

DorleLettersC L0010 (English)

Toronto, August 14, 1957

Dear Mutti!

Thank you very much for your letter. I'm coming home for Christmas anyway, because I'm not coming home to travel. First of all, none of you would have enough time in the summer, and then I couldn't be traveling around while you're waiting, right up until midnight. To be honest, I don't have a huge desire to travel around Europe; there's still so much beauty to see here, it's so easy to travel here, and the West is so incredibly wild—once you've been there, you don't want to leave either. I'm curious to see how Gerd will like California; I assume he's going over next year. It's no sacrifice at all for me to come; it will soon be 6 years, so I would really like to be home for Christmas again.

On August 1st, we went on a wonderful outing with the youth group. Forests and beach and sand, it was wonderful. We were also a really fabulously nice bunch. We cooked on my camp stove and on a gasoline stove from the youth group. We had an accordion and three guitars. At night it was noticeably cold, so we wore sweaters and jeans; during the day we were in the water the whole time (the calm part of Lake Huron) with air mattresses and 2-meter-high waves.

I find it downright funny that Christel and Dagmar have to study so much for the exam. When I think of us, we leafed through the Kotte book at most, at least until 2 days before the exam. By the way, back then in Vancouver, when I got the job at the bank, Mr. Betzel's reference helped me a lot. Mr. Betzel isn't in the best of health anymore, lots of back pain; he's also 51 years old now and has worked himself too hard. Hermann is more or less running the business. It seemed to be going well until now, but now the owner of their leased land (a 20-year lease) has gone bankrupt, and the land is full of Type 9 apple trees, freshly planted 2 years ago.

Yes, you know, whether I find Liesel changed, I can't really say after such a short time; it didn't seem that way to me, only that after 5 years in America I still seem to be very made-up compared to everyone else—I already noticed that with Machi (but that's not a criticism). I'm working here at the bank now, it's fun, and you know, since I'll definitely be moving around a lot and traveling in the near future, it's good to have a profession where you can always find a job, and that's in an office, or at least having as much experience as possible in as many areas as possible. I can always find something interesting in even the most unlikely things; I've never done anything that bored me, and I'm so glad I can do that, because in and of itself it's not so great not to have a real profession, like Machi, for example, or Liesel or Ursel. Whether I earn more or less,

On Wednesday we performed our play "Johan The" in Hamilton. The audience was very good; they laughed and clapped a lot, which really carries the actors along. With the money, we're building a stage in the church basement, with first-rate lighting and a curtain, for \$300 and our labor—we're doing it all ourselves.

Thank you also for the pictures of Ari and the mountain pictures. He must be a magnificent

fellow. Is he trained yet? In the past, when I sometimes saw a cowboy film at the movies, I was never particularly enthusiastic, but now I'm more interested, especially because of the scenery, because they always show landscapes, and roads and gas stations or little towns that I still know exactly. 90% of all westerns are filmed in the Alabama Hills, 5 miles from Death Valley. Zensi would also like to go to California with me, if I drive back over after Germany, which I strongly assume I will. I like the Rockies even better than the Alps; it's all much wilder and more rugged, you just can't go off alone because of the mountain lions and bears and wolves, but it's precisely the animals and the unfamiliar plants that make it all so appealing. And it's funny, but the steppe with the desert and Death Valley has something very attractive about it. I would also love to go to Central and South America. You could do that with the VW; the VW service is pretty well established.