**1971**

There are wild days and wild weeks and everyone is “wild about bowling.” Dad is off the Session, and then right back on. Mom finds a job from a newspaper ad. The Chansonettes like her better than their regular director. There is a new car and a new couch. Talk of teeth. Sickness and swimming and “stuff stacked everywhere.” Alan is an All Star and good at everything he tries. The girls learn to sew so they can have new clothes. Lesle does not volunteer to lead discussion groups. Or games. She is a teenager now, you know. Lisa gets riding lessons for her birthday. Andy gets a hand me down bike. Alec gets along with all kinds of people. The trees are beautiful.

**1-11-71 – Mon PM -** Dear Mother, Aunt Clara, M.J. & Bill, I’ll start this tonight, but it won’t get mailed tonight since Ruth has already left to attend her chorus rehersal. They sang yesterday AM for the Mass at a nearby catholic church. She drove our car and the rest of us got a ride to s.s. with another family. Ruth then drove over in time for the worship service. It was communion Sunday, and was the last time I will serve since my term as elder will soon be finished. I watched some of the football games yesterday afternoon. Norm Calof, the man from Canada who was let go a few weeks ago, came over for supper and then visited awhile. He will leave to go back to Canada as soon as he gets his apartment sold.

We had a lot of snow Sat night and Sun. I guess you had some also according to the reports. It was lucky we had such good weather for the trip. Thanks again to everybody for everything. We counted the money gifts as covering about half of the trip expenses. It was definitely worth it, and I’m sure you’re glad to know that we can get there so easily. I had some trouble starting the car when we got to Joliet but soon made it OK. It had not snowed here so we didn’t have any trouble getting home. The trip on the train was fine, and it was nice that the train was exactly on time. The trains weren’t real crowded either way, and we probably would have had seats together on the Mom takes over: other train. (Carroll asked me to finish this for him.) Alec had his checkup last Tues and weighed 12 lbs 9 oz and was 23½” tall (1 oz heavier than Alan was when he was one week older), which makes Alec our biggest baby. He got his first DPT shot too, and was a miserable little boy for a day and a half.

The boys had their parties last week, but not on their real birthdays. Alan had 5 friends in Friday and they went bowling and then came back here for cake and ice cream. They came at 1 and didn’t want to leave even by 5:30! Andy had 6 friends in Saturday and we stayed home and played games, had a treasure hunt, etc. Tues night we had the Lunas (Carroll’s technician from Decatur) over for an early birthday celebration for Pete. It was also Association day, so I wasn’t home to get ready for them till 4:00. Tonight Carroll will get to baby sit again so I can go to my circle meeting – I have the Bible Study, as well as being chairman. It’s really winter now – we can tell when the hot water to the back bathroom freezes! Must get this out now before the mailman comes. Did M.J. & Bill’s card and picture ever arrive?

**1-12-71 – Tues PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ll write a shorter letter and get it mailed sooner. Thanks again to everyone for the Christmas things. The last few days have been somewhat warmer after our real cold spell. The last part of Jan and the first part of Feb is the coldest time of the year in the Chicago area. We still have some snow which I believe we got about the same time that it snowed out your way. The kids have been ice-skating only a very few times. At the present, they are all wild about going bowling. We’re cleaning the living room right now as an insurance saleslady is bringing Alec’s new policy out this evening. Last night Ruth had her chorus rehersal and I stayed with Alec. He went to sleep so I didn’t have to give him a bottle. Alec still has his touch of cold; he’s not too bad, just wheezy part of the time. Otherwise we’ve all been fairly well this winter although I missed 1½ days of work and Lesle has been slightly wheezy.

We had a letter from the Laidigs yesterday and they seem to be OK. Tomorrow night is my final Session meeting at church; it is the end of my 3 yr term. Ruth attended a Womens meeting this AM. Last Sun AM Ruth stayed home with Alec and I took the older children to s.s. and church. I’m still teaching a 6th grade class. In the afternoon Lesle had her fellowship and Ruth and I had to go as chaperones. Afterwards we all went bowling. Last Sat was the usual shopping. Glad to have Mothers letter and to hear the news. That’s about all I can think of. Hope you’re all OK. I just barely missed the Hutch High Band on TV.

**1-23-71 – Sat -** Dear Mary Janet, Mother, Aunt Clara and Bill, I guess I should write my Sister once in a while especially when I failed to get a card off in time for her birthday (maybe she doesn’t want to be reminded again?). I asked Ruth the other day if she had a birthday card we could send you, but then I forgot to follow up. Anyway. Happy Birthday!

Sun PM – We all went to church this AM and it was very cold. I don’t think it’s been much above zero all day, so its been one of our coldest days. We haven’t had a lot of snow this winter; its only been slick a couple of times driving to and from work. Our car pool is still working fine with just the 3 members. We received Mother’s letter. That was too bad about the 2 women who lost their lives in the fire. After reading the front page article that Mother sent I wondered if the upstairs windows that were covered up, and which the two women were trying to reach, were the same ones we used to watch parades out of?

I just took time off to take Lesle to the Jr. High Fellowship meeting at Church. She always says she doesn’t want to go but I think she kinda likes it. I don’t think so ☺ They had a swimming party a week ago last night. Alec is doing fine as he just passed the 4 month point. He just takes one big nap a day, with maybe a short catnap. Ruth kept him in last Wed night, as he’s still a little snuffly, and I went alone to the Annual Congregational Meeting. There was a pretty good crowd considering it was a cold snowy night. I just went to the business meeting, which followed a pot-luck supper. My 3 yr term as elder is now finished, so my only responsibility is teaching one of the sixth grade s.s. classes. It was a wonderful experience, although I didn’t work as hard as I should have.

