for some of these remedies. Through all kinds of weather in the winter, Mother would walk to take them to some of the suffering neighbors. In the early days there had been several families living a mile or two from us in out of the way places. The whole family -- father, mother and six or seven children, the grandfather and grandmother -- all lived together in one room houses and it can easily be seen there was sickness there, especially during the winter.

Every spring and fall, we children were given a small dose of aloes. Then Mother had the plant called vermuth in her garden, the leaves of which she boiled and from which she strained a thick green tea. Of this we would each be given a good dose. This was the bitterest stuff we ever took. How we hated it! But when we were told it would keep us from getting worms, we gulped it down willingly enough.

Our herd had increased. Three little calves, of which I was very fond, had come. After they were weaned they had to be fed with bread and milk and this was my special duty. They had to be taken down to the meadow to where there was an enclosure where they were kept during the day. I would have to tie them with a rope around the neck of each and lead them along the path through the grain. It was a good half mile distance to their little pasture. Sometimes all would go well and it was just a pleasure to lead them along. At other times they would get frisky, run ahead of me and lead me, instead of I leading them. This would make it a merry trip through the grain, corn and potato field until they were tired out. Then I could again lead them to where they were to go. Whenever Old Yerk had seen this, I would get a good scolding for the performance for which I was not to blame. The combined strength of the calves was, of course, greater than mine.

Bringing the cattle home in the evening was really my favorite job. Sometimes they were near and sometimes far away. I would take my dog, find out which direction the sound of their bells came from, and saunter forth through the woods in that direction. Upon nearing the herd with the dog, they would lift up their heads and come towards us, then go on ahead and thus I would bring them home.

One evening the sad news came that the only cow belonging to the Yerks had sunk in the sinking marsh. She was a big white cow and had been the mischievous element among the herd. She could not only jump fences, but she could open them with her horns, laying off one rail after the other until the fence was low enough for the cattle to get over. So we used to call her "Fencenspringer" (Fence Jumper) and "Fenceableger" (Fence Derailer). Other animals seemed to avoid this marsh but the green grass growing luxuriantly along its edge had probably tempted her, and having found it good, had taken a few steps further in. This cow had needed particular watching almost constantly, but otherwise had been a good milk cow and a great asset to the poor family, so her death was a great loss. As they could not afford to buy another cow, all the milk they had after this, was what Mother could give them.

The days were getting shorter and colder, so one morning I found my poor little lame duck dead. This was a great sorrow to me, but all I could do was to give it a decent burial. The other seven had grown to be big self-reliant ducks and Mother was very much pleased with them. But I hated to think that some of them would be killed and eaten during the winter.

There was still a busy time helping to gather in the ripe navy beans and peas (of which we had a good quantity) and shelling them.

The last flowers in Mother's garden, which was against the house toward the road -- nasturtiums and sweet peas, and mignonette, her favorite flower -- were picked and our last bouquets put in vases. Then whatever seed of these plants was ripe was gathered in tiny bags and put in a safe place for the following spring. Then Mother had a few busy weeks making our new dresses for school. All had to be sewed by hand. They were of red calico, the waist and sleeves lined. All summer on week days we had worn brown denim dresses, high necked, long sleeved with perfectly plain waists unlined and ran around barefooted. For the winter we had white hand-knitted woolen stockings and shoes made by a shoemaker. Mother also had to make Henry's clothes by hand, but for his there did not need to be so much fitting and fussing. How clean and well-dressed we felt on going to school that first day! It seemed good to be welcomed by a teacher, who by this time we knew so well. We were glad too, to meet all our schoolmates. The Meyer boys also were attending this school again but no longer called for us. We stopped in at the Jahnkes as before and evenings going home there would be a crowd of us but now the boys walked on one side of the road and the girls on the other side.

This fall while the potatoes were being dug, I sometimes snatched an hour or so to help. Not that it was at all necessary but I loved to see how many potatoes would come out of a hill. Besides digging potatoes the Yerks burned stumps and for their lunch put some of these newly dug potatoes under a heap of hot ashes and coal. When they were baked, crisp and mealy, we sat down on the ground and putting a little salt on them, found them most delicious.

When the roads were hard and frozen, sometimes the McLaughlin children -- Susan, John and James -- would join us from the South at the crossroad, a short distance behind our house. At other times from the north, some of the Bavarian children, who attended the Catholic School at Little Kohler would pass us in their wooden shoes, thumping along on the hard frozen road, trying to keep warm.

Most of the people living in the wilderness at this time had a common school education, received in the country from which they had come. There were very few who could not read or write and these it seems to me belonged mostly to the Bavarians. Scattered in between there were also some who had belonged to the higher class in the old country. These, strange to say, were not the ones who were the most successful.

Off and on, when we came in contact with them, there would be a great deal of complaining of the hardships, the monotony of the social life and the seemingly impossible which needed to be done. From which it was unmistakable, if the means were at hand, they would surely go back to the beautiful country from which they had come -- liberty or no liberty.

There were no libraries, of course. One seldom saw a newspaper and no magazines. But there were some people who owned books. My mother had some -- a few Sir Walter Scott books, and Rosseau. Besides this she had some historical books in both German and French. These, of course, could be exchanged for good works which others owned. Besides this, the visitors Father brought home, usually brought books of recent date to read as a pastime and then frequently left them.

The newspapers, both English and German, which Father always brought kept Mother quite well informed with what was going on in the world.

Entertainment consisted of dancing held in a tavern here or there or once in a while a celebration in a new barn, which consisted of dancing where the beer flowed, tobacco smoke and the dust filled the air; crude puppet shows about once a year or so called "Kasperli" were given in a tavern. The only dance I ever attended as a child was the one on a Fourth of July, mentioned before, which I attended with the Jahnke's. Mother never attended any. We were never allowed to attend. I never attended a "Kasperli" show at this time. (Punch & Judy)

The first year I was in Chicago in 1860, Mother took the five who were still with her to Farmington to see one of these shows, which they all enjoyed very much and about which Mary wrote me. It was a three mile walk and on their way home a kind woman, Mrs. Schroeder, invited them in to her home, treating them to a cup of hot coffee and some German kuchen, which must have made the three miles homeward somewhat easier.

The foregoing entertainments were usually attended by the Germans except on the Fourth of July, which was attended by both Germans, and the Yankees, the latter usually being in the majority.

The coming together of the American women in Waubeka was usually for a quilting bee. The Saxon women in our neighborhood usually had a "Federschleiss" (which means slicing of feathers) in the winter for feather beds, for they did not believe in quilts, and blankets had not as yet been heard of. They had a feather bed on top of the strawtick and one as a covering and two monstrous feather pillows. The "Federschleiss" was usually held at the Carl Meyers. Not only the few Saxon women were invited but also the Bavarians, Luxemburgers, and all from far and near. For this work a large table was improvised in the kitchen, and also benches on either side of the table. Then the bags of goose feathers plucked from live geese during the summer

were piled in the center of the table. The guests would begin to come about seven o'clock and begin work immediately. Keeping it up until about ten or half past, they enlivened the work by singing jolly German songs. Neither Mother nor I ever participated in these entertainments, but Mary did once and told us about it. One song she remembered with which she sometimes entertained us was:

"Seht doch mal die Fliege an der Wand,
die Fliege an der Wand,
die Fliege an der Wand,
Seht doch mal die Fliege an der Wand,
die Fliege an der Wand,
Warte du Fliege, wenn ich dichkriege.
Seht doch mal die Fliege an der Wand."

(Just see the fly on the wall, the fly on the wall,
the fly on the wall,
Just see the fly on the wall, the fly on the wall,
Just wait you fly, when I shall catch you,
Just see the fly on the wall.)

This was the only song Mary remembered.

The husbands would put in an appearance about nine. About 11:30 the sliced feathers would be put back into the bags which had been emptied and the stems cleared away. The table would be thoroughly dusted and hearty meal of potato salad, pork roast or different kinds of sausages, delicious rye bread, dill pickles or cabbage slaw and coffee and different kinds of kuchen here would be served, the men would also take their place at the table partaking of the feast. After a very sociable time all would depart for home. This was only one occasion of the kind in our neighborhood, but some miles away, in Farmington, where the Saxon predominated, it was an almost weekly occurrence during the winter months.

This reminds me of the flocks of geese the Meyers usually raised. I've said before I was never afraid, but those geese I had to pass on my way to Waubeka caused me to run and sometimes to yell when they stretched out their long necks at me and opened their big yellow beaks. Once when I had passed my tenth yearmark, Mrs. Meyer when hearing the alarm came out and seeing what it was about called out, "That big girl. Isn't she ashamed of herself!!! afraid of geese." Mother also kept a few geese and I had never been afraid of them until coming up from the well with a pail of water in my hand, the old gander had come behind me, stuck his big beak into the calf of my leg and then pinched me as hard as he could. I fell over, spilling the water and almost fainted with pain. After this, all respect for geese!

About the middle of November, coming home from school one evening, we were surprised to find Mrs. Bach, the mother of the musicians installed as housekeeper. A few evenings after that, we also found Dr. Neumann there. We were given a hurried supper and the little ones were put to bed early, while Mary and I were told to go the Yerks and stay there until bedtime. The next morning we were surprised by a little sister having come.

The tiny sister that had come to us was named Louisa. She was a good baby. We hardly realized that another had been added to the family. Still it must have been an added care to Mother, for her hand harmonica was hardly ever used now, for when the baby slept she did not want to wake it and when she was awake, Mother was nursing or otherwise caring for it.

It was now Mrs. Bach who prepared us for school. No more sugar for Henry. It was either go to school willingly or take a whipping. We children liked Mrs. Bach. Evenings before going to bed, she would tell us stories about the old country, Germany. To hear more of these stories I would stay up later than the other children. When she had told all the funny and pleasing stories that she knew, probably to get rid of me, she would tell gruesome tales. One of which I have never forgotten ended, "Ach, wie scheint der Mond so hell, und wie reiten die Toten so schnell." (Oh, how bright the moon shines and how fast the dead ride.) Up to this time I had never been afraid to be outside alone no matter how dark nor how far from home, but hereafter whenever out when the moon shone bright those lines would appear in my mind and cause cold chills to run down my back.

Mrs. Bach was the mother of Christian Bach, who lived in Milwaukee, as had been said, and was a composer. Henry worked a small farm and played in a band in the neighborhood. George, the youngest son, was at this time working his way up as a musician. Mrs. Bach had three daughters, Mrs. Niederstedt, Gretchen (who was also married), and Lizzie, who was making a living working out in Milwaukee. Mrs. Bach part of the time lived with Mrs. Niederstedt and part of the time with Henry. She went out nursing as she was doing now and between times made winter hoods for women. These were very artistically made. She made one for mother. The outside was made of black worsted goods. It was padded with cotton batten and the lining was of black silk, beautifully quilted in squares. It was the shape of a sunbonnet with the cape in the back short and slightly ruffled. For the goods and everything she needed she charged five dollars, but when one realized the fine needlework put in, one did not think it too dear. The hoods were comfortable and well suited to the cold weather of this region.

This winter in my classes I kept very much at the head but in deportment I fell a little bit behind. One time the teacher had to make me stand on the floor. The worst of it was, I had to stand beside a Rudolph boy. What he had done to deserve this punishment I do not know. I had done nothing worse than to start laughing at

something funny one of the girls had done and could not stop laughing. The teacher by shaking his head at me had given me a chance but the more he warned me, the harder I had laughed. Then noticing that the whole school was paying attention, he came, took me by the hand and led me to stand on the floor with this boy. Sobered at last, I felt very much ashamed of myself, for this had never happened to me before. With both hands before my face, there I stood, looking between my fingers at the floor. I saw the boy standing beside me had torn shoes and stockings for his two big bare toes could be seen wriggling. Then noticing my own nice new shoes I felt somewhat consoled. When I finally was allowed to go back to my seat, I noticed a rather satisfied look on the faces of some of my schoolmates. They were probably pleased that at last I, too, had received some deserved punishment.

This, like the winter before, was a severe one. At times Mary and Henry stayed at home, but I would not miss school on account of any kind of weather. One January morning, however, Mother did not think it wise for me to go, I persisted and bravely started out. By the time I got to the Jahnke's my hands and feet seemed to be frozen. The Jahnke's too, were not going to risk the weather this morning, so after being warmed I started out again. Laboriously trudging through the deep snow, I finally reached the school house, and everything was so quiet that I knew I was late. Opening the door, to my surprise no teacher, the benches empty and only the three biggest boys, John Keefe, John Delaven (his half brother), and William Regan standing around the stove. They were surprised to see me and told me to come near the stove and warm up. They told me there would be no school today because there had been a fire in the school house that morning, and they were staying here in case the fire would start again. It had started around the chimney, probably because too big a fire had been started on account of the extreme cold. I stayed long enough to get warm, then started back for home, which I reached none the worse for my experience.

So Old Yerk busy clearing his five acres, making baskets, the winter went by. Spring came and for the summer Mother made me a special bonnet. It was the shape of a regular sunbonnet but was blue veiling shirred over a yellow silk lining with blue ribbons as ties. I was not allowed to wear it even on Sundays unless I went somewhere. But whenever I went to the Post Office I wore it. It was very becoming and was being very much admired by everybody.

School again closed. The maple season over, when Yerk complained to Mother that my dog Carlo was getting into the habit whenever anyone passed, of barking and jumping over the fence and scaring them. I strongly defended my dog. So far he had never hurt anyone, yet I could see that Mother was siding with Yerk. Probably she thought two dogs were too many to feed and as she could not get rid of father's dog she must have consented to have Yerk do away with Carlo.

One morning early while yet in bed, I heard a shot. Instinctively I knew what happened. I covered my head with a quilt and cried until I fell asleep again. I did not get up until noon. Then after eating I went to the clearing where the Yerk's

were burning brush thinking that helping to build fires might ease my sorrow. I was just choosing the brushpile I was going to light when I saw Old Yerk. With a triumphant look on his face he pointed to a certain brushpile. When I turned to look, there on top of it lay my dear Carlo ready to be cremated. This was too much for me. I turned and ran home and for weeks I could not forgive Old Yerk for what he had done. Of course, we had the other dog. Leise was not mine for Father had given her to Henry. She now had five cute little brown puppies and with them she lay on the sunny side of the house in a comfortable nest Henry had made for her. I loved these little puppies but they did not take the place in my heart that Carlo had had. Wherever I went, especially evenings when I got the cattle, I sorely missed him.

By this time we also kept cats in order to keep the place clear of mice. The Yerks had some and so did we, so there often were kittens. I dearly loved these little kittens but there were sometimes more than Mother wanted to keep. Then she would order Fritz to dispose of them. We children knew that that meant drowning them in the creek, so we -- Mary, Henry and I -- would get ahead of him, gather them in a bag, and take them to Mr. and Mrs. Kelly, a middle aged Irish couple who had no children. We knew she loved cats. They lived on the back road passing the Hempsteads, their land adjoining our meadow. Either early in the morning or late in the evening we would take our bag containing the cats and empty it over the Kelly garden fence and then run, hoping that it would be a welcome gift to Mrs. Kelly and that she would be kind to the poor little orphans.

Louise, the baby, was good. I had taken it upon myself to put her to sleep every afternoon. This I would do by laying her on Mother's bed and I beside her, would sing until she fell asleep. One afternoon when I had gone on some errand, I came home finding the baby yelling her loudest. Mother came out of the bedroom and greeted me quite impatiently with the words, "Go in there and put your spoiled child to sleep." This was the first time I realized I really had spoiled her with my singing for she would not go to sleep for anyone else not even for Mother, who I'm sure could sing better than I.

Sometime after this, Mother while walking down the path to the spring getting her two pails of water, glanced over her garden towards the left and caught me climbing the high rail fence, to get to the road with the baby hanging on my back like a papoose. I was giving the baby her morning airing and this way of carrying her was easier for me because she had grown to be quite plump. There was bright sunshine on the road and the walk was a happy and healthgiving one for both of us. About twenty minutes later when I reached home, a good scolding was waiting for me. Mother thought it was a dangerous thing climbing fences with so young a baby on my back. She said she had not known that I did things so carelessly. Poor dear little Mother! There was much she did not know.

A few weeks after this the baby did not seem so well for several days, so one morning while giving her her sponge bath Mother found a big red lump on the upper

part of one of her legs. She looked as if blaming me for it. We all gathered around feeling sorry for the suffering child, when Charley stepped forward and boldly announced that I had let the baby fall on the big flat stone in the front yard a day or two before. Of course, this put the blame on me. I cried bitterly, for I could not remember that I had ever let her fall before, and this time it had not been a hard fall.

Next morning when this lump had grown bigger and the baby was crying harder than ever, the doctor was summoned. After examining her he pronounced it a boil. Mother had told him about the fall Louisa had had but he said that had nothing to do with it. He advised giving her warm baths before putting her to bed and feeding her bread and milk and he would come a few days later, that after the bath her fever would probably be relieved. Mother followed his instructions and after two days the doctor came and lanced the boil, after which the child was perfectly well again.

Chapter XIX

The Year 1860

Whenever the question of education had come up, when Father was at home, he had always shown he was determined we children should have more of an education than was to be gained in the country. His plan was to begin with the oldest, take her to Chicago and have her attend school there for two years, then bring her home. Then give the next one the same chance and so on down the line until all six had had their turn. This winter when he came home after Christmas he told me this would be my last winter at school here in the country for the next fall I would go to Chicago with him. This urged me to study all I could at school because I did not want to be behind when I got to Chicago.

One evening while Old Yerk was at the house and after Father's harangue on politics, we children sitting around the table with our books, he suddenly switched off onto the difference between the schools here and in the city.

While Father was at home, Old Yerk came over to spend the evening listening to Father telling about what was going on in the world -- politics, history and what not all. Fritz, who came over with his father, would lay curled up on the floor behind the warm stove, sleeping and snoring. One evening he had lain down in the middle of the kitchen floor, where Mother stumbled over him with the baby in her arms. The baby dropped out of her arms while Mother lay sprawled over Fritz on the floor. Neither she nor the baby was hurt. After this Fritz had to take his evening naps at home.

Father knew that I was doing well in school here and he felt sure with better chances I would do wonders. Then he spoke of music, dancing schools, French and German, besides the English. That was putting great expectations into my little fool head. For sometime after this, I had a hard time falling asleep. But it was still a long time before the next fall so I soon came back to my usual routine. Even Mother was making more and better underwear for me so as not to be too much rushed at the last moment. Also instead of knitting stockings for the younger children, Mother had me start a pair of white cotton ones for myself. This all kept us from worrying about the slaves in the South.

When Father came home in the summer of 1860, he brought two of his friends who had visited us before, Mr. Heil and young Hildebrandt. This made extra work for Mother, so that in the afternoon she was glad when I took all the children away to give her a chance to catch up with the day's work. One afternoon we got into the Meyer's woods (which adjoined our land on the other side of the road). This was an especially dense forest with much underbrush. As it was fenced in and cattle had not been allowed to graze in it, the grass was lush and green, and all kinds of wild

flowers were plentiful. We were having a good time. We found a nest of three young rabbits who scampered away. Louisa, who was about nine months old, could not yet walk but only creep. Mary, Henry and the twins were chasing wildly around gathering flowers. I wishing to do the same had put Louisa in a sunny place, think ing she would be perfectly safe, while I followed the others picking my share of flowers. It was only a few minutes as it seemed to me when I returned and found the baby gone. In great fright I called the others to help me hunt. It was a few minutes of anxiety chasing in different directions and calling, but we soon found her under some underbrush where she had crept, probably thinking she was following me. This, too, was something Mother never knew.

This caused me to see that Mother was right -- I should be more careful of the baby. It reminded me in a vague sort of way that years ago a little three or four year old child from Waubeka had been lost in the woods. Father was home on a visit and for one whole night he helped in the hunt. The child, as I remember had been found -- by whom I do not know. It seems to me the child had been the Parker girl. For days after losing our own baby I could not shake off a heavy depressed feeling, or the thought how awful it would have been had Louisa really been lost.

At this time we heard a great deal of talk about slaves and slavery in the south as my father and his friends were staunch Republicans there was a great deal of criticism of President Buchanen (1856-1860). Poor Old Yerk would come over to listen to these men. What he thought of it I do not know, but he did enjoy hearing about what was going on in the country.

Some of the neighbors had moved away and others had moved in. The Roussards were still there. Mrs. Roussard, Sr., who had been the first to entertain us, at certain intervals still passed the house taking produce to the store in a basket carried on her head, holding herself straight as a post, with a small basket held in one hand and a tin pail in the other. The large basket on her head was a homemade one of willows like the one our Yerk made and as they were natives of the same state in Germany -- Nassau -- it may have been her husband who made those baskets. She was noted as one of the hardest working and cleanest women in the whole region, for not only did she whitewash the whole inside of her house every spring, but also the outside. I have mentioned before that she had one son who was deaf and dumb and her youngest child Katherine was the only daughter and consequently very much spoiled. She had never been allowed to do any hard work like her mother but had been trained to become a seamstress. A younger son, William had taught school for awhile, and then had gone to St. Louis, Missouri. At this time he had not been heard from. This did not seem to trouble the family very much because it was something that was happening in other families. Letter writing was not prevalent in those days. This may have caused the mother some anxiety. It proved to be Katherine, the adored one, that did it.

Unfortunately she fell in love with Henry Bach, the musician, and he reciprocated. When the mother discovered what was going on she sternly disapproved for they were strict Catholics and the Bachs either were Protestants or did not belong to any church. This Henry was not good looking, but the homeliest of the Bach family, being short of stature, not well proportioned, and had a round puckered face with a snub nose and small gray eyes and black curly hair. But neither was Katherine beautiful, however, they were desperately in love. One fine morning Katherine was missing, all day she was expected to return. Night came and passed. Not until noon of the next day did she return. Of course, the mother was glad to see her return, but the scandal was on. It gave the gossips something to talk about which lasted some time. When Bach discovered that the Roussards would not consent to a marriage, about a year later he married another girl. Katherine in two or three years married their hired man, which was also against the parents' will, although he belonged to their church, so they both had to move out immediately. Her husband was not long from Germany and the story was that he had left a wife and three children behind. However this may be, he was a hard worker and soon had his own small farm. In time they had three beautiful children and seemed to live in peace.

One afternoon we were again in Meyer's woods walking along and looking about for some adventure, when we found a slim high wild cherry tree. It had grown this way because it was among other high trees. The cherries on the lower branches, being in the shade, had not ripened very well but way on top, above the other trees in the sun, they were big and black and ripe. How to get at them was the question. After some consideration I finally thought I had a way and started to climb up. The branches below were weak and far between, still I made it. When I was far enough up where the tree was still strong, I held tight with both hands, let go of my feet and so the weight of my body brought the tree down. Then we had a feast. Were those cherries good and sweet! Another performance of which Mother never knew.

The last week in July Father came again bringing his friend Mr. Wiedmann. With him came a whole bolt of unbleached linen and one of gingham checked tan and brown. I did not think it was very pretty. Of this Mother made me a new dress. Besides this she made me a dress of some goods she had bought which had more color than the gingham one. Besides the preparations for getting me ready, things went on as usual -- the daily work had to be done. Father brought home game from his hunting trips. The meals which Mother prepared with it were surely enjoyed by all for no one ever could prepare game as she could. At this visit of my father, I heard him tell Mother that they had organized a Journeyman Tailor's Association and that he had been made president of it.

So one morning of the last week in August, when the birthday of my 12th year had passed, I had taken my last bath in the creek the day before. My small bundle was packed. I was finally all dressed and ready for my journey. The sad hour of saying farewell to the family had come. As I walked towards the door, I looked back at

Louisa. Toddling around, she was the only one who did not seem to realize what was happening. One thing I was glad for was that I had given her my doll the day before.

There was a load of something being taken to Port Washington and William was driving the oxen, so my small bundle and the satchels of Father and Mr. Wiedeman were put on the load, but we were walking. After we had passed the Meyer's I was later informed Charley had missed seeing us go by. He had been very much disappointed not to have been able to bid me good bye, and had said, "Now I will never see her again." So we walked along. It was a sunshiny day and where there were no trees the road was dry and dusty. But there were miles where the road still led through the forest, where the grass on the side of the road was still green and the wild flowers still fragrant and blooming.

After we had covered about three miles, we reached the house of the Gatfields, an American family whom we knew slightly. Here the oldest daughter, Eliza, all ready with a heavy satchel in her hand came out to the gate, asking whether we could do her the favor of letting her put her satchel on the wagon and taking it to Port Washington. She had been having a few weeks vacation at home and was now going back to the place where she worked in Oakfield, a small place between Port Washington and Milwaukee. Of course, Father was glad to do her that favor, so she walked on ahead of us.

Walking a few miles more we reached the place where Margaret now lived. She came to the gate and it was plainly to be seen she was in the same condition she had been in when she came to stay with us for a while. Her face did not show happiness and we had heard that the man she had married was none too good. In her yard near the gate stood a good sized plum tree with plenty of plums on it, but they were not quite ripe. However, she hunted until she found two which were nearly ripe and handed them to me as a farewell offering.

After another few miles, I commenced to lag behind. Several times I felt like turning around and going back home. I commenced to wonder what Father would do, if I'd do that. Then came the thought who would milk the cows this evening and perform all the other little duties that had been mine. Then, I commenced to ponder on what might not all happen to me in Chicago. Wearily, wearily I plodded along. Often Father and Mr. Wiedemann would turn around and wait for me. Sometimes if I had found a comfortable stump they would see me sitting on it. Finally a little after noon we were nearing Port Washington -- nine miles had been covered. We had left the house at about 7:00 o'clock in the morning. I had thought myself quite well dressed when I left. My new cotton dress, my white home-knit stockings and shoes the shoemaker (in the country) had made, a brown silk shawl Mother had brought from Paris over my shoulders and best of all my blue bonnet. The shine of my shoes, of course, was covered with dust. Even my stockings did not look so clean anymore. As we entered the village, a group of five or six young girls about my own age, walked ahead of us probably going to a party, all dressed in white with hoopskirts, sashes of different colored ribbons and white straw brimmed hats called "flats" made me feel that I would

like to hide myself. Leaving home I had thought myself very well dressed, but now I commenced to wonder how I would compare with others when reaching the big city of Chicago. Then too, I was beginning to be hungry and thirsty, but we were just in time to take the boat for Milwaukee.

On the boat that day there were very few passengers -- a few plain elderly people, no children. I sat on the deck having a restful cool time. After awhile I took out my two plums and after squeezing them to soften them, I ate them. This both appeased the hunger and thirst within me. When we reached Milwaukee we went to the depot immediately. There, waiting for the train for I don't know how long, all at once when Father and Mr. Wiedemann were looking at me they saw that something was not quite right and before they could reach me I had fallen off the chair in a faint. A nine mile walk and a fast, except for two unripe plums, from seven o'clock in the morning until towards evening had proven too much for even my strong constitution. I supposed the men realized what had caused my collapse, so when I came to a cup of black coffee and a piece of bread and butter was handed me. The train was then ready for Chicago.

To me it seems there was only one coach which was occupied by only our party and a handsome young woman, very well dressed. What I admired most about her was her beautiful face and especially her bonnet.

The train was going rather fast and of the scenery, as long as daylight lasted, I could not see much, but what interested me most were the signs "Take care of the cars", which I read, "Take care of the caps" which I figured must mean that men were so careless as to stick their heads out of the windows and let their caps fall off. When it got too dark to look out of the windows, I soon fell asleep. When I awoke it was in the streets of Chicago. I never knew how I got out of that train, but suddenly found myself being dragged along between Father and the other man. Then suddenly I awoke. Looking up at the high buildings, I said, "Oh, is this Chicago?" After awhile I was taken to the house where my Father and Mr. Weidemann boarded. Their landlady, Mrs. Fred, took me to an alcove where I undressed and went to bed on some kind of a cot. This boarding house on Randolph Street was kept by Mr. and Mrs. Fred. It was in the rear and in order to get to it you had to pass between two houses. In the house on the left side lived a man who had a fruit stand. The first day, not having anything else to do, I kept running back and forth towards the street watching streetcars, drawn by horses and donkeys. The man, who kept the fruit store and I soon became acquainted. He told me he knew my father. He showed me a case of small apples and said I could at any time help myself to an apple. So after a time I did help myself. When a man in a drag-cart called out, "Thief, Thief," I was too frightened to take my stand, but ran away. From this I learned how it feels to be branded as a thief. I could not eat that apple. I took it back and put it on the stand from which I had taken it and I never, much as I loved apples, repeated the act of taking another.

Some Jews lived behind the fruit stand. One day the Jewess opened her door and invited me in, which invitation I willingly accepted. Instead of asking me to be seated, she asked me to start the fire in her stove. This I refused to do. Instead I went to the door and found the door locked. Thinking I was trapped and even fearing I was in danger of being murdered, I started to cry. She, trying to console me, showed me the pile of kindling wood and in a kindly way, told me there was nothing to be afraid of and that it would be doing her a great favor to start that fire in the stove. Although I had been very fond of starting fires, I had never been allowed to kindle the fire in my mother's stove. I could not see why I should do it here, so I moved the chair towards the window, determined to watch until my father and the other men would pass for their dinner. I did not have to wait long. My father came with a group of other men and I rapped at the window. The Jewess unlocked the door and I rushed out. Then it was explained that it was a certain Jewish holiday and it was forbidden for her to light a fire.

On the first Monday I was taken to a private school. I got there early and the children, trying to get acquainted with me, asked me where I came from. All I could tell them was from Wisconsin. When they asked me from what part, I did not know whether to tell them the county, the township, or the name of the village, so I told them all three, Washington County -- Fredonia -- Waubeka. Then they laughed and laughed and asked each other whether anyone had ever heard of a place like that. I was confused and a real greenhorn. When school was called the professor was not there. A boy of seventeen or eighteen was the teacher. There may have been about twenty to twenty-five pupils and such disorder I had never seen in any of the schools I had attended. Everybody moved about, changed seats and talked out loud. The teacher went around with a stick, hitting them on the heads and the pupils just laughed at him. When the first class was called, I was put at the foot. They had French books, what looked to me like Third Readers. They started to read, when it came my turn one of the books was handed to me. Of course, I could not read one word. I was tried out in the next class with the same result. Then the third class, for I went there three days. The third day the professor came to the door. He asked the young teacher how things were coming and was told everything was all right. I had been expecting to be given a book, but nothing happened. The professor did not seem quite sober. Then I decided I would tell my father and that evening I did. He had been great friends with this professor and had expected great things of the school, because French, German and English were taught.

One evening on my way home from visiting my father I had just passed the courthouse and had come to a little frame house called Sharp Corners on Randolph Street. There I found men standing in groups and talking. I had heard there was going to be some kind of a meeting and that Lincoln, the Republican nominee for President was going to give a talk. I stopped and looking around towards my left, off the sidewalk aways in a group, stood a man, head and shoulders taller than any man around. He wore a stove pipe hat. As I stood and looked, a man came, stooped down, pointed and said to me, "That is Abraham Lincoln." I nodded and then walked on. The next block

I came to there was another group of people barring my way. They took hold of hands and sang, "Lincoln on a White Horse."

One evening while walking along Randolph Street with my father, I saw a small group of people form a circle and sing, "Lincoln on a white horse, Douglas on a mule, Lincoln is a Gentleman, Douglas is a fool." In the next block there was another group of people, singing the opposite, "Douglas on a white horse, Lincoln on a mule, Douglas is a gentleman, Lincoln is a fool." It must have been the excitement of the coming presidential election that kept me from getting homesick. I had never known before whether my father was a Republican or Democrat. Indeed, I had not known what Republican or Democrat meant.

The Republican Convention at which Lincoln was nominated had been held the previous May (May 18, 1860) in the "Wigwam" which was a building holding twelve thousand built especially for the occasion! Excitement ran high at this time.

One evening when Republicans paraded, Father took me to see it. By this time I had been bitten up by mosquitos so that my face was so swollen and full of humps that people looked at me a second time, probably thinking I had the smallpox. I was dressed in my best country style, without a hoop and country shoemaker shoes, home knitted stockings and my little sunbonnet which mother had been at such pains making for me. When the wagons drawn by three span of horses loaded with girls in white with sashes of red, white and blue, wreaths of flowers on their heads, passed by, I hoped that some day I might have that honor and thinking that being a Republican would bring it, I decided from that day on to be a staunch Republication. I am not sure but what at one of these meetings I shook hands with Lincoln. I was introduced to several of the speakers. After this I went with my father to several of the Republican meetings in what was called the Sharp Corner house. And as much as I understood, I was sure the Republicans were on the right side. At those meetings I do not remember any other little girls being present, so my clothes did not take away from my pleasure.

After a week or so, my father discovered a place where I could room and board and attend the Public School. This was on the West Side, the corner of Monroe and Clinton Streets. The people were Mr. and Mrs. Schroeder who had no children. The school I was to attend was the Scammon School, on Madison Street, I believe. The first day Mrs. Schroeder took me to the school. It was different from any school I had ever attended. Large rooms and over 300 pupils, but what pleased me most was the singing. After an examination I was given a list of the books I was to get, among them being a song book which pleased me most of all. On my way home, I was so elated, that I forgot the way home. Meeting a young man I told him in German I wanted to go to the corner of Monroe and Clinton Streets. He answered by "Nix versteh." When the tears were ready to come to my eyes, I saw Mrs. Schroeder coming around the corner to meet me.

At first I was put in the lower grade. The teacher was Miss Litchfield. Of course, I was the big girl in the class, but Miss Litchfield soon found that it was only in my pronunciation that I was behind and I was soon promoted to the next grade, the teacher, whom I loved very much, soon had me do a lot of printing which I could do better than anyone else and I was soon at the head of the class. One day, an artist gave a talk on drawing or sketching, which I enjoyed very much. Before leaving he drew on the blackboard the picture of a white curly dog, which he recommended that we, the pupils, copy. When the pictures were shown, mine was the best of those drawn by the three hundred pupils, for which I got a lot of praise.

We had each to report where we were born and in passing our that evening the teacher took my hand, kissed me and said, "So you are a little French girl."

Before Christmas vacation, I had found there was going to be a program of some kind. That day at noon, when Mrs. Schroeder asked me why I was not hurrying off to school I started to cry. When she insisted on my telling her why, I told her there was going to be a program at school and the children were all going to be dressed in their Sunday clothes. She got busy and got me dressed in my Sunday best, my shoes blackened, my coral beads on and off I ran. I just got there in time. After the program was over, a chance was given to anyone who would like to give something. I jumped up and got on the platform, and the only thing I could think of was a little prayer,

"O Lord, as now I bend my knee
And lift my heart and soul to thee,
Hear what a child can say.
For though thou art the Lord most high
Thy word hath said that thou art nigh,
To hear us when we pray."

I received great applause and my teacher came up to me and whispered, "That was the best thing in the program today." None other in her classes had given anything.

Mrs. Schroeder made me a hoopskirt, the first thing after I had come to live with her. It was a white cotton skirt with three hoops, made of bamboo and drawn through tucks. Then she made over all my clothes and with new aprons in the style then worn I felt quite a la' mode.

On Saturday, when I was to go to see my Father and report, knowing how much he was opposed to hoopskirts, my conscience was ill at ease. Going up the stairs to his shop opposite the Sherman House, I took my time figuring how I might be received. After rapping and being asked to come in, I slid into the room and held my hoops against the wall and slid over to the chair offered me. Father, having turned his back, had not noticed anything but his workmen started to laugh loudly. Father turned around, gave me one look and asked me to stand up. Then he just said, "Oh, that's it," after which

I felt very much relieved. He never said another word on the subject. At this time wearing a hoopskirt seemed the main thing in my mind. For sometime every evening, I went out on the sidewalk. I would walk up and down the street before the house, switching my skirts from side to side. One evening a group of boys on the other side of the street imitated my walk. Ashamed, I ran into the house, knowing I had been watched. This ended the performance. Among the grown-ups there was nothing but politics talked about this fall and I, being the only child in the house and not having many companions as yet, could not help but be interested in those discussions. Then there was great excitement when Abraham Lincoln was elected President in November. That the South was not pleased we school children knew, the Southerners feeling that the election of Lincoln was an endorsement by the North of a policy of hostility toward slavery. At recess we children did a lot of marching, singing "John Brown's Body lies a molding in the grave," until it was forbidden by the teachers. There were not many Negroes in Chicago. There was but one Negro girl in our school -- Olive Brown. The mother was a hairdresser. The boys on their own playground would sometimes call over the fence when Olive played with us, "They are playing with a nigger."

I spent a lot of my spare time at the Union depot which was, at the time, a very small building, to see the passengers come and go. It was great entertainment. One day a group of seven or eight foreigners came, dressed like Germans -- heavy skirts, short, with heavy shoes, and short heavy jackets with three cornered scarves over their heads. The men had on rough looking felt hats. I thought of myself as I had entered the city dressed so differently from other girls of my age and it pained me as I looked at their troubled faces, when a group of children yelled "Greenhorns, Greenhorns" at them.

Christmas morning, while Mrs. Schroeder was preparing a big dinner, I went to see my father. There was really my Christmas feast. I received from Father the goods for a new dress, and from some of his friends and workers a small work box with needles, thread, shears, etc. Also a basket of candy and things too numerous to remember. I could hardly carry them all. I've always counted that day one of the happiest of my life. When I got home, even the irritability of Mrs. Schroeder could not take away my happiness. She was worried about her dinner not turning out right, but it was a great success and enjoyed by the company. Father was one of the guests. I went out with him that afternoon to pay calls on some of his friends. In one place, the daughter, a girl about my own age had a big Christmas tree and a doll's house. I did not envy her because I had given up my dolls when I left home.

Next came New Years. New Year's Eve I was to go to a dance with my father, so a white dress was my present from Mrs. Schroeder and new cloak from my father. Mrs. Schroeder had made the dress and all the underwear to go with it. My hair was bobbed. I went to the Negress, Mrs. Brown, to have it dressed but she was not at home. The next best place was a barber shop and the barber just combed my hair back and put some scented hair oil on it, all of which I could have done myself. Then I was sent to my

father's. The dance was held in the Metropolitan Hall. Father, being the chairman of a committee, had gone on ahead, but Mr. Hildebrand (who had several times visited us on the farm) and his girl took me to the hall. Mr. and Mrs. Schroeder came later. When my father bade me welcome, I thought him the handsomest man there. He left me in the care of Mrs. Schroeder. When the dancing commenced, I sat and watched. I was asked to dance several times, but not being able to, I refused. Once, when father came, they were playing a galop (gallopade, a lively dance in duple measure). He said that was the only dance he could dance, so he pulled me around. I guess I could galop all right.

At twelve o'clock we had supper. I've never forgotten that meal. The first course was a plate of oyster stew. It reminded me of milk soup at home but there was no bread in it and no crackers were served. It contained one lump of something which I found had a queer taste. I wished I could take it out of my mouth but politeness forbidding, I quickly swallowed it. I thought it might have been a piece of a dishrag. I tried to cover it with the next course, but it kept troubling me until the candy course came around. Then I hurriedly left the table, Mrs. Schroeder following me, took me to the washroom and I threw up. She wanted to know what the trouble was and when I told her I thought I had swallowed a piece of a dishcloth, she informed me it had been an oyster. This was my first introduction to oysters.

Chapter XX

The Year 1861

The next day, New Year's Day, Father came in the afternoon and we had oysters for lunch. I made myself eat them so as not to be ridiculous again. Then my father took me with him and we went to several saloons, which in those days did not have the reputation they gained later on. At the last place it must have been going on to midnight and I was tired out, seated on a chair wearing my new cloak and a very pretty red knitted woolen hood. I must have had a scowl on my face, wondering what on earth Father and a young man were so earnestly discussing. Off and on as their eyes turned toward me I became angrier and the scowl must have grown darker. But on they kept, I do not know for how long. They slapped each other on the back and took hold of each other's shoulders. I wondered what it might be which had such vital import. Finally the young man left, not having gained his point, as it seemed to me, whatever it might have been. Then Father took me home. What they had been talking about did not interest me, nor would I ever have remembered that occasion had it not been that the next summer during vacation, sister Mary told me that this young man had wanted Father to promise me to him and that Father had refused to have him speak to me about it until I was eighteen years old. Mary had heard Father tell Mother this story when they thought that she was asleep. I never saw this young man, who was 18 years old at the time, again. But his uncle came to see me just before I left Chicago for good. He just intimated that this young man was still thinking of me. But as I gave him no sign of encouragement, this episode was closed.

It might seem like an awful ordeal for a child to be taken to several saloons, but as I recall there was not one wrong word or act I heard or saw. Besides the saloons were not filled. In some of them we were the only guests. The men seemed to go there for companionship and for the purpose of discussing politics rather than drinking. Nor was I ever given any intoxicating drink. A glass of lemonade was my favorite. One saloon keeper entertained me by showing me his cage of white mice. In one on Randolph Street there was a woman who, whenever I came, took me to her room in the rear of the saloon. She sometimes gave me refreshments consisting of coffee and coffeecake, or bread and butter, cheese and milk. This was my father's favorite place of recreation.

From some raffle my father and Mr. Schroeder had attended three live ducks were given me. It was thought that would help to keep me from getting homesick, but those ducks might have starved for all of me for I had plenty of things to take up my time and attention -- my work at school and the things Mrs. Schroeder was teaching me, sewing and knitting. Although I had been able to knit my own stockings and those of my sisters and brothers, I found that according to her idea, my way of knitting was not perfect. With sewing it was the same. Besides knitting stockings and mittens, I was soon an expert

at lace-knitting. With sewing she started me at making patchwork quilts -- and oh, how I had to rip! Some of the blocks looked old and worn before my sewing would pass muster.

By this time I had gotten more intimately acquainted with some of the girls who attended the same school. Susan Van Dusen was the first to take me to Sunday School. It seems to me it was a Methodist Sunday School. She lived in an alley a short distance from us and they must have been poor but she was always neatly dressed and well behaved. This was the first time I had ever been in Sunday School. I liked it very much. What impressed me most was seeing very finely dressed women bringing in some ragamuffins that I had seen coming out of dirty homes in alleys roundabout. Then the singing of holy songs and the good advice given impressed me very much.

A story book was handed each of us in going out. Some Bible verses were given us to commit for the next Sunday.

For the rest of the winter I attended this Sunday School. Twin girls, Isadora and Isabella, always called for me.

Thus a busy winter passed. On April 11, 1861, Fort Sumter was fired on and captured by the Confederacy. This was the beginning of the Civil War and Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers caused a great deal of excitement. Soon the soldiers commenced to pass through Chicago. Many enlisted willingly. My father, too, went to enlist. But when examined it was found he was not strong enough and he was rejected. So were many of his friends.

At recess we played we were soldiers. The German girls formed one company and sang, "Deutsch Company ist best Company, For day fights midout der Lager, Till de sets de country free." Everyone who had a bright scarf or shawl donated it to decorate the captains of the various companies. Again I spent much time at the Union Station. Several companies of Irish were leaving Chicago to join their regiment. Their wives were with them, probably to drown their sorrow they had looked all too deeply into the bottle. The women had their hair loose, their bonnets on the back of their necks, their red and plaid woolen shawls hanging loosely around the shoulders for it was a hot afternoon. The men, unsteady on their feet were bidding each other a loud good by. Some of the men almost missed getting on the train in time. If it had not been such a sad scene it might have been amusing. Whenever another war commenced I always thought of this scene.

There were several houses in our neighborhood -- one in the same block with us on Monroe Street. It was a low red brick house, St. Louis brick. In the front yard it had a small beautiful flower garden and shrubs. This place I admired every day going and coming from school. The other was on Clinton street, a well kept brown frame cottage with a good sized front yard all in roses of different colors, pink, red, white. It was

kept by a man, who may have been retired, and whenever I passed he was in that garden, hoeing, pruning, watering, etc., forever busy among his rosebushes. In those days all front yards were enclosed by some kind of a fence and there were but few cracks between the boards through which one could look. One day I was determined to get a better look at those roses, which were wafting their fragrant odor into the soft summer breeze. So, stretching myself and putting both hands on top of the board, I managed to get my head above the enclosure. Instantly the man saw me, lifted his ugly face, yelling, "Get down there you saucy face!" I did. This of course spoiled the view I had gotten and set me to thinking of my wild rose garden at home in Wisconsin. Ever since then a wild rose has been my favorite.

On a hot day in the beginning of June I was helping Mrs. Schroeder to prepare the evening meal. She had told me to peel four potatoes which I did. Having them on the stove she looked and told me I had not peeled four potatoes. When I told her I had, she flew into one of her rages, calling me names and pushing me around. I went and sat down at the head of the stairs. As she passed me to go into the other room, she gave me a push so that I fell half way downstairs. This was the worst she had ever done and it was one too many. I was glad I wasn't hurt. I picked up my shawl and bonnet and walked away out of the house. I walked along Monroe Street, turned the corner at Clinton, walked down a block or two and turned west on Randolph and walked and walked and walked, until I was out of town. I still kept on walking down the road until I got to where they were loading hay. How good it smelled! For the first time since I had come to Chicago homesickness crept over me. I sat down on a stump by the side of the road and wept. I felt all alone and did not know but what I might be lost. After awhile I saw it was getting dark. I knew I was far from home, but was glad I had kept a straight course, so I knew I could not be lost. Then I commenced to think what had I done wrong. I had been scolded and pushed around many a time and sometimes felt I might have been wrong, but this time I was sure I had done nothing wrong and had not deserved any punishment. Mrs. Schroeder had said "four potatoes" and had not said large, small, or middle-sized. I had grabbed haphazardly and had not thought of the size and had peeled them conscientiously and put them in the pot. Having settled this, I began to wonder what might be happening when she discovered that I was gone. Imagining the commotion my absence was causing, I hurried my steps homeward, but did not reach there until dark.

When I got to the house, the door was open but no one was there. I threw myself upon the couch to rest. It may have been about half an hour later when I arose and left the house, thinking I would go to my father and tell him the whole story. As I turned the corner I met Mrs. Schroeder. She did not speak to me as she passed by. A little farther on I met Father, Mr. Schroeder and another friend of father's. Mr. Schroeder left without saying a word. The other two turned and walked with me. I told my story. Father asked me why I had not come to him directly and I told him I had been afraid.

The next morning Mr. Heil recommended some friends of his who might be willing to take me in. These people, whose name was Demmerich, had just moved to Chicago. They lived on West Randolph Street. They were so different from the Schroeders, so easy going. They had two little children, a boy three and a girl one year old. All I was expected to do was to take care of those children. If I did not do that it was all right too. I missed the instructions I had been getting at the Schroeder's, the orderliness and cleanliness that had prevailed there, but it was a place to eat and to sleep and I could take all the time I wanted to study my lessons in the evening. During the short time I was with them until it was time to go back to Wisconsin, they had moved three times. The last time was on Madison Street very near the school. Mr. Heil had a small cigar and tobacco store and Demmerich moved into the rear and upstairs.

The last day of school, I took part in a dialogue. I had printed the various parts for the five children. I was the mother and had the most to say. My father attended the exercises and I felt very important. The only criticism my teacher made was that I should have spoken a little louder. The dialogue went off without a mistake and father felt very proud of me. This dialogue had been one of the main numbers on the program.

On June third, about two months after the war had started, Steven A. Douglas died in Chicago. It was announced in school that he lay in state in Metropolitan Hall, if I remember right, and that we were allowed to go to see him. Of this I took advantage and with two schoolmates I went during the noon hour. This was the first dead person I had ever seen. He was a good looking man, short but well proportioned, with a round face and dark curly hair. I can see him very plainly in my mind's eye to this very day. He was buried in a small park at the foot of 36th Street on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Then came the day when we took the boat for home. Right after dinner I dressed myself in my white dress and put on my coral beads and played on the sidewalk with other children. By the time Father came, I was hardly clean anymore, but what was the difference? It was to be a night trip. Mrs. Schroeder would have decided what was proper for the trip and would have seen that her instructions were carried out. Father and Mr. Wiedemann called to take me to the boat.

On the boat I must have had some sleep although there was no place to lay down. It was past midnight when we reached Port Washington and we walked the nine or ten miles home. I must have been stronger than in the fall before, because I had no trouble keeping up with the men. Father kept us entertained talking about the stars, for it was a bright starry night and the Milky Way was very much in evidence.

Part of the road still led through great forests. There Father talked about how those trees, great oaks, along the roadside would in time be worth more than they were at present. One of the things I remember he said in reply to Mr. Wiedemann's remark, "What a wilderness this is!" was "Yes, it is. It will be our children who will benefit from it, not we."

Finally when we reached the schoolhouse which I had attended, I called out, "Oh, what a little schoolhouse!" I had not imagined it so small. It was now just a mile to our house and I was wider awake now than I had been all the way. No matter how those old block buildings looked to me, I was glad to get home to Mother, to brothers and to sisters.

Father rapped at the door, pulled the leather latchstring and we walked in. Mother jumped out of bed and pulled on a dress. She was so excited she dropped the lamp and it rolled under the bed. Fortunately it had not yet been lit. I ran into the bedroom. I still see Mother on hand and knees getting the lamp out from under the bed. They had a kerosene lamp! Something they had not had when I left. Evidently some improvement! I got into bed beside sister Mary, the same place I had slept for eight years before. What the rest did I do not remember.

It was noon when I awoke. I found all eyes upon me, finding me, no doubt, somewhat changed from a year ago. I looked upon them, still barefooted, and to me all the change I could see was that they had grown. Looking about the place, I found Mother still had her flower garden -- sweet peas and mignonette, with all her other favorites in full bloom; on the window sill her boxes with basil (basalicum as she always called it) and other plants in pots. Her vegetable garden she had on the hill a little ways from the house nearer the road to keep the chickens from getting in so much. The one change I regretted was that the linden tree, which had stood in the front yard at the northeast edge of the flower garden had been cut down, the stump remaining. I had thought of this tree in reading the poem at school, "Woodman spare that Tree, Touch not a single bough, In Youth it sheltered me, And I'll protect it now," by Wordsworth. And here it was gone.

The Yerks were also gone. I would miss Clara and Fritz. Another family by the name of Horn had taken their place. There was a big boy of about fifteen or sixteen years by the name of Herman and a girl about my age, about thirteen, named Mary.

I soon adjusted myself and soon hardened my feet by running around barefooted, helping sister Mary do the chores, going to the creek, bathing the children and sometimes taking them to the river evenings to practice swimming. It seemed good to be home, again eating Mother's good cooking and drinking water from the spring well down in the meadow.

One Sunday afternoon the Regan girls, Helen and Anna, came to see me. We had a good time visiting, talking over school days and the things that had happened in the neighborhood during my absence. Mary and I accompanied them up the road to the Indian Trail, which they took in order to cut short their way home. Before saying good by they invited us to come to see them the next Sunday.

The next Sunday, dressed in our best, we returned their call. Mary was glad to have a chance to wear her new shoes and new black hat with a lot of checked or plaid

ribbon on it, which I had brought her from Chicago for a present. I wore my old fashioned horse head shaped bonnet which Father and the first woman I stayed with in Chicago had ransacked the town to find. It was a very becoming bonnet but I hated it with its ruching and little forget-me-nots around the face.

We walked along to the Regans. When almost there, we met William Regan, their brother, who was now a young man and was probably on his way to see his girl. Another half mile or so and we were welcomed by the Regans. We had never been at their house before and had never met their mother, who was a nice Irish lady, very different from the German women in our neighborhood. One could see and feel that she never worked in the fields with the men. They lived in a block house, well arranged and well kept, with trees and a garden around it. We stayed until suppertime, being served with raspberry shortcake and tea. This was the last time I ever met any of the Regan children.

Mrs. Horn told me that she had a daughter, Catherine, who had gone to Chicago to find work. They had not heard from her since she left home. Had I perhaps heard of her? No, I had not. One Sunday afternoon, when Mary and I were walking along the road, a team passed us with a girl and several men loudly talking and laughing, going west. We wondered who that might be. That evening it proved to have been Catherine Horn. They had passed the house and gone to the place where the Horns had previously lived. The lost child had found her way home again. One warm evening Herman came to visit us. Somehow the conversation turned to red cheeks. Herman said he knew how red cheeks were made. When asked to give an explanation, he said, "Sister Catherine has a lump of red stuff, some of which she rubs on her cheeks." This horrified me and I said, "Oh, those are the bad girls in Chicago who do that." The doors and windows of both homes were wide open and we heard Mrs. Horn call, "Herman, Komm Heim." (Herman, Come home.) Reluctantly he left. Catherine had made a lot of trouble and I suspect that she was the cause that the Horns left our place before the year was up.

The reaction of the Germans to the war in our part of the country was not altogether favorable. One day there were two brothers who met right in front of our yard, each driving his own team, William Beger and Charles, the former living a few miles west of us and Charles in Port Washington. William was against the war and Charles for it. They had a hot argument. Just what they said I do not remember. Many of the German immigrants claimed they had come from Germany to escape military service and here they were in the midst of war. They objected greatly to having to go to war. Charles later became captain of the Port Washington militia and went to war.

When Captain Beger was at Fortress Monroe, President Lincoln was there on an inspection tour. Desiring some information, Lincoln approached Beger and asked him where he was from. When Beger told him Port Washington, Lincoln said he had once walked from Milwaukee to Port Washington. Beger was elated to think that Port Washington had been honored by the presence of so great a man.*

* History of Washington & Ozaukee Counties, 1881, Page 508.

So the summer went. I had a good time until the end of August when I again left home. On this trip we stayed in Milwaukee overnight, taking the train for Chicago the next morning.

The Demmerichs had again moved to an upstairs apartment on Randolph Street. They were German born and had settled in Tennessee on arrival in America. They had liked the South, but when the war started, fearing the South would lose, they had moved to Chicago. Now that the South was winning, (summer of 1861, Bull Run) they wished they had stayed there. The uncertainty kept them in constant fear. I, being heart and soul for the North, was amused by this.

Father had gone to school to see that they promoted me a little faster. My reports were always 100%, so he felt I should go into the next grade. This was done and so I was kept busy with my school work.

Chapter XXI

The Year 1862

It was on a warm spring day, a Saturday, and I had been given a few of the Demmerich baby's things to hang up in the back yard. Hearing Sunday School music and songs I ran out and seeing they were Sunday School pupils on march, I joined them, without anything on my shoulders or head and in my working clothes. I was happily taken in and helped along with the singing: "From Greenland's icy mountains, From India's coral strand, From Africa's sunny fountain, etc." and other Sunday School songs. What the occasion was I do not know. It was just a grand festival for me. We marched across the bridge to Randolph Street past noon, way into the afternoon until I was tired out. Then I induced another little girl to go home with me. On our way home we heard music and speaking in some hall and as the door was open we went in there to see what it was about. We found a seat among the audience and sat down to rest. As there were girls in white with sashes on who read essays one by one, we discovered it was a high school graduation program. After we'd had enough of that, we got up, walked out, and went towards home. When the other girl, whom I had never seen, had to leave me to go to her own home, I commenced to wonder what the Demmerichs would say or do. They were easy going people, as I've said before, but this was the worst I had done since I was with them. They might think it was another runaway and I wondered whether my father had been called in and what not all. But when I reached home, they seemed very much relieved and asked me where I had been. They just told me if this happened again all I would have to do was to tell them where I was going.

In September Father had brought two friends with him, Mr. Wiedemann and Mr. Hildebrandt. One afternoon the three men had gone to Waubeka. They must have been visiting for they did not come home until late -- after we were all in bed. They had just retired when a loud rap on the door was heard. Father responding to it, the answer was, "Be on your guard. Ten thousand Indians have come. They are now at Holy Cross." The man, who brought this news, was back on his horse instantly, galloping to the next neighbor. Father, with a "Donnerwetter" as soon as he could gather his breath, got us out of bed. However, I was the only child who had heard this announcement. Father, Mother, and the two men were dressed again in a jiffy. The three men, each with a gun, all were soon on their way to Waubeka, thinking that would be the place the Indians would reach first. Mother and I sat for a while quietly looking at each other. Suddenly Mother jumped up saying she could not stand this -- she would go too. She asked me, did I think I could take care of the children. I thought I could. She took off her house slippers and put on her shoes. She went outdoors, found a pitchfork, and then started off to help kill Indians. I, at first, went around looking at the sleeping sisters and brothers. Sister Louisa was now almost four years old and sleeping in the large twin cradle. Then I commenced to think of the large can of powder and

other ammunition Father had standing on one of the long shelves, which had been part of the store. I busied myself, carrying one red tin can after another down into the cellar and then hiding them behind old boards and an empty barrel. By that time I heard a racket at the neighbors. They were hitching up their oxen, loading things in their wagons, dogs were waking up and barking. At first this was some entertainment for me. Then I commenced to plan what I would do should the Indians really come.

The next morning the neighbors were all back home, however, many of the people of the County had packed their families and their belongings and driven as far as Milwaukee to escape the danger.

The following is a quotation from The History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties, 1881, page 498:

> "During the latter part of the month of September, 1862, the people of Ozaukee County were thrown into a state of utter confusion by what is known as the "Great Indian Scare". Without any foundation whatever a report was circulated that the Indians, nobody knew from where, were coming in large numbers, and that they were killing men, women, and children, and laying waste everything before them. This story, coming as it did close on to the great Minnesota massacres, and the people, being already worked up to a feverish state of excitement by the effects of the war, soon gained credence, and had the country been netted over with telegraph wires, it could not have spread faster or have created a greater panic. The general condition of the people was just ripe for a stampede; and a stampede it was. The ruse, if such it was, could not have been sprung at a better time."

As I said before Father had planned that each of his children was to spend two years in Chicago attending school. This year Mary was supposed to start her turn but she did not want to go. Since she did not want to go, Father decided that I go again.

When we reached Chicago in the fall we found the Demmerichs had moved out of the school district, so I suggested a place -- people who had been friends of the Schroeders and lived near where the Schroeders lived. Their name was Eckert. They were willing to take me in. They had one little girl about three years old. Mr. Eckert was a baker. I liked the place mostly because it gave me a good chance to see the soldiers go and come from the Union Depot.

While at home during vacation, I had seen there was much disturbance among the farmers on account of the impending draft. Although they did not object to the higher prices for their produce brought about by the war, which was helping to pay off many of their debts. When in November the draft became a reality, from one of Mother's letters to Father, we heard of the draft riot in Port Washington (November 10, 1862) which later we learned was caused more by the ignorance of the Luxemburgers

and the Germans and by the manner in which the examination of the men to be drafted was conducted. We also learned that a good deal of damage had been done to property and that some were not killed was a wonder. Governor Salomon ordered a detachment of troops to be sent from Milwaukee to Port Washington which soon put a stop to the rioting. Strange to say, I never heard who any of the men were who took part in this disturbance. What I did hear was that some when they were drafted, suddenly disappeared by night while others hid about the place and were later found. There was one of our neighbors who was soon found. He was dressed in his wife's clothes and it took only a few days to discover him. But one, an old Frenchman of Waubeka, kept hidden all the rest of the war. His wife must have known his hiding place and fed and taken care of him.

Then there were many drafted who were well enough off to buy substitutes. In this way many a young man of 18 or 20 sold by his father, became a substitute. One man who had two sons was able in this way to buy a small farm. Since his sons came back alive it was not as bad as it might have been.

Chapter XXII

The Year 1863

Mrs. Eckert was a good housekeeper and I did not have to do any housework. My main duty was to amuse little Annie. If ever I stayed away longer than necessary I was never reprimanded. When St. Valentine came along we children had a good time looking in at the show windows, where many of the so-called comic valentines were exhibited. One day on my way home with a basket of groceries, I saw a crowd of girls and boys at one window having a hilarious time. I joined them to see what it was they were laughing so heartily about. There was the valentine -- a woman at the door, who seemed to have something under her apron, greeting her soldier husband at the door. He seemed to straighten up and with a scowl on his face, exclaiming, "Whose been here since I'se been gone?" There were some Valentines even worse, but this was enough for me.

Saturday was my time to go down town to see my Father. He had moved his shop to Van Buren Street to a very nice place. It was a hot June day and after walking up the stairs and rapping at the door, I felt sweltering. Father opened the door and just looked at me saying, "You've got the measles. Go home and go to bed." On my way home I thought, "Well, I've got the measles. That is why I nearly fainted yesterday." In the heat I felt they were coming out. As I entered the front room, Mrs. Eckert who was sewing said, "Didn't you find your father at home?" I said, "Yes, I did, but he told me I had the measles and had better go home and get into bed." She jumped up and said,"Well, I'll get the bed ready." But I refused. I took my jumping rope and went outinto the yard. The neighbor girls came and wanted to come into the yard, but I yelled at them, "Stay away for I've got the measles." But soon, after an early supper, I did go to bed. That Sunday I was absent from Sunday School. By Monday morning after a bath in the washtub and dressed in clean clothes, I went to school, without a sign of having had the measles.

A few weeks after this, when I came home from school one afternoon, I found the neighbors very much excited. They handed me the key saying Mrs. Eckert was out hunting little Annie and a neighbor's little girl, also named Annie. The other little Annie was two years older than our little girl. They had been playing quietly in the yard. After awhile, when Mrs. Eckert looked for them, they were gone. Going over to the parents of the older child, she found the mother had thought both children were at the Eckert place. I did not go to the house, but started out to look for the children, thinking I might find them. After an hour's wandering about aimlessly I suddenly remembered I had the key in my pocket. Thinking Mrs. Eckert might have found the children and reached home, I hastened back as fast as I could. No, she had not come home, so I went into the house. Being hungry, I ate the piece of apple pie left over from dinner. I decided to stay there until Mrs. Eckert came home.

She soon arrived without any children or any news of them. The police had been informed by this time so she got supper for her husband, hoping to soon hear about the children. After supper she gave me directions to go farther west while she would go toward the north. I walked along different streets going back and forth, inquiring about the children but found no sign of the little lost ones. Finally about eight o'clock I was so tired I could hardly drag myself home. I lay down on the sofa and was soon asleep. It may have been about midnight when Mrs. Eckert came back. She made me go to bed. What she did I do not know. Next morning she called me and said there was good news. The children had been found and were in the convent or an Orphans Home. I do not recall what sort of an institution this was but Sisters were in charge. The children may have been of the ages 4 - 5 - 6 - 7. She wanted me to go along with her and the mother of the other little child and get them. So after a quick breakfast we started out. We went partly on the street car and partly walked.

I was placed in the room where the orphans were all seated on benches along the walls. There I witnessed the most cruel thing I had ever seen -- a lot of dirty, neglected, ragged little girls. One of them was passing from one to the other with a small earthen jar of fat in one hand and a comb in the other. Each little girl took out a little of the fat which she rubbed on her hands and then in her hair. Then she took the comb and passed it through her hair as best she knew how. While she was combing the girl with the jar went to the next one and so on. After they were combed, they looked a little different, but as tousled as before. They had probably had their washing before I came but certainly did not look clean. When they got their breakfast I do not know, but I smelled coffee and heard the clatter of dishes of the Sisters' breakfast in an adjoining room. A more undernourished and unkempt lot of children I had never seen before.

When I saw the women come out with their little Annies I was glad they did not need to be kept there.

The other Annie, who was about five, told that they had wanted to take a little walk. Then, when they thought they were going home, they found they were lost. When little Annie started to cry and she couldn't make her keep still, she cried also. A man took charge of them and wanted to take them home, but she could not tell where they lived. He found a policeman and the policeman took them to the institution. When she was asked how they were treated she said they were given bread and milk for supper and little Annie was whipped because she had been guilty of a misdemeanor beyond her control.

The summer of 1863 Father did not stay home longer than a week but I was left to finish my vacation. Finally that pleasant time was over. Father had written what boat I was to take to go back to Chicago. Mother hired Blom's horse and small wagon to take us to Port Washington. The horse was an old one and went rather slowly so

when we reached the village, we found we had missed the boat, so we drove back home. Next day we started earlier. It had been terribly stormy the night before and the tail end of the storm was still on. This time we had Brother Charley with us. I was so proud of him. He was such a blonde, slim, good looking boy. He had on a new suit and a soldier's cap and I wanted him to get on the boat with me, but the boat was rocking so terribly that he was afraid and would not. Mother got on with me and asked the captain to take me in his care.

It was a wild night, dark and rainy and I soon went to bed in the cabin, assigned to me by the Captain.

The next morning, having had a restful sleep, I was soon ready for breakfast and felt very proud to be seated beside the captain at the table. But the boat was still rocking terribly. As I was going to take my first taste of coffee, my stomach heaved and I left the table in a hurry and lay down on my bunk. I had to stay there until we reached Chicago. The minute we landed and I had left the boat, I felt perfectly well.

Finding Father had not come to meet me, I found a boy who was ready and willing to take care of my trunk until I could get Father to get it.

As I entered the store Father looked up in surprise and exclaimed, "I'm certainly glad to see you. I wondered why you did not come yesterday."

I was terribly hungry, having had no breakfast or supper. Father not having been able to eat on account of worry, we went to dinner together. I had missed the first week of school and Miss Merryman, the teacher, said she was glad to see me. She had wondered whether I was coming back.

A woman whose husband had just gone to war, wanted me to stay with her. She was Mrs. Freyr. She had two little boys, Frederick four years old and Bennie two years old, a sickly child. She lived in her own home which was a cottage. Mrs. Freyr had been married when she was sixteen years old and was still a very young woman.

There was plenty to do here so I was kept busy. At noon, when I came home for dinner, I usually took little Bennie out for an airing. He was a sweet child and I loved him from the beginning.

Mrs. Freyr had two sisters, Susan and Emily Kinsie, with whom I had become well acquainted for they were next door neighbors of the Eckerts. They were Catholics and I sometimes went to church with them.

At recess we recited "We'll hang Jeff Davis to the sour apple tree."

One day I came home from school and little Bennie had died. I had to stay home from school for three days. I went with them to the funeral. This was the first time I had a ride in a carriage. We all missed the little boy very much.

With winter coming on, Mrs. Freyr worried about her husband very much. Although her mother, Mrs. Kinsie, came to see her quite often, that did not seem to console her.

Father again went to school and had me promoted. I somehow found time to keep at the head of my class all the time. Father also had a cheering effect on Mrs. Freyr whenever he came.

Before her husband had left, Mrs. Freyr had gone to the soldier's camp, where she had made the acquaintance of a girl who was visiting her soldier friend. This girl now came to visit Mrs. Freyr weeping and telling her about the trouble she was in and asking for advice for she had to leave the place where she was working. There were others who came who were in the same predicament. I learned later on that the soldier friend, when he returned from the war, married the first girl. How the others fared, I never learned.

Now a girl baby came to the Freyr home. Mrs. Freyr was soon up. When her mother and sisters came to call I realized they were talking about something I was not to know.

One morning there was something wrong with our pump in the backyard so I was asked to get a pail of water at the neighbors before leaving for school. I had to go by the front way and on my way back there was a man at our front door. Upon seeing me he asked was this where Mrs. Freyr lived. Upon being told it was, he rapped, while I went my way to take the pail of water into the kitchen. As I entered, Mrs. Freyr met me all excited, and handed me my coat and cap to get rid of me. When I told her there was a man at the front door, she said, "Hurry up, Get off to school. You'll be late," but I said "I need my books. They are in the front room on the table." She hurried in and got them for me.

The Freyr's had been next door neighbors to the Schroeders when I was there and although I had not seen Mr. Freyr for over two years, and at that not very often, it came to me on my way to school that this man was Mr. Freyr. So that was what it was all about! He was a deserter! After this I had to keep my books and things in my own bedroom. That the man was kept somewhere in the house I knew. Gradually I was told the Freyrs were going to move and I would have to find another place. My trunk, which had been kept in a closet off the front room was also brought to my bedroom.

I went and told my father. He decided I should move in with him. On our way to Van Buren Street Father wanted to know what had caused this commotion and the hurried moving. I told him I would tell him if he promised not to tell anybody. He was surprised and I knew he would never tell.

There was a great deal of war talk -- a great deal of criticism of President Lincoln and his wife was even accused of acting the spy in the White House. But was proved afterwards that she was innocent of that accusation. There was sorrow enough for that family since they had recently suffered the death of one of their dear sons.