I enjoyed reading the newspaper articles that referred to Bill’s analysis of the farmer’s economic situation. I hope the downtrend doesn’t affect Bill’s situation. My job is still apparently reasonably stable for just now. I’m getting to work with marketing, and some others, and broaden my experience in ways that will hopefully aid long-term job security here, or somewhere else. We like it here so I’m just going to stay as long as I have a job, and work as hard as I can. Our living room is torn up as we’re cleaning the carpet with a carpet shampooer. Ruth has her circle next Wed night at our house. I have a dental appointment tomorrow night. Last Tues night Ruth and Andy went to Lisa’s winter concert and I stayed home with Alec. Last Thurs night Ruth and I both went to choir practice for only about the 2nd or 3rd time since Alec was born. Again, Happy Birthday, You can pass this letter on to Mother and Aunt Clara.

**2-13-71 – Sat PM -** Its Sat afternoon and Ruth has gone on an errand. Alec is swinging in the kitchen watching the girls make decorations and things for tomorrows first family night at the Church. Our theme is Latin America (last year it was China), and it lasts from 5-7:30 on each of the 4 Sun nights in Feb. We take a sack lunch and then have speakers, classes, etc. Our denomination has some work in Costa Rica, and a minister and his wife who work there will be here tomorrow. There will be a nursery for Alec.

I bought 4 more shelves for the big shelf area we have in the boys room. They have so many things that they just don’t have places to put everything away. They did work some in their room the last week. Ruth got the carpets all shampooed before her circle meeting last Wed night. There were 9 women here. The Bible study was given by Rev. Reif. Thurs night was choir practice (Next Thurs night is a community concert in Kankakee). We stayed at home last night as we were all tired. Ruth did the grocery shopping for 2 wks this AM. I get paid every 2 wks now (it was formerly every week, which was nice). I took the girls up to a bowling alley to see about one of the junior leagues (10-12 year olds). They don’t have any openings right now, but newcomers can bowl as fill-ins, and get on a regular team when somebody drops out. They got to bowl a couple of games today, but said they didn’t do too well. Alan has joined a league which meets every Wed. They have all been “bugging” us to go bowling all the time, so maybe the leagues will satisfy them. It fun for the whole family to go, albeit expensive, but difficult with Alec. When he gets a little older we can go more often as a family.

I guess I wrote last Sun. Last Mon night I had a dental appointment. He filled a place where a filling had come out; 2 hrs later I accidentally bit it a little and part of the new filling came out. My next appointment is the first of March. Why don’t you try and come up sometime this Spring. Alec has outgrown the basket so we leave the basket in the car for him to ride in. We’ll need to buy a new car seat for him before long. He doesn’t sit up as yet, however. We’re convinced he says “Hi” and “Ma-Ma.” I’ve always been the one who doesn’t brag about his children, ha! Alec doesn’t walk yet so I guess I’ll have to start teaching him. After all, he’s 4 months old now. Glad to have your letter. The Laidigs are busy. Mr. L has beginning cataracts but won’t have to have surgery for awhile. Hope its not too cold there.

**2-20-71 – Sat Afternoon -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Its one of our usal Saturdays here with errands to run, etc. Ruth is shopping right now with Alan. She is getting some starting piano music for the Luna’s girl Laura (he’s the fellow who has worked with me for about 7 years); she’s starting piano lessons this week. She will take 2 - 15 minute lessons a week at the start. Ruth has been accompanying 7 children, including our girls on their contest solos. They had their preliminary contest a few weeks ago; the big contest is a week from today; we plan to drive, and the whole family will go. Alec just doesn’t like a bottle, so Ruth can’t leave him for too many hours. Alan, today, wants to buy a little cabinet with drawers to hold his rock collection. He’s still quite interested in rocks, space things, and bowling. I guess all of our families have been pretty well this winter. None of our kids have missed any school so far this year. Lesle has been a little hoarse, but hasn’t missed any school. Andy had a fever, earache, and was very tired a week ago today, but he was OK on Sunday so everyone went to church as usual. Alec has been pretty well except for an occasional runny nose.

When Ruth bought the valentines she thought she had one that said Aunt. She didn’t and the children made you one, but didn’t get it mailed. Thats why you didn’t get any in time for Valentine’s Day. Last Sun night was our first Family Night Session. Everything went OK. Our speaker (a worker in Costa Rica who is home on furlough) was almost late as he made a wrong turn. It’s snowing a little bit now and is fairly cold. We haven’t had too bad a winter so far. Last Wed I attended the start of the Session meeting at Church in order to say “Goodby.” Afterwards I attended a Sunday School meeting. Last Thurs night Ruth and I attended the community concert in Kankakee. It was a concert by Bruce Yarnell, a baritone. Lots of light music as he does a lot on TV, light opear, musical comidies, etc. Last night we stayed home. I can’t think of much else. Hope you’re all OK and its not too cold.

**2-28-71 – Sun PM -** Sorry to hear that Aunt Clara has been sick; hope she is feeling better by now. I won’t finish this letter until after I hopefully hear from you tonight. We leave in a little while for the fourth and final of our Family Mission Nights. Ruth will be relieved when they are over since she has done most of the organizing work. Our attendance has only been fair so far. Today is clear and above freezing although its somewhat windy. The kids, except for Alan, have been playing outside. Our snow is all gone here, and we’ve had a lot of rain the last few days. Alan has been inside for about 4 days as he had a sore throat and fever. He missed some school for the first time in 2 or 3 years. Ruth stayed home with him and Alec this morning and I took the others to s.s. and church. Alec has had a runny nose but hasn’t gotten any worse. Alec is just like Lesle in that he wants to stand up all the time. Like Lesle, he will probably walk before he crawls. We even let Andy hold him some, so all the “big kids” can say they are baby sitters.

Tues – Glad to have your letter yesterday and to hear about everything. Hope Aunt Clara is feeling lots better by now. We all went to Family Night last Sunday night. Our final crowd was about the same as our first night which had been our previous largest crowd. We were both glad to have them over. I stayed at home last night while Ruth went to her chorus rehersal. Alec stayed asleep all the time so it was an “easy” baby sitting job. Earlier I had a dental appointment; had 1 filled, but my other filling (The kids are all just getting home from their music (piano) lessons) keeps falling out so I’ll just let it go for awhile, and then try a crown, or have it taken out. My teeth have held up fairly well in recent years.

Alec just fell asleep here in the living room in his playpen; that’s the first time I’ve ever seen him do that! He hadn’t had a nap all day because of various interruptions, and then this AM Ruth had regular Womens Association meeting at church. Ruth is about as busy as formerly with the Womens work. She attends the board meetings, writes the Newletter and is Publicity Chairman. Tomorrow night is the 2nd of our 6 Lenten services. I went last Wed and Ruth stayed at home. Ruth then went to choir practice on Thurs night and I stayed home. A week ago tonight we both attended Lesle’s band concert. Lesle got a 2 at the contest and Lisa a 1. Ruth thought it should have been the other way around. That was the contest at Streater (about 90 miles away – the Santa Fe goes through there), Ill where we went all day a week ago Sat.

**3-7-71 – Sun Afternoon -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ll send this letter to the hospital, since I’m sure you’ll enjoy having mail while you’re there. I assume you’re in Grace; Mother didn’t say and I didn’t ask in the last letter to Mother, although I wouldn’t have heard by now anyway. Lesle says “thanks” to Mother for the birthday card and gift, and thanks also for the other gift.

Our news at this “end” is sickness also. Ruth has been down since last Wed with the flu. She felt OK last Wed AM and was getting a lot of sewing done, when she developed a fever in the afternoon and was in bed by the time I got home from work. She stayed down pretty much all day Thurs and Fri. Yesterday she felt a little better and was up for Lesle’s birthday supper and cake (I bought the cake; Ruth had never missed baking a birthday cake for any of the children). She also gave Alec a bath. The kids and I have done all the other work. The girls are good about helping cook, etc., so we’ve made it OK. Ruth, of course, stayed home with Alec this AM as I took the older children to s.s. and church. (Alec stayed on the bed with Ruth most of the time Thurs and Fri.) I imagine that Ruth won’t really begin to feel like herself until about Tues. We missed the Lenten Service last Wed night (it snowed some then) and choir practice on Thurs night. Fortunately Alec has been a good baby while Ruth has been sick. Alec has a bit of cold but hasn’t gotten clear down with anything. Ruth’s symptoms were just like Alans when he was down a few days ago, and her cough is just like his.

Well, enough about our sickness; hope this letter finds you beginning to really feel better. I’ll mail this when I take Lesle to her Jr. High Fellowship at 4:00. She won’t admit it, but I think she kinda likes to go. We got the family nights over with OK before Ruth got sick. We had some wet snow the last couple of days, so the kids played outside some. I think our children are more for summer sports like swimming, etc. My boss and his family like skiing and every other week-end drive up into to northern Michigan for a weekend of that sport. We have to out before long and buy Alans full size bicycle which has been promised as one of his birthday presents. Lesle got a lot of new clothes for her birthday (she’s a teenager now, you know). The children also got a lot of new clothes. Again, hope you’re feeling better and can possibly get someone to stay with you when you go home. I guess thats all the news since I wrote less than a week ago.

**3-21-71 – Sun Afternoon -** I don’t know where the last two weeks have gone. I think it has been two weeks since I wrote to Hutchinson, although I did call a week ago. Today, the first official day of Spring, does feel a little more like Spring will finally make it. The last few days here have been on the cold side. Glad Aunt Clara is feeling better; I imagine she is home by now. I imagine we’ll have a letter from you about tomorrow.

After missing three Sundays in a row Ruth and Alec made it to church this AM. Three weeks ago they stayed home when Alan was sick; two weeks ago Ruth was sick; one week ago Alec was just getting over his bout. We’re all pretty well right at this time. Alan finally got his new bike (promised on his birthday) a week ago yesterday. Alan’s old bike was smaller than regular size. We had it fixed up and it becomes Andy’s. Andy doesn’t know how to ride however. I’ll have to see if I can find the training wheels to put on. We’re having the girls bikes fixed up and hope they can all ride their bikes to their music lessons one of these days. We did. All the time!