I was now settled with my father but was outside of the Scammon school district. Living on the north side and not wishing to leave the Scammon school on the west side, I had to get permission to attend the same school. On account of my good behavior there was no trouble about this. The name of the Superintendent was Mr. Wells, who sent me the certificate of permission to attend the school.

I liked it very much at my father's. I had a very nice room all to myself and took my meals with my father at a boarding house. Of course, I had many more blocks to walk to school, but I enjoyed the walking.

The teacher one day was admonishing the pupils who so often came late to school, telling them that they should look at me, who, she said, would rather swim across the river than be late. Referring, of course, to the fact that sometimes the bridge was open for boats to pass, for which allowances had to be made. I sometimes had to run as tight as I could when the bell would ring for the bridge to open and I was still some distance away. There was a policeman who knew me and who would laugh to see me run and get across the bridge before it opened.

The only work I had to do was to keep my room and my father's swept and dusted. When my father did not have the time to take me for a walk on pleasant evenings he had one of his friends, Mr. Heil, Mr. Hildebrandt or Mr. Wiedmann take me for a walk along the lake. There is where the rich lived and I used to love to look at their beautiful homes with flower gardens in front and into the windows and see their rich furniture and pictures in gilt frames hanging on the walls.

Here at Fathers, I had time to draw and sketch, in which I was very much interested, especially as my father had a young man working for him who was adept at it. He helped me and lent me his books on the subject. As I think back, these were among my happiest days of the stay in Chicago.

I was getting better acquainted with the Mueller girls. Whenever I had time to visit I visited there. It was from Mary, the oldest that I learned how to crochet and to do beadwork.

One Sunday instead of just taking a walk, Father decided to take me to call on Louise L'Esprit who was now married. I do not recall her married name. I had to remind him my hat was not fit for calling on anyone on a Sunday. He said we would have time enough to stop at a store and buy me a new one. This we did and had quite a time selecting one. Father wishing to select the cheapest and I wanting one somewhat better and more becoming. There was one I especially wanted, the newest style. It was a fine white straw trimmed plainly with black velvet ribbon, but it proved too expensive for Father. The shop keeper said he could have it made up by the next Sunday in a cheaper material and would let me wear for today a black straw with a red ribbon on it. Father made some remark about my getting to be too much for him.

We made our call. I found my old friend living in a large white house with many well-furnished rooms. She had a nice husband and little girl three years old. Her old father was comfortably seated in a big chair on the front porch reading a paper. Louise had French company on the front porch who were well groomed and seemed to be of the better class. My father had a nice visit with them. She served us with wine and cookies. Altogether we had a very good time. She seemed glad to see me again and said I resembled my mother.

Whenever Father went out on a Saturday I took care of the store. As a rule it was men who came in. Evenings I did not go with my father to taverns so much anymore. Often I was out to try to find out in what tavern he was. I could usually hear him debating with someone. If I found he was all right I would go home. It was seldom he stayed until after ten.

There was one new friend of Father's who had been coming to our place quite often of late. He was a very well-educated and much-traveled man and would entertain us by the hour with stories of South America, Mexico and the western part of the United States, which I, too, had always been interested in.

One late afternoon he came in again and finding Father absent, I expected him to leave immediately but he stayed on and tried to make himself pleasing to me. I took up my chair and moved to the front window. He soon followed. The first thing I knew he was down on his knees before me. I straightened out stiffly. Then he grabbed my hand and said he loved me, would I marry him. I pulled my hand away and told him I was too young to be married. He wanted to know how old I was. To mislead him I told him I was just 14. He told me that was not possible, I was big enough to be 16, but I insisted I was only 14. It was fast going on to six o'clock and Father hurried in which made the young man jump to his feet. Father caught on that there was something unusual going on. The man explained he had wanted to kiss me but that I wouldn't let him. Then he started to talk business, looking at goods for a suit. Then he picked up his hat and said good by and Father and I went calmly to supper.

The war was still going on and business not improving. Father had spells of depression which made him keep me stricter than ever. This winter soldiers were marching through Chicago more than ever. Often they were those from Wisconsin. Whenever I had a chance after school or on a Saturday I would be on the sidewalk watching closely to see if I could not recognize some of them but they were all in their uniforms looking straight ahead, so that pleasure was never granted me.

Often the teachers knowing I had to pass the Post Office on my way home would give me their letters to mail. This favor I liked to do them for most of the envelopes had war verses written on the bottom of them. One of these I remember even now, which is, "We are coming, Father Abraham, 600,000 more. From the Mississippi's winding stream, And from the Atlantic Shore."

This winter Bach's band was in Chicago and the Bachs sometimes sent us theatre tickets. My Father did not feel much like going to the theatre but he took me once to a play in McVicker's Theatre called "The Silver Spoon". There were so few in attendance that evening that just when I got interested in the play, it was postponed, so I never saw the end of it. To make up for this, Father some weeks after took me to an entertainment given by the Tom Thumbs. There we saw them sitting together on the stage -- Mr. and Mrs. Tom Thumb, Commodore Nutt and his wife, who was a sister of Mrs. Tom Thumb and was even smaller than she and I thought much prettier.

There was a man sitting in front of us, who looked around several times, while I was making remarks about the show, and must have noticed I was enjoying it. When the pictures were being peddled for sale and had passed us and when they came to him, he bought one and presented it to me. He was a nice and a good looking man. That picture is still in my possession and he is still kindly remembered by me. After the show, Father and I walked around to see the exhibit of many gifts of beautiful jewelry and other possessions belonging to Tom Thumb.

My father had been advised to start a business of his own. So far, he had been working for other bosses. He soon found a place in the Sherman House. Other friends told him it was a mistake because times seemed to get harder as the war went on, but he was determined to try it anyway. So the deed was done and we moved in. There were four nice rooms behind the first room which was the store. There was a large room where the big stove was -- where the ironing was done. Then there was a fitting room and two bedrooms. In this place there was no bathroom but we had running water and an indoor toilet, the first indoor convenience we had had.

The Sherman House was right across from the Court House, which was a three story building with a big cupola. In order to shorten the distance to school, I walked through the Court House square which was enclosed by an iron fence, with gates at the four corners.

I often went to the Court House to pay our gas bills. One day I went up the winding iron stairway, which was in the middle of the building and to the cupola and almost fainted on looking down.

Again there was a change, but I had, by this time, learned to adjust myself to any change. There was more work to do, but as Father told me I was getting to be a big girl and ought to be able to keep the place clean and in order. Our laundry was given out every week and off and on when necessary a woman came in to do the scrubbing of the floors.

I had by this time learned to do quite a bit of sewing, so I had the waists of dresses made, but the skirts I made myself and sewed on to the waists.

It was a hard cold winter. Father had picked up a young friend by the name of William Clayton. Whether it was the hard times in business or what, I have never been able to discover why Father became interested in Spiritualism. It may have been its prevalence. His new friend came to see us about three evenings every week and after business hours they would sit at the small table in the fitting room, trying to conjure up the spirits. When they got tired sitting, they decided the evil spirits were in the room and would get up, waving their arms to chase them out. Of course, they had had instructions at some other meetings before this. When I'd finish my lessons in the other room, I sometimes joined them, putting my fingertips on the table, trying to see whether I could find out something. Try as hard as I would, I never got in contact with any spirit.

Mr. Clayton claimed having once come in contact with a sister of his, who had been deceived by a bad man, which had been the cause of her death. This new friend of my Father's soon became a true friend of ours, who went almost wherever we went. When we had tickets from the Bachs to go to the big circus that winter, he accompanied us. This was the first circus I had been at and from the clown to the riders and the trapeze performers I enjoyed every minute of it most intensely.

Chapter XXIII

The Year 1864

New Year's Eve Father and I were invited to go to the Muellers. Mr. Mueller, from some friends in the country had received a barrel of sweet unfermented apple cider, which he wanted to tap that evening and have us enjoy the first glass with him. I intended to wear my new blue cashmere dress, the skirt of which I had made at home, but the waist was still at the dressmaker's. I had to go and get it. It was five or six blocks to the dressmaker's. I started out after supper at about six o'clock. It was bitter cold. When I got to the place, I found the waist had to be fitted and was not quite finished. All the hooks and eyes had to be sewed on. The dressmaker was a very poor woman who lived in two rooms in an old frame house. She had three young children. While she was sewing on the hooks and eyes she told me the story of her poverty. I do not remember whether her husband was dead or in the army. When I counted out the money for making of that waist, I lacked one penny, which she hoped I could bring as soon as possible.

As I got out on the street, I found it was still colder than it had been. About half way home I met two soldiers wearing their blue soldier overcoats. As I reached them they stopped and let me pass between them. One of them exclaimed, "My God, a child out at night in this weather!" My feet were so cold and heavy by this time I thought they might be frozen. When I got home I found Father had been anxious about me. He decided my blue dress was out of the question for I did not have time to sew the waist and skirt together and besides my fingers were too stiff from the cold. I warmed up and put on the next best dress I had -- a brown worsted with red braid.

We walked to the Mueller's, which was just two blocks away. Since they had no other company, it did not matter so much to me what I wore.

The party was held downstairs in his shoe store. Just his two daughters, Father and I were there. The entertainment was the two men talking politics, and we girls listening. The refreshments were bread and butter and cold cider. The keg was right there on a chair. The party lasted until ten o'clock.

I was invited to remain and sleep with the Mueller girls. They thought it was too cold for me to go out again. It seemed nice to get upstairs in a nice warm and well-lighted room and find Mrs. Mueller and her baby. She gave each of us a bowl of hot milk and bread. Then we went to bed. Oh, did I sleep that night!

The next morning the breakfast consisted of coffee with rich boiled milk and coffee cake, which I thought the best meal I had ever eaten. Mr. Mueller thought it too cold for me to go home, and they invited me to stay with them all day, but I knew Father

would be anxious to have me home. On that morning walk I found nobody out on the street and I ran all the way. This New Year's time was said to be the coldest it had ever been in Chicago and throughout most of the country. Father was at the door anxiously waiting for me. We had, of late, in order to do some saving started to do our own cooking and had a chicken for our New Year's dinner. We had to boil it on top of the big stove. We had no conveniences and neither of us had ever had much experience in cooking, so this was hard work. We finally got our dinner done, and it tasted good and this work helped to pass the time. The big stove kept our rooms warm and comfortable. Later on the news came that whole familes had frozen to death in and around Chicago. It was reported one family, father, mother and five children, on the prairie had chopped up their furniture and used it as fuel, and finally set their house on fire and were found lying around it frozen to death.

Mother wrote it had been very cold in Wisconsin, too, that animals had frozen and that our old dog, Liese, had died on New Year's Eve.

After this there was a siege of small pox in Chicago and all school children had to be vaccinated. I figured out that if I got vaccinated on a Friday after school, by next Monday I would be well enough to attend school again. Monday morning I was not feeling so very well but decided to go to school anyway. It was a bitter cold morning and within about a block and half from school, I fell down. As luck would have it, a strong big man gathered up my books, put them in his pockets, took me up in his arms and carried me to school. I was all right after I had warmed up.

The house in which the poor dressmaker lived had a sign "small pox" on it so she unfortunately did not get her penny at this time and later on I found she had moved. But whenever I thought of her I hoped she was taken care of. So the winter passed.

By the time spring came, we had had enough of our own cooking and so we went back to our boarding house. One day when I came home from school for dinner, Father said he was not going to eat and asked me to take his dog along. It was a brown setter trained dog. When I got to the boarding house, I found a table by myself and got the dog, Zimar, to go under it. Pretty soon a group of five strange young fellows, probably students, came in. The long table being occupied, they had a table brought next to mine and noticing the dog, they got the dog to come under their table by giving it pieces of meat. They were five against my one. I commenced to figure what might be done to get the dog back. I waited until I thought he had had enough to eat. Then I got up and called him to me and put on his muzzle, which every dog had to wear at this time in Chicago. I walked out with my dog and had walked half a block when the boys followed. They had a rope, fastened it to Zimar's collar, and led him off around the corner of the street.

I went back home and told Father what had happened. Then I had to hurry off to school so as not to be late.

We thought at first that the young men had only played a joke on me and that by night the dog would be back, but we found ourselves mistaken. Father missed him very much, for every morning when he got up he had called, "Zimar, apporte mes pantoufles." (Zimar, bring my slippers.)

I felt bad because Father had had a hundred dollars offered him more than once for the dog. I could not help but blame myself for having lost him. Why did I not look for a policeman? Or why did I not yell for help?

Five weeks after this event I think I had almost forgotten about Zimar when I came home from school in the afternoon, Father met me with a joyous look on his face, saying, "You can't guess what has happened. Zimar has come back." I asked, "Did somebody bring him?" "No," said Father, "He came all by himself, dragging a long chain and part of a rope." After this, I was never allowed to take the dog to the boarding house. Zimar looked as if he had been well kept and well fed. How he got loose or from how far away he came we never knew, but realized he loved his old master better than his new one, although they may have fed him more meat than we did. Soon after, Father went home for a week or two. He took Zimar along and left him there.

William Clayton came to see us one day, telling us he had enlisted and handed me a new medicine sized light tan leather satchel, asking me to keep this for him until he came back. If he should not come back, it would be my inheritance from him. It was about half filled with jewelry. He had been an agent for a jewelry firm and this was what he had paid for and not sold. He bade us good by and left.

Sometime after when Mary Mueller came to see me, I showed her the bag and told her what was in it. She was real anxious to see the jewelry, but it was locked and William had left us no key. This, of course, told me it was not to be tampered with.

Father's health was beginning to decline, probably owing to poor business. He had customers enough, but they did not pay. There were those who got things on trust and then would leave the city and never be heard from again. The doctors had told Father he might get worse, unless he went to the country. So when a chance came to sell out, he was most willing, although he had to sell at a loss and could not get full pay at once. After the business was sold we rented rooms in the Mueller house. Father still had some business to attend to.

Then came the last day of school. There was not much of a program this time. I took my books and said good by to my teacher and school mates. Francella Dunham, who had the last few years been my most intimate friend and schoolmate, walked with me up to her home, which was on the street I took towards home. The house in which she lived and some of the others on this street were below the street level. Because

the ground was swampy, the streets in this neighborhood were usually very muddy during rainy weather, so the grade of the streets had been raised. Then we said good by. I was sorry that this was my last day at school. One more year and I would probably have been ready for high school. I had intended to teach school at home, but did not think I could with the education I had had so far.

In a way too, I was glad to get home. I knew I could be of some help there. So this was vacation, but Father was not quite ready to start for home. He seemed to have a lot to do. Being in the Mueller house, Mary was in my room much of the time and every time she came she would go for the satchel of jewelry until I caught the infection, wishing to see the contents, but there was no way of opening it except with a key and I had no key. So I had to hide it to overcome the temptation.

One day George Bach came to see me. It happened that I was outside on the steps with the Mueller girls. As our rooms were just bedrooms, I did not ask him in, but we had a pleasant short visit.

Suddenly Father announced that we would leave the day after tomorrow and that I should get my packing done. This I did.

This time I had a little dog, Fawny, a canary bird, Dickie, to take care of. Both had been gifts to me from friends of Father.

So my last day in Chicago arrived. It had just been announced that plans were made to build a tunnel under the river at Randolph Street, which interested Father very much, but did not occupy my thoughts for I was thinking of getting home.

When I said good by to the Muellers I gave them the bag of jewelry to take care of until William Clayton would come back from the war. I made Mary promise that she would never open it, so sure I felt that he would come back.

We had our last breakfast at the boarding house, then took the boat. The cage with Dickie was hung on the ceiling of the saloon, where he entertained the passengers with his songs and Fawny was placed where the dogs were kept.

It was beautiful sunshiny weather. When we reached Milwaukee, the boat stopped for an hour or so. I had been outside on the deck most of the time and had just come in and was visiting with a woman with whom I had gotten acquainted when Father came in looking excited and disturbed. He announced that he had seen Mother on the deck of the boat going to Chicago which was anchored on the wharf next to ours. "Donnerwetter," he said, as he turned to go to see what he could do about getting her on our boat. They soon came back together. Father had managed to get her ticket exchanged.

Of late we had been so busy thinking she knew we were coming home, neither of us had thought of writing.

As we met, we found I had grown to be taller than Mother. She looked sweet and dear to me with her coal black hair and a neat gray dress she had made herself. She did not show the effects of a life of years in the wilderness, -- of long cold winters and summers of hard work. She still had that air of perfect poise and look of distinction. She had probably wanted an outing and taken our not writing for an excuse for a trip to Chicago. I, for one, did not blame her and Father seemed to be satisfied knowing it might have turned out worse had he not discovered that she was on her way to Chicago.

We had a good time the rest of the way for Mother soon found people she knew from Port Washington. One was the rich merchant, Goldsmith, and they spent time talking politics, history, and what not all.

We stopped in Port Washington overnight at the American House. The next morning Father found a team to take us, our trunks and other belongings, home.

When we got there we found the children and the house in terrible disorder. There was no bread and mother did not know how to bake soda biscuits. She had to send to the neighbors, Hempsteads, to borrow bread, which she had never done before. I was sorry I could not help. Mother made the men a good meal of omelette and coffee.

When they had been fed, and gone, getting things in order was next. Our bedsteads, bedding and trunks only added to the chaos. A temporary place had to be found for those. Finding I was more in the way than a help, I went outside, looking over familiar places and figuring out how I could make myself useful. Father had taken his gun and dogs and gone hunting. By supper time things had been put in order. The children had been washed and combed. I found that by this time Mary had become Mother's helper. I had opened my trunk and put on some of my every day clothes.

I found, however, I could still milk the cows, take care of the calves, feed the chickens, weed and hoe the garden, and get water from the well. There were the children to be bathed, and sewing and mending to do in between times.

When the grain was ripe and it looked like rain, I was called upon to help with the grain in the field. I could not bind, so I carried the bundles and stacked them. By nightfall my hands were sore and sometimes bleeding. But there was no time for complaints. Then when the thrashers came, Mary and I had to carry the chaff.

Then came the fall. I helped to dig potatoes. Husking the corn I enjoyed best of all because we children could sit together in the barn. I taught them songs and little poems that I knew. Perhaps we did not work as fast as we might have but we all enjoyed it.

Then I had to get busy and help sew the dresses for the girls and the blouses for the boys for school. I commenced to feel homesick for school but I could make up for that by teaching the children their lessons in the evening.

One day I was asked to substitute for Mr. Tolleth, the teacher, who was sick. I was glad for the chance but very much afraid to tackle the job, wondering what I would do if the boys did not behave. To my great surprise they had such great respect and love for me that I had no trouble at all. Besides, I found myself fully able to teach them and to put in some extra ways of teaching I had learned in Chicago. Remembering my own first day at school, I put the little A B C pupils together, saw they got slates and pencils, and between times told them stories and in different ways kept them interested. After my two weeks of substituting, I found I had made a reputation. This gave me an idea.

When Mr. Tolleth came back the big boys were coming to school because the farm work had been done. This perhaps might have proved too much for me, but all the same, I now determined to prepare myself for teaching. So when my father went back to Chicago to collect his money for his business, I asked him to bring me a bigger geography and a higher grammar than I had had. I decided to go back to school to further my studies in Arithmetic.

At the school I mainly put in my time on Arithmetic. I found myself keeping ahead of those two big boys, Anson Gatfield and Reinhold Karman. Evenings at home I studied the grammar my father had brought, the geography and a U. S. History. I sometimes stayed up until twelve o'clock at night for which Mother would scold, but I got so interested I'd forget how the time went.

Two more weeks, a week at a time, I had of substituting. That was when Tolleth had been on a booze. The big boys and I got along all right. One morning when we came to school the door was locked. We waited a long time and were just about to go home, when the boys said, "Why not get in through the window?" which we did, the big boys opening the window, one getting in and pulling, pushing the rest of us in. Then they voted me as the teacher. I was just ready to begin hearing the classes when the teacher walked in with swollen nose and lips and black and blue around the eyes. Whether he got this from falling or a fight we did not know and did not try to discover. He was an excellent teacher except that he would get on a booze once in a while. But this was his last one for that winter.

It was a busy winter but I enjoyed it. We asked the teacher could we have an evening of spelling school, an entertainment. Some of the older girls and I had discussed this for quite a while. The teacher gave his permission most graciously. We gave ourselves two weeks time to prepare it. On the appointed evening the school house was crowded with the children and many of the parents and other young people, but the teacher was not present.

I had appointed Emma Gatfield, who was about my age, as my assistant. We had a spelling-down, pieces spoken by some of the pupils and singing by the school. Then I read the poem by Tennyson "The May Queen" -- by candlelight, and Emma Gatfield read a story from the same book. After our program we asked the visitors whether they had anything to offer by way of entertainment. Theodore Geidel, son of the German Pastor, who had probably been longing all evening to give an addition to this entertainment, jumped with alacrity and gave his Negro song, "Ham fat, ham fat, sissy Sally Sam, Oh, get into the kitchen, for the gravy's getting hot in the ham fat pan, and I know a little yellow gal and I'm loving to kill her, And if any nigger fools with her, I'll knock him if I can. Ham fat, Ham fat, Sissy Sally Sam, Oh, get into the kitchen, for the gravy's getting hot in the ham fat pan." Of course he got a great deal of applause. We all went home feeling we'd had a jolly time.

When the school term was almost ready to close, one noon the two big boys, Anson and Reinhold said a casual good by to us, taking the road to Waubeka. Obviously we wondered why they were thus absenting themselves. A few days after we heard that they had enlisted. Later in the spring, when school closed, Anson came back home on a visit and with his older sister Maggie and his sister Emma called on us one evening. We had a pleasant visit that evening and walked part way home with them when they left. He looked so nice in his uniform. We had no idea we would never see him alive again.

This spring I helped make maple syrup and sugar. Later on I helped plant potatoes. After having planted a big patch of eating potatoes, there was a bigger patch of California potatoes to be planted. These were for the animals. How tired I got going up and down those rows -- hoeing and dropping in the potatoes. The next time I covered them. Then down again row after row until an acre was planted. By that time I was ready to drop.

There was also corn to plant. Of course, I did not do it alone. Later on there was the hoeing to be done around the potatoes and the corn. Then came the hay to be raked and to be turned to dry. One burning hot day in mid afternoon, Mother stood on the hill and called. The children decided I should go to see what she wanted. When I reached home she was weeping, the cage upset on the kitchen table and Dickie in her hand. -- dead. Poor Dickie! He had been so hot and Mother had taken the cage down in order to clean it and had given him fresh water to drink and put some in his bath. In an instant when she had turned her back, the cat had jumped on the table, upset the cage and caught the bird. While Mother had jumped to take the bird from the cat, she had already strangled him. Poor Dickie! His music had cheered us up many a time. We would all miss him sorely. I took him and wrapped him in a clean handkerchief and put him where the cat could not get him. Then I went back to the field.

Father had come to see what it was all about and got us to work again.

The next three days we spent our spare time finding a place to bury him and to find a box in which to place him. Finally we gave him, in Mother's flower garden, what we called a Christian Burial.

A rainy day that summer was always a day of rest for us girls. We would spend it up attic sewing by hand, for we had as yet no sewing machine.

Off and on we received a letter from our soldier boys. Of this Father and Mother were not to know anything. We always had a time keeping the letters hidden away. This the boys seemed to know for where would we get paper, envelopes and postage to respond, so they always enclosed a quarter in each letter. There was some lumber in the loft of the barn and for a long time we found that the best hiding place for our mail. One day Mary having gone home from the field to get our nine o'clock lunch, returned with a most anxious look on her face. She asked me to eat our lunch behind another stump than that where the other children were eating. Then she told me Father and the boys were at work getting down the lumber. This was bad news indeed. I consoled her by saying that whatever happened we would have to take. Mary did not take things as easy as all that. When we got home for dinner Father had not reached the house. I went up into the loft and found our letters safe for only a few boards had been taken from the top of the pile. Knowing them not to be safe there I took them away in the meanwhile sticking them in my pocket.

On our way to the fields, we went across the road into the woods and put them into a hollow stump over which we placed a flat stone. That henceforth we called our safe.

Then came the Fourth of July. Mary and I who were now 16 and 14 years of age, were allowed to go into the village where the celebration was going to be held in the afternoon. We put on our lawn dresses and our hats. My hat was the white straw with black velvet Father had bought for me the time I had gone to see Louise L'Esprit. For Mary I made over an old one to as near the new style as I knew how.

When we reached the village we found nothing doing except a dance in one of the saloons. So what should we do but go in there. Upon entering we saw the place was rather crowded so we kept near the door. We discovered none of our school mates there. The rowdy kind of Germans were having a most hilarious time. Louie seemed to have had too much beer already. This was not to our taste so we left.

Not knowing what else to do we walked back towards home. Reaching the Meyer corner Mary turned around and pointed to a crowd behind us, also going home. She pointed out Fritz Yerk to me, who had grown very tall and in his soldier uniform looked very fine. He must have been home on a furlough. I never saw him again though.

Towards evening the Yahnke girls came back from the village and stopped in. Father, saying he would take Mother and the other children to the village, we asked the girls to stay. After having milked the cows and done the evening chores, we put on our good dresses again and sat outdoors visiting and listening to the music. Off and on we would get up and dance in our own way. Then, not having any lemons, we made soda water with vinegar, baking soda, water and sugar. This we served with a piece of plain cake Mary had baked in the morning, which was not a success exactly but with the drink it tasted very good. About ten o'clock we heard the people coming back from the village. The girls, Mina and Louise, decided to leave. We accompanied them half way to their home. Thus ended our Fourth of July.

I kept up my studies in some way all summer, but often for a day or two I would be too tired to stay up at night.

One Sunday late in the afternoon Mary and I decided to visit the Beger girls, Mina and Laura. After we had been there a while they said there was a dance in Farmington to which they were going and invited us to go with them. They had on new gingham dresses with short sleeves because there had not been enough goods to make long sleeves. The dresses we were wearing had long sleeves but were not exactly new anymore. We thought that was excuse enough for not wanting to go, but they just laughed at that and finally we decided to risk it. We thought we'd just go and look in, but when we got there, it was a big temporary floor put up in the woods with a wall around it of benches, interspersed with wild flowers. Temporary benches around the wall and three musicians were sitting on an improvised platform.

The music was good and too tempting to resist, so in we went. There was a crowd of people, both young and old, all so friendly. One woman asked us to take off our hats and wraps. Before we knew it we were on the floor dancing with the rest of them. We soon lost sight of the Beger girls. After I had danced three times with the same young man, Mary came to me whispering "Say, this young man with whom you danced last and the one who danced with me intend to go home with us, what shall we do?" At first I told her I did not know. Then she said, "Supposing I get out our things and put them in a fence corner and then I come back and we dance once more and then sneak out." I thought it a good idea and so after the next dance I ran down first and then waited for Mary who soon followed. We picked up our wraps and hats, we walked up the hill congratulating ourselves on a narrow escape. As we reached the bottom of the hill giggling, suddenly before us stood our two young men barring the road. I said, "Please let us pass." "Oh, no," said the older who had been Mary's man. "It isn't right for two little girls like you to walk home alone so far at night."

"But we are going to walk home alone," said I. "Let us pass." After more discussion on the subject, they finally let us pass with the words, "Oh, then go to hell."

"Oh," said I as we passed, "We are not going there, you can go there." Then we started to run, Mary whimpering, "Don't be so saucy, they'll do something to us." It was a bright beautiful night. We might have enjoyed the three mile walk though the thought that we might meet Father looking for us, for it was fast going on midnight and the knowledge that we were not allowed to go to dances without permission, gave us an anxious and worried feeling. We got home safely, found the house dark, and the latchstring hanging outside. Our bed being in the loft, we took off our shoes in the hall and walked upstairs quietly. Next morning we were not even asked what time we had returned from our visit.

The weather this summer was favorable for the growth of crops. The rains seemed to come at just the right time, no storms occurred. I had grown used to hard outdoor work and my hands were getting tough. The only thing that I did not like was picking up stones. When there was nothing else to do Father would get us at that. I made myself a pair of mittens of pieces of cotton cloth to save my hands from getting sore when picking up stones. But the dust would get in and they would sweat which was almost worse than using bare hands.

We wore sunbonnets in the field, but most of the time when it was hot we had them hanging down our backs. I soon took on a light tan which did not seem to hurt my looks very much.

In the midst of stone-picking, in the middle of a hot afternoon, loud singing of church hymns struck our ears coming from our woods across the road. To me it sounded like Sunday School but Mary thought it might be the opening of a Camp Meeting. So when this kept on and was really getting louder, we sent Henry to investigate. He soon came back with the words, "Oh, it's a drunken man." When asking "How did he get there?" Henry told us, "With a two-wheeled cart. He has some jugs standing around, a frying pan and a kettle." I told Mary, "It's a Methodist Camp Meeting alright!" The next day by noon we remembered our man and before going home we went to see him. We found him stretched on the ground, looking very sick. Upon inquiring what we could do for him, he said, "Water, oh, some fresh water." He pointed to a jug which Henry took. He found it heavy, almost full. The man advised, "Pour it out, Pour it out." So Henry poured out almost a gallon of whiskey. We could smell it was strong at least. While pouring Henry looked up and said, "Shall we take some home?" but I told him "No." Henry went to the neighbor's place which was nearer than home, to get the water, while we went home. On telling the story to Mother, she decided the man might need something to eat too. Since there was nothing left from our dinner, she prepared a tin pail full of bread and milk which seemed just what he needed. Next day he had disappeared. Later on I heard that he was a blacksmith from Racine, a pillar of the Methodist church there, but once a summer he took a trip with two jugs of whiskey and other paraphernalia, pushing his cart ahead of him and landing in some forest for his spree.

When the grain had ripened, Father found it impossible to find a man to cut it. The reason for this was the war. The two boys, Henry and Charley, brought out the cradles, cleaned and sharpened them, and found that they could cradle. Henry was not yet thirteen and Charley had passed his eleventh birthday in the spring. They were both strong healthy boys but all the same they surprised all of us. Father was awfully sorry to have them start such hard work so young and feared they would not be able to hold out for the whole job. But they did. There were other boys in our neighborhood who had to do even more.

We had a bumper harvest that year and could not get all the grain into the barn, so some stacks had to be made. These I helped to make which I found great fun, being on top of the pile and putting the bundles around and around. Then when the stack was finished, sliding down the side.

Then came the fall, bringing in the corn and digging the California potatoes that I had planted. I found they were the biggest potatoes I had ever seen and so many of them. There would surely be enough for the pigs and cows and all the other animals.

Amidst this came the news that Anson Gatfield had come home very sick. That evening Mary and I went to see the Gatfield's. When we got there we found the house in disorder and the family disturbed. We were told Anson had gone to his rest. It was typhoid that had taken him, which he had contracted in the army camp in the South.

A few weeks after, his little brother James, a boy about eleven, followed him. Next a sister Sarah, a classmate of our sister Emma, and six weeks or so after, Emma Gatfield, that beautiful girl who had helped me conduct the spelling school and entertainment, was taken. It did not seem possible that we would never see her again.

When all the hard work was over this fall, Father began to do some tailoring work which had been offered him. During the day he had me help him. For exercise I would take the two pails and get the water down in the meadow. My evenings I spent studying. At that I went with a will. The children were going to school. Tolleth again was teaching.

Mary and I were determined to have a regular Christmas festival at home this year -- tree and all. It was easy to get the tree in one of the marshes nearby, but where would we get the money for the trimmings? We always saved little pieces of fancy paper. There were hickory nuts and butternuts and these we wrapped in the colored paper, red, blue, yellow and white. By putting our pennies together we bought fifteen cents worth of stick candy. Having plenty of popcorn, we made balls by sticking the corn together with melted maple sugar.

Different kinds of cookies, which Mother made, animals and men, stood around under the tree. Then the question came about candles. We had made regular-sized tallow candles, but they were not the Christmas tree kind. By cutting one in short pieces and sticking them around on the branches of the tree they would have to do.

Louisa, the baby of the family, was six years old since November. She was the only one from whom the whole thing could be kept a secret. For weeks before Christmas she had been told about the Christkindchen and I had told her stories how good children had often been rewarded by getting a tree and how bad ones had been punished by not getting anything. She took it all in seriousness, got her lessons and went to bed right after supper.

The question of a doll came up. We found the head of a china doll with part of the neck broken off, but that could be fixed. I made the body and fastened it to the head. Making her dress highnecked, all in all when done it was a beautiful doll, with shoes and stockings on, arms made of cloth. She had on pretty underwear which could be taken off and washed and a light blue lawn dress. She sat in state under the tree.

Mother thought it wasn't quite right to so deceive the child. She had never done this to us when we were little, but Father joined us in the fun. He put up the tree, and helped trim it. We were all up that night, except Mother, until twelve o'clock. When the tree was all ready we dressed Emma up in white as the Christkindl, curled her long blonde hair, put a paper mask over her face, and a wreath of paper flowers around her head. Then we lit the tree and woke Louisa. She came out excited and willing to say the little prayer I had taught her, to the Christkindl and to thank her for the tree and the doll which she supposed the Christkindl had brought her.

The next morning she said, "I must have been good." We told her she had been.

Chapter XXIV

The Year 1865

Father had gotten acquainted with the County School Superintendent, a man by the name of Gannon, who lived in Cedarburg, and Father had told him about me. So some weeks after New Year's Father took me to Cedarburg to see Mr. Gannon in his office. There I took my first teacher's examination. I was very much excited, whichever way it went -- failure or success -- I would have to bear. Mr. Gannon must have made it easy for I answered every Geography, Grammar, etc. question correctly. He had me do a lot of figuring and had me read several articles. He told Father he was glad for my correct pronunciation. He could not say the same of many young people teaching in the County. At the end of the examination he wrote on a paper which he handed me, saying it was only a temporary certificate, because he wanted me to come to the Spring examination in Port Washington, which I was willing to do.

Father was a slow driver and my hands and feet were tingling with cold, but I was happy and I knew Father was proud of me. When we got home Mother felt relieved that my staying up nights had not been in vain. I still had the public examination ahead of me and I kept at my studies, probably harder than ever.

In the last week of April the Teacher's Examination was held in the school house in Port Washington. All the seats in the room were occupied. My early schoolmates from Waubeka were present -- Almedie Turner, Solvandre Daggett, Mimmie Cassel and others. Their teacher, an Englishman was also there. He was not taking the examination but walked around among us. How much he helped his own pupils I do not know, but he saw I was excited and puzzled over one example in Arithmetic. Glancing it over, he gave me one hint and set me straight and I finished the problem.

Mr. Gannon, the Superintendent, had a head of red hair, but we all admired him very much.

On the way home some answers I was sure I had given right but others I was not sure about. Nor was I sure that I would get a certificate.

My Father was still sewing and I was helping. There were serious thoughts going through my head during those weeks.

One day in the month of May, Mother went to the Post Office. When she came back she said, as she handed me an envelope, "I am bringing you bad news." This gave me a scare and without looking at it, I dropped my hand with the envelope in my lap. Father, looking up, asked, "What is your news?" She said, "Lincoln has been shot."

All that day Father could do nothing but talk and think about Lincoln. Although I felt sorry for Lincoln, I felt much relieved having my certificate and knowing the school in our District was promised me.

There had been no school the summer before, but a law had been enacted that from now on a three months summer school must be held. Now I got busy going to see the members of the School Board in our district. The Director lived about two miles from us. I wasn't slow in seeing that the contract was signed. Eighteen dollars a month for three months, what a fortune it seemed to me.

There was only a week to get ready. Father bought me eight yards of calico at sixty cents a yard for a new dress. It was brown with small purple starlike flowers. We could hardly afford it, but he said he wanted me to have a new dress to start school. And indeed, it was the first new dress I had had since coming from Chicago.

I made the dress myself, a full skirt with a yoke waist. I now could make a whole dress -- waist and all!! It turned out to be a perfect fit.

Not only I, but Emma and Louisa had to be gotten ready for school. Mary and the boys could not attend summer school because they were needed at home. So for a week my books had to be laid aside.

I've never forgotten that first day of school. This was the Flag Day School. I was the first one to get there. Unlocking the door, I found the floor scrubbed clean as it could be; the windows all shiny and bright.

The sun was shining that morning, but there was a chill air inside. While Emma and Louisa went up the road to meet their schoolmates, I went outside to pick up kindling and wood to start a fire. While doing this, I wondered whether it was fitting for a teacher to start her own fires, remembering that in Chicago they had a janitor to do that.

Soon the pupils began to come. There were thirty-five enrolled on that first day. It was a very successful three months which ended with a grand entertainment the last day.

Most of the money I had earned went to help in the home. There was talk of hiring me for the winter but since they had always had a male teacher for the winter, they could not very well break that rule.

I spent my vacation helping Mother and when necessary helping in the harvest as before.

On Sunday in early fall, Father coming home from a hunt announced that he had found a school for me for the winter. This was in a Bavarian District, northwest of us.

I was to go to see the place. I went and spent an afternoon visiting some of those people. I found them kind and friendly enough, but was not impressed with the way they kept house. By the time I got home I had made up my mind not to accept that position. But to my parents seven months at $22.00 per month was some inducement, not to be thrown aside lightly. They gave me time to think it over.

The next Sunday my father went hunting again and when he came home announced that he had accepted the position for me in the Bavarian District. I would not have to board with any of these people. The "Rothschild" red-head Meyers lived nearest the school in a new good-sized log house. There was a room upstairs that would be mine. It contained a bed, a chair and a table. I would have to furnish the stove and the dishes, etc, and would have to do my own cooking. So that was settled.

The day before school opened was a Sunday. Father hitched up the horse. He and Mother sat on the front seat and I sat on my little trunk, the one I had brought from Chicago. Besides that we had the little kitchen stove, the first one we used when we commenced housekeeping up in the attic.

It was a three mile ride and we were welcomed by the Meyers. They had three children, two of school age, a boy eight and a girl six, and one three years old. This child could hear and see, but could not talk or walk. She was a very beautiful child having lovely blonde hair and blue eyes.

After visiting awhile, Mother suggested that she wanted to see the room. I went up with her. The first thing we noticed was that the bed was a small mountain of featherbeds. Mother, lifting up the top featherbed, found there was just a bottom sheet, which looked a dark gray. Mother said Mrs. Meyer had forgotten to change the sheet. Frau Meyer, being reminded of that fact, said, "Oh, no, no. That sheet is clean. Only the peddler slept in the bed." We did not try to find out how often he had slept in it, but just asked for a clean sheet, which as it happened, Mrs. Meyer did not have.

Following my parents as they left, I told them not to worry, as I had white petticoats, which were very wide. These I would use for sheets until the end of the week, when I would get sheets at home.

That evening after preparing my own supper in my own little room and getting into bed with the aid of a chair, I sank in between the featherbeds and two immense fat pillows. Between the softness and the warmth I fell asleep and slept until morning without dreaming or waking up once. I could not remember ever having slept in a more comfortable bed.

After breakfast I hurriedly got ready and went to the schoolhouse. I found it a tiny square building with just two half windows. After unlocking the door, I found it hanging on one one hinge and had a time opening it.

The clerk's wife came to see if the women, who had been asked to do the cleaning, had done the work right. Everything had been scrubbed clean, -- the floors, benches, and windows. The clerk's wife was not a Bavarian. She was glad to get acquainted with me and I was glad to find her so interested. We had quite a visit before the first pupils came. Then she left, wishing me success and told me if I had any trouble to come to them.

When it was time to call school to order, twenty pupils had gathered. The boys took off their caps and mufflers but the girls just took off their wraps and kept on their hoods. When I asked them to take them off they hesitated, but I insisting, they finally took them off and I found their hair had not been combed. They all had beautiful hair and lots of it -- big heavy braids wound around their heads. When I asked them why they had not combed their hair, they said they had combed it yesterday, for Sunday. I spoke to them and said they should comb it every day for school, they just smiled and said they would after this.

Before the day was over, I noticed that something was creeping on some of the heads -- on some more, on some less. So before school closed I told them to tell their mothers their heads would have to be washed and cleaned before they come again. They all came again the next morning and took off their hoods. A strong odor of kerosene permeated the air.

Before the week was over, the number of pupils had increased to twenty-five. There was never any trouble in conduct. They were all most obedient and willing, even anxious to learn. There never needed to be any punishment -- no standing on the floor, nor remaining after school.

One day two brothers brought a little brother, about five years old. He was mentally deficient and there was something wrong about his face. It was more like that of a dog than a child. At first he was repugnant, yet I felt sorry because his eyes seemed to plead for kindness and help, which I freely gave him. He even came and climbed on my lap and I held him awhile. Then, putting him kindly down on a seat, he obediently stayed there.

I had decided to tell his brothers to not bring him again, but they seemed so grateful to me that I did not have the courage to do this. Next day he came again and after a week, became a fixture in the school. He had a slate and a primer but could do nothing with them. His mother came to see me one afternoon at the Meyers and weeping thanked me for what I was doing for her child. She said he was so fond of me, it was impossible to keep him from going to school. I told her he was no hindrance in any way and that I had learned to love him and that she could with a clear conscience let him come. After this, whenever he had any candy or fruit given him, he always put half of it in his pocket saving it for me. So off and on I received the gift of half an apple or half a stick of candy.

There was held in Saukville in November what was called a School Institute and I received an invitation and felt in duty bound to go. School matters were discussed and instructions given by Superintendent Gannon and older teachers. At almost closing time an elderly man came and stood before me holding out his hand saying "I always knew you would make something of yourself." I recognized my old teacher, Frank Haskell, who had been the last before my going to Chicago. Of course, I was very glad to meet him again.

Before this meeting was over, the Ozaukee County Teachers Association was organized, which I joined.

My expenses this winter were twelve dollars for the room including the wood chopped especially to fit the small stove. Besides this I could go down cellar and help myself to carrots, turnips, beets and potatoes, which however I did not do, because Mother had furnished me with these vegetables, except potatoes, ready cooked. Besides this I paid a boy two dollars to start the fire in time to heat the schoolroom.

In the middle of winter the superintendent called. By this time five or six older boys and girls had added themselves to the pupils.

There were no benches or seats with backs in the school room -- just one long table and plain benches. The superintendent commented on the way I had arranged them. We were somewhat crowded, but there was no disorder. He stayed to hear several classes recite. As he left he criticized the door on its one hinge, which I had to open for him. I told him that was not my fault, upon which he laughed.

In parting he said, "I can see that you like your school." As he shook my hand I saw appreciation on his face.

A week before Christmas on a Saturday I was at home, when Father came from Waubeka and told me I was going to have a caller that afternoon. He was going to ask me to the Christmas dance at Saukville and that I was not to refuse. When he came, I saw it was John Keefe. I kept myself in the bedroom and when he had visited with Father and Mother long enough, a hint was given that it was time to show myself and I came out and found him seated beside the kitchen stove. I greeted him and he asked me, "Will you give me the honor of your company to the dance?" I answered with a nod of my head in the affirmative, with Father, Mother, sisters and brothers as witnesses, turned, and rushed back to the bedroom. Then he left.

Nothing further was said about this matter in the family, but the coming night I did not sleep a wink. This was going to be the first time I had ever gone to a dance with a young man. As far as I knew he was the most prominent young man in town, five or six years older than I. He had gone to school with me before I had gone to Chicago. He had been a soldier and been in the cavalry.

I had heard about him but had not seen him since I was back from Chicago. Why was he choosing me as his partner? Was he in love with me? I had never loved any man except my father. Was I going to fall in love with him? Such were some of my thoughts that kept me awake all that night.

Next day, Sunday, came up the question of what I would wear. I decided to take the skirt off the blue merino dress and make a waist from the skirt of the white dress which had grown too small for me. Then the question came up would it be proper for me to go alone with John? Ought there not be a chaperone to accompany us? One of Father's and Mother's big city ideas, which had already caused them enough trouble and under which I had suffered before.

After it had been decided that Mother could not go and they could not see how Father could go, they finally decided Mary should go. In all of this I had not been asked to give my opinion and knew it would do me no good to do so.

Mary was to be dressed like myself. She had a blue dress like mine and the white skirt, a full one, contained enough goods for two waists, so all the expense would be to buy a pair of gaiters for Mary. I already had a pair. Father was willing to go to this expense!

Even now, after these many years have passed, it sets my heart to beating faster than usual, at the thought of this event!

I cut and fitted the waists although it was Sunday. In the evening I took them with me as I went back to my work.

The day before Christmas I closed school at noon, went home and the waists were all made. We tried them on and they were a perfect fit, so washed and ironed them and sewed on the skirts.

In the middle of the week before Christmas a homesick feeling had come over me one evening after I had had my lonesome supper. It being a bright cold moon shiny evening, I decided to walk home. When I reached there, after a short visit, I told my sisters and brothers to hang up their stockings and I told them that I was going to Waubeka and would order Santa Claus to see them. At Vermuth's Store in the village I bought a pair of white cotton stockings for Mary, a blue hair ribbon for Emma, a red one for Louisa, a pen knife for Henry and some kind of toy for Charley.

When I reached home again the family was in bed. After placing the gifts in the stockings, I walked back to my place of residence at the Meyers. After reaching there, having done my kindly deed and walked six miles, all traces of homesickness were gone.

This was the only time in our home that Santa Claus stockings were hung. Father and Mother no doubt thought it a foolish thing, but the recipients of the small gifts were probably pleased and happy.

As the dance was going to be in Saukville, Christmas evening, Mary and I were all ready in the afternoon. We knew it would take several hours to get there. Mother has the teakettle on, ready to give John some coffee and cookies, when lo and behold, a wagon full of young people drove into our yard.

Kate Keefe and her young man were seated on the front seat, he being the driver, two other couples sitting on the back seats and one seat left for John and me. As John jumped out, Father went to meet him, I suppose to tell him Mary was going along. John came in. Mother invited him to have a cup of coffee, but he refused.

There was room for three of us on one seat. When we got to Waubeka we picked up Almeda Turner and her young man, who sat behind us.

They stopped at different taverns where John would get out and walk in. From the third he came out with Reinhold Carmen. A board was put behind us for Mary and Reinhold. We were now ready to proceed on our journey.

I knew there must have been some eyes made and some smiles at these unexpected performances. The young men had all been soldiers so the singing was war songs, all of which I knew, but I could not get myself to join, feeling very much embarrassed.

When we got to the hall, many were already there and more coming all the time. The other girls, who had come with us, had combs and did their hair over and tied blue or red ribbons around their heads for ornaments. Mary and I had done our hair at home and had just black ribbons to hide the elastic of our nets. Besides we had not thought of bringing combs.

When the music started we formed in line for the grand march, John and I at the head of the procession. I was very proud of him, tall and straight, and the best looking man there. But my heart was beating loud enough to be heard, I thought, for I had never even seen a grand march performed. How was I ever going to get through with it? Still, with his help, it went all right to the very end.

Then came the first dance, which was a quadrille -- the four couples in our group were Kate Keefe and her man, Almeda Turner and hers, Mary and Carman, John and I. At the "All hands round" someone stepped on my skirt, which I had made quite long thinking it would make me look a little more grown-up. It tore a few inches below the belt and dragged on the floor. I quickly picked it up and had to leave, and John following took me to the kitchen to find someone to help me repair the damage. I was taken upstairs to a bedroom, given a needle, thread and thimble where I made the repairs. When I had finished John came and got me again.

We girls were a lot of crinolined creatures. The boys were all ex-soldiers, as I mentioned before, so a good deal was being made of them. While in Chicago, I had vowed I would never marry a man unless he had been a soldier, but I could not get myself to make a fuss over them as the other girls were doing.

There was one girl, with her hair all in curls, who ran around from one to the other, sitting on their laps and saying, "When you were leaving for the war I said 'when you come back, I'll kiss everyone of you.'" I might, perhaps, have been a little more demonstrative, had I not had a chaperone to keep me in order.

Before going to Chicago, Father had often spoken of having me take dancing and music lessons, but those instructions I had missed, owing probably to the hard time brought on by the war. I was getting my first lessons in dancing this evening. In spite of telling everyone who asked me to dance that I could not, they would say, "Well, but you want to learn, don't you?" or "Come on, I'll teach you." and before the end of the evening I wasn't doing so badly.

Then came the banquet. Everyone who came to that table seemed to have a good appetite except me. My stomach seemed to be turned around. John heaped my plate with turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, meat dressing, and good vegetables, but to save myself I could do no more than just taste of the food. He wanted to know what was the matter, "Why aren't you eating?" I had to say something, so I said, "I can never eat so late at night." When the coffee came, I just drank a cup of black coffee without sugar. John just looked disgusted.

When the musicians were eating, our group formed "all hands round" and played the game "Happy is the miller who lives by himself, As the wheel goes round, he gathers up the chaff, One hand in the hopper, the other in the bag, as the wheel goes round, he cries out 'grab'". The one in the center of the ring, would grab one from the circle to take his place and he would again join the circle.

When I had been grabbed, I quickly made up my mind it was my duty to grab John, which I did. Soon the dancing commenced again.

Unfortunately toward the end of the dance Reinhold Carman and I danced twice in succession and being the only man I was intimately acquainted with, we happened to have something to laugh about which seemed to offend John. When we got into the wagon to go home, he was not with our crowd. As I turned around to look for him, I saw he was on horse-back. However, we got home safely and Mary and I were too tired to even make remarks.

The next morning Mary got up before I did. I stayed in bed until late in the afternoon. When I did get up, Mother had been told how things were the night before, so I was spared the questioning.

This week was vacation for me, for which I was almost sorry.

To show the family I did not regret how things had gone at the dance, I constantly sang the tunes of the dances I had learned there and other songs. If anybody thought I had fallen in love they were mistaken!

Chapter XXV

The Year 1866

After New Year's Day I went back to my Bavarians.

After the school day was over, was the time to do the cleaning in my room and prepare my evening meal, which in the beginning of the week was warming up something Mother had kindly cooked for me. This usually was used up by the middle of the week. Then I had to cook potatoes. Sometimes I peeled and sliced them, which I thought would go faster but which I remember eating while they were still half raw, because I could not get the stove to give enough heat to bake them, the wood being still green, as a rule. Before the end of the term I had learned to dry the wood in the oven and under the stove while I was cooking, and I became more of an expert at cooking.

After supper I washed the breakfast and supper dishes and those of dinner, for I sometimes came home at noon and baked pancakes, that is, when I had nothing I could take along.

When the dishes were washed and it was pleasantly warm in the room, I took out some papers and magazines I had brought from Chicago and read. Often I would have a musical spell and set a poem to music and sing it. This, as I soon heard, gave pleasant entertainment to the family downstairs.

The Meyers were a very hospitable family, a trait of the Bavarians. Seldom an evening passed without having some of their neighbors and friends in. Often the room was crowded. I had a general invitation, so whenever I got tired of entertaining myself, I joined them downstairs and was always heartily welcomed.

It pleased them that I was trying to learn their dialect, and I soon succeeded. They would try me out by talking very fast to see whether I understood. I understood it from the very beginning and soon learned to converse with them in their own tongue.

At the end of the evening Mrs. Meyer usually had a cup of tea or bouillion and a piece of bread for refreshment. With tea there would be pumpkin jam, or syrup with bread, otherwise just dry bread. This was usually served on the bare table. I always enjoyed it to the full. After this I would go up and get into my soft bed.

During these evenings I got all the news going round. One evening it was that two young men whose family had lived in the neighborhood had come back from Minnesota to look for a wife for the younger brother, the older being a married man. The topic for quite some time hereafter was the girls upon whom they had called and the question as to which one would be chosen.

I, for one, had not been at all interested in this topic and indeed was beginning to get somewhat bored by it. One afternoon there was a rap at the school door and upon opening it I found two young men. The older one introduced his brother and himself as the Kelb brothers. What could I do but ask them to be seated. They stayed about an hour or so and then left.

When I got home and was halfway upstairs, Mrs. Meyer came out of her room quite excitedly, telling me, "You are going to have company this evening. The Kelb brothers were here. You are the one they have chosen." "Oh," said I, "isn't that nice." I hurried up, started to get my room in order and was all ready, except pouring out the dishwater and drying the spider when I heard them coming upstairs. The dishpan and spider went under the bed, but my kitchen apron had to stay on. I let them in, gave them chairs, and they seated themselves at the table. The older one, the better looking one, said they had something to tell me, so I also seated myself.

The older one, who did all the talking (the younger one just ogling at me), started by saying, "You have probably heard why we are here. My brother so far has not found a girl he could like enough to marry until he saw you." Then he gave me a long lingo that his brother was independent, that he had a farm with a home on it in Minnesota. He would be easy enough to get along with. I thought to myself that he looked "dumb" enough to. The older brother continued that he liked neither sauer kraut nor onions (which I liked much) and said a lot more along this line. When, after about an hour, the older one popped the question, would I be willing to marry his brother, I made it a positive "NO". I might have added, were the older one, the one who wanted me, there might perhaps be a chance, but not for the younger one.

That evening there was great commotion downstairs, but I did not go down. I stayed upstairs and sang.

The next morning on my way to school the Kelb brothers met me at the gate and walked to school with me, pleading all the way. At parting I again told them it was "No." They said they would come again in a week or two, but they did not.

This caused a lot of gossip, many blaming me, thinking I had missed a chance I would regret someday, for the Kelb's were a fine family and very wealthy. At the end of the week when I got home, the family did not look so pleased. The story of the Kelb's, somewhat distorted, had preceded me. I had to straighten it out, which was followed by a great deal of advice to be more careful.

A few weeks later, a group of young people had arranged a party at the Weimar saloon in Waubeka. To this I received an invitation. As it was to be on Saturday, I wanted to go, my reason being to practice dancing. The people at home were not so willing to let me go, but finally Father decided he would take me.

When we got there, a young man by the name of Joe Wagner, made himself my partner. We had known each other when we were children, meeting on the way to school, I going to the Public School and he to the German, at Little Kohler. Now he was partner in the grist mill in Waubeka with John Keefe. They both boarded with John's half-brother.

Soon John came with a girl. It was a very pleasant affair, not overcrowded and all the better people present. When Father got tired of watching me dance and saw that everything was all right, he left for home, saying he would send the boys for me a little after twelve.

A light supper was served, at which I sat between the two, Joe and John. John whispered that he could not see me home, that he had felt in duty bound to take this girl, who was working for his sister-in-law and was a stranger. He asked permission to come to see me at my boarding place the next evening, for which I gave him permission.

Soon after this my brothers came. I was good and tired and willing to go home.

Sunday I got up earlier for I had to do my packing. I had to carry a bundle of clothes and the food Mother had prepared. I started on my way about four o'clock in the afternoon. Of all the weary tramps of three miles this was about the hardest of my experience. Off and on I could go no further and had to lean against a tree for a minutes rest. Yet the place was reached safely. Then the getting ready for company, for which I waited until after nine o'clock. Then I decided that John, too, was probably too tired to make it.

The following evening he came on horse back. I had to receive him in my bedroom, which I knew my parents would object to, but wasn't it my kitchen also? Besides how terribly out of place we would have felt downstairs with the people.

I entertained him by showing him some of the old newspapers and magazines I had brought from Chicago. He noticed some books I was studying which were on my table. To me, the two hours or so had passed most pleasantly, but I felt he might have been somewhat bored. I realized that I never had had any practice in entertaining young men.

Whenever Joe and John became angry at us girls, they would say they were going to see the Widow Ingersoll. Later on I learned she always served them tea and cookies or cake. Well, I was glad they had found such a place. She had two small sons. I saw her once at a dance. She was about thirty then, rather comely, and wore a light blue ornament hanging over one ear.

In later years when we had moved into a new house at West Bend, our next-door

neighbor was a Mrs. Mary McHenry, a woman eighty years of age. We became quite intimate acquaintances. One day while visiting across the fence, it came to me that there was something in her features which reminded me of someone I had seen before. I asked, "Mrs. McHenry, did you ever know a young man by the name of John Keefe?" She looked at me in surprise and answered, "Yes, I did." Did you know him?" Then I said yes, that we were schoolmates and added, "So you were the widow Ingersoll whom John used to visit!" She said, "So that was it," and laughed, adding "He was a nice boy alright."

Some time after this I called on her one evening. Somehow we got on the subject of the Civil War. I asked her to tell me the story of her first husband going to the War. This she willingly did. "When the war first started," she said, "he felt it his duty to go. So before I knew it, he had enlisted for a year. He thought it would not last longer than a year. When he returned he found that the farm had been somewhat neglected, for I had done all the work that I could and had not been able to hire anyone. The house needed repairs and a new barn had to be built. It was a very busy year for us."

"Then the drafting began," she continued. "My husband vowed he would not go as a drafted man, so he enlisted again. When he came home dressed in his soldier's uniform to say good by to his family, the youngest boy, three years old, did not recognize his father. As he picked him up to kiss him the boy cried."

Mrs. McHenry said, "Again I was left alone to do the work on the farm, but this time the boys were a little older. Yet, this at times seemed even worse than before, for when I left them alone to get the cattle, they often got into mischief. One evening, when the cattle had strayed farther away than usual, I told the boys I would be gone longer, that they would have to be good boys and not play with knives, the ax, or the hatchet."

"When I came back I found them both crying and the older boy bleeding. He had tried to chop some kindling wood for me. Being barefooted, he had chopped off his big toe. When I examined it I found it was still hanging on a bit of flesh and skin, so I washed it, put it in place, tying it with clean strips of white cloth. It actually healed. That was the worst happening during the year."

"For several months I got no letters from my husband and finally did not know where his regiment was located. When again I had not heard in a year, I finally got a message, not written in his hand. Trembling, I opened it. It told me that he was sick in a hospital in Chicago and very anxious to see me. It also gave me directions on how to get there. I hastily got ready and went to my next door neighbor to get her to take care of my children, then took the first train from Port Washington to Chicago."

"When I entered the hospital and asked about my husband they said yes, he was here and had been very sick. Yes, I could see him. They took me to a room in which

there were a number of coffins, and showed me one coffin. When they opened it, I saw it was he. I was left alone in the room for awhile. When the man came in again, I asked him the quickest way I could get home. Upon inquiry, he told me a freighter would leave in about an hour and a half. Would I be willing to travel on that? I told him I would. I was told my husband had been very anxious to see his wife before he died."

"It was a sad journey by night and twelve o'clock when we reached Port Washington. I found myself alone on the pier with my husband in his coffin. It took me a little while to collect my thoughts. What to do was the next question."

"He had an older brother living on a farm a mile from Port Washington. That was where I would go. When I got there it was my husband's brother who opened the door. It was sad news I was bringing. My sister-in-law also got up, made me a cup of hot tea and made me go to bed. The brother and some neighbors went immediately to get the coffin and the next morning we were taken home."

One night at ten o'clock on coming upstairs after a visit with the people downstairs, I was just preparing to go to bed, when I heard someone coming upstairs hurriedly. On opening the door there stood Mary, pale and trembling, with a basket of provisions on her arm. All she could say was, "I was lost, I was lost." She told me how she had left home about half past four. They had given her directions how to get to me, but when she came to where the road forked in three directions, she had forgotten and walked until she came to a cedar swamp, where the road seemed to have come to an end. Then she had to walk all the distance back and she didn't know which of the two remaining roads was the right one. But this time she guessed right and at last found the place.

I wanted to give her something to eat, but she said she had eaten before leaving home. All she wanted was to get into bed. The next day, although it was Saturday, I had to teach for there was school every other Saturday in those days.

When I came home at noon Mary was up, had the table set and things she had brought warmed up, so we had a good meal and an enjoyable visit. That evening we walked home together.

At last this long winter came to an end. In my work I had been very successful. At least so everyone told me. Immediately upon reaching home, I found the prospect of teaching school for the summer three miles east of us. In this district the old schoolhouse had just been torn down and they were starting to build a new one. The school was to be taught in an empty room frame building. As I went to get my contract, I also looked for a boarding place, but I found nobody would take me in. After having applied at five different places I later discovered they all thought I looked too "Swell". They were all afraid of me although I was dressed in the plainest way.

Then I determined to board at home, thinking it wouldn't be too hard to walk six miles per day.

When I found some of the girls in Waubeka, now having received their certificates, had applied for the school, I felt very fortunate for having been the lucky one.

The first day I entered the house in which I was to teach, I found it not overly clean! The furniture was a small table, some low benches and a decrepit old chair which was, I suppose, meant for the teacher.

There was a pump near the house. I would have liked to have washed the windows had I had rags. As it was, I could not even do the dusting.

Fifteen pupils enrolled the first day. Two of them were step-children of my old teacher, Mr. Tolleth, who had married a widow, Mrs. Follett. The girl was named Diana and the boy Samuel. They were Scotch and were the head class, all the others being younger. If they were the most intelligent of the pupils, they were also the hardest to discipline.

After awhile, with the help of the pupils, I got the room cleaned. I tried to get members of the board to furnish us with the blackboard and dictionary but found it impossible for those things were packed away behind the desk and other school furnishings in a barn.

I found the three mile walk every morning most interesting. It was in April and when the flowers were beginning to come out along the roadside, especially where it led through the forest. The different kinds of birds were just arriving and with their songs were very entertaining.

One morning I had not felt like eating breakfast. When I had covered about half the distance I started eating my noon lunch, so before reaching my destination the two bread and butter sandwiches and the hard boiled egg were gone. When the noon hour was approaching, I was again hungry and wondered how I would stand the fasting before reaching home again. An invitation to dinner came from the house across the road from the school. They were a Welch family named Huges, who lived on a rented farm in a large frame house, still almost perfectly new. Three of their children were pupils of mine -- Sophy 10, Joey 8, and little Helen 6. Besides these there were Thomas, usually called Tommy, and Jennie, two years younger than I. They were one of the families I had asked to board with. They had by this time gotten over the idea of being afraid of me.

I had a good dinner and a merry time getting acquainted with the whole family. I told them how their invitation had saved my life, for without it I would probably have had a fainting spell before getting home. Those long trips were sometimes shortened by a mile or two by a team going to Port Washington with a load. Then, too, in

a great while some interesting person would be met, which would help to break the monotony of the way. One evening on the road through the forest going home, I met two interesting looking men going to Port Washington. One stood still and gazed at me, but I kept on going so he did not speak. Upon reaching home, Mother asked me whether I had not met Marcellin Audier. He had been with the doctor from Port Washington. They had been to see the Frenchman who had by this time moved to Waubeka and who was very sick. After that they had called on Mother and Father. I was sorry I had not recognized him. He, not having seen me since a child, had not recognized me either.

Then there was the elderly Catholic priest who lived in the parsonage at Holy Cross. On his way to services at Little Kohler and back, we often met and were on greeting terms. One afternoon, when he saw me go into Hughe's he stopped his horse near the gate and entered, telling Mrs. Hughes he had for a long time wanted to meet the people who lived in this nice house. Mainly I knew he had come in to get a better look at me, for he had not been able to see my face, owing to the shaker I wore.

After talking to me in French about the weather, I still being able to understand the language but not able to speak it very well; upon leaving he shook hands and in parting said, "Vous etes jolie comme un ange." (You are as lovely as an angel). Being so taken aback and not knowing what to say, I said, "Monsieur, vous etes tres complaisant." He seemed to be pleased. It meant, "You are very kind, sir."

In the month of June when the weather was getting hot and dry, I reached home one day, worn and dusty. After taking off my shaker and slinging it over a chair, I stood in a disconsolate mood at the window, wondering what life was all about anyway. A click of the gate caused me to look up. There was a peddler coming in. Mother, who had been working at the kitchen table, always a friend of peddlers, handed him a low bench. He opened his pack and in a cheery way commenced to show and to praise its contents.

He tried to interest me in some of his articles, but I having no money, could not let myself get interested. Mother spent her last few pennies on some shoestrings and thread. After convincing him she could buy no more, he started to repack. When he came to a card with some earrings he held them up to me. They were a plain ring with a red glass ball the size of a large currant or small cherry, dangling from the ring. He closed his pack and kept on trying to induce me to buy them. Then he tried Mother again. She surely would have bought them only she did not have the cash. Finally he got up, his pack on his back. In passing me he laid the card with the earrings on the window sill beside me saying, "They are made for you. They will match the color of your cheeks." He was a nice looking young Jew and I did not have the courage to insult him by throwing them back at him. This little gift cheered me, although I thought at first they were brass. But the rings did not corrode so they must have been of a better material. For years and years I never wore them, but they often reminded me of that peddler.

After the first breaking of bread with the Hughes, I found them to be true friends indeed. Although they did not own their own home, their standard of living was above that of their neighbors. I was often invited to come in and sometimes after school went in without being invited. Mrs. Hughes and I would have a cup of tea. What made these visits most interesting was that she could or pretended to be able to tell fortunes by the tea leaves at the bottom of the cup.

Of all the things she told me, I only remember one, which she foretold more than once. That was that I would marry a tall man with a dark complexion, dark eyes and a lot of black hair and a black beard.

How that woman found time to spend in a social way, is still a wonder to me. She kept that large house, which had some rooms unfurnished, always in perfect order, did all the sewing for the family by hand. Besides doing the knitting for them, she knitted woolen socks for the stores. She also did the spinning of the wool of their five or six sheep. Besides all this, she milked the three cows morning and evenings, made enough butter for the family and to sell, took care of the chickens, ducks and geese, and during harvest helped in the fields, whenever her help was needed. But whenever I wanted to go to visit the families of some of my pupils she offered to go along and introduce me.

Mr. Hughes was much older than she. He had been married before and had already brought up one family. He was a real farmer, for he surely knew how to make both ends meet. He always had good crops for he knew how to do things right. Of course, the older children were a help, both in and out of doors. All in all they were the finest family I ever met. Though poor, they did not seem so.

Off and on, on a Friday evening, when the following Saturday was an off day, which means there was no school, Jane and Tommie would invite a few of the young people in the neighborhood. The musician would be Theodore Geidel, the Lutheran pastor's son, who could play any instrument but only owned a hand harmonica. Then after supper we would dance in one of the unfurnished rooms. Our refreshments would be a large white pitcher of fresh water, which the Germans called "Gaense Wein". (Goose Wine) We usually made racket enough to keep Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, who usually retired early, awake.

At the end of the first party, the question came up, how was I to get home. Tommy wanted to hitch up the horses and take me, but I positively refused that. When I said I wanted to walk, he wanted to walk home with me but I also refused him. Theodore Geidel lived a mile and half away on the same road. After some discussion, this was settled and Tommy just walked to the gate with me and turned me over to Theodore. All the way to Theodore's place there were no houses but from his place on, which was right across from the Gatfield's, there were houses quite close together -- the Welches, Mooneys, and others. I never being afraid, got home safely.

The last week of my term, a girl named Augusta, whose acquaintance I had made and who had kindly entertained me at coffee at her home several times, came to the school house one morning. She asked me would I write a letter for her to a young man in Cedarburg with whom she had gotten acquainted while working there.

After telling me what it was all about, I knew it would have to be a love letter. I had written a few letters to soldier boys before, but a real love letter I had never done. It was getting time to call school so I told her to come back at four o'clock and I'd see what I could do for her.

Then, when she returned, I tried to persuade her not to send the letter I had written, before handing it to her, for I didn't think it was the right thing for a girl to tell a man she loved him, but for her to wait until he came to her. She promised to think about it. The next time I met her, she admitted she had not copied the letter but sent it off the way it was written, and was now anxiously waiting for an answer.

A few weeks after, when we met again, with tears rolling down her cheeks, she told me he had written her that he was married. Four years later, Augusta got married. The very day after, the young man (to whom I had written my first love letter) came as a widower to propose to Augusta. This proved too much for her. For several weeks she was out of her mind, but when I visited her some years later I found her a good true wife, housekeeper and mother of a family.

Even before the close of this term our district had decided to have a two month's summer school and that I was to teach it. This would keep me busy during the usual two vacation months -- July and August. I was very happy getting back to our own district with the pupils, who with their parents, were all friends of mine.

The first month had passed. Even the Fourth of July was over. Then one Sunday morning Minna Beger, my good former schoolmate, who was working in Waubeka called and asked me to go to church with her in Fillmore. Dressing in a hurry, I was soon ready. The church was the German Lutheran. This was the church I mainly attended when I did go to church. Reverend Geidel was the pastor, the father of Theodore. About his sermon I do not remember but what took most of my attention that day was the picture of Martin Luther hanging right over the pastor's head behind the altar, with the quotation:

"Wer nicht liebt wein, weib and Gesang,
Der bleibt ein Narr sein Lebenlang."