The children are all making progress with their music. They have missed some of their oboe lessons. Alan still says he wants to play the bassoon. An ordinary new bassoon costs about $800-900. We asked the girls oboe teacher if she could get a line on a used bassoon, or tell us a music store that would be the cheapest. If Alan starts it will be in summer school. We haven’t made any definite vacation plans for Summer. Yesterday morning the four older children and I went down to Manteno (about 20 miles south of here) Jr. High where I helped judge a Science Fair. That was the first time I had ever done anything like that. It was all 7th and 8th graders. We stayed after church today for a quartet practice. We have to sing at the final Lenten service a week from Wed night. Last Thurs night Ruth and I both went to choir practice for the first time in a long time. We left Alec with Lesle. Alec has been going to bed about 7 or 7:30 so we can leave in the early evening and usually be back before he awakens.

I have the income tax about ready to finish and send in. Kansas University won its basketball game yesterday at Wichita so will play UCLA next Thurs with a chance for the national championship. I guess its one of the best teams they have had since Ruth and I were there. The Laidigs are in the South now on highway work and related trip. I’m not sure if they plan to get up here this Spring or not. Again, hope Aunt Clara is doing better and has her ladies to stay with her. We got snow from that last storm but I couldn’t tell if it snowed as far South as Hutchinson.

**3-28-71 – Sat PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I just finished watching the college basketball championships. Kansas lost both of their games in Houston so they finished fourth, a good showing anyway. That was the first time they had gotten that far since 1957 when we were there and that tall man Wilt Chamberlain was playing. Glad to know you’re back at home and feeling better. Hope the women staying with you are working out OK. This morning Lesle left early on the bus with the other band members to go to their district band contest. We all drove over later to hear them and then brought her back home after we had eaten lunch. We’re going to eat out tomorrow after church. Today has been more on the warmer side, although cloudy. It rained a lot as we were driving up to the contest. Our weather the last week has been way below normal so we’re all looking forward to a Spring warm-up. We have lots of cleaning up to do in the carport and storage area. Our quartet is next Wed night at the sixth and last Lenten Service.

Sun: afternoon - I just got back from Church where I attended the examination of the Confirmation Class (8th graders). Ruth and the family dropped me off after we had eaten out at Howard Johnson’s. We used the birthday cards (free meal) the boys had received. It was the first time Alec had sat in a high chair while eating out. We’ve eaten out with him about 6-7 times now. Ruth has now taken Lesle back to the church for Jr High Fellowship. Lisa went along so she could buy some material. The girls are starting to sew some now. We have told them that they can have a lot more new clothes if they learn to do their own sewing. As I may have said we’re letting Lesle babysit some now. She’s not physically as big as Lisa and Alan but I think they respect each other and get along pretty well when we’re gone. Alec is 6 months old today and is doing fine. He likes to stand all the time just like Lesle did, and loves to be in his walker. He’s eating a lot of solids now, but still doesn’t sleep all night. Ruth says her brother Eldon will be out for dinner Tues night. He’s the brother (my age) in Denver who is a principal. Apparently he’s attending a meeting in Chicago. Ruth called her folks last night and the’re OK. They just got back from a trip to the South. We don’t know if they will drive up this Spring or not. I see that the Santa Fe will still have trains between here and Hutchinson after they start the new Railpax System. Again hope everyone is fine in Hutchinson. Ruth has been asked to be Sunday School Superintendent.

**4-?-71 – Sun Afternoon -** I just finished watching the Chicago Bulls Professional Basketball Team play the Los Angeles Team and win. Alec is taking his nap, and should stay asleep until just about the time Ruth and the others get home. They all went to see the movie “The Barefoot Executive” a Walt Disney movie at the local theater. It will be over in time so that Lesle can go to Jr. High Fellowship Darn!; she has to take part of the refreshments. She hasn’t volunteered to lead the discussion or games, as yet, but at least she goes without too much persuasion (our agreement is that she will go to either Fellowship or sing in the Youth Choir). I guess I wasn’t the most forward person when I was that age. I don’t remember at what age we had BYU in the evening? I remember going in High School, but not so much about the evening fellowships in earlier years.

It has been cool again and except for a couple of warm days really hasn’t seemed like Spring; but this is pretty normal for here. We have a lot of outside cleaning that needs to be done. I played a little catch with Alan yesterday afternoon; his first practice is next Sat I believe.

We have a special choir rehersal Tues night to get the Easter music ready (2 services; Youth Choir at first; adults at second), and to finish getting “The Crucifixition” ready for the Maundy Thursday Service. We’ll have Communion also. “The Crucifixition” is the same one I sang in at your Church in 1950, I believe. I sang the bass solos. We have several (4) basses who can sing solos, so I only have one this time. I had 8 in s.s. class this AM. Last Sun I had the 7th grade class also (Lesle is in there). I may not have mentioned that Ruth is the new S.S. Superintendent. We have a strong Christian Education Committee so the job won’t be too big. She can do a lot of the work by phone. I have Good Friday off. I don’t know whether we’ll do anything special. There is a service at the Church in the afternoon.