(Who loves not wine, wife and song,
Remains a fool, his whole life long.)

I was only casually acquainted with some of the Fillmore people, but I always enjoyed meeting them.

After church Minna wanted to go to see the Jaenig's with whom she was distantly related. Before leaving, Mrs. Jaenig wanted us to look at her garden in the back yard. The Yaenigs were the brewery people and a dance hall was built onto the back of the house. The door being open, Minna led the way back through that hall. Halfway through, the door in front opened and a young man, named Vincent Mischuck, passed us. We both knew him slightly and greeted him. Just as we reached the road, Minna looked at me and said, "My goodness, he never looked at me! He just looked at you," to which I answered, "What of it, we passed so fast he probably didn't have time to look at you." We went to her home, had dinner there and I spent the rest of the afternoon with the Beger's.

This young man, Vincent Mischuck, whom we had met, had lived at the Julius Klessig place for the last six or seven years, an exile from his home in Germany. He was said to have been sent from home by his father because he had finished his studies as a Catholic priest and then had refused to be ordained as such. Coming over here and finding nothing he could do, he made his home at the Klessig's. Whether he helped on the farm or paid board and room, I do not know. He never mixed with the young people and I had only met him on the road several times, even before I went to Chicago and had never taken any interest in him whatever.

Suddenly there came the news that his father had died and had willed him $7,000.00, so he bloomed out in perfectly new clothes, and was soon the owner of a buggy and white horse, everything of the best.

For a time he now called at our house very often and his rig, being seen by the neighbors and passers by caused the rumor to get about that he was calling on me. One Sunday dinner Father and Mother invited him and Julius Klessig. Mother had prepared a very tasty lamb roast dinner; I, of course, was informed what it was about. Mr. Mischuck had provided the bottle of wine for the repast. During all this time, including dinner, I had kept in the bedroom. Nor did I especially dress or try to beautify myself for the occasion. Finally Father, Mother and Mr. Klessig went out to look at the orchard and the garden. Before Mother left me she told me to come out which I did. Had I been a little older, when he put the question to me, I would probably have asked him to give me time to get better acquainted with him, but as it was, I was only thinking that if I acquiesced, I would be doing a great favor to Father and Mother, because I knew they were anxious that I should marry this man. So, I said "yes" to his proposal.

There was something about me, so he did not dare take me in his arms and kiss me, he just merely shook hands. Then, without saying another word, we walked out, took the path down the hill in the meadow. During this walk I felt it no more than right, being engaged to him, to put my hand on his arm. In this way we walked back up to the house and found the others ready to congratulate us. There being some wine left, a glass was poured for each and a toast "Hoch" was drunk. Everybody was merry except I myself, who seemed to be in a daze.

After this he came every morning with a bouquet of flowers to take me to school. After this week he had decided to take me to Milwaukee to buy the wedding clothes. This would take two days, for the trip was to be made by team. I decided not to teach on Friday and to make up the day at the end of the term.

It was about ten o'clock when we started from home. In Waubeka he stopped at the blacksmith to see that the horses' feet were shod all right. Then we started off on the long trip. He sometimes asked me if I had nothing to say, to which I would shake my head in the negative. If I said nothing, I did a lot of thinking. At noon we stopped at a saloon, "Der Braune Hirsch", (which later gave its name to the small town of Brown Deer). Here he had a glass of beer and I one of lemonade.

It must have been about four o'clock when we reached Milwaukee. Upon entering the city, the horse being tired, we went rather slow. Passing one of the houses where three young girls were seated on the shady side on the steps, one dressed in pink, one in light blue, and the other in a black and white check, doing some fancy work and looking so happy and content, a feeling of envy swept through me. It reminded me of my last summer in Chicago, when I had sat among a group of young girls on Randolph Street across from the Briggs House, making bead collars or crochet work. Now here I was all dusty and hot, sitting beside a man I was engaged to but for whom I did not care.

We had no dinner but I was not hungry. At the hotel I washed and combed and took off my dress and dusted it, after which I felt better and reimbursed myself with courage to go on with the ordeal before me.

Then Mr. Mischuck took me to see some of his friends. We visited three families, all young people. They were all of the better class of people, which showed me why he had not sought to mix in with people where we lived. At the last place where we visited they were a newly married couple. The husband had not yet come home from work and the young wife was just setting the table for supper with a beautiful white tablecloth, napkins and beautiful dishes.

She kindly invited us to partake of the meal with them, but Mr. Mischuck politely refused saying we were staying at the hotel and would have our meal there. Then we walked back to the hotel and had our supper. The rest of the evening we spent on the porch watching people going in and out and later in the front room for an hour or so.

What I remember best of this evening was a group of musicians coming in for a stop over with a nice sort of woman among them, so efficiently advising them. She must have been the wife of the band leader. I liked the way she talked to them and advised them.

When it was bedtime Mr. Mischuck got the clerk to go up with us. The clerk unlocked my bedroom door and Mischuck and I kissed good night. The clerk handed the key to me. I went in and locked the door from the inside. Saying a prayer that God would give me strength to do what was right and being tired enough, I slept all night without dreaming.

The next morning we had breakfast with the members of the band, which made it a pleasant meal. Then we walked to one of the big dry goods stores to select the goods for my wedding dress. When I said "a brown" he bothered me a lot by wanting me to tell what kind of brown -- a coffee or a nut brown, a dark or a light brown. I said, "I don't know. I want to see all the browns and select." The clerk piled all the browns he had on the counter and without any particular fuss I soon had selected a dark brown, rather an expensive piece of goods. How many yards I do not remember.

From there he took me to a milliner and introduced me to a clerk. Mischuck excused himself and told me to wait while he attended to some business. The woman, who seemed the proprietress took me to a counter loaded with beautiful hats and told me to try them on and make my own selection, she being busy with earlier customers.

I could see they were expensive hats and for the first time in my life I was allowed to choose without bothering about the price, which showed me the advantage of belonging to a rich man.

When the woman found the time to come and wait on me, she said, "Oh, any hat would become you. Have you any preference?" I asked her the price. She said they were from three and one-half to ten dollars apiece. I showed her the one I had thought of taking -- a white fluffy neatly trimmed one and put it on again. She told me this one was five dollars. She then picked up some of the ten dollar hats, but I told her they had too much trimming. It was put in a box but she did not cover the box and I sat down and waited for my man. I did not have to wait long. He was pleased with the hat when I put it on and also seemed pleased with the price when he paid.

By the time we got back to the hotel, it was about 10:00 o'clock and time to start back. He ordered a light lunch after which he took out a light parcel and handing it to me, said he had bought a special present to give to me. Then he went to get the horse and buggy. I found the special present to be half a dozen black lace silk gloves with half fingers. This I thought would give me something to give to Mary and to Mother. It also reminded me that Mother had sometimes talked of buying gloves by the dozen or half dozen in Europe.

Passing through a small village in passing a certain house, he mentioned they made good sausage there. Had I said the word, he would have stopped and bought some. But I was not interested in sausages. As I did not respond he turned around and looked longingly at the place. This gave me the idea that he must be fond of good things to eat. Being of the corpulent type, I had thought of this before, but had not been quite sure.

Mischuck was not a bad looking man, but rather good looking. He had bright intelligent eyes, dark blue, dark brown hair and a smooth face, with a light tan skin in the summer. He had beautiful hands that showed they had never done hard work, and small feet. He had shown me the picture of an only sister, who was very good looking and the same type as he.

Thinking things over, whatever he could see in me I could not understand for he came of an aristocratic family. That he could take to Father and Mother was probably the foreign bringing up they had. Father he had known for a long time, but with Mother he had only of late become acquainted.

We reached home about six o'clock. Mother was just getting supper but he would not stay.

The next day was Sunday. I got up late and in the early afternoon who should come to see us but Adolph Hempstead. I was so glad to see him. We had not seen each other except on the road, off and on. When Mother said "I suppose you came to congratulate Mathilde," he admitted he had, with a weird peculiar smile on his face, so I thanked him by shaking his hand heartily.

That lank ill-dressed young man, whose father had intended to be a lawyer and had promised him to me as a husband, was now considered as part idiot. He did not seem that to me just now. I got him to talking about happy childhood days and that I would always think of him as our first playmate after we came to this home. This seemed to please him very much. We sat outside near the door where it was cool and shady. We were talking and laughing for about an hour and a half when the rattling of the wheels inside the yard told who was coming. Then Adolph left.

I now got ready to take a drive. This time it was to Fillmore. About four o'clock we stopped at Gruhle's, who kept a store and a saloon, for a cup of coffee, bread and butter, and sardines, the first time I had ever tasted that kind of delicacy. I had to watch and see how one ate them, but I did not let on that they were strange to me. I found them very good. We drove around until it was getting dark and then headed for home.

Before leaving, Mischuck told us the coming week he would have to spend in Milwaukee on business for there was a lot of red tape connected with that inheritance of his.

I had looked forward to a week of peace and it was, except that a letter came every day and such letters, beautifully written in German. So full of faith, love and promises for good and what not all, but the sweeter they were, the less I cared for them.

Next Sunday we took a drive to Saukville, stopping at a tavern in the village and had coffee there also. As we were leaving some Port Washington people came in who recognized me. They looked as though they were anxious to speak to me, but I hurried on. Later I heard they had been pleased to see me with such a fine looking young man.

The next morning I hurried off to school earlier than usual so I would not have to drive with him. Right after school was called, he came in and laid the bouquet of flowers before me on the desk, just nodded "good morning" and he left.

I was now beginning to feel I just could not keep on. That I must put an end to this affair, I knew. I had felt that way from the beginning but had tried my best to "stick it out". So when he again had gone to Milwaukee, I responded to the last of his letters explaining the best I knew how that I was breaking off the engagement. I had told Mother that I was doing this, but she did not believe me. When I told Father he advised me not to do it, that I could get used to his ways and that money would do a lot to smooth matters over. That had he always had money enough, much trouble that he and Mother had had, they would have been spared. But I knew that money would not help me, so I concluded my writing and sent it.

About three days after, Mr. Mischuck came to the house. He wanted to know what had he done to offend me, what he had missed doing, or what could he do? I told him he wasn't to blame, that I had made up my mind not to get married just yet. I wanted to return the things he had bought for me, but he took that as an insult, saying I should at least think enough of him to keep those little gifts. This had been a trying hour and having it over, I did not feel any better, for now my conscience was beginning to hurt.

A few days after this a letter came addressed to me from Oconomowoc, seriously advising me against marrying this man, for although he had money enough now, how long would it last? He had never done a stroke of work to earn a cent and although he was planning to start in business, if he had any business ability, would he not have tried to earn his living long before this? Worst of all, it said, he was in the habit of drinking. A lot more was written, but this letter was signed "from a friend". I had never heard of anyone having seen him drunk, but the letter was a consolation to me. It made me feel more sure that I had done the right thing and also showed me and my people that perhaps it was for the better that everything had happened as it had.

A short time after this, one night the dogs were barking their fiercest. Father asked Mary and me to go out and see what the trouble might be. We went out and got on the fence between the front and the cattle yards. The dogs, Fawnie and Ziemer, came to us, trying to reach us on the fence. They anxiously seemed to want to tell us something. We spoke to them, and petted them but could not understand what they wanted to explain to us. Then we walked all around the back yard, but the dogs kept barking toward the road. Finally Mary said, "It must be ghosts they

are seeing." "Yes," I said, "perhaps evil spirits." We went back in, reporting there was nothing wrong that we could find.

The next morning, when the pigs were being fed, a dozen or more of the loveliest young pigs were missing. Thinking they had strayed out of the yard we were sent to hunt for them. Coming back at noon, we reported we had not been able to find a trace of them. We kept on hunting for another day or two. Father came home from his work, saying he had figured it out. The pigs had been stolen. There had been a cattle market in Saukville the day the pigs were missing. He ordered Mother to get ready and take Louisa along and they would go and inquire there. They did not come back until the next day. They had discovered that the pigs had been taken to the fair and sold. We had had a man working for us off and on. Between times he had been working for the Hempsteads and other neighbors, and now he was working for a man, whose name I do not recall, across the river from Waubeka, so the thievery was traced to the two. Some of the pigs were traced and returned to Father. The workman, not being able to pay, was put in jail for three months. What they did to his boss I do not remember. This proved quite a loss to us, because these pigs were a rare breed, and Father was raising them to sell. I never cared for pigs, but I did admire these.

About a week after this I received a letter from Supt. Gannon from Cedarburg telling me of a district where the people wanted a teacher for the winter who knew German. Having recommended me, he asked me to go to see them as soon as I could. This school was miles away. The next day I started out on my "adventure", as I called it, right after dinner. I walked a mile east, then turned the corner of the Sheboygan Road, and walked several miles north, then turning east again, I came to the home of one of the Geidel girls, who was now married. She had been one of the two older girls, who had attended school when I was a child, had curled my hair and played with me and gotten me into mischief. She was now married to a farmer and we had renewed acquaintanceship when with Mrs. Hughes I had visited her some weeks before. She was very glad to see me and it being supper time, invited me to partake of this meal with her. Her husband was absent and would not be home overnight. Having only one bed, this made it possible for me to spend the night with her. As she said, her little boy six months old would not object to having me sleep with them. I took it all in good faith, for the people I wanted to see were still miles away.

Then the next morning after breakfast, I started out again.

It was past noon hour when I found the home of the Clerk of the school. His wife had just cleared the table and washed the dishes. She said I would have to wait as he was not at home. Then she got out the churn, went down cellar and brought up the cream. She sat a little way opposite from me and started churning, telling me as soon as her butter came she would make me a cup of coffee and give me a lunch. But that butter did not seem to want to come. After hours had passed, and I felt I was near to starvation, she was still thump, thump, thumping. Alas, I knew she was not to blame for that cream not turning into butter.

Finally she got up, went and looked out of the window towards the field for quite awhile. Then she returned to her churn, I could see she had been weeping. I commenced to ask questions. "Where had her husband gone? and when did she expect him to return?" After a regular crying spell, taking out her handkerchief and wiping her face, she told me she had a son about seventeen years of age by a former marriage who did not get along well with his stepfather and that today they had had one of their regular quarrels. The boy had picked up a rope and run away into the woods. She supposed her husband had been trying to find him. It was now fast going onto evening, and I, wishing to get home, thought it best to start. I consoled the poor woman as best I knew how, telling her to ask her husband to let me know if he wanted me to come again.

When I reached Ida Geidel's place I went in and begged for a piece of bread and butter but I did not tell her my experience at the Clerk's place. I walked on until I reached the marsh road which led through a thick forest. This was a long stretch -- I do not know how many miles. It was a corduroy road -- very narrow and dark. I have mentioned before, that I was never afraid. There was no moonlight to remind me of the little poem Mrs. Bach had taught me: "Ach wie scheint der Mond so hell, Und wie reiten die Toten so schnell" (Oh how shines the moon so bright, and how fast the dead do ride).

The road was narrow and dark and it was hard to jump from log to log. Suddenly the thought came that that boy might be hanging either on one or the other side of the road and I could not get rid of this thought.

Not wishing to see him if he did, I looked straight ahead of me and kept going as fast as I could. Fear surely had gripped me and after awhile I wondered would I ever get out of this dark woods and would my hair have turned white when I did come out?

When finally I reached the open, I was wet with perspiration and weak from fear.

When, some miles from here I passed the houses of friends, I might have entered any of them and been welcomed, but decided to walk on, even though ghosts seemed to be following me. On reaching home, how welcome was the familiar bark of Fawnie, which he gave as a welcome, whenever I came home at night and told the family who was coming in.

It was late and I was hungry. Although I knew there was enough in the cupboard to which I might help myself, I went upstairs to bed.

After several weeks had passed without hearing from the "promised land" I took another day to go adventuring for work for the winter. Toward evening I had accepted a position three miles from home in the Luxembourg District. I was told this would be

a hard school to teach because there were seven big boys who were very unruly. Three of them belonged to the Kultgen family, their father being a brother of the school clerk. The clerk told me if I could manage to board with this family it might be a great help, so I went to see them and they were willing to board me, even free of charge, if I would teach the children German in the evening. But I decided I would board at home as long as the weather would allow, to which they also agreed.

It was a family with many large and small children -- nine of various ages from one year to seventeen.

School started in the middle of September and for six weeks the weather allowed me to board at home. I could make the three miles about half by going crossways through fields and woods and by climbing fences. In the beginning of November I moved in with the Kultgens. I wanted to begin the German lessons right away, but there were no books. They were rather a clean family but without any manners whatever. If I stayed I knew I'd have to adjust myself to their way of living. The oldest daughter, Lisbeth, fifteen years of age who attended school, slept with me.

We all took our lunches to school, so had the dinner in the evening. The third week they had soup one evening. It was a very good beef soup with all kinds of vegetables in it. It had a very savory smell and I was very hungry. Across from Mr. Kultgen I sat, and as he started to dish out plates of soup, a mouse coming through a crack in the ceiling probably attracted by the smell of the food either fell or jumped down into the big bowl of boiling hot soup. Mr. Kultgen with a Luxembourg swear-word, took it by the tail and threw it against the wall. I expected the soup to be spoiled, but he calmly and cooly filled my plate and handed it to me. I could not start eating and waited until all had started to think of something besides the mouse and began to empty my plate. But I refused a second helping and I could not eat anything else. After supper, the thought of that mouse would not leave me, and after awhile I commenced to feel sick and went out and got rid of that soup.

When Friday evening came I went home. I told the Kultgens I would board at home the following weeks, the weather still being nice. I had just a few of my things there so it wasn't hard to carry them home with me.

During that week I went to see Mr. Kultgen, the clerk of the school, and told him they didn't have any German books and they didn't have any in Waubeka, so I had been waiting to get a chance to go to Port Washington. I was sorry but I was thinking of changing boarding places and could he recommend any. He said he would like to have me board with them, but his wife was not well enough. He recommended a family by the name of Matthews, living on the same road as the Kultgen's, a half a mile farther from the school.

The next day I went to see them. I found them rather cluttered up. She having

three small children and a husband troubled with rheumatism, so they could not board me, but rent me a room containing everything but a stove. I was to bring my own bed linen. It was a room upstairs, thoroughly clean and with a perfectly clean strawtick. They would be glad to let me have it free of charge. So that was the place I moved into the next week.

I was sorry for the Kultgens for they took my moving as an insult and this started talk. I did not want to talk about them, but they talked about me a lot and it kept up all winter. It made a lot of trouble in school. The three big boys and Lisbeth who was as tall as I and again as heavy, were positively unmanageable. Whenever I was teaching their little five year old brother, Lisbeth would come and sit on the other side of us. As he was just a beginner and did not know more than his alphabet, she would say whenever he was not able to read a word, "Bist du doch ein dummer Mensch!" (Are you a stupid person!) No matter how politely or kindly I tried to tell her he was only a child, and that he could not learn that way, she kept right on and her brothers would look at her with pleased smiles of encouragement. This, of course, had its evil effect on the other pupils.

After one afternoon recess, the Kultgen boys had incited all the boys except the very little ones, not to come to order, when I called school. I had noticed there was something going, but did not know what it would be. When school was called, the girls taking their places, the boys chasing each other over the benches, some pulling each other's hair and calling each other names, I just sat down and looked at them for awhile, which they did not seem to mind, but kept right on pow-wowing.

Suddenly they moved towards the door, I got ahead of them, turned the key in the lock and put it in my pocket, just looking at them. Three of the bigger ones came towards me. They could easily have pushed me away and that is what I was afraid of, but I just looked at them and said, "You big boys, aren't you ashamed of yourselves? Don't you see that you are not only wasting your time, but that of the other children who are anxious to get at their lessons?" As they stood and looked at me, I said, "Go to your seats and behave yourselves," and they did. The rest of the day was the most perfect day we had had in a long time.

The oldest boy in school, eighteen years old, who was working for the clerk without pay while attending school, was absent today. He was a very good boy and anxious to learn. Had he been present this probably would not have happened.

Seldom a day passed without some disturbance. In the morning I never knew what was before me and after school I always knelt down and prayed, thanking God it had not been worse.

In the month of December one evening about eight o'clock Mother came to the Matthews. She looked worried and told me she had come to tell me that the

Superintendent was in Waubeka and was coming to see me the next morning -- that there was a rumor I always started school late and they were trying to put me out.

The Matthews consoled her and said there would be no such thing -- that I always started early enough to get to school in time. I admitted that twice I had started school after nine o'clock, owing to snowdrifts in the road that had caused me to take a big detour, but that I had made up that time after 4:00 o'clock.

The next morning just as I was calling school together the Superintendent with two teachers whom I had met at examinations and institutes arrived. As they entered the door they all looked at their watches, finding it a little before nine. They looked at each other and nodded, as if to say "All right." Mr. Gannon asked me did I always call school on time. I told him I had missed doing so twice and gave the reason for it. He smiled and after they had examined the copybooks they commenced to examine the school room, the table and benches. The two young men said they believed this was the worst schoolhouse in the county. Mr. Gannon said he did not see how anybody could do much in a place like that. Then all three shook hands, wished me luck, and left. This was really the only day of good order, for the Kultgen children, seeing the Superintendent being kind to me, did not try any of their tricks.

Mimmi Cassel was teaching the school two miles north of here. One evening she came to visit me, so I had her for supper. I baked some biscuits and made tea and she stayed over night with me. When she left she invited me to visit her school. Since the next Saturday was going to be my day off and she was teaching we decided on that day. Her school was opposite one of the richest farmers around there, named Rheingans. I found her school even more disorderly than mine, although the children did not do it out of spite. She seemed to have no order whatever. Even in class when they heard the rattle of a team going by, some of them would run to the window and look out, and then come back to class.

After four o'clock we went to her room, where she, too, was doing her cooking. After a lunch we decided to visit Emaline Daggett, who was teaching the school I had taught in the Bavarian District the year before. It must have been more than two miles away. She also was doing her own cooking in the room I had occupied. We found her in her room. By this time it was dark, but she did not light her lamp; however we had a jolly good visit, which one could always have with Emaline. She told us she liked her school very much and the people in the District, which indeed made me feel I had made a mistake in not taking it again.

I stayed overnight with Mimmi. She had the young woman of the house build her fire in the morning and we stayed in bed until the room was warm. That day, being Sunday, we both went home.

The Cassel's often drove Mimmi to her rooming place on a Sunday afternoon in a little cart drawn by a dog, and would call for her again on Friday. I was very much pleased when one Sunday afternoon they drove me in the little cart to my place.

Several weeks later I was invited to the Krause's who lived on the Fond du Lac Road between the Moody's and the Welche's. To me it seemed a good thing to be invited to the homes of different people, so I accepted readily. Katrina's father was a musician and so was her brother. They were to play at a dance in Newburg and had taken her mother along, so we two were going to be alone in the house over Sunday. It was Saturday evening when I got there.

It was a hard cold winter and there had of late been a lot of snow. Katrina wanted to know how I was getting along at school. When I told her some of my hard luck, she said, "Well, if you had married Mischuck, you'd be in a nice warm place enjoying all the comforts money could give you. Aren't you sorry now that you didn't marry him?" I told her "No. Hard as this winter is, that might be worse." She told me that when she lived in Racine she got acquainted with a blacksmith who was crazy about her and when she left had told her he would wait for her no matter how long. Any time she was ready to marry him, he would be waiting. Years after, after several disappointments, she went back to Racine, I suppose to marry her true love.

There was another nice place where I sometimes visited about a quarter of a mile from the schoolhouse. She was a sister of the Kultgens and had three children at school. Her husband and she were always glad to have me stay for an evening and overnight. They had books and we would read and sing and then have a late lunch before going to bed.

Chapter XXVI

The Year 1867

So the winter passed. When the last day was over, I knelt down beside one of those old benches and prayed long and earnestly, thanking God that I had not been thrown out by those bad boys. Mr. Kultgen was called "Ochsentreiber" (Ox driver), the name he had gotten because he insisted on driving oxen a long time after his neighbors used horses.

I was told even after I left the district he tried his best to give me a bad reputation. I was told nobody was listening to him and that people were telling him they knew he was making up those stories and was hurting himself more than me. It was all the fault of an innocent little mouse.

Father had been elected School Clerk of our district and had already hired the teacher they had had the previous winter for the summer school, so I could not teach that school.

On a Sunday there was a celebration of the new Little Kohler Catholic church. There were going to be people from Port Washington, Holy Cross and other places. I always liked to be in big crowds, so I went. The church was crowded. They also had a new organ which was being played by a middle aged woman, Mrs. Fisher, from Port Washington. How I enjoyed that music! And the services. I had always rather liked the Catholic Church and as a child, when seeing the people go to church on a Sunday morning had many a time wished to do the same. Today, again, the thought came over me that I could not see why this inclination had been forbidden me.

When the crowds left the church, I met many people, who had been schoolmates of mine before I went to Chicago -- Margaret Retzer and others whose names I have forgotten, which also made it a pleasant reunion.

Then, as I started on my way home, Mr. Roussard, clerk of the Neumann District School, which I had attended last before going to Chicago, asked me to come to his house the next day, Monday, to sign the contract for teaching their school for three months that summer. So this proved one of the happy days of my young life.

This came to be a busy summer. The school was just a mile from home and little sister Louisa walked the way to school with me every morning. Some of my pupils were young sisters and brothers of former schoolmates, some of whom were now married and having babies of their own.

This school house was a log building like all the others I had taught in but was

kept in good repair and had more windows which made it light and airy. There were the same benches I had sat upon, the large table around which the older pupils, the Ragans and the Keefes had sat, and the small desk against the east window which had been mine when writing in my copybook.

School started with twenty-five pupils. They all seemed pleased to have me as their teacher. At the close of the first day I noticed that Arthur Beger took his slate home with the examples of long division which he had learned how to work on this day. In saying goodbye to me, he had such a pleased happy smile on his face that I knew I would have no trouble in disciplining this school this term. Soon after this I found that Mr. Beger, the father of my schoolmates, and Arthur, his little sister Agnes too, who for some reason or other had never seemed very friendly now could not do enough to please me.

This proved, in a sociable way, also a very pleasant summer. There were many parties in Waubeka, which if they happened to be on a Friday or Saturday evening, I never missed. There I would dance with Tom, Dick or Harry for a few hours, when Father would come and take me home. Once when Father was not home, I thought I could stay a little longer, but at the correct time Mother and Mary appeared.

A few weeks after this the Farmington Turnverein gave a dance in Waubeka where six wagon loads of both the married and unmarried young people came. By this time I had learned there was no danger in dancing and going home with a Turner boy, for they were under a certain code of behavior, which, if they disobeyed it, meant forfeiting their membership. Drinking more than was good for him meant being put out of the hall. They always looked so clean and slick in their white linen uniforms.*

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* The Farmington Turn Verein was organized in 1862 and held their meetings in the Saxonia House, (built by Mr. Ernst Klessig) until 1867-1868 when the Turner Hall was built. This organization was the successor to the "Farmington HumanitaetsVerin" which was organized for educational and benevalent purposes in 1857.

"In February, 1869 the Turn Verein organized a German Sunday School which held sessions in the new hall, and which were attended by the children of the community. Various leading Turner members served as teachers from time to time and Mrs. Kuechenmeister who taught at the Fillmore Public School was also engaged in teaching in the Sunday School."

(The preceding was taken from "Farmington Turner Centennial" 1962, p. 29.)

How I got there this evening I do not know, but I was having the best of times dancing every dance. By the time it was time for my Father to come the rain was coming down in buckets full. As time went on it seemed to be getting worse. As nobody came to get me, I stayed on and on until finally I was beginning to be anxious. One after the other the boys asked me to go home and since each had his own girl I thought they meant to go on one of their wagons and I said "Yes" to each one. When it was time to go home it was still raining but not so hard. Daylight was beginning to appear.

When it was time to leave the young men were all around me, each claiming I had promised to go home with him. Seeing the mistake I had made I was puzzled what to do when one named Andrew Young grabbed hold of my arm and holding an umbrella over me helped me on to the wagon, where there was a seat ready for us. By the time we reached my home, which they all had to pass, it had stopped raining. When the team stopped in front of our place, Andrew jumped off and helped me down and walked with me to the middle of the front yard. When I saw he wanted to kiss me I pulled away my hand and gave him a hard slap on the mouth instead. I found that everyone had been watching to see what kind of a "good by" he could get. A roar of laughter went up.

It was about this time that the Meyers returned from Madison, where he had held a public office, that of Assemblyman. Mr. Meyer now bought a business place in Waubeka, in which he was establishing a general store. His first wife having died a few years before, he had gone to Germany and married a German girl there. His oldest son, Charley, and I who had been friends, playmates, and schoolmates, renewed our friendship.

There were still a few weeks of school but an agent had come around to engage girls to pick hops in Baraboo. As he offered good pay, some of the older girls among my pupils wanted to go and as their parents wanted me to go along as chaperone, I got permission from the School Board. So Mary and I went along.

We were taken in wagons starting at five o'clock in the morning. We took a rest in West Bend at Goetter's Hotel and probably ate a lunch there. On our load were Emaline Dagget, Lizzie Bolz, Mary and I, seven of my pupils, and also little Augusta Beger. I sat on the front seat, the best place, beside the driver, who was Mr. Roussard. In West Bend we changed to a larger wagon from Baraboo. There I sat in the back of the wagon on a board seat with the other girls. We reached Baraboo at ten o'clock at night and were given a hot supper. Many other girls and women got there about the same time and it was a motley crowd!

By this time I wished Mary and I had stayed home, but as I had come along to take care of my pupils I made up my mind I'd make the best of it.

The man who had engaged us, saw to it that we got a clean room in one of the

private homes of the Company. It had two double beds in it for Emma, Lizzie, Mary and I. As I was anxious about the girls I had come to take care of, he let me select a room for them from among the many rooms available. They were all alike but supplied with miserable beds and bedding. I selected a large room nearest the house in which we were placed so that I could easily call on them at anytime. Besides this, we all sat at one table in the dining hall.

The next morning the work began. This happily was in a forest, where each one was provided with a box, which held about a bushel or so of hops and we were paid according to how much we picked. There were men to bring us the vines and to take them away when they were stripped.

I soon had the reputation of being one of the fastest pickers. It wasn't hard work, but it was monotonous. We worked four in a group but could not talk much. There were all kinds of people here -- good people and bad people. I always liked to be in a crowd, but I did not like this one. Mary seemed to like it because she was making money.

Every evening we went somewhere. One of the first evenings we went to Baraboo where Emaline bought a small box of white face paint. It was called "Mean Fun". The next evening there was to be some kind of a party in the dining hall. Before going Emaline painted her face and induced me to have mine painted to see how I'd look. They all said it was very becoming but just before we left I looked in the glass and saw it gave me a sort of a ghostlike appearance. We were all ready to start so I could not go back and wash it off. Besides we were going to be among strangers so what did it matter how I looked.

When we got to the dining hall we found there were many of the young men as well as the better class of girls. There was no regular program -- just a get-acquainted party. Soon Emaline found a young man from Newburg she knew named Byron Fairbanks. She introduced him to us girls. He seemed a very congenial fellow and was an ex-soldier. He had entered the war at fourteen and served as a drummer boy for four years. He stayed with our group all the evening. Why he was looking at me so much was, I thought, because my face was painted. All evening I kept very quiet for I was ashamed of myself. Upon leaving he came up to me and in shaking hands slipped a folded piece of paper in my hand. Reaching our room, I managed to get in first and I lit the candle. Unfolding the paper and reading it, I found it was a billet-doux. I tore it into bits and threw it under the bed, then went outside to sit with the girls on the porch to cool off. A Negro, who was the only one on the place, came and presented us with a big watermelon, which of course he had stolen. It was such an immense one, we could not eat half of it, so I took the bigger half to the girls in my care. After this, the same gift came to us every evening, in the same way.

The next evening we went to Baraboo again, but separated, Mary and Lizzie going along one street and Emaline and I along the other. Upon reaching home Lizzie was quite excited. A young man, named Fisher, had fallen in love with her. Mary and Lizzie had gone into some place where soft drinks were served. There was a crowd of people there. As Lizzie was very good looking and a good talker, telling somebody about our crowd of girls picking hops, this Fisher introduced himself and treating them to more drinks, wished to escort them home but in some way they got away from him.

The next evening there was a dance somewhere and I danced a pair of shoes to pieces.

Then came Sunday when we were taken to Devil's Lake. This getting up early and staying up late every night and perhaps the strain of trying to be one of the fastest pickers, was beginning to tell on me. On the way to the lake I felt I should have stayed in the room and rested in bed. But I had not wanted to miss seeing that wonderful lake. All the way I sat on the floor of the wagon with my head in Mary's lap. When we got there all the other girls walked up the rocky cliffs and I did wish I could go with them, but I was really sick, stretched out full length on the beach letting the fresh air from the lake fan me.

A little over a week had passed and we four girls decided we had had enough of it. I got Augusta Beger, who was the oldest and did not go to school anymore to take care of my charges. So we were taken to the station and took the train home. I was all worn out and when I got on the train I lay down and fell asleep. At some junction, Father met Mary and me. How the other girls got home I do not remember.

We had earned quite a little sum of money which we gave to Father. I was glad to get back to my regular work of teaching.

Soon after this hop-picking experience, this Mr. Fisher from Baraboo came to see Lizzie. She treated him very coldly and let him know she had no use for him. Soon after there was a dance at Waubeka in Cigrand's Hall, which she attended. She was as usual having a gay time, when lo and behold! Mr. Fisher, who had stayed in the neighborhood, walked in. She was shocked and would not speak to him, not even look at him, much less dance with him. When he left the hall, someone said to her, "Oh, Lizzie, supposing he would drown himself?" "Oh," said Lizzie, "he can hang himself for all of me." I hadn't been at the dance and Fisher came to see me. He wanted to know from me what kind of a girl Lizzie was. I knew she had always been the belle of town, was a very gay and happy-go-lucky girl and that she and I had been in a way good friends and I did not know anything derogatory about her. She lived on a farm and her parents were well-to-do people.

Fisher told me the history of his life. His people had always been wealthy. He had been a captain in the Civil War, had a large and beautiful home in Baraboo. He

had fallen in love with Lizzie at first sight and his one wish was to marry her. He wished me to help him to the consummation of his hopes.

I told him Lizzie was older than I and had a mind of her own and I did not think I could do much, but would do what I could.