Ruth didn’t make it to her rehersal last Mon night as the car wouldn’t start. We had it fixed on Tues. Tues night Eldon Laidig (Denver) came for dinner and a nice visit; he was attending an education meeting in Chicago. Wed night our quartet sang at the final Lenten service. It went OK. Thurs night was choir practice. Fri night we had a regular baby sitter; and we all went to see “The Unsinkable Molly Brown” at Bloom High School in Chicago Heights. It was late enough that Alec awakened (he goes down right after supper) and finally took part of a bottle; it was the first bottle he had had in about 2 months. Alec eats solids now, and drinks a little from a cup. He got his first pair of shoes yesterday. The girls got new Sunday shoes and the boys new tennis shoes. Glad to have your letter. Glad to hear that Aunt Clara’s women are working out OK.

Easter Sunday – April 11th

**4-18-71 – Sun 9:30 PM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, The kids are now all in bed. They watched the Wizard of Oz and some other programs. The Wizard of Oz has been on TV once a year for as many years as I can remember. Hope you’re feeling more like yourself now and are able to go as much as you want to, or feel up to. Hope the women who are staying with you are still working out OK.

I’m sitting here on a heating pad. My back is giving me some trouble. I’ve had it a time or two before. I hope its just muscle spasm. We’ve all been pretty well recently except that Lesle has a touch of bronchitis and cough that she can’t seem to throw off; she’s taking some medicine for it. Alec is such a big boy now. He says “Hi dada” real well and also says “MaMa,” although not as often. He still gets up every 3-5 hrs at night so we’re still tired part of the time.

I went into the city last Tues, Wed and Thurs to attend the Federation of Biology Meetings. Those are the meetings that I usually go to Atlantic City to attend. They meet in Atlantic City for 3 yrs in a row and then come to Chicago about every 4th year. This morning we all went to Church and s.s. as usual. The choir did not have an anthem so we all sat together. Ruth led the discussion in the Adult Class, and we talked about drugs and pollution in my class. We had a reception for new members after the worship service. Ruth is getting her work organized as S.S. Superintendent. Tomorrow night I have to finish getting ready to help lead a discussion on Tues night about Christianity and Drugs; I guess I ought to be interested in drugs. Thurs night is a choir and s.s. recognition dinner at Church. A week from Thurs night is the Father and Son Banquet. Ruth is working on the Mother-Daughter Banquet which will be in May. They will model old wedding gowns, and will have wedding pictures on display.

Alan had baseball practice yesterday. I was out playing catch with him this afternoon when I bent over and made my back worse. Ruths folks will be here sometime in May. They may be here for the kids piano recital. We have reservations to attend a Presbyterian Family Camp Aug 15-21; we’ll plan on our week in Kansas right before that I imagine. We’ll work out the dates at a later time. Last night we went to the Couples Club at church and listened to the “Jesus Christ Superstar” record that is very popular now. Fri two Jr. High girls stayed overnight; they were attending a Student Council Conference out at Lesle’s Jr. High. I haven’t written in 2 wks, but I can’t think of much else other than the ordinary routine. Again, hope everyones OK.

**4-25-71 – Sun Afternoon -** I’m watching a basketball game so will write this. Its nice here today, although the last few days have been a bit cooler than the previous warm period. Alec really enjoys being out of doors. Ruth gets him out as much as she can. Alec say DaDa a lot as I may have said. He sits quite well now so we don’t have to watch him every second when we leave him sitting somewhere. He eats all kinds of solids now; he didn’t start on solids as early as most babies do these days. I just finished playing some catch with Alan and then just took Lesle to her Jr. High Fellowship. Alan had his baseball practice yesterday. He may still be on the team he was with last year, but he doesn’t know for sure yet. If the’re good enough they get drafted up to a higher league. Andy is old enough that he can start throwing the ball some and playing catch.

The car stalled on the way to Church this morning so the family says we’re now ready for a new car. Fortunately a man from our Church happened to be driving by so we got a ride and were not too late. We got a ride back to where we had left it and it started OK. Yesterday we drove over to Joliet where Lesle’s band played in the state contest. They got a I. Lesle said her reed broke and she actually didn’t play very well. My back feels pretty much normal today. It took about a week for it to get better. When it was the worse a week ago tonight I couldn’t even hold Alec; I can’t remember ever not being able to hold that much weight.

Mon Evening: We’ve just finished supper. Glad to have your letter today. Lesle’s band is playing at PTA so we’ll go out there; a babysitter will come. I may go to a small discussion group tomorrow night. Thurs is choir practice and next Sat night we’re all going to “West Side Story,” a musical put on by the local Jr. College. The male lead attends our church. I feel a lot better tonight than I did a week ago when my back was still hurting. I played some catch with Alan yesterday afternoon and my back seemed OK.

A week ago tonight Ruth had her chorus rehersal. They sang for the Ill Federated Womens Clubs State Convention last Fri. Last Tues night I had my drug discussion at church. It went OK but there were only 11 there. Last Thurs night was a dinner at Church honoring choir members, s.s. teachers, etc. We had a short choir rehersal afterwards. Last Fri night we ate out and then had popcorn at home. Glad to hear that everyone is fine in Hutchinson. We’ll probably go to Kansas the first Week in Aug. Thats interesting that the Herbert Harbaughs returned to their old church.

**5-8-71 – Sat AM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, We just found the Mothers Day cards so they won’t arrive until sometime next week. Today is clear and warmer after several days of cool wet weather. We had our first real rains of the Spring. I guess this is supposed to be the first year of a dry cycle in the Midwest. Our grass has finally grown some so I’ll have to see if the lawnmower will start. I’m afraid we won’t be able to spend a lot of time in the yard this Summer. The boys are “trying” to get their room in better shape; they have to do that before they can go over to the Powwow at the grade school. Thats the same as what we used to call a fair. Its for raising money. I used to do magic shows at some of them. Did that once here.