Having this affair on my mind, I made inquiries about Lizzie from some of the young men who seemed to be good friends of hers. They would look at me and say, "Oh, don't you know?" One evening I asked one of them, "What is it you know about Lizzie?" and he told me that she got drunk at the end of every dance and that was usually the end of knowing what she was doing. No, I had not known about that, probably because I was never allowed to stay to the end of a dance. I never told Lizzie that Fisher had been to see me.

It was two years after this when one Sunday afternoon I was taking a walk along the road which led through our forest when a beautiful buggy drawn by a beautiful white horse was coming towards me. Two people were seated in it. They were just going to pass me and I looked and lo and behold! It was Lizzie and Fisher. They stopped and I asked what it was all about and Lizzie told me they were engaged to be married. He looked at me as if he were grateful for my help and she too looked pleased. Evidently he was the only insistent lover Lizzie had had and she may have thought she had had enough of dissipation.

At the end of summer John Keefe was giving his farewell party. Having been a soldier he had taken up a claim of government land in Minnesota. It was in the middle of the week, so I did not go to bid him good by but Father and Mother went. The next morning they told me he asked them why I did not come. When they told him, he said that that was no excuse. When the Waubeka paper came out the next time it announced John Keefe's marriage to Maggie Smith of West Bend, which had been performed the next day after his party. Then I was sorry I had not gone to bid him goodbye.

I now quietly finished my term of teaching in the Neumann District.

After a few weeks spent at home, I came home one day from a visit in Waubeka. Mother told me a man from Farmington had called and wanted to see me. They had built an addition to their school house and now had two departments. They wanted to know whether I would accept the position as primary teacher. If this was acceptable I should call and see the members of the school board as soon as convenient.

I took a few days to think it over, then decided it would be no mistake to accept this position. This district was the next district west of the Neumann School. I discovered I did not know who the members of the school board were. Finding myself in front of the Gruhle store I entered. I asked the clerk, but he was a new man, had been there a week, and did not know people. This clerk later turned out to be Philip

Heipp. Walking on a short distance, I met a man whom I asked about the board members. He showed me where Carl Wittig lived, who he thought was one of them. There I found Mrs. Wittig alone, her husband, a carpenter, being miles away at work. She showed me where the clerk, who was a doctor, lived, a short distance away on the other side of the road. He was plowing way back in his fields. His wife told me to come on Sunday. She would tell him to expect me. So I walked back home.

The next Sunday I made the trip all over again and found Mr. Wittig and the doctor waiting to see me. They seemed very glad to see me and the contract was written out. I was to receive $30.00 per month which was more than I had ever had. I was asked to stay to dinner. I remember it was a beef steak dinner with spiced currants for a relish. Mr. Wittig also partook of that meal.

A few days after this I went to Mr. Roussard to get the Treasurer's warrant to get my salary for the Neumann School. It was a cool evening and I found him sitting behind the stove with bad rheumatism. He scowled at me and said, "What did you do that for?" meaning, of course, why I had accepted the Farmington School. When I told him "Because they wanted me to" he said, "So you didn't want our school!" Like a flash it came to me, that sitting beside him on the way to Baraboo, he had told me I could have their school as long as I taught and I had given him my promise. I felt stunned for awhile and could say nothing. Finally I told him I was sorry I had forgotten. I could tell he did not believe me, but I had told him the truth. I have sometimes wondered what a different trend my life would have taken had I not forgotten.

Mother wanted me to board with the Jaenig's. Mother had known Mrs. Jaenig when she had been Mrs. Liberta Klessig from whom we had bought our groceries in the early days. So Mother went to see them. They were very willing to take me.

It was on a Sunday evening that I moved in. They were a large family -- five Klessig children and two Jaenig. Mr. Jaenig was running the brewery. They no longer had a store or saloon -- just the brewery. There were five or six hired men, a hired girl and off and on an extra woman to help. Besides this Mr. Jaenig's sister Yetta came every day to take care of the baby, Edwin. She lived in a little one room block house in a lonely spot on the Jaenig property. The Jaenigs lived in an immense house. I have forgotten how many rooms it had.

This first evening I was almost bewildered and was glad when bedtime came and I was shown into the room that was to be mine.

Next morning when I reached the schoolhouse, Mr. Wittig met me and told me for the first month I would have to teach the whole school in the larger room. This meant about 60 or 65 pupils, but I found them very easy to manage. There had not been a woman teacher for years so I was something new to them and they all seemed to fall in love with me right away, both big and small and I found myself in love with the whole town, everybody in it.

The township was Farmington but this small place was Fillmore. The inhabitants were mainly Saxons. Their standard of living was above that of the Bavarians and Luxembourgers among whom I had taught before. There were two stores about a quarter of a mile apart, each with a saloon in connection. All the same, they were very orderly, with never any brawls or anything out of order happening. There was a small library above one of the stores.

The brewery was not in the building in which we lived but quite a distance behind it on the farm. The cellar, where the beer was kept, was about half a mile away.

They were all Germans, not one of the children could speak a word of English, so in the home I started to teach them English and help with their lessons from the very first evening. I got them to singing a little English, Sunday School songs.

The five Klessigs were Mary 14 (who did not attend school anymore), Augusta 12, John 10, Emma 8, Ida 6, the last four going to school. The two Jaenig's were Alma 2-1/2 and Edwin was the baby.

At the end of the first month of school the middle of October, one morning Mr. Wittig brought the man who was to be the Principal of the school. They seemed to look for some commotion about dividing the pupils, but I had that all arranged. I had counted the seats in the new department and had picked out the pupils who would fill those seats. So, when the door was opened, at a sign and a word they rose and marched into our new department. There were thirty-five. In parting both men gave me a relieved smile.

It was a beautiful clean new room, all white washed, the seats painted, a lovely new stove all blackened, and a pretty table and two chairs for me. I felt I would spend a pleasant winter at my work.

The next day about a dozen older boys entered the upper department. I was glad they had not come when I was there.

About a week after this, I remembered that my certificate was for Ozaukee County and that I now was in Washington County. I had not spoken to the Board about this, not having thought of it before. When Friday evening came I decided to go home and see whether Father could take me to West Bend to see Mr. Regenfuss who was then Superintendent of the Schools of Washington County. So that is what I did. When I got home Mary was outside near the gate. I told her what I wanted but she advised me not to come in as Father was not in a good humor. I had walked three miles. I decided to walk as far as Newburg and stay there overnight. It was another mile to Waubeka. I had had nothing to eat since noon. I crossed the bridge and got on the road to Newburg. How many miles that was I do not know. When I reached that town, all the places where I might have stayed were connected with saloons and seemed rather lively. Having passed through the town I met a man and asked him could he tell me of a place

where one could stay overnight. He told me a very short distance away there was a house where they sometimes kept people overnight. That was a little house up on a hill. There was a bright light burning in the window. A pleasant little woman opened the door and welcomed me in. It was past ten o'clock and she had just been ready to retire.

I was terribly tired and fiercely hungry, but did not ask for anything to eat. I was glad to get into a warm clean bed, where I fell asleep immediately.

The moving about of the people downstairs awoke me the next morning. I arose immediately. When I came down, they had already breakfasted. I was served an egg, fried potatoes, biscuits, and coffee.

When I paid a dollar for my room and board, the woman took one of the biscuits and put it in my basket. They were raised biscuits, not the kind we make nowadays, but great big square ones. She said it was a long walk to West Bend and I might get hungry on the way. We bade each other good by as friends.

It was still dark when I started out. The houses that I passed were far apart. I do not remember meeting a single team or person along the long road, but there were plenty of stumps to rest on whenever I got tired and many miles of forest on either side of the road.

Just before reaching West Bend, I enjoyed my lunch. Reaching the village I did not know where the Superintendent lived. Entering Goetter's Hotel to inquire, I was told he lived next to the schoolhouse. Passing a small saloon, a man came out. I heard someone inside calling him Mr. Regenfuss. I stopped and looked at him and told him I had come to town to see him. He put his arm around my shoulder and said he was glad to meet me. Reaching his home we entered his office. Being seated he commenced to ask questions. He asked had I brought my certificate from Ozaukee County with me. I handed it to him. He wanted to know where and how long I had taught school. I told him and he then made me a copy of my certificate, handed it back to me, and promised to come to see me.

On my way back I felt relieved. I did not intend to go back the road I had come. It would have been miles further. I entered a small store intending to buy some little thing for my sister Louisa with some of the paper war change (fractional currency) I still had in my purse. I bought a little china cup and saucer which I think I paid 50¢ for. The clerk, I found, was a girl about my own age whose name was Gusta Miller, a granddaughter of William Wightman, one of the early settlers of West Bend, who owned the store. Then I asked the clerk about the road to Fillmore. She showed me the way to Barton and told me where to turn right, which road would take me to Fillmore. Again there was no chance to get a mile or so ride. When it was getting dark I felt I might not be on the right road and entered a house to ask for a drink of water

and find whether I was still on the right road. They were very friendly young people, two men, a woman, and two little children.

With the assurance that I was on the right road and with a refreshing drink, I started out with new courage. When I reached the North Branch, it was so dark I almost stepped into the river, having followed the path which led beside the bridge. Since I had escaped drowning myself I was not only glad, but also I knew now how near my boarding place was -- a little more than a mile. With courage I trudged on. It was almost nine o'clock when I reached home.

I was tired, almost to dropping down. Mrs. Jaenig asked where on earth I had been. I told her I had been to West Bend to get my certificate. When asked, had I had supper I told her "no." Would I take something cold? She put bread and butter and a big hunk of bacon on the table. Since I did not want beer, they gave me a cup of cold water. I never could eat raw bacon, but I did eat a little of it that evening.

I was in bed when Mr. Jaenig came home that night. The next morning when I came down, he was awaiting me and did I get a scolding for not having told them where I was going! After this, he said, I should remember I could have the horse and buggy and someone to take me wherever I wanted to go.

Mr. Blum, the Principal, was a good teacher. He was a man about thirty-five years old, a bachelor. His left hand was always tied up in a clean white cloth. The first time he called, at recess in my room. He told me he would never show his hand to anyone except the girl he married. He had rented a vacant house and was doing his own cooking. When he called one evening at the Jaenig's, among other things, he told us he was studying French. When Mrs. Jaenig told him that I had been born in France, he immediately started to examine me on my knowledge of French. He started by asking me to translate cow, cat, dog, table, chair, etc.

He then said he would give me more examinations as he improved. I told him I would have to study for that occasion as I had forgotten most of my French by that time.

The next Saturday evening Mrs. Jaenig sent Mary and me to take some of her baking to him. We found the house in which he lived a short distance from the school house, a lovely place at the edge of the woods. He had just had his supper and was putting away his dishes. He seemed pleased to have us come and bring him some baking, which he himself could not do. He seemed to live in one room which was kept very neat and clean. Again he entertained us with his French and showed us his books, of which he had quite a shelf full.

After this, he was a daily visitor in my room. He told me a lot about his past history. One of the things I remember was about a young lady he had known and loved named Alice. He would lend me magazines, papers and books.

About this time, at about eleven o'clock a terrible blizzard suddenly came up. By noon it had grown worse. As I was getting ready to go home for dinner, Mr. Blum announced that he had sent two boys to get my dinner. I was quite provoked. I told him many of the children had gone home, he was going home, why shouldn't I? "No" he said, "those boys are nice clean boys, sons of the Methodist minister and they will bring you your dinner." I told him I had gone through this kind of a storm before and for a longer distance. Well, I had my dinner at school. It came well-packed, and hot. It consisted of four potato dumplings, sauerkraut and hot roast pork, some bread and butter and a bottle of hot coffee. I enjoyed it and felt I was being spoiled. But all the same, I was provoked.

By four o'clock that afternoon the storm had reached its peak. I was going to show them how bravely I could get home, when Mr. Jaenig appeared with the sled to get us all -- his four children and me. Even the horses had a time getting through. There were pupils who had to walk over a mile, but there were no accidents.

A week after this, it must have been the last one in November on a Tuesday, Mr. Blum came and announced we would have a spelling school on Friday evening. Later he announced that I was to have three numbers for the program while he would have the spelling and one dialogue at the end. Then, before going home, I found he had put me as the main character of that dialogue. The next morning he gave me my part and I found I would have to commit three and one-half pages of material. I told him I simply could not do it because there were only three days to prepare for my part of the program besides that. But he simply insisted there would be plenty of time.

Well, the evening came and I could not eat supper. I felt like fainting and I hoped I would. We had had one rehearsal where I had read my part and the thing had come off quite well. The whole town was there that evening. The first time around in the spelling I did all right. The second time he gave me a catchword and I went down. I didn't care what happened. When, at the last, the dialogue came off, I knew where I was to come in, but not having committed my part, I just improvised as I went along. There was a logging chain in the dialogue and when Amanda Aurig came along with it, I said something that got her mixed up. We went on to the end though, and got great applause. Nobody seemed to notice that I hadn't spoken a single line correctly. The funny part was that Mr. Blum tried to help me but I didn't pay any attention to him.

One thing, my little pupils had done well. There was a dialogue with five little boys. The boys knew their parts perfectly. That was something to be grateful for. Two girls recited a poem each.

The boys were five little tradesmen -- a carpenter, a shoemaker, a tailor, a butcher and a baker. They each gave a little part and then together recited, "We all are merry

workers, we'll keep in pleasant mood, no matter what our trade is, If we are doing good. The world is wide and weary and if we all are true, the world will be a better place, for what we workers do."

After this, the busy Christmas season commenced. Mrs. Jaenig kept asking me to help decide on the decorations and presents to be given. She seemed to think that I was well informed on that subject and I certainly enjoyed it to the full. I sat up late hours dressing three dolls -- one for Emma, one for Ida and one for little Alma. When they were finished they were fully clothed -- underwear and dresses that could be taken off and washed, with buttons and buttonholes, shoes, stockings, coats and most stylish hats, As they sat under the Christmas tree, visitors declared nothing so artistic had ever been seen in Fillmore.

The decoration of the cookies I had also conducted. My gift, as I remember, was a lovely small purse containing a dollar's worth of old fashioned silver change. Had I but kept some of it!

The last week before the holidays, Mr. Blum had asked me to stay after school a few minutes. It was to consult should we have a week's vacation between Christmas and New Years. It was decided to do so, so the next day he came over and told me he had decided to spend a day of that week in Milwaukee. Then he asked me to go with him, which I promptly refused. The next day he came and said then we would have no vacation. I told him it would be all right with me. I expected none of the pupils would come, but they all came.

It gave me no time to spend at home except Christmas afternoon and the next day for in Fillmore two days were always celebrated "der erste und der zweite Feiertag." There were several parties given at the Turner Hall called "Kraenzchen" which were rather informal doings. All in all, I had a glorious time and was rather tired out when the holidays were over.

Chapter XXVII

The Year 1868

The first day at school after New Year I found an envelope on my table. Upon opening it a beautiful card was disclosed. This was from Mr. Blum. The verse was in German:

"Frohsinn and Zufrieden heit
Schmucke reich den Leben

Alles was dein Herz erfreut
Möge Gott dir gehen.

Und kein böser augenblich
Trübe deines Lebens Glück."

(Gladsomeness and contentment,
Brighten richly thy life.

All that brings joy to thy heart
May God give thee.

And no evil instance
Shadow thy life's happiness.)

It was supposed to be a New Year's wish, and I was very much pleased with it. It caused me to somewhat regret my cold treatment of him and I decided to be somewhat kinder and friendlier toward him. This I soon found, however, was a mistake. For after a few days he acted as if he thought I was encouraging him. He came in to show me a beautiful album, decorated with sea shells and pretty stones, which he said would be given to the girl after their engagement. It must have been a very expensive thing, but did not tempt me in the least. For three or four days he kept on coming with that album, giving me the history of how he had bought it. He seemed to think it might finally have the desired effect on me. But one day when he tried to kiss me, I slapped him in the face and got away. The end of even a slight friendship had come.

About a month after he was engaged to be married to a very handsome girl, perhaps the best looking one in town. She had been working in Milwaukee and had come to visit her mother for a short vacation. I do not recall her name. She was not popular because her mother had no good reputation. For all that, she was a good girl and made him a good wife. About a week after their engagement, they were married. We all congratulated them and treated them most civilly. Although they had been disgraced

by not giving a treat to the boys who had given them a charivari (a mock serenade of discordant noises). In this town it was an honor to be given a charivari but Mr. Blum thought he would cure them of giving this uncivilized demonstration. He might have found that he could have saved himself a lot of disturbed rest for they kept on for weeks, making it worse every time until the serenaders themselves got tired and realized what fools they were making of themselves.

So far I had had a good time. Everybody seemed to be my friend. But now, suddenly, something seemed to have happened. Especially the young men were giving me the cold shoulder. I felt I must have done something to displease them certainly, whatever it might be, I had not done purposely. There was a strange young man from Germany — a very cultured and educated person. He, it seemed, had been offended by me. At the next Turn Hall dance it was rumored that all the Turners had been sworn in not to dance with me, so I wisely stayed at home. I also stayed away from several parties to which I was invited by the girls; also from some of the Federschleissen (slicing of feathers), which were very prominent occasions in the Town of Farmington, where both men and women high and low, rich and poor, would meet. Finally at one place, where I had an urgent invitation, I went. Sitting beside my pile of feathers on the bench at the long table, busily slicing one feather after another, pulling the downy part of the feather off the stem, I wisely kept my mouth shut. While everybody else was having a jolly time, suddenly Herr Florian, the newly come, moved his chair opposite me. He sat there awhile just staring at me. Then he put his fingers on the pile of feathers in front of me and loudly proclaimed, "Das ist eine Gans." (This is a goose.) While everybody held his breath, he repeated it again and then a third time, after which I calmly said, "Ach, dass sind ja laute weisse Federn." (Oh, these are a lot of white feathers.) A shout of laughter went up all over the room. He quickly removed himself and I had no more trouble that evening.

After the sumptous refreshments we went home. On the way home Mr. Florian tried to be funny, but it didn't take very well.

When there was to be a masquerade ball in the Turnhall, I had decided not to be present. The day, a Saturday, I spent at home. Late in the afternoon Mary brought home a long-nosed mask. Just for the fun of it, thinking it would be a shame not to use it, I decided to go that Ball masked as a gypsy fortune teller. But what to wear was the question. Luckily there was three and one-half yards of material which had been bought to repair an old quilt. It had a lot of large red and yellow flowers with a lot of green leaves on a gray background. I quickly basted it together, shirred it on top, and sewed on a belt. That would do for a skirt. I borrowed Mary's black and white plaid shawl, braided my hair in one braid and had it hang down my back tied with an old red silk ribbon. With a gray woolen scarf I made a cap with a blue ribbon around it. I put on a pair of gray silk gloves and borrowed Mother's fancy basket from Paris, putting in some small pieces of paper and a lead pencil.

By now it was about time to start out. I hired my brothers, Henry and Charley to take me. They got me there just in time. I put on my mask, entered the hall, mixing in with the crowd. I let them know I was a fortune teller. They would put out their hands and I would tell them by motions whether the signs in their hands were good or bad. Some who wanted to know who I was would follow me, trying to find out who I really was. Then I would find a place to sit down, scribble something on a piece of paper nobody could read and motion that was all.

Some put their hands in their pockets offering me pay, which I pretended to take but didn't. At a certain time all the maskers formed in line and marched in couples around the hall. In passing groups that were not masked I saw that Byron Fairbanks, an old friend of mine was present. I had intended to go home when the maskers commenced to unmask, but now, knowing someone would be there to dance with me, I decided differently. I now quietly slipped out and ran to my boarding place. The Jaenigs were all at the hall. Only the hired girl was in the kitchen and she did not see me. I walked in through the front door, walked upstairs to my room, undressed, washed and combed, put on a nice new light gray worsted dress, put on my dancing shoes and stuck an artificial rose in my hair. Looking in the glass I was quite satisfied with my looks. My cheeks were red and there was a twinkle in my eyes. I put on my rubbers and walked back to the hall.

When I entered the hall Mrs. Jaenig caught sight of me. She was pleased and asked me how on earth had I come. All the older people seemed glad I had come. Mrs. Wittig had been masked in a German costume which she still wore. Many more of the married women had been in costume all of whom I had seen, but I did not let on I had. They all had had so much fun and were sorry I had missed all that.

I soon noticed that the young men were still sworn against dancing with me. But while I was having a good time visiting, Mr. Fairbanks came to ask me for a waltz. So I would show them! When he asked me why I had come so late, I told him I had been at home. Then he said one of the maskers was missing, one dressed as a gypsy and he had suspected I was the one. When I asked him what there was about her that reminded him of me he replied, "The color of her hair and her small ears." Then I admitted it, but made him promise not to tell anybody. He was a fine dancer and we did not miss one dance.

At least I pretended I was having the grandest time of my life. At about eleven o'clock we were tired of dancing, so he asked me to go to the corner saloon for some refreshments. It was a walk of about a quarter of a mile. Nobody but the proprietor was there. He served us a cup of tea and some bread and butter -- not in the saloon but in the parlor. He seemed to know Mr. Fairbanks real well and they visited together, I was glad for that for by this time I suspected there might be some talk. Then we went back to the Hall, danced some more, and then he took me home.

During the next few weeks there was a great deal of speculation who that fortune teller could have been. My costume had been put in my trunk under other things and the trunk locked and it was not until five years after when Mrs. Jaenig spoke of how queer it was that no one had ever found out who that fortune teller had been that I confessed it was I. She looked as though she did not believe me so I had to tell her exactly how I had accomplished it.

The last Federschleiss that I attended was at the Goldammers. They were a very prominent family. The only daughter that was left at home was Laura and several younger sons. It had been a very pleasant evening and I was glad I had come. Some of the boys had seemed somewhat friendlier than of late and since it was early spring all the snow had gone and I was expecting that also my enemies would relent.

Augusta Beger, one of my schoolmates of old had also been present and had to go home the same way I did. Being the third of the Beger girls, she was about five years younger than I. I remembered when the two older girls, Minna and Laura, had brought her to school. She was such a cute little thing that I had fallen in love with her and loved her from that time on. She was now a delicate, brown-eyed young lady of about 16. As we walked along talking of our school day years, and as we neared the corner where we had to cross the main road, we saw a row of men holding up something that looked like guns. We stopped to consider what to do, for it looked as though they were obstructing the road to keep us from passing onto the main road. Augusta suggested climbing the fence and going through the fields. I knew that would not be wise because all the snow had melted on the plowed land and we would sink up to our waists. Finally I said, "No, don't let us do that to please them. Let us go on and see what they'll do." Gusta said, "Supposing they shoot to scare us." Said I, "Don't let it scare us." As we neared them we noticed that what they held was not guns but sticks and poles. When we got up to them they stepped aside and let us pass. They did not yell or even say anything. We did not look at them and I never knew who they were, but I knew they must have felt ashamed. And this was the last of the trouble I had.

In my school I had so far been very successful. I had succeeded in getting my pupils to speak English whenever they spoke to me, which their parents also appreciated. So I had made many new friends. There was Mr. Seiering, a bachelor, who often came to see the Jaenigs, pretending to visit with the family, when he really came to see me. He never came without bringing me something, most of the time it was a beautiful apple with red cheeks; Sometimes an old German song or a German poem, which he had written. He had passed his sixtieth year for which he pretended to be lamenting, because he said if he were ten years younger no other man would get me. So it was up to me to be careful. Of course, I was grateful for all his kindnesses but was always on my guard not to encourage him.

The girl Mr. Seiering had been engaged to marry had died in a fire and nothing was left of her except the ring he had given her which he religiously kept. Mary

Klessig and I visited Mr. Seiering and his sister one evening in the original old block house which had been built for temporary use. Mr. Seiering brought out his guitar and we were entertained by his sister's singing accompanied by the guitar. Then I was asked to sing. They both wished I could stay with them. What pleasure we would have singing and playing. We were served with a cup of good coffee, bread and butter and handcheese. It was enjoyed without any vulgar excuses for not having something better.

One Monday morning, after my return from having spent Saturday and Sunday at home I was told that Herr Florian had left his boarding place by "Nacht und Nebel" without paying a cent of board. (by night through fog). Well that was that.

The last week of school on a pleasant moonlight evening, I went to the store to get a few necessary trifles. On my way home I called on Mrs. Wittig to bid her farewell. Soon Andrew Young, who was clerk and postmaster in Wittig's Store also called. I suspected that he, together with that Florian, had been one of the main instigators of that foolish trouble I had had. It now seemed that he wanted to be friends again. When I was leaving he offered to see me home. On the way, of course, we got to talking about what had been going on during the winter. At some of the things he was telling me, I burst out laughing several times. That seemed to anger him. He asked whether I was laughing at him. I was not. I was laughing at what he said. Then I asked him to tell me what I had done to deserve the treatment I had gotten. Then he laughed and reluctantly told me that it had made him mad to see the fools gather around me as thick as flies around honey. Besides that they had heard I was making fun of them, which I truly could not remember ever having done. I told him that I could truly say I had not been in love with any of them, but that I liked them all. Thus we parted. At the end of the week the term ended. The Jaenig's expected I would teach the summer term, which I would gladly have done, but there was a man by the name of Knool, with a wife and several children who was in dire need of help and would be able to get on his feet again if he was given the school for three months to teach German. So that put me out. But they made me promise to be ready for them again next fall.

At home I immediately started house cleaning. First the attic was cleaned, then the three beds belonging to us children were moved up to the attic. This gave me the smaller bedroom, which had been formerly the store, for a living room. Into this, after cleaning and white washing the walls myself, I moved the round table, the three cane seat chairs, which were still intact. On the wall, the only picture which was worthwhile was an old painting of Father made in Paris. The one shelf, left from when the room was used as a store, I decorated with all the books in the house, my workbasket, and a few fancy boxes, a vase in which I put fresh flowers every day when at home. Outside of the only window in the room, which was to the south, I planted some carnations and morning glories. For curtains I found a pair brought from Paris which could still be repaired. There were no rugs. Still I knew that it was the most beautiful room in

the neighborhood for miles around. One day I visited my old schoolmate the former Mary Neumann, now Mrs. Rehm, who was glad to see me and invited me to visit with her all summer. She could keep me busy taking care of the children while she worked on the land with her husband. Besides there would be sewing and mending to do. So it was that after I had finished the sewing at home that Mother had for me, most of the time I stayed with the Rehms.

They lived in a small, but well-kept frame house. There were two rooms downstairs and a good sized pantry. One was a bedroom and the other served as kitchen, dining and living room. The upstairs had two bedrooms, one of which was mine whenever I was there.

The summer went by pleasantly. In midsummer when I came home to do some sewing for Mother and help her in other ways, the window in my room, having been kept open all the time, the morning glories had grown into the room and fastened themselves onto the curtain. This indeed was one of the main decorations in that room.

Charley Meyer, my childhood playmate, took me to the Turnhall in Fillmore for several parties. He himself belonged to the Turners. On those occasions we visited the Jaenigs to whom he was distantly related. The Fourth of July we spent in Waubeka at a dance and to the one circus which came to Waubeka he also escorted me.

At the Rehms's I prepared many a supper, always with wild strawberries or raspberries which I picked myself. Once in awhile I helped milk the cows and once right after having a pail full of milk the cow kicked it over. I was very sorry and sure of getting a scolding, but Mary laughed and said it had happened to her several times with that cow.

When fall came and I was getting ready to go to Fillmore, I felt sure that not a moment's time of that summer had been wasted by me.

Chapter XXVIII

The Year 1869

During this year an incident happened that brought such great unhappiness to our family that it overshadowed all else that may have happened.

On a Saturday about the middle of July, 1869, I was just getting up rather late in the morning when I heard a sudden racket downstairs. Listening I heard Father say to someone, "Take me. Put the handcuffs on me." "No, no," said the other man. "Mr. Brinker, I won't do that to you. I know you'll come along peaceably." which told me it was the sheriff and that my father was being arrested.

To keep myself from fainting, I sat down on the top step.

Father wanted to know what he had done. Why was he being arrested? The sheriff asked, "Why, don't you know?" "No," Father said, "I don't know." The sheriff answered, "For taking the paper which shows that you owe Foster some money. Father had borrowed $500.00 from Foster, a lawyer in Port Washington.

Father said, "All right, Take me. I never took it. I never saw it again after I paid him his interest."

I came downstairs weeping. We all said good by to Father and they left. I was so excited all day long, I wanted to write to Foster but was so full of mean things to say to him, that I kept delaying, giving myself a chance to cool off.

When the rest of the family had retired, I knew I could not go to sleep until I had done something. I got paper and ink and sat down. All the things I wrote I do not recall, but it was enough -- a very short letter; just one side of the paper. The next morning early that letter was mailed. Sometime later we heard there had been some farmers in Port Washington who knew Father and had immediately given bail for him knowing he was not guilty.

Soon it was all over the neighborhood the letter I had written to Mr. Foster would get me into jail. I didn't care. One of the things I had written was that I would take revenge. Of course, I knew very little about the law and that one had to be careful how one threatened a man. But I wasn't afraid. He deserved whatever he got.

When Father came home, I was out in the yard and heard him talking to someone. I ran out to meet him and found it was young Charley Meyer who had escorted him home from Waubeka. Father had driven as far as Waubeka with the Post carrier.

Soon after a letter came from Mr. Foster admitting he had found the note. The letter read as follows:

Port Washington
July 26, 1869

Henry Brinker, Esq.

Sir.

I am happy to inform you and your family that I have found this day the papers which I supposed you had wrongfully taken. I found them in a Book in my library that I have no occasion to use more than once or twice a year, but had used a few days before you were here, and probably it was lying on my table when someone closed it with the papers in it and put it away.

I am very sorry for what has happened and am willing to make any honorable amend you shall ask.

You and your family cannot be more glad than I am that all Suspicion of any thing wrong on your part is removed.

Of course, you need not appear before Judge Lutfring unless you shall choose to.

I shall be glad to see you at my office at any time.

Yours Very truly,

George W. Foster *

It was just like my father not to sue Foster or do anything about the matter. He contented himself by calling him a damned scoundrel and cursing him loudly.

In the fall of this year I was glad to get back to Fillmore to teach.

* This letter may be seen at the Ozaukee County Historical Society, Port Washington, Wisconsin.

Chapter XXIX

The Year 1870

At the Jaenig house there was sorrow. In January after New Year, Mrs. Jaenig gave birth to a fat stillborn little girl. Mrs. Jaenig was very sick and did not recover until late spring.

That year I taught the Spring term (making it ten months in all). I had seventy-five pupils that term. It was hard work, but I enjoyed it very much.

I was asked to have closing exercises. I had a meeting with the school board and was told Mr. Wittig, the President of the Board, was a Turner and we were to have the exercises on the Turnhall grounds. The Turners would arrange the grounds for us -- build arbors, etc. My work would be preparing the program. Of course, each pupil would in some way have to take part. There were dialogues where quite a number could take part, poems to be recited, some could show off how well they could read, little groups of singers and the whole school to sing the Star Spangled Banner and two other songs. I have forgotten what they were.

Some of the dialogues and pieces spoken I had to compose myself for there were not enough books with suitable material.

The preparation was an exciting time, but all the pupils seemed to enjoy it immensely which made it pleasant work for me.

On the last day we formed in line at the schoolhouse, marched to the Wittig Saloona store about a quarter of a mile distance. There we turned, marched back past the schoolhouse and from there to the woods in which the Turnhall was.

At the entrance to the Turnhall Park, some of the Turners met us and led us into the arbor. The arbor had a roof of green branches and a board floor with temporary benches all around, a table with a large bouquet of flowers and chairs. I had taken the material for the exercises there early that morning.

Needless to say that it had been some work and that I had almost been downed with worry how the whole thing would come out.

But there was no mistake, no hitch. After it was all over it was pronounced the grandest entertainment that had ever been given by a school. It was a relief when it was over and the boys ran for the entertainment prepared by the Turners, some of which was racing, climbing trees, and other innocent games. The girls enjoyed the swings and teeter totter of which there were aplenty, visited, talked about their new clothes

and watched the boys. About four o'clock coffee was served on an immense table in the woods with many different kinds of kuchen, such as only the Saxon women can bake.

That evening there was a dance in the Hall. I thought I would stay to dance only a few dances but when I found it was the middle aged married Turners I had to dance with, I realized it would be an insult for they would think I was running away from them, so I stayed until the bitter end.

My two months vacation, July and August, were spent at home. Father had no hired man that summer so I could be of some help. The Rehms had a big strong hired girl that summer. Mary would have liked me to come to visit and take care of her three small children again, a boy six and two little girls, one four and one two, but I could not accommodate her that summer.

I worked each day where I was most needed -- indoors or out. Most of the time it was out doors. What I enjoyed most was helping make grain stacks. I wore old easy shoes without stockings, old cotton dresses and a sunbonnet. On a stack I would help handle the bundles as they were pitched up to Father. We would lay them around and around with the ears inside. It was interesting to get higher and higher. We had time to visit and as I remember Father would talk about the politics and the history of France. He hated Napoleon III most because it was under him that he had to leave France. When the stack was finished we congratulated ourselves for having it in a good peaked shape, so if it should rain, the rain would slide down the sides. The sliding down for me was lots of fun and reminded me of the time, as a child, how I had climbed up on the strawstack in the back yard and slid down again singing and yelling.

The fall found me again in Fillmore. The principal this year was Samuel Varney, a real American. He was still a young man but had taught school for years. He was married and lived on his farm six miles from Fillmore on the road to West Bend. He came to school every morning by team which he left in the barn of the corner saloon. Mr. Varney was a good teacher and was liked by everybody from the very beginning.

That winter another baby was added to the Jaenig family -- a little girl which was named Bertha. After the child was a few weeks old Mrs. Jaenig again became very ill and the place had to be kept so quiet that it became uncomfortable for me. Then Mrs. Carl Kuechenmeister invited me to stay with them for a time. I gladly accepted the invitation. The Klessig children came to me evenings whenever they needed help with their lessons and Mary Klessig sometimes came when she needed help in the cutting of garments.

Mrs. Kuechenmeister and I got to be such good friends and companions that I decided to stay there until the end of my term. Before the close of the winter term I was asked to teach German that spring. While at Chicago I had taken some private lessons in that language but had sadly neglected it ever since, not knowing I would

ever be asked to teach it. I told the Board that I did not think I knew it well enough, but they insisted that according to the way I spoke it, I was capable of teaching it.