Ruth just got back from taking Alec over to see the parade for the Powwow. Lesle’s band had to march; the jr. high band always does that for the grade school. We’re supposed to hear today about a bassoon for Alan. He will start in Summer Band in June. Andy says he wants to play the French Horn; he, of course, can’t start for several years. The girls oboe teacher doesn’t want to teach anymore so we don’t know yet about getting someone else. They actually only had lessons on the average of about once every third week the last year because of sickness, weather, and many times when she wasn’t available. The kids piano recital is a week from tomorrow. They all have a solo number and then the boys and the girls each have a duet. I have to give Ruth a lot of the credit for seeing that they practice, especially in the morning. I hear them more in the evenings as they often just sit down and play for fun, which is the way it should be.

Ruth and I looked at a couple of cars last Thurs night; we didn’t make it to choir practice. Last night I went out and looked at a few more. We’ve been looking at 69 or 70 3 seat station wagons. We haven’t decided what to do yet. There is no great hurry since our car is still running OK. The Youth Choir sings tomorrow at Church so we can all sit together (we could never get the girls to sing after Mom quit directing).

I have to go to Boston, Mass next Mon afternoon on business. I’ll be going with our Director of Research; its about a new project I’m working on. The magazines may be confusing. Armour Pharmaceutical Co is part of Armour-Dial (Dial Soap etc.) – and all of Armour is now controlled by Greyhound Corp, which of course owns the buses, etc. The Laidigs are coming next week. Mrs. L will go with Ruth to the Mother-Daughter Banquet next Thurs. There will be modeling of old wedding gowns, etc. Our plans call for going to Kansas the first week in Aug. Glad your ladies are working out OK.

**5-16-71 – Sunday 2:00 PM -** The 4 older children have been doing their last minute practicing before their annual recital at 3:30. I think I told you that the boys and the girls each have a duet, and each one has a solo. I think the girls last oboe lessons are this week. I don’t know what we’ll do for next year. The next thing to figure out is what we’re going to do about a bassoon for Alan. Our choir director at church (he also teaches at the high school) told us about a place in Chicago that may have a good reconditioned instrument. It doesn’t seem possible that school will be over in about 3 weeks. The Aqua Center opens in less than a month. Membership costs $50 a year for a family. I’m hiring a couple of boys to mow the yard since our lawn mower won’t start at the present time. Yesterday and today have been a lot warmer with more normal temperatures. I’ve started to take off the storm windows. We had a couple of mornings down to almost freezing within the last week.

The Laidigs are here; I think they plan to leave in the AM as Mr. L says he has to be back by Tues night. I think they plan to drive directly back to Kansas. Sometimes they go back by way of Indiana to visit some of the relatives. My trip to Boston went fine. I went in to the lab on Mon AM and left about noon with Dr. Dailey (Director of Research) to go to O’Hare. Since he had been to Boston several times, and likes to see the historical sites, we did have time Mon to see several of them. We ate at the Parker House in the evening. The appointments were on Tues AM at Massachusetts General Hospital and Mass Institute of Technology. Dr. Dailey had an appointment with some scientists who are involved in one of our projects. I’m not involved much with that project, but sat in on the discussions, etc. The meeting on the new project I’m working on was a little bit later. We got to see Howard in the afternoon before going to the airport. The Boston airport is very spacious and nice. Our flying weather was good both ways. Got home about 7:00 Tues evening.

The Laidigs drove in about 6:00 Wed night. The rehersal for the Mother-Daughter Banquet was at 7:00 and Ruth and her Mother just barely made it. Mrs. L modeled her wedding gown and Ruth played the piano for the style show. Ruth had been in charge of the Banquet and then was the M.C. The banquet was Thurs night. We stayed home Fri night. Ruth did the grocery shopping yesterday AM and then Alan had his practice game. In the afternoon we all drove up to Brookfield Zoo. The L’s had never been there and we hadn’t been there for a couple of years. It was warm but not hot and some breeze. Mrs. L developed a sore throat over night (she often has them) so they didn’t go to s.s. this AM. They came to Church and sat with the children while Ruth and I sang in the choir. Mr. L repaired a bad wall in the back bathroom where the water had ruined the wall. Hope you’re all OK. Glad you liked the Mother’s Day things.

**5-31-71 – Monday -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ll write you first since I called Mother last week. I have an envelope of things to mail sometime. Today has been very pleasant; not too hot. I’m off work today since Memorial Day fell on Sunday. Today is our 14th wedding aniversary. We usually eat out but we’re staying home tonight. This morning Lesle’s band had to play in a Memorial Day Service and parade at Monee, a little town 5 miles south of us. The children from Monee are in the same school district that we are. After the service we looked at new cars, especially Dodge’s. I’ll go out tomorrow night and see what the Plymouths are like. We like the inside of the Dodge and Plymouth better than Ford and Chevrolet. Our first car was a Ford and we had it exactly 7 yrs. Our current car is a Chevrolet and we’ve had it exactly 7 yrs also, although we have more miles on it than we had on the Ford.

This afternoon I finished mowing the yard. We haven’t spent as much time in the yard this year because of Alec. Next weekend we plan on going to Decatur to the Fun Fair. We haven’t gone for several years. They ask to go every year since they remember it from when we lived there. Next Fri night we’re taking the 6th grade s.s. miniature golfing; it will be in honor of two 6th graders who are moving away. Had regular s.s. and church yesterday AM. I only had 4 (counting Lisa) in my s.s. class. I could sing better than a week ago when I was very hoarse. Hope you’re still getting along OK with the two ladies. Thats wonderful its worked out so well. The Laidigs got home OK although Mrs. L was still quite sick with her sore throat when she got there, and had to see the Dr. They, or at least Mrs. L, plans to go to Oregon this summer to attend the wedding of one of the older Musgrave (their foster children) boys. The Musgraves have all turned out quite well considering their background and everything they went through.

The weather report calls for showers tonight. We still haven’t had a lot of rain so we’ll have to start watering the yard. The swimming pools here open 2 weeks from today. The kids are enrolled in Summer School for band, art and Alan is taking a gadgets course. We’ve ordered Alan’s bassoon. He’s borrowing one for now until the new one comes. Things at work are about the same. My raise finally came through so that will ease things. The girls and some friends have been having spooky plays, etc. in the carport yesterday and today. Last Mon night was Ruths first meeting of the s.s. teachers. Tues night I had the discussion group on abortion. Hope everyones OK.

**6-13-71 – Sun afternoon -** I’m sitting in the living room with Alec so I’ll see if I can get a letter started. Alec was asleep until I started to mow the grass around on that side of the house, so I guess I awakened him. I’m still borrowing the neighbors lawn mower since ours doesn’t work well anymore. Alan is asleep in the family room. He has the flu and is still running a fever. He stayed home alone this AM while the rest of us went to Church. Had a good crowd at Church for Communion, the welcoming of new members (20), and one infant baptism. It was warm, but not hot, as there was some breeze. It was the last Sun for the adult choir to sing, also. Like last summer we will have 2 services through August. I suppose Ruth and I will sing in a quartet sometime along.

I had all the 6th Graders this AM as the other teacher was out of town. A week ago Fri night the other teacher and I took all the 6th Graders miniature golfing at a place about a mile from our house. Our kids went along also. Ruth stayed home with Alec, got the house ready, and then we had them all in for refreshments afterwards. That Fri night, and just before going to the Church to meet the kids, we picked up our new Plymouth Station Wagon. It cost $4,000 (including tax) and the old car. Even the cheaper ones are expensive when you get air conditioning, etc., and the other things you just about have to have.

A week ago yesterday we drove to Decatur, leaving about noon. We didn’t leave any earlier since Alec had a sore throat and we were awaiting the Dr.’s report as to whether he had a strep throat. It was negative so we went on to Decatur. It was the hotest weekend of the year so the kids went swimming in the motel pool as soon as we got there. Ruth bought a new suit. At supper time we all went to the Fun Fair (the real reason for going) for supper, rides, etc. The Fun Fair is a big event in Decatur, and is used to raise money for the hospitals to buy new equipment, etc. We saw several people we knew. The kids went swimming a little bit before the motel pool closed.

Sun AM we all went to our old church. It was hot in the sanctuary as the air conditioning wasn’t working. Some friends invited us to lunch, so after a swim, we went there at 1:00. Afterwards we visited our old neighbors and then drove to Allerton Park where I had been once, but no one else. Its an old estate that belongs to the U of Ill and it has beautiful gardens, walks, landscaping, etc. It was on our way home. We drove on for supper and got home about 10:15. It was a nice weekend.

Bible School starts tomorrow. Ruth will be leading the music as usual. Its hard to get the older kids out anymore as there are so many Summer activities just like in the winter. There are so many Summer School programs anymore, and not just remedial ones. Our kids start their programs this week, and I’m not sure how much Bible School they will be going to. Yesterday Alan had his regular game; he probably shouldn’t have played, but he didn’t have any fever in the AM. In the afternoon after the game he had 102. Ruth did the grocery shopping in the AM and Lisa and Lesle went to the Aqua Center for awhile. It just opened yesterday AM. Afterwards in the afternoon the women and I went shopping. The women all bought Summer sandals and I bought a new pair of shoes. They bought material, etc.

Glad to have your letter and all the clippings. I had just been reading the clipping about Mr. Banyards work with the Senior Citizens when I read the notice of his passing – too bad. I remember taking some voice lessons from him. I think he gave them to me at the First Presbyterian Church. Ruth isn’t back yet this afternoon with Lesle and Lisa. They all went swimming awhile and then Lesle had her Jr. High Fellowship. Ruth wanted to practice the organ awhile to get ready for Bible School. You should receive an envelope of things. I would like the booklet on Boston back, but you can keep it until we come. Hope you’re all OK and sorry I didn’t write sooner. We’ve finally taken a few pictures of Alec.

**6-19-71 – Sat AM -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I wrote Mother first last week and sent her the envelope of things, so I’ll send the letter to you first this time. Hope you all have had nice birthdays. I was just now thinking that you were just about a year older than Lesle is now when Mother was born. As I’m sure many years you were thrilled with the new baby in the house, Lesle, and Lisa too, have been thrilled with the new baby.

Our weekend is already hot, but I finally got our window air conditioner fixed in the kitchen. Its an old one we bought in Decatur which has given good service over the years. Actually, we don’t have a hot house and, of course, we’re not as hot here overall as you are in Kansas.