I now decided to make use of the short time before having to begin teaching German by studying. I got my books together again besides borrowing all the books I could.

As mentioned before, most of the people in Fillmore were Lutherans and the Reverend Kausewitz who lived in West Bend came once a week to give religious instruction in the church. He took his meals and stayed one night at the Carl Kuechenmeister's. It was always on Saturday that he taught and on Sunday he would serve at the church.

Usually on a Saturday evening there would be at the Turnhall what they called "Ein Kraenzchen" which was usually an informal enjoyable party. Everyone who wished could come without an invitation. So the first Saturday after having moved to the Kuechenmeister's, when I found the minister was going to occupy my room, I decided to go to the Kraenzchen. It was a very jolly time we were having there. When one of the Turners remarked that I was staying late and wanted to know how that happened, I told them, "I might as well stay here, for I have no place to sleep tonight." When they wanted to know what happened, I told them that the minister had my bed tonight. However, I had to go home at last. There I found the door locked. Not wishing to rap and wake up the whole family, I found I could open the window of the room where the Kuechenmeisters slept and got in there. There I found Mrs. Kuechenmeister sleeping alone, Mr. Kuechenmeister was sleeping on the lounge in the front room. She, having brought down my property, I had a good half a night's sleep with her.

The next morning, Sunday, I did not get up for breakfast, but at noon had to face Reverend Kausewitz at the table. He immediately asked me where I had spent the evening. Upon honestly confessing he said, "Ein Kraenzchen. That is too nice a name to give to that kind of thing." Then he wanted to know what time I got home. I told him I did not know what hour, but I knew it was late. Then he wanted to know how had I gotten in. Upon my hesitating, Mrs. Kuechenmeister told him how. Then he said, "Through the window! Oh, that is how thieves get in." That was all!

The Kuechenmeisters had three boys — Reinhold 14, Oskar 12 and Clemens 3. Mr. Kuechenmeister was jolly, about 35 but seemed less than 25. He was an odd sort of a character -- a quiet sort of man. When he worked he worked hard but had no hobby of any kind, so every minute of his spare time was spent on the couch, then called a lounge.

One day when I told Mrs. Kuechenmeister that he wasn't very sociable and asked whether he was dissatisfied with my staying there, she said, "Oh, no, he's glad you are here, so that I have some company -- somebody to talk to." When I remarked about their being so unlike each other, and asked how she had come to marry him, she

told me the following story. She said that when she had come with her family from Germany and were settled in the wilderness, they found they had a neighbor about a mile or so from their place named Muehlberg, a very nice young man. She and he soon fell in love with each other, but when he came to ask her parents for her hand they told him there was an older daughter he could have, who had to be married before this one, Henrietta, called Yetta. The parents would have given her to him but she refused. Both men visited the home for about a hear and a half, waiting for her to get ready to marry one of them. Finally Muehlberg, needing a housekeeper very badly, married the sister. Then Carl Kuechenmeister, still hopeful, kept coming. When Yetta's parents asked her why she wouldn't marry him, a man who had a home of his own, was sober and hard working and just insisted on having her, she said she would not marry a dullard -- that he never danced, at parties sat around in corners and sometimes fell asleep -- she wouldn't marry a sleepyhead.

The next time he came to see them, her father took him out to the barn or somewhere and explained why Yetta wouldn't marry him. The next party was a baptismal or birthday party at the Begers where they both were invited. There Carl Kuechenmeister was the jolliest of all the company. He danced, he sang, he told funny stories. Then he took Yetta home. The next morning she told her people she was getting to like him -- that he could be entertaining. But it took five or six more parties for him to act up before she consented to marry him.

It wasn't long after the wedding that she discovered how she had been fooled but in this day and age divorces had not yet become prevalent. The only thing one could do was to run away and go back home, but finding a cold reception there, one soon found it better to go back to one's husband and make the best of it and that was what happened to Henrietta.

By the time I got acquainted with them, both being hardworking economical people, they had become quite prosperous. He was a carpenter and had a brother named Ferdinand who was a mason, so the stones they picked up on the farm were used in building a spacious two story house, with four rooms downstairs and three upstairs.

Carl Kuechenmeister had served three years in the Civil War, during which time things on the farm had been somewhat neglected, but after his return he soon got things in shape again.

There was going to be an informal masquerade in the dance hall across the road from the Kuechenmeisters. We talked it over, whether we should go or not. She wanted to go badly. So I suggested she mask in a man's costume. We got Reinhold to go to the Gruhle store, nearer the Jaenig's, to pick out a young man's mask, so they might think he wanted it for himself. He brought home a very handsome face with a black mustache. When the time came, Mrs. Kuechenmeister dressed in a

white shirt with a starched collar, her husband's black suit, a fancy little black bow, and a pair of black gloves. The one thing that troubled us was her long black hair of which she had a lot and which she did not want to cut. This was finally twisted and rolled on top of her head. Reinhold's gray Sunday cap, which fitted exactly, was put on her head and pulled down all around. She would have to keep this on while dancing, but what of it? There were always some at such doings who thought it too much trouble to bare their heads. Mrs. Kuechenmeister was a slim well formed person and looked like a very nice young man. Her one worry was, if only they wouldn't discover who she was. I assured her they never would. Mr. Kuechenmeister was pleased that I was helping her to have a good time.

I wasn't masked and went over to the dance early. She came over about half an hour later when almost everybody who was coming had arrived. They were already dancing. Many of her friends who usually sat around just looking on were there. She started to choose one after the other of these old friends who seldom had a chance to dance. She was not only an accomplished dancer herself, but also could take a man's part perfectly, so it wasn't long before everybody was wondering who that dapper young fellow might be. So when the masks were being removed she still kept hers on and kept dancing for awhile, but finally it had to come off, when a roar of laughter and cheers went up. She kept on her cap and kept on dancing until she was exhausted. When at last we went home together she admitted she hadn't had such a good time in years.

When the Lutheran church had its next Trustee Meeting, Mr. Kuechenmeister presented himself there. It was to see that they find a different place for the minister to board and lodge. He had tried this before, but without success and again he was unsuccessful. He was quite put out and declared that since nothing could be done to get rid of that burden, he would sell the place and move away. Mrs. Kuechenmeister had the work but had no objections to keeping Reverend Kausewitz. They were being well paid and that money was always hers, but it must have been that Carl was sometimes disturbed in his rest on the lounge that he so objected to having him. A week or so after he took a trip into northern Wisconsin. On his return he informed us he had found a farm in Clark County of eighty acres or so. The next week he made his wife get ready and go up there with him to see if she liked it. She did not like it. It was all wild land. She preferred to stay where she was among her friends. But when he wanted a thing, he wanted it and kept on preparing to move and to find someone to whom to sell his local place.

Andrew Young, having just married a few months before, and being the clerk in the store, and the Postmaster right across, bought the property. Later he sold the farm and just kept the house and lot.

The Kuechenmeisters stayed until the winter term of school ended. I decided to board at home that spring and give the board money to Mother.

The Kuechenmeisters moved to Clark County and I moved home. After a week's vacation and rest, I started teaching German. For three months I walked six miles every day, three miles going to school in the morning and three miles home in the evening.

I did not find the walking hard, rather enjoyed it, but I had several hard trips when it rained. One afternoon in about the middle of the term when school closed I noticed it looked like rain and thought I would walk fast and might get home before it started. But when I reached the Jaenig's Mary was waiting at the door to invite me in for afternoon coffee and pancakes. I could not refuse for fear of offending them. Besides I was hungry enough. When I left a good hour had passed. About a quarter of a mile farther on, the home of a younger brother of Mr. Jaenig was reached, Herman Joenig. Here another invitation was awaiting me. Mrs. Jaenig wanted me to come in and give her some advice about a Sunday bonnet. She had a new ruching (a strip of pleated net or lace) and some flowers to put in the front of it and did not know how to do it. When the job was finished the weather had grown more threatening. She offered to make me some coffee and keep me overnight, but I decided to risk it.

I was about halfway home when the clouds burst, but I kept right on and when about halfway through our woods my clothes were so heavily soaked that I could hardly walk. I had picked up a stick with which I was helping myself along. It was so dark that I did not know whether I was still on the road or not. Suddenly I slipped with both feet into a hollow filled with water by the rain. In slipping I hurt my back so badly I did not know but what I had broken it. I was in the water from the waist down, with a terrible pain, the rain coming down, it seemed, by the barrelful. For awhile I did not know whether I could get out or not. I had to wait awhile until that awful pain ceased. When it did, I managed to crawl out on hands and knees and when out was grateful to be on my feet again. Then it commenced to lightning which showed me I was on the road. Terrible thunderclaps followed, but I finally reached home. My dog greeting me, I opened the door, walked upstairs, slipped off my wet clothes, took a towel and wiped myself dry, put on my nightgown and got into bed. It being Saturday the next day I could sleep as long as I wanted to.

My back was rather sore but by Monday I was able to take my walk again.

My term passedsuccessfully and pleasantly. Again at the close there was a grand picnic and a very elaborate English and German program.

Mother was pleased with the money I could give her. I decided to spend my two months vacation in Milwaukee going to some school.

In the middle of July 1870, Father took me to Fredonia Station to take the train to Milwaukee. Just as I was gathering my bundles to get on the train, Father came hurrying and said, "France has declared war on Germany." He was flushed and trembling

with excitement. I looked at him and said, "Never mind, there'll be some excitement then." Just as I was stepping on the train he said, "George Bach and his wife are going to Milwaukee on this train. I turned and looked at Father and said, "Another surprise". We then said good by and wished each other luck.

As I walked into the car George Bach met me and after introducing me seated me beside his wife. She was a Lietchen daughter from Cedarburg. They had lately been married.

After awhile George came back in and gave each of us a beautiful red cheeked apple, which we ate while visiting.

Reaching Milwaukee, he had to help his wife and looked as if he would have liked to help me too with my bundles. As we said good by he looked at me, loaded with bundles on my arms, under my arms and in my hands. I just wondered what he was thinking for I knew that not long ago he had wished to marry me. We said good by for the last time, for I never saw him again to speak to.

There was no one to meet me at the depot but I knew where to go. Sister Mary was working for the Slocum Straw Hat Factory. She was rooming with a Miss Hoffman, an elderly unmarried lady, who had a millinery store on Main St. (now Broadway). Before coming here, I had made arrangements to stay with Mary. We did not have to pay room rent but had to furnish our own food. She took us in for company and to help her keep the place clean. I found the place anything but comfortable and wondered how sister had managed to live through it as long as she had. But she said, "One gets used to it."

The front part was the store, a very attractive part of the place. Then came the living room, not so bad either. Part of this was partitioned off for Miss Hoffman's bedroom. Separated by a hall were two bedrooms, one of which we occupied. An immensely large room was used as a kitchen, dining room, and laundry and whatever else it might be needed for. There was a kitchen stove in there, a table, a few old rickity chairs and three or four trunks. There were never any regular meals cooked. We were not allowed to start a fire to cook anything for ourselves. Whenever Miss Hoffman did some cooking we could use the spare part of the stove to cook a few potatoes for ourselves or to warm some up, if any were left from another meal. It was about once a week that she cooked a beef soup. By the time we got home that was usually almost all done, so if we got on some potatoes by the time her soup was done our potatoes were about half done. But not another stick of wood went in. Miss Hoffman usually ate her meal in the living room, so often I would put in a few sticks of wood and finish our cooking. Thanks to her not counting the wood anyway.

There were no delicatessen stores nor cafeterias in those days, so on many a day when there was no fire in the stove we lived mostly on bread, butter, milk and cheese. Miss Hoffman did not drink coffee or tea so it was not allowed in the house.

When I got there the first question was what school would I attend. I had to depend on Miss Hoffman to help me find a school. We had heard of several private schools for girls but upon interviewing them found they were preparing wealthy girls for society, teaching them French and manners. It would not have done me any harm to learn more of the latter if I had been that kind of a girl -- headed for society, but they were too expensive to serve me. So, to make a long story short, I entered the Spencerian Business College just around the corner.

There were about thirty-five boys, young men, also some middle-aged men attending, but just one other girl besides myself, named Lizzie. Lizzie and I sat together. She seemed to be the kind of a girl who didn't care to learn, while I was anxious to make good use of my time and learn a lot. Besides Mr. Spencer, there was a woman who taught some of the classes. I was in the class under Mr. Spencer. I was disappointed in finding that all they taught was a business course including Arithmetic and Penmanship. In the latter Mr. Spencer did a lot for me, giving me special lessons and had me practice by the hour on the blackboard. In Arithmetic I got very little beyond what I knew myself. Besides the day sessions, every evening there was a session of about an hour which I never missed.

Going home for the first few weeks I always had several invitations to be escorted home which I refused regularly until finally they knew better than to ask me. Mr. Spencer, who often saw me go home alone, always gave me a pleasing smile. After reaching home Miss Hoffman who kept the Chicago Tribune and other papers and magazines had me read to her and Mary until bedtime.

Sometimes after Mary was in bed, Miss Hoffman would send me out on some business. One evening, having had some business with a man from New York, she had forgotten something. She handed me a letter and told me where to go and if I did not find him at the first place there were two other addresses where I might find him. It must have been very late for I met Mr. Fred Dreher, whose people lived in Fillmore, and with whom I had gotten acquainted when he was on a vacation at home. He looked astounded when he saw me and asked me what on earth I was doing at midnight in the streets. I laughed and told him I was looking for a young man, then showed him the letter and told him why I was out so late. I found that person whether at the second or third place I do not remember. It should be remembered there were no telephones in those days. Sometimes it was for something to eat that she would send me out. One evening it was to some fruit store quite a distance away to get her a quarter of a watermelon. I don't know to how many fruit stores I went that were closed but finally found one where the last clerk was preparing to close. When I told him what I wanted he looked at me rather strangely. In later years after he was married and had a wife and children I met him at Cedar Lake -- his name was Charley Seefeld. But I never told him I had been the girl who had come so late to get a quarter of a watermelon.

About the Franco-Prussian war one could find several columns in the papers every

day. It did not seem to interest or affect those with whom I came in contact for very seldom did I hear anyone discussing it.

Whatever the faults might have been of our apartment, life was not monotonous, for one side of us was the Hempstead Music Store. Whether it was part of the same building, I do not know. The walls between must have been very thin, for the business discussions, the trying of different instruments, and often the practicing on them for hours at a time could be heard distinctly. If sometimes annoying, it was entertaining.

To the left of us was an artist's studio and Art Gallery, where off and on a new picture was put in the show window, which Mary and I would take a few minutes to examine and admire. Then a few buildings farther west in the same block was a room with chairs, benches and an organ which was dedicated to prayer meetings. Between the hours of 12:00 and 1:00 anyone who had a few moments and wished to go in could. I think it belonged to the Methodist denomination, but that did not matter to us. We usually spent five to twenty minutes in there at noon and often in the evening also. So did Miss Hoffman. Every Sunday we went to some church. Perhaps we did most of this to please Miss Hoffman, but we also got much benefit from it. Sunday afternoons were mostly spent along the lake.

After my six weeks of school, my money being exhausted, I had to quit. Once in awhile Miss Hoffman took an afternoon off and entrusted her business to me. I never sold more than a few yards of ribbon or lace or a flower. One afternoon I had a surprise. Mrs. Weinreich from Fillmore came in with her Aunt, Mrs. Mueller. I had some sewing for her months ago and had left without being paid. Now she came to pay. I have forgotten how big the sum was but remember that it came in handy to buy some extra raw ham, smoked sausage and at Martini's a dozen or so of small cup-cakes. That summer I got quite well acquainted with Mrs. Martini. She was a splendid busy little woman and several times when I bought only a few cents worth and handed her a five dollar bill and she happened to be too busy to change it, she would say, "Oh, you just run along. You'll come again and then you can pay me."

All this summer I had been receiving letters from the Carl Kuechenmeister's in Clark County, Mrs. Kuechenmeister especially telling me how lonesome she was. Whenever he wrote he begged me to come and stay with them over winter, promising of course that he would see I'd get a school, that they were paying more there than in Fillmore. I knew the school in Fillmore was a sure thing, while expecting to get one in Clark County would be a risk. For a long time I had been undecided what to do.

Finally I decided to go North to the Kuechenmeisters. After I had my packing done and before closing my trunk, I went out and bought two reams of writing paper for I could not be so sure of getting a school. So I decided if I failed I would give lessons in penmanship in Neillsville. The Kuechenmeisters were strangers living among Americans, so to me it seemed problematic that they could find a school for me.

Miss Hoffman hated to see me go. She had learned to like me. I had had so many ways of helping her.

So one evening in the beginning of October I boarded the train for Tomah. As I arranged myself in my seat I noticed my fellow passengers were all very common people, so expected to lean back and go to sleep and have a very restful night. Suddenly a square box of candy fell into my lap. I had seen these boxes before and knew they were sort of a gamble. After paying for it and opening it you might find a 50¢ piece in it or just the candy. Thinking the boy who peddled it was trying to sell it to me, I picked up the box and put it on the edge of the seat. Then a very nice slim well-dressed young man came and politely asked could he sit beside me. This would be company so I willingly allowed it. He picked up the box and handed it to me, telling me to open it. I now knew that it had come from him. Opening it, found that beside the candy it had a 50¢ piece in it. He told me it was always the first box bought that held the prize.

My new friend was very entertaining. We had a good time visiting, making the hours pass quickly. He tried to discover my name, where I was going and what I was going to do when I got there. But whenever these questions came up I started a new subject -- something about the war, a new book, the weather or something. It must have been about midnight when his station was called. When he got up, we shook hands. He said, "The only thing I know is that you don't work hard, your hand is too soft for that." Then standing with his back against the door, he said, "I feel like staying on this train to where you get off." The train stopped and not getting any encouragement from me he got off. When I was left alone I had time to think. He reminded me of Charley Meyer, my childhood schoolmate, but was somewhat taller. He must have been the son of a merchant who had been in Milwaukee buying for the store. But this was all a guess, of course. I had the 50¢ to remember him by, but never saw nor heard of him again. The rest of the way to Tomah I was left to sleep in peace.

About seven o'clock in the morning we reached Tomah. In turning around to get my satchel, I noticed way at the other end of the car a woman with five children. They were gathering their bundles and satchels and baskets together. The oldest child may have been eighteen years old. She was taking the curl papers out of her hair and had just combed it when the train stopped. We all met at the door, when this girl with the curls asked me, "Where are you going?" When I answered, "Neilsville," she shouted "So are we, We'll go together." Her mother, with the youngest child in her arms, and loaded down with a satchel, looked at me and smiled. Upon getting out on the platform and casually looking around at the crowd, the back of one man looked familiar to me. Thinking it might be the nephew of the Kuechenmeisters who was a traveling agent, I wondered whether he might be going to visit his relatives. After while I saw him face to face but it wasn't Gustav Kuechenmeister. He was a man somewhat taller with a pockmarked face. At the hotel for breakfast, I had fried potatoes, a hot beefsteak and a big cup of coffee and bread and butter. I have never forgotten how good it tasted, not having a hot breakfast for several months.

I found the family again, whose acquaintance I had made. They had found a wagon to take us and our trunks and baggage to Neillsville, which was miles and miles away. Their name was Forrest and they came from West Bend, Wisconsin. They had been in Neillsville before and had gone back to West Bend. Now they were again going to Neillsville. They were very poor. Mrs. Forrest expected to make a living by sewing when they got settled. There were four girls and the youngest was a boy about six, a hunchback with weak legs. They were all dressed very sensibly and looked very clean, poor though they might be. They all had on heavy new shoes.

When we got on the wagon we found straw at the bottom to keep our feet warm. The wooden seats had been removed to make room for our trunks, boxes, bags, so it was on our baggage that we sat. It was a big strong wagon drawn by a pair of strong horses. There were two drivers on the front seat. This reminded me of the trip I had taken when but four years of age from Port Washington to our homestead.

We had gone on for miles when we found someone was coming on behind us. They were passing us slowly because they were sinking in the mud. It was a small buggy with the top off drawn by one horse. As I looked I saw there were two men on it, the driver and the other, lo and behold, was Gustav Kuechenmeister. So he had been on the same train with me.

They had a hard time getting through the mud but they went faster than we and soon were out of sight.

It was a cold damp day, a long dreary ride. Marion, the 18 year old girl, and I seated on our trunks, from the beginning had elected ourselves to be the entertainers. We told stories, cracked jokes, and not being able to sing the same songs, we took turns singing. Almost every house we passed had a bearskin hung over the door. One of the younger girls asked why did they always hang that fur in front of the house. I did not know but Marion said to give warning to the next bear -- what might happen to him if he did not keep away.

It was seven o'clock when we entered Neillsville, and it was dark. The driver stopped at the hotel thinking I would stay there, but I decided to go on a mile and stop with my new friends. Not only because I was told the other place would be cheaper and just as good, but also because I suspected young Kuechenmeister would be stopping at that hotel. So we went on another mile. We had had nothing to eat since morning, yet not a whimper or a complaint had come out of those children. It was a fine clean homelike hotel where we stopped, and a good hot meal was served us and we rested overnight.

Next morning after breakfast when I told them I was going to Neillsville to find the way to the people I was going to, Marion immediately invited herself to go with me. She seemed to think I would need help. We went to the Post Office. The postmaster

said there were three young men there with a team who were going in that direction and would be glad to take me. He told us where to find them. When we got there they were just emptying the last bag of grain from their wagon. They arranged a comfortable seat for me, helped me to get into the rig, and off we went. It was a long ride of six miles, but the roads were good and the weather was sunshiny.

At a corner they stopped. There was a crude tavern there. They told me I should follow this road from the corner one mile and I'd come to a house and there I should turn right and go along a path about one-fourth mile up the hill. That was where the Kuechenmeisters lived. When I came to that house I could not see much of a path, so thought I was lost. I rapped at the door. A sweet little woman with curls came to the door. She said she was Mrs. Benedict, a neighbor of the Kuechenmeisters and told me to go straight up the hill where I would find them.

As I neared the house it seemed terribly quiet but when I stopped and listened I heard someone chopping wood. Reaching the back of the house there was Mr. Kuechenmeister chopping wood from a log. When I said, "Hello", stopping and looking at me, he yelled, throwing his ax into the air. He told me that Gustav had also come this morning and that Mrs. Kuechenmeister and he had gone to visit the Dreshers, people who had also moved from Fillmore out here and lived some miles away. He called Oscar from the woods beyond and told him to go and tell his Mother I had arrived. We went into the house where I immediately made myself at home. It was a log house with a rather good sized room. It was the kitchen and also used as Mr. and Mrs. Kuechenmeister's bedroom. The boys all slept up attic. Besides there was a bed for company there. Luckily there was a large hall, half of which Mr. Kuechenmeister had partitioned off, which made a pleasant bedroom with one window for me.

I had reached there in the afternoon and towards evening Mrs. Kuechenmeister and her nephew came home. She was overjoyed to know I would be with her during the coming winter. And the young man thought it had been a misadventure that having come on the same train we had not met and made the trip together, and stopped at the same hotel and surprised the Kuechenmeisters together. Of course, I did not tell him that it had happened just as I had wished it should.

During the three days stay with his aunt and uncle we got quite well acquainted and when his uncle took him back to Neillsville, I went along to get my trunk. That morning we had to get up at four o'clock. It was a bitter, cold morning. Mrs. Kuechenmeister had given each of us a quilt to cover ourselves. Before we were half-way to Neillsville we put them over our heads to keep from freezing our faces.

We reached Neillsville so he could get on the early train that was taking them to Tomah. After having bidden him farewell, on the way to the hotel to get my trunk I could not help but admit that he was quite a nice young man and that I was glad I had the chance to become more intimately acquainted with him.

At the hotel I found Mrs. Forrest gathering up her belongings. She told me that she had found an empty house about a mile from there that she could have for the winter without paying rent and that people all around and especially the widow who was keeping the hotel had promised to give her all the sewing she could do, besides helping her and the family in every way she possibly could. I was glad to hear that but am still sorry I never heard of the family again.

On the way home I remarked about the roads being so good around here. Mr. Kuechenmeister said, "Yes, whoever had this territory in charge saw to it, before anything else, the roads were made wide anough and good. No stumps were left and no creeks unbridged."

The very next day we went to see the clerk of the district. Both Mr. and Mrs. Kuechenmeister took me. These people, like others, lived in a log house in the woods. They were nice people -- American, or Yankees as they were called. Of course, I had to do most of the talking myself. After telling them where I had taught school and how long they wanted to know why I had come here. After that had been explained satisfactorily the school was mine for five months at $30.00 per month. This was a great relief. Later on I learned I could easily have the chance of teaching penmanship in Neillsville. I knew I would have hated to make the attempt and was not sure of succeeding.

This was near the end of the week and I was to begin teaching the next Monday.

I started school with thirty-five pupils. I liked my pupils and they liked me which made the work easier. Soon I found I had the reputation of being the best teacher in this district they had ever had. I soon got acquainted with all the people around and whenever I was invited on a Saturday or Sunday for an afternoon tea, Mrs. Kuechenmeister was also invited, which she enjoyed very much, and she soon learned English enough to be able to visit with these Americans.

One Saturday morning Mr. Kuechenmeister had some business in Neillsville to attend to. He asked me would I like to go along for pastime. I was most willing.

Mrs. Kuechenmeister asked me to do her a favor. She needed a pound of coffee and had three dozen eggs. She told me what she thought the price was and what store to go to. When we reached the store on the outskirts of town, the first on the street, Mr. Kuechenmeister stopped and told me he wouldn't be long; when I got through to wait for him. It was a small store and there was no clerk, just the proprietor. When I asked the price of eggs he looked at them and the price of the eggs was a cent more than Mrs. Kuechenmeister had thought. While taking out the eggs and weighing the coffee, he asked me did I live on a farm and how far from here and where. I answered all his questions and when he handed me the coffee I knew he wanted to ask me many more. I decided not to stay any longer. As he opened the door very politely he said he hoped I would come again very soon. I started to walk back home knowing Mr.

Kuechenmeister would soon catch up to me. I had gone about a mile when he came. Mrs. Kuechenmeister took her coffee and said I had brought more than a pound, and when I told her eggs had been a penny more she said that was queer. I told her probably her eggs had been so nice the man just gave me a penny more.

The next Saturday I accompanied Mr. Kuechenmeister with a big roll of butter. This time I went to a larger store on the Main Street of Neillsville. Again the proprietor waited on me. He asked me was this my butter after tasting it. Then he said it was so good he would give me 2¢ more than the regular price. It was a roll of ten pounds. I got all the groceries I had been told to get. He gave me three sticks of candy. He too was inquisitive who I was, where I lived and how long I had been in the region. Before all these questions were answered other customers came in. For about twenty minutes I sat at the door until Mr. Kuechenmeister called for me.

The next time there was butter to sell Mrs. Kuechenmeister went along. We went to this same store. She took her butter to the proprietor while I stayed in the forepart of the store. Pretty soon I heard there was an argument about the price of the butter. Mrs. Kuechenmeister called me to talk to the man because she couldn't make him understand her. He wanted to pay her the regular price and she was trying to tell him he had paid 2¢ a pound more the week before because the butter was so good. He asked me was the butter the same as the butter I had sold him. He said, "You didn't make it, did you?" I told him "No." He asked, "Does this woman make this butter?" I told him she did. Then she got her 2¢ raise and got it every time. She admitted she had me to thank for that.

Some weeks later I again came to town with Mr. Kuechenmeister. He left me at this same store while he went to attend to some other business. This was in the middle of the afternoon and the store was filled with customers and was very busy. While I was being waited on by a young clerk, a load of wooden shoes was delivered and temporarily put in the middle of the aisle. Then Mr. Kuechenmeister came in. Seeing I was still busy he sat down on a box near the pile of wooden shoes which had attracted him. The clerk came to wait on him. Mr. Kuechenmeister commenced to talk and was praising the utility of wooden shoes -- how they saved other shoes and how much warmer they were than leather shoes -- that the family was still well supplied with them but that he would buy a pair for each of the boys and himself. Then he told that he had three boys, big strong fellows. I was surprised how well he was getting along, making himself understood. The clerk who was waiting on me must have mistaken my smile for sarcasm, when he burst out saying, "Yes, that is one of those old Germans. More of them are coming in all the time. They think themselves awfully smart, nothing but rude ignoramuses they are." I let him go on without saying one word. Then, when he had handed me the last parcel I went straight to that old Dutchman,* tapped him on the shoulder and told him in German I was ready to go now. He said, "Ja ja, ich auch bald." (Yes, yes, I'll soon be ready also.) So having the clerk help him carry out his newly bought wooden shoes, I felt satisfied that one young man had been taught a good lesson.

* Karl Kuechenmeister was a very prominent farmer in Grant Township, Clark County, Wisconsin, See History of Clark County, 1918.

It was a homemade sleigh that we got on, made by Mr. Kuechenmeister himself. There was plenty of snow on the ground so we slid along fine. I did not tell Mr. Kuechenmeister how he had been rated at the store, but I got to thinking. It was true that more and more of this kind of people were coming to this part of the country. There were already five or six German families, a few miles apart in our neighborhood. There was a young Bratz, a Degnitz, a Walter, all three from Farmington, still unmarried, working in the logging camp, saving their money to buy some acres in a year or so. Were they really ignoramuses? It was true that up to now they knew but one language, but I could not recall one American who knew more than one. Most of the older Germans who had come from the old country had at least had a good thorough common school education, while most of the Irish had had no education at all. But being better versed in the English language and with their other natural gifts were far ahead of the Germans, while many of the Americans or Yankees had less education than the Germans, but of course, considered themselves the real Americans and far ahead in intelligence to anyone from a foreign land. It was a mistake for many Germans not to learn the language of their adopted country. The only excuse I could find for that is that they worked too hard being too busy clearing the land, making a home for their families. I remember one German who was a very witty man, and with whom the Irish and the Yankees would have enjoyed visiting, when asked why he did not take the trouble to learn English replied, "If those darned Yankees want to talk with me, let them learn my language." The only remedy I could think of was that they should learn to know each other better which would show them there were more advantages in working together as friends than to be forever looking at each other askance.

One Sunday when Mrs. Kuechenmeister and I had been at church together in the forenoon, had spent the afternoon in the home of one of the members of the Lutheran Church, where a crowd of the members together with the minister had been served with coffee and coffee cake, we came home after dark. Mr. Kuechenmeister announced we were both invited to a party at the Campbells, who were the swellest people in all that neighborhood. Mrs. Kuechenmeister thought we could not refuse that invitation, so immediately we commenced to change our clothes and do up our hair appropriately. We had almost a mile to go. Most of the people in that neighborhood had one room -- a combination living room, kitchen, and bedroom, but here we found a bedroom and front room together but a separate kitchen. Besides, the house being a frame house instead of one of logs, showed them to be well-to-do people.

It was a jolly party, most of the neighbors being there. Pretty soon a middle-aged man with a violin came along.

Mrs. Campbell was Irish while he was a Yankee. They had two children, a girl and a boy. The girl, Sally, was 12 and the boy, John, 10. When the dancing commenced my first partner was Patsy Lynch, Mrs. Campbell's brother. He had some kind of an office at Neillsville, a fine looking young man with dark eyes and a head of curly black hair. All the members of the School Board were also there so, of course,

I had to have one dance with each of them. At about half past ten refreshments were being served. It was a lap lunch, a large plate with different kinds of cake and a cup of coffee. All were served by Sally Campbell and Mary Jane Slocumb, but mine was served by Patsy Lynch with a double share of cake and two cups of coffee. Before handing it to me he asked permission to enjoy this lunch with me, which, of course, I granted with pleasure. Then from somewhere he brought a footstool, seated himself upon it and while eating we had the jolliest time. Mrs. Kuechenmeister was not far from me and gave me several sly winks. After refreshments there was more dancing. Soon after there was a loud rap at the front door and three young fellows stepped in. They said they knew they were not invited but had been driven by lonesomeness to come anyway and if they would not be thrown out they'd be grateful. They were three college students trying to earn enough money in the logging camp to finish their schooling. They were taken to the kitchen and served refreshments, then introduced to everyone. When dancing a dance which was called the "gallop" with one of them, I was asked what distance I had to school. When told a mile he said, "My goodness, how do you get there?" I answered, "I gallop." Then I had to dance with the next one and the third. By this time it was going on twelve o'clock and I could see my chaperone was getting tired and sleepy so we went home, both having had a grand time.

I had expected to do a lot of studying, thinking it would be a lonesome place. When I found there was no chance in the home, I thought I could stay in school an hour after four o'clock but it got dark so soon that I had to give that up. When the days commenced to get longer there was usually something going on in the evening so I had to hurry home, which was a good excuse for no studying.

Besides the white people being of different nationalities, there were also the Indians. One morning at school after the fire was built, the children came running in to tell me some Indians were passing. It was one of the coldest mornings we had. Upon looking out, I saw a group of seven young bucks, all of the same size with their long black hair hanging down and blowing in the wind with some kind of a light garment without sleeves, that barely reached their knees. It looked like a cotton shirt. With bare legs and low moccasins on their feet, they were all straight and well built, but they were running!

There were Indians here and there. One evening after school about half-way home I suddenly saw a crowd of Indians, both men and women dressed in gay rags and blankets coming toward me. It was a surprise but I wasn't at all scared. Perhaps they thought I was for as they came nearer I saw they all had broad grins on their faces. When we met, they all said, "Bonjour." I nodded and smiled and so we passed each other in a friendly way. After that I sometimes met them singly and in crowds. Nothing happened. They all seemed to be friends with the white man.

One evening Mrs. Kuechenmeister had the washboiler on for heating water to soak her clothes for washing the next day, when Patsy Lynch called. He gave his

excuse for coming to borrow a book -- the Constitution of Wisconsin, I think it was. I kept that book in school so I could not accommodate him. He did not stay long probably because a kitchen with everybody in it was not a good place for young people to visit. I knew, of course, that borrowing that book was just an excuse. He was studying law and must have had that book himself.

After this I was asked by him to go to a dance, which was going to be held in the corner saloon. The evening he came to call for me he had been at the Post Office and brought my mail, which I took time to read before starting out. After reading the letter from home first, I opened one from somewhere in Illinois, the first one from young Kuechenmeister. When finally I had finished it, Mr. Lynch said, "That must be from someone who can write some, for that was a long letter." Evidently he was anxious to know from whom, but I simply smiled and did not give him the information. We had a grand time at the dance. All the young people from roundabout were there. Although it was in a saloon kept by a somewhat lowly German, there was no drinking going on at all.

Next Sunday I was invited to the neighbors, the Patches. Mr. and Mrs. Patch were regular Americans, Yankees. They had one little boy and lived in a three room house -- kitchen, bedroom and living room. A niece, a very beautiful girl, had come to visit her. Soon after I had arrived, I discovered that Mr. Patrick Lynch was also invited, with a few other young girls and boys. We had a very pleasant afternoon telling stories and singing. We stayed for supper and quite awhile after. I suspected Mrs. Patch had invited Mr. Lynch to get acquainted with her niece but when I got ready to leave for home he was at my side to go with me. After this I knew I would have to accept him as they say nowadays "for my steady". In those days we said "for my beau" and as I did not take the affair seriously, I could not help but think myself lucky for he certainly was a well mannered, well educated, ambitious and good looking young man.

The Kuechenmeisters and I visiting the Benedicts one night, I discovered that most of the residents round about here had been soldiers in the Civil War and were living on government claims for their services. Not so the Kuechenmeisters. They had bought their land from a man who had had it from the government for four years. Mr. Kuechenmeister and Mr. Benedict had a good time talking over incidents in the war. Neither of them had been hurt or wounded in any way. We women folks were well entertained by their stories.

Chapter XXX

The Year 1871

The holidays had pleasantly passed. No great entertainment had been given because every family had its own way of celebrating. So we had had few callers and to me it had been a very restful time.

The week after New Years, Julius Goldammer from Fillmore arrived, settling at the Kuechenmeisters. He had come, as he claimed as an agent to sell apple trees. He was told that apple trees could not be grown around there, the winters being too severe. He was trying to induce people to try again to see if they wouldn't. He started on his tour every morning when I started for school, going with me, which at first I did not mind so much, but when this was constantly continued, I was thinking of some plan to "shake" him. I told little Oscar, thirteen years old, to stay close to me on the way. This seemed to please Oscar very much. He kept right in front of us, listening to what was said, turning around every little while, with mischief in his big brown eyes, looking at me. On the way some of the other boys would attach themselves to the company. This, of course, helped to keep Julius from becoming too friendly. When this happened every morning it seemed to aggravate him, so very soon he admitted he wasn't doing very much business and would go farther South.

Time went on pleasantly when the first of April came on a Saturday or Sunday, early in the afternoon a surprise party came. About fifteen or sixteen young people came among whom of course was Patsy Lynch. There were two young girls named Lizzie and Mary Baer, who had brought their mouth organs along. They were good at playing dance music, so they were elected musicians. Everything that could be moved was soon cleared out of the kitchen and the dancing went on merrily, even Mr. Kuechenmeister joining in. When he was dancing with me, Oscar ran upstairs to tell his mother to come down, that Father was dancing with Miss Brinker. A jolly time was had by all until five o'clock when refreshments were served. It was the last party I enjoyed there.

About a week after this I was ready to leave for home. Finding I had to be in Neillsville early on a certain morning, Mr. Kuechenmeister took me and my trunk to a friend of theirs for the night. Nearing Neillsville, which was then only a village, I saw two men walking several rods ahead of us, one of whom I noticed was Patsy Lynch. Coming up to them he motioned Mr. Kuechenmeister to stop, then came up and handed me a letter. We said our good byes to each other then and there.

The letter contained many good wishes for a pleasant trip and hopes of our meeting again soon and thanking me for having helped in giving him a good time. It was quite a lengthy letter but I have forgotten what all it said.

The people with whom I stayed were very nice well-to-do clean people. There were no buses in those days. At seven o'clock the next morning a big farm wagon drawn by two big horses with two drivers picked me up. My destination was Black River Falls. At noon we stopped at an inn where they served meals and took dinner there. They were serving quite a crowd of travelers going in different directions. We stayed there about an hour or so for the horses also had to be refreshed, then drove on until where they let me off, taking my trunk to the depot and bringing my check to me. My train left at about eight for Sparta. I was going to visit the Hughes who were living on a rented farm there.

Nearing Sparta a man who had so far sat quietly opposite me got up and took the seat beside me. He was a black haired, dark eyed businessman, as it seemed. Although he had not asked permission to take the place beside me, I did not object. It was getting late, almost midnight and I soon found that he was trying to protect me. When he found that I had nobody to meet me at the station in Sparta and did not know where I was going to spend the rest of the night, he suggested that I stay at the hotel where he was going to stay. The hotel was near the depot rather outside of the town. When he told me he was well acquainted there and had often stayed there, I was grateful to him for the information and, of course, would stay there also.

When I awoke the next morning, I thought I had overslept, but when I came to the dining room I saw the tables were still filled with people. At a table in the center of the room I found my friend of the night before. He just looked up with a satisfied look on his face, which seemed to say, "Oh, you're all right" -- the last I saw of him.

After breakfast I commenced to realize that trying to find my friends, the Hughes, might be quite a task. I had their address, a small town near Sparta. I was beginning to feel lonesome and somewhat lost.

While seated on the veranda, thinking things over, a young girl as I thought came and sat beside me. I soon found she was a bride and was on her honeymoon. She seemed very anxious to have somebody to talk to and I, being a good listener, she told me the whole history of her life and that now she had done the thing she had never wanted to do -- married a minister. Of what denomination I have forgotten, although I think he was a Methodist. At this she laughed as if she thought it funny, for she would have to readjust herself. Her whole life would be different from what she had wanted it to be. Well, I felt that I was somewhat in trouble myself, but nothing compared to hers. Then we parted. I did not see her at dinner time so they must have left.

About the middle of the afternoon I decided not to stay at the hotel another night. So I started out on foot to see what I could find. First I walked about half a mile along a road, then not passing any houses, I soon came near a railroad track. I thought I would take that and I walked and walked and walked along that track. I must have been deep, deep in thought for after having walked a mile or two I was suddenly pulled

off that track and a whistling car with bells ringing passed. Another minute or perhaps a second I would have been run over. When I realized what had happened, I found myself in the arms of a young boy about seventeen or eighteen years of age. He shook me and said, "Did you want to be killed?" With a hysterical laugh I said, "No, I didn't." "Well," he said, "Why didn't you get off the track when you heard them whistling and ringing?" I could truthfully answer, "I did not hear them." That boy was one of a gang working near the track.

I had written a letter to the Hughes but did not hear from them until Tuesday. The Post Office was three miles away from their home, so they could not go there every day.

On Tuesday afternoon Tommy Hughes came along with a big wagon drawn by a span of horses. We drove to the depot and got my trunk. I found the Hughes well-settled in a five room house. They were poor people but they never seemed to be poor.

It was a lovely house, well furnished in the best condition -- white curtains on all the windows, trees and flowers and shrubs all around the house and a newly laid vegetable garden in the back.

Jane was working for a wealthy farmer miles away. I went to see her the next day and spent a few days with her.

On the way back to the Hughes we stopped at the Post Office. There was one letter from home, and one from Gustav Kuechenmeister, and one from Patsy Lynch, and one from Andrew Young from Fillmore telling they would expect me back to teach the school in the fall. There was one from Mrs. Kuechenmeister in Clark County saying that if I came back right away I could have the summer school for three months. I wrote I would if they gave me $35.00 a month, to which I got a response that they would pay me what they had paid during the winter -- $30.00. So I did not go back.

I spent the rest of the week very pleasantly with the Hughes.

Again a long trip on the train. When evening came we were nearing Milwaukee. The conductor told me it would be midnight or past when we got there. The young brakeman seemed to be right behind him when we got this information. Soon after he came to me and told me he lived in Milwaukee and that he would see me home -- that it was dangerous to be alone in a big city at night. I told him I had often had that experience in a bigger city than Milwaukee -- that I was not afraid for nothing had ever happened to me. Off and on he repeated his annoying visits when finally I realized there would be no getting out of letting him go home with me. But then I decided definitely to avoid this -- to stay in the depot all night if such a thing could be done -- perhaps one could engage a room, because sitting in the depot might be worse than going home with a stranger. I was worried and very uneasy when we were reaching Milwaukee. In the commotion when people were gathering their things up, a big man in gray stepped

up to me. He told me there would be an omnibus at the station and advised me to take it, give the driver my address and I would be taken right to my home. When I thanked him he smiled and told me to keep near him. He was not a young man. He was homely and was a Jew. But, oh, how I liked him. My place was the first stop the omnibus made. I rapped at the front door of Miss Hoffman's millinery store. I rapped many a time and stood there it seemed for hours before I saw a light appear. Finally she came wrapped in a blanket with her night cap on. When she looked through the glass and saw who it was getting her out of bed, she unlocked the door. It was not a friendly greeting that I got. "What on earth are you doing out on the street past midnight? A great wonder no policeman was out to get you." When I found she was alone in her place, I could realize she thought it might have been a robber trying to get in. Knowing where the beds were, I betook myself to one and immediately fell asleep.

Next morning I awoke, and I did not feel like rising but knowing if I got up late there would be no breakfast for me, and as there had been no dinner on the train, I had had nothing to eat since the previous noon, when the train had stopped at some station, where the meal was served daily to passengers.

For breakfast there was bread and butter and cold water. Coffee and tea were never served here and as the beverage of hot water had not as yet been thought of, we partook of it cold.

Miss Hoffman was in a better humor this morning. She asked me to stay with her a week. By that time she hoped the girl who had promised to stay with her would have arrived. It being Sunday we were going to church.

When I had put on my new black dress, she thought it very nice and becoming but it needed just one thing -- a bustle. Not having one she would make me one. She found a piece of white goods, filling it with newspapers and putting strings to it and I put it on. It seemed all right except that it shortened my dress in the back, which she said couldn't be helped and wouldn't be noticed with my coat on. I couldn't see why it was necessary to be so in style in church, but after getting there I would have felt very much out of place if I hadn't been fixed up.

I think the church she belonged to was the Presbyterian. Anyway there was fine singing and a splendid sermon. Getting back home we prepared our frugal meal of potatoes and vegetables on an old cracked rusty iron stove. Iron stoves were the only ones in use at that time. By Wednesday evening the girl she had expected arrived. She was a very nice girl. We slept together one night and then I decided to take the train for home Thursday morning. It was the first time I went home on the new railroad, landing about a mile and a half from our home. Before that I had always landed in Saukville. A young man, with whom I had attended school as a child -- Michael Liddy -- was brakeman and he recognized me and I would certainly have recognized him had I noticed him before, for the Irish still stuck out all over him. Still he had

the best of manners -- politely carried my satchel and helped me out of the train.

The depot stood in an acre or two of forest and before getting on the open road I was worried how to get rid of my bustle which I had worn up to now. I knew it would be dangerous to confront my Father with that thing on me. Just what he would say to me I could not imagine, but I knew it would be enough to cow me. So when I got to a place where the forest was thickest and where I was sure I was alone, I divested myself of the encumbrance. I tied it up in a ball and I put it on a branch of a maple tree as high up as I could reach.

Mother was at the gate when I got home. She looked a year older than when I had last seen her. We went in and she told me that Emma had gone to Clark County and was staying with the Kuechenmeister's and that Louisa was with Mary, who had started a little millinery store in Waubeka so she was alone to do the housework for Father and the boys.

We had a cup of coffee together and talked over whatever news there was. After supper the boys, Henry and Charley, got my trunk from the depot. I stayed home the first few days, then went to Waubeka to stay with Mary and Louisa. She had moved into the building which John Keefe and Joe Wagner had built right after the war, to make their bootleg rye brandy.

Mary had expected to work up a good business in the town, but hardly had she opened up before the Karl Meyer store, which was a block away from her place, and the Vermuth Store, right across from her, started in the millinery business in opposition to her. As they were able to sell cheaper than she could, they took away most of her customers. As I see it now, it was a low mean trick. Of course, she was good at making over old hats. She could reshape any old straw hat, mend it and make it look like new. Even straw hats for boys. I remember that one day four of those came in battered and torn. They were white hats for four of the Cooley boys. They went out looking like brand new. Besides she had a sewing machine I had bought for her a year before. Very few women possessed such a machine and as ruffles on dresses and underwear were the height of style at the time, she got the hemming of ruffles, for which she got a penny a yard. In this I helped whenever she was busy with other work. In this way she managed to make expenses at least during this summer.

The only recreation we had was evenings after the shop was closed. After helping Louisa with her lessons, we would sing our troubles away. I would teach Mary, who had a strong alto voice, some new songs and for an hour or so we would entertain the neighborhood with our music, for which we got quite a reputation as singers.

One afternoon I started out to visit my good Irish friend, Mrs. Welch. She lived on the old Port Washington Road about one and one-half miles from Waubeka. I found her and her two daughters, Marion and Helen, in the barn, right in the wide open door working on a quilt. Both she and the girls were glad to see me. Marion, 12, and

Helen, 8, both had been pupils of mine the first and second years I taught in our district. I was soon in possession of a needle, thread and thimble, helping to finish that quilt. The rooms in the house were too small to put up a quilt frame, besides this had the advantage of being cooler and having less flies.

It was about 12:30 when I got there and since I knew all the neighbors, all the news about the neighbors was told me in exchange for my experiences while away. About half past three the quilting was finished. Then Mrs. Welch invited me to a four o'clock tea which she would prepare while I would finish the quilt by hemming it.

After seven that evening a surprise came, for Henry and Charley arrived with a load of wood and food.

This was a sociable little town. There was never a chance to get lonesome. Even if business was not exactly booming, many of the girls who had been our schoolmates often called. Some were married, others expecting to be. Then, especially on market day, many outsiders would call to see the hats, flowers and ribbons. Many would buy a few cents worth of something.

One Saturday evening, after I had had my tub bath, my hair put up in curlpapers and safely in bed, almost asleep, Mary came up and told me two middle-aged men were there -- rich farmers who wanted to see me. One named Rheingans was considered the richest man in the county. I sat up in bed and said, "What do they want to see me for? Tell them I'm asleep." She said, "I did tell them that but you've got to come down, because Mr. Rheingans is a customer of mine -- he bought all the hats for his girls from me in the spring. They heard you are here and want to see how you look. They've never seen you before." By this time it came to me I couldn't afford to kill any of Mary's customers, so out of bed I got and put on my everyday clothes and came downstairs.

I sat down on a chair before them. Mary introduced me. I smiled at them. They looked very disappointed and then asked Mary was she fooling them? When she told them no, this was her sister Mathilde, I nodded. They said "goodnight" and left. Evidently they had not found me as good looking as they had thought. Mary said, "You should have taken the curlpapers out of your hair and put on a different dress." I told her, "Not for two old men," and went back to bed.

The Fourth of July there was a big dance, which, of course, we attended and had a good time.

Some weeks after that I heard Gustav Kuechenmeister had come home and was going to start giving music lessons on the organ. One afternoon he called. His excuse was to find out whether I had received the book "The Hoosier Schoolmaster" by Edward Eggleston he had sent me and whether I had read it and liked it. Of course I had already read it and liked it.

The Sunday following some of the members of the Fillmore School Board and their wives called. They had me take them to Miss Almedie Turner where they engaged both of us to teach their school. She taught the primary department while I was in Clark County. She was to have that again and I the upper department, both at $30.00 per month. She was to teach seven months and I ten months. I was to teach German three months in the summer.

Just before school opened I was again in Milwaukee. I had come on business for Mary -- to see what the winter styles would be and so forth. Again I was staying with Miss Hoffman, who, although she had several girls with her, was glad to make room for me.

On October 8th all Milwaukee was excited when the news of a terrible fire in Chicago was announced. Again the Prayer Meeting Room was open and we went there to pray for Chicago. Collections were being taken for the suffering people and I gave my goodly share. I believe it was the second night of the fire that I went with a crowd of people to the lake shore. From there one could see the heavy smoke and the sky a fiery red.

There had been a long and terrible drought and when back home I heard there had been a forest fire even worse than the fire in Chicago in Peshtigo, northern Wisconsin. So in our part of the country the air was very hot both by day and night which caused great fear that a fire might start here at any time. There were people who believed the end of the world was near at hand and it would be by fire.

Miss Almedie Turner and I were very successful, getting along well together in school. Miss Turner boarded in the corner tavern across from the Carl Kuechenmeister's old home while I was back at my old place with the Jaenigs.

Gustav Kuechenmeister started to give music lessons, which meant also selling organs. The first he sold were to the Jaenigs and the Gruhles. Then some of the members of his church -- the German Methodist Episcopal -- followed suit. He also started a class in Waubeka. One of the wishes of my life as far back as I could remember was to learn to play the piano, but here was the next best thing to it. Miss Turner also with many of our older pupils, enrolled. Gustav Kuechenmeister had been in college at Berea, Ohio, the present Baldwin Wallace College and among his studies had been music. He was a devout lover of that art and was from the beginning a successful teacher. Besides the organ, he also played the violin and almost any other instrument.

After the first few lessons once a week, I was able to accompany my songs but otherwise I think I was the most aggravating of his pupils, for Mrs. Jaenig was an invalid all that winter and her bedroom, being off the front room, where the organ stood, gave me little chance to practice. Little Emma Klessig who was one of my pupils also was taking lessons. Whenever there was a chance for anyone to practice it was for the most part she who took it.

Emma and I took lessons once a week early in the morning. She from seven to eight and I from eight until quarter to nine. Our music teacher living about a quarter of a mile from the school, I could easily make that. Emma and I would sometimes meet, she coming from her lesson and I going. She would inform me whether he was in a bad or a good humor, which gave me a chance to prepare for whatever it might be.

Thus time passed quickly and soon Christmas was near at hand. Then besides all, the preparation for the holiday. About a week before Christmas Mary Klessig told me she had some hair of each one of the family and she had thought of having a wreath made of it and she couldn't think of anyone that could do that except me. I thought it would be impossible since I had never taken lessons along this line, and I had never even thought of doing anything like that. Still she handed me the hair and told me to go on -- she knew I could make some kind of a wreath, for it was the only thing she could think of to give her parents for Christmas.

I could not start it at the Jaenigs because her mother would be sure to see it and ask what I was doing and why. When Saturday came, although it was a bitter cold day, the coldest we had had that winter, I started for home. On the way there was a man a quarter of a mile ahead of me who turned around every once in awhile and walked backwards to keep his face from freezing and give his back a chance. That seemed to me a good idea so I did the same. After three miles of this I reached home. The kitchen was the only warm room and I knew Mother could not let me mess around with hair. However, after a good cup of coffee, bread and butter and hand cheese, I picked up courage enough to walk another mile, to get to Mary's in Waubeka. Mary would not let me unpack my wares, until after we had had supper and all the dishes and everything was cleared up. Her kitchen was now upstairs in the smallest room. Her stove was the first one we had had in the old block house after we had reached the wilderness. Since there was plenty of wood, I could keep comfortable.

I started about half past six and by kerosene lamp worked almost until morning, when the hair flowers were all made. I was almost blind when I went to bed and slept until noon. Then after breakfast, I put my flowers together in the form of a wreath and started for Fillmore.

Mary Klessig was very much pleased with the wreath so we took it to Mr. Wittig to have it framed. He was glad to get it in time because he had to see about the size if he made it by hand. When Mr. Seiering saw the wreath he was inspired to write a poem to the parents. This poem was put in the center of the wreath. This present proved a great surprise and a very worthy gift to the Jaenigs. It has the honor place on the wall in their front room as long as they both lived. In later years, about 65 years after, when present at one of the family's homecomings it was given back to me and is now in the Old Settler's Case in The Court House.*

* At present in Old Settler's Case, Washington County Historical Society.

NOTE

Mathilde did not dictate anything for the year 1872. Undoubtedly because she again was Principal of the Fillmore School, lived at the Jaenig's, attended the Turner Dances, and kept up her music lessons. Life went on as usual.

The only thing Mathilde ever mentioned about 1872 as far as I can recall was the one day she saw a funeral procession pass the school house and she knew it was Gustav Kuechenmeister's grandmother, Theresa Stolze, who was being buried. M.M.K.

Chapter XXXI

The Wedding Year, 1873

About the middle of January I was asked to come home on Friday evening to spend Saturday there to help with the sewing of Mary's trousseau.

She had had no business in her millinery store during the winter, for very few people wore winter hats, instead they wore home made hoods or knitted shawls. So she had given up in despair and had at last accepted the man who had, ever since she was a girl of fourteen, said he would marry her some day. He was ten years her senior and a good honest, hard working man. He had served in the Army during the Civil War for four years from beginning to end. From the government he had accepted a claim of eighty acres in Marathon County, about four miles from Colby. He had built a log cabin on it and was going to take his bride there.

After this I spent every weekend at home. Father also had his table in the corner of the room and was sewing while Mother would be reading "War and Peace" by Tolstoi to all of us, a book Father had had a chance to borrow. Those were pleasant evenings.

On April 17, Mary and Peter Beckius were married at Port Washington. Immediately after they moved to their new home in the wilderness of Marathon County.

Before taking lessons from Gustav Kuechenmeister I had simply met him casually, except for the time I saw him at Neillsville with his Aunt, where I had come to teach school and be with his aunt to help her get over her homesickness in a new home. There I had gotten well acquainted with him to think he was a pretty nice young man -- in fact, a coming man. And when he got the wishbone at a Sunday chicken dinner in Neillsville and wanted me to wish with him, I did not know what to wish, so he gave me five minutes time, and not knowing what else to wish, I wished he would write to me, thinking the winter might be kind of lonesome. I got the wish and sure enough after he had left, about a week later my first letter came. It was a long, very interesting letter and thus our correspondence began.

At that time he was traveling in the east in large cities and meeting fine people and described what he thought was worthwhile. So the letters were instructive as well as interesting and I enjoyed them very much.

After Christmas Gustav Kuechenmeister changed the time of my music lesson from morning to the last one in the evening -- between seven and eight. Of course, I was perfectly satisfied because I hated to be so driven in the morning. But I did not know that his reason was to see me home if the weather was fine. Then when snow came and

there was good sleighing, he would hitch up his horse to his cutter and give me a long, roundabout sleigh ride. And when the moon shone bright and the stars could be seen, he would talk about astronomy, in which he was well versed. And I, thanks to the instruction I had had from my Father from little up could at least understand what he was talking about. This was all very interesting and enjoyable but it brought me home late to a house full of servants, both male and female. It gave reason for talk. But I did not know how to stop it. I tried in a polite way to let him know that I would just as soon leave for home alone, but he said his horse needed the exercise and why shouldn't we enjoy the ride.

Whenever possible Gustav spent an evening at the Jaenigs and that always was the one evening that Mr. Jaenig stayed at home. Often it would happen that several guests happened in. First thing on the program was that little Emma would have to show how she was progressing with her music. Then Gustav would play several pieces and I would be invited to sing some of my recently acquired songs, which Gustav would accompany, of course. Then in between, Mr. Jaenig would have a chance to tell some of his adventures in California where he had gone for the Gold Rush and spent many years. It was usually a very jolly time that was spent by all and helped his reputation as a musician if nothing else.

The eleventh of March was Gustav's birthday. It came and Mrs. Jaenig thought Emma and I ought to do a little something for it. I did not see how I could get out and let Emma do it alone, so it was finally decided that we congratulate him by each sending him a note. At this time there were no cards with the wishes of the giver printed on them, no birthday, wedding or any other cards. Whatever we wished to say, we had to compose ourselves. If I remember rightly, Emma's wish was written on a heart-shaped paper scalloped all around and trimmed with a red ribbon. My wishes were on a square paper also scalloped with a ribbon drawn through, just wishing him a happy birthday and many more to follow.

Emma's step aunt, Mrs. Herman Jaenig, who was a near neighbor had a box garden in her south window, full of blossoming what the Germans called "Lebemäulchen" (snap dragon). She gave us a big bouquet to give him for his birthday and Mrs. Jaenig insisted that we buy a photograph album and give him that. It was all a company affair which I objected to. I wanted Emma to give it to him alone, but my wish had nothing to do with it. So in the morning of Gustav's birthday we both appeared with our gifts. Of course, he was very much surprised and pleased. His mother was also pleased.

All this winter he had faithfully attended church and Sunday School, the German Methodist Episcopal Church, where he played the organ and gave one evening to teaching Sunday School songs, while I, belonging to the jolly crowd, attended almost every dance party given in the Turnhall, invited by one or the other of the Turner boys, and once in awhile by my former little boyfriend, Charley Meyer, from Waubeka.

Now, after Gustav's birthday in March there were special meetings held in their church -- prayer and revival meetings. How different our interests were!

Thus things went on until spring came. It must have been the latter part of May that Gustav walked home with me. It has been a very quiet walk. When we stopped at the gate, I told him that people were congratulating me on my engagement. I told them I wasn't engaged but everybody told me that he accepted the congratulations. He insisted we were engaged. I do not recall how he did it, but he finally almost made me believe that we were. Well, anyway I told him my Father had not yet given his consent. Did I think he would beg for that? I certainly would not marry a man until my father had expressed his approval. Then I said good night and opened the gate. I hadn't taken two steps before he called me his bride. This sent cold chills running through me and instantly a dark apparition stood between us just for an instant and it disappeared. I wanted to say something but was frozen stiff and could not open my mouth, so I walked away and entered the house. I felt it was a premonition. It was rather late and everybody was in bed, so I did not light my candle before going to bed. I was tired and slept soundly all night. I got up early and after breakfast went to school. There I wrote a note to my father, telling him what was going to happen and the trouble I was in and to be sure to say "No." Then I took the letter to the Post Office, which wasn't far from the schoolhouse. I felt very much relieved and felt sure everything would be all right.

The next week of my lesson I got there on time and saw in a minute what had happened. His face was beaming. He did not have to tell me -- but he did. He had my father's promise. So I was engaged. Later on, I figured, well, I could break the engagement anyway. But could I? I had already broken one engagement. So I decided for the former.

It was left for me to choose living in a rented house or with his people. I thought it would be better to move in with them since they were willing.

One Sunday afternoon Gustav's mother invited me for coffee. When I got there I found she wasn't so much pleased with me. She asked me how did I think I'd get along with her son. I could have told her I didn't want him but that he made me. But I just smiled at her and let that be my answer. Then she let me know how many nice girls that belonged to their church would have been glad to marry him. I could have told her I'd be glad if he had married one of them but I kept my mouth shut. (Gustav's Mother was a convert to Methodism, therefore she was very much opposed to dancing.) As soon as the coffee hour was over I left for home.

It did not take me very long to be reconciled to my fate -- for fate it was. I had fought it long enough and had lost. After all we had many similar views of life. We both liked music and were very fond of good reading. A special subject, history, we both loved. So the next time we were taking a walk, I had a pretty little gold

ring on my finger and was feeling especially good, because he had given me two beautiful books the day before -- Robert Burn's poems and a book of German poems, Blaetter and Bluethen (Leaves and Blossoms). His good taste in selecting that kind of book had given me much contentment. As we were walking down the hill, reaching a fallen log, he said, "Let's sit down." After a little while he said, "I want to ask you a question. Perhaps you'll think that it's none of my business, but I want to know. After we are married, what will you do about your dancing parties?"

"Oh," I said, "I never had any respect or liking for a woman who went to a dance without her husband, so I would not for anything put myself in a class with that kind of woman. But, if ever we are together in a place where there is dancing, I won't make any promise that I won't dance." In a greatly relieved tone of voice he said, "This is more than I expected. I am satisfied." After a minute or so he said, "Have you any requests to make?" I had none, but his brought something into my mind. "You do not belong to a Temperance Society?" I said, "If you should ever come home drunk, I won't like it but I'll forgive you. But if ever I find that you are chasing other women that will mean the parting." We both laughed and left it at that.

I was finishing the last few weeks of school. Summer school lasted during April, May and June and during that time I had both grades in the large room. The enrollment consisted of over eighty pupils. During the last two summers I had taught German. I now had the two last weeks of the term to prepare for the last day of school which was the grandest holiday in Fillmore because this was the one day when the grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles could all come together and enjoy the program and afterwards see the children play games the rest of the afternoon and then have refreshments together.

The program again this year was a great success -- half German and half English. The program was held on the grounds of the Turnhall but in the evening there was a dance for the young people in the Turnhall and, of course, I had to be present there. I had a very jolly time for each one of the boys wanted to dance his last dance with me, but I had brought Augusta Klessig, who was to be one of my bridesmaids with me, so I did not stay until the usual hour of twelve o'clock. This being Augusta's first dance, she too had a good time and was willing to go home with me.

I was planning a very simple wedding in that old home that I had called mine for so many years, but Gustave told me that it must be a church wedding and that his parents wanted to have it in their own home, since they only had two children and could have no more than two weddings. The Jaenigs also wanted me to stay with them and be married from their house and would help me get ready since I had helped them when their daughter Mary was married.

Since it would make it easier for my people and me, I was willing.

There was about a week and a half time after the close of school to set the date. I would have liked more time, but Gustav's mother insisted on having it over as soon as possible. She didn't quite trust me, I guess. During that time I made myself two new dresses, and had the wedding dress made in Port Washington, made four new sheets, and two pairs of pillow cases. I hemmed two linen tablecloths and a dozen napkins. At home there were several patchwork quilts I had made just for fun during the last few years and a few cotton tablecloths and some napkins. It was just a meager trousseau but I felt quite proud of it -- something not to be ashamed of, since I had made and paid for it myself.

Choosing the day of the wedding had been left to me, July 17, 1873, the wedding party being at Gustav's people's house. Things being as they were, I could not invite any of my old friends, so just my parents and oldest brother Henry came. None of the girls were at home so Charley my younger brother stayed home to take care of things. Emma and Louisa were in Colby with Mary.

When Gustav came to get me, Father, Mother and Henry were at Jaenig's as well as several other people to wish me happiness. One of them was Mr. Seiering, quite an aged man, a fine musician, who declared were he ten years younger no other man than he would have gotten me.

My dress was a blueish gray silk, the waist and sleeves trimmed with fringe of the same color. I had no veil because Gustav's mother had asked me not to, so I just wore a green myrtle wreath tied with a white ribbon in the back. My hair was waved and hanging below my shoulders.

Thus we all drove to the church, Gustav and I, in his light one-seated carriage.

The best man was Robert Dresher. Then there was Emil Bratz. The bridesmaids were Augusta Klessig and Ida Gerhart or Emma Klessig. Gustav and I walked in first and the other couples followed us down the aisle.

When we entered the church at ten o'clock it was crowded. The minister was Reverend W. F. Kruechman. The church was nicely decorated and a bouquet of flowers was on the altar, raised from those that had taken root from the bouquet of flowers Emma and I had given Gustav on his birthday. His mother had transplanted them in her garden.

The minister was a very nice man. It seemed to me it was a very short service. We went home for the celebration.

We all seemed to have a very good time. We had a good chicken dinner at twelve o'clock and some coffee and cake for those who wanted it at four o'clock. Mother wore her best black dress from Paris and looked very nice for the wedding and Father offered a toast at dinner which Gustav and all present thought very fine.

Among our wedding presents were two beautiful vases, some fancy cups and saucers and a tea set -- white with a gold rim, a coffee pot of the same ware and three sets of plain white plates, some towels and a small cane seat rocker, 12 quilts and two pillows and a featherbed were also received. Father gave us some Russian chickens and there were other articles I do not remember.

At about half past seven the Turner boys came and gave us a hearty charivari. Gustav gave them the money to buy a keg of beer and then they wished us a long and happy life together. This was the end of the wedding. The next day we went to Milwaukee and stayed there a few days getting acquainted with Gustav's many friends.

When we came home the festivities were over but during the coming years, if Gustav did not come home on time at night, I never had to go to bed worrying, because I knew it was business that kept him away.

- THE END -

BACKWARDS FROM NINETY

The Autobiography of Marie Mathilde Brinker, 1848-1873

This is to announce the availability of the above autobiography. Mathilde Brinker was born in Paris, France a few months after the French Revolution of 1848. She was born a short distance from the Place de la Concorde and remembered playing in front of the famous fountain there.

Her father was involved in the politics of that day and being very democratic was very much opposed to the thought of Louis Philippe becoming Emperor of France. He was so opposed that he became a marked man and was scheduled for arrest. When his friends learned this, they kidnapped him and put him on a boat bound for America to save his life. A year or so later he sent for his wife and two little girls and when they reached New York they lived on Broadway for awhile.

The father and some of his friends purchased land near Waubeka, Wisconsin and they made the trip to Port Washington via the Great Lakes. Mathilde writes vividly of pioneer days.

The first school she attended was the one which is now known as the Flag Day school. This was also the first school in which she taught. She spent the four Civil War years attending school in Chicago where she saw Abraham Lincoln. A little later she taught school in various districts in Ozaukee, Washington, and Clark counties. Wherever she taught she became a part of the community life and writes very clearly about the schools and life of that day.

When she was in her nineties, Mathilde dictated the story of her life from her birth until her marriage in 1873. Partly as a result of the book, she was honored in 1970 by the Women's Auxiliary of the Wisconsin State Historical Society as one of the outstanding pioneer women of the state.

The book speaks for itself. It has been said that one of the chief values of the book is that it stimulates both the old and young to become more interested in the early stories of their own families and communities.

Charles Shetler, Librarian, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, wrote: "This will be a fine addition to our local history and genealogy collection. I hope that it will be distributed widely in the state."

Paul J. Sotirin, Librarian, Milwaukee Public Library, said: "It is a type of personal reminiscences which helps preserve the flavor and temper of a bygone era. So often histories are presented inan impersonal manner and much of the true story of an individual is lost. As there is a growing concern for the preservation and collecting of local history, the Library is most eager to acquire for its collection such works as this."

Robert E. Gard, Regional Writer-in-Residence, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, states: "I have read Backwards From Ninety. It is an authentic and very absorbing personal account of experiences which throw much light on our early settlers and their problems and life. The account is highly readable and should be of value to schools. It ought to be in every school and library in Wisconsin."

If you would like a copy of the book sent to you on approval, please let me know. I would appreciate hearing from you within four weeks, if possible.