Alan got new glasses so he should be able to see better for his game at 1:00. His teams group picture will be taken about 12:00. I imagine the girls and maybe Alan later, will go swimming later in the afternoon. They went for the first time last weekend when the Aqua Center opened, and went 2 or 3 times during the week. Ruth is making a little progress on the yard, but Alec still takes a lot of time and, Bible School has taken all of the mornings the past week. Our children went some to Bible School, and some to their regular Summer School. Ruth says there weren’t many older children at Bible School this year because of the many conflicts, summer schools, etc.

That fellow from Mexico who still works with me is leaving today to be gone three weeks as he drives all the way to Mexico to visit his parents. His Mother is beginning to get a little senile and it is hard for his father to take care of her. His father has been a Presbyterian (not our denomination) minister near Tampico (about 10 miles from the Gulf of Mexico). He’s leaving his family at home. They only live about three blocks from us, so we can help out if needed.

Tomorrow starts two services at our church for the summer. Sunday School will be as usual between the two services. Tonight is the Annual Steak Fry sponsored by our adult s.s. class. We plan to go as we have a babysitter. Last night we ate out and then looked at some houses. If I survive the budget for 1972 we’ll probably add on to this house or move to a bigger house. We seem to have “stuff” stacked everywhere and, of course, Alec will be needing more space about that time. Glad to have Mother’s letter and to hear all about her 3 days. Hope you’re all OK and we’ll see you the first week in August. We like our new car fine.



Summer pajamas with beach ball. Mom made all the pajamas.

**7-10-71 – Sat PM -** Glad to have your letter today and to hear the news. Our activities are about the same as usual. With Alan’s baseball, time to take care of Alec, and Summer School, there isn’t much time left. Alec is doing fine, learning new things every day. He finally got his first tooth this week, and he tries to chew everything with it. He eats some baby food and some soft table food. He still says “DaDa” more than “MaMa.” He expresses all kinds of emotions, of course. At the fireworks display on the 4th, he didn’t care for the big skyrockets that exploded. Today he cried when a dog barked.

Today is a lot cooler and rainy, which is a relief after a hot humid spell. You may have heard that we had the hottest spell here in 10 yrs. Our little room air conditioner in the kitchen is a big help. Alan’s game was postponed today because of the wet grounds; it will be played tomorrow. Alan is hitting the ball better this year, the team is better, and he made the All-Star Team. We hope he will continue with baseball. He’ll never be big enough for football (which is fine because you can get such bad knee injuries), and probably not tall enough for basketball.

The kids Summer School classes are OK; they occasionally bring something home or tell me about it. Ruth sings in a duet at the early service in the morning. We won’t stay for the second service, but will go to a movie in the afternoon. Ruth had the nursery for both services and s.s. last Sun. It was the lowest attendance of the year. Lisa was the only one in my s.s. class so we cleaned the room and sorted things. I probably won’t have more than 2 or 3 tomorrow.

We’ll go to Hutchinson first. If I can get Friday the 30th off we leave then or the night before. Otherwise we’ll leave after work on Fri the 30th. Mrs. L is attending Don Musgrave’s wedding that day in Oregon and won’t be back in Oberlin until the middle of that first week in Aug. Our Church Family Camp is the third week in Aug at a place in Michigan.

We enjoyed the long holiday over the 4th. Got a few jobs done. Went to see “The Song of Norway” on Sunday afternoon. Thats the story about the great Norwegian composer Edward Grieg. Sun night were the annual fireworks. Mon AM was the parade. I finished tiling the back bathroom Mon afternoon. (what?!) I’m glad your getting groceries at Fitzgeralds has worked out OK. Interesting letter from Elaine. The article in one of Armour-Dial magazines about pharmaceutical research and development is my area.

**7-21-71 – Tues PM –** I just took Alan to a baseball practice and will write this while I’m waiting before I go to pick him up. Both Alan and his team are doing quite well. His last game of the regular season is Sat the 31st; I forgot to check his schedule when I wrote last that we leave that Thurs or Fri. He’s so interested in baseball that I’d hate to have him miss his last games since his team is still in the running for the championship, and it all hinges on the 3 remaining games. If they win they have some kind of a playoff. If they don’t win we’ll leave after his game on Sat afternoon. We, of course, won’t be able to make it for Church on Sunday, but maybe we can come again on Sun at Christmas time. If his team wins we’ll delay starting until their playoffs are over. We’ll let you know as soon as we can about the schedule.

The last week has been cooler and very nice, reminds me of Wisconsin; not as much pollution also, as when its warmer. As a result, the kids haven’t been swimming as much, so Ruth is helping the girls to really learn how to sew. Alan’s weekday game was last night. Tomorrow is his Summer band concert. I’ve heard him play the bassoon only a few times and he sounded real good, I guess he has picked it up without any trouble, as I knew he would. Summer School is over at the end of this week.

Things at work are pretty good. I guess the Companys sales have been pretty good. I’m still allowed a lot of freedom in what I do so the last year has actually been a good one for gaining broader experience.

Alec is doing fine and is a real joy most of the time. He was fussy at supper tonight. He got his two lower teeth, and his two upper ones are ready to come through, so I imagine they were hurting him at supper. He is practically walking now. The kids are all good about helping to take care of him. He still gets up most every night, but someday (?) he’ll sleep all night. We’re talking some more about adding on to the house but won’t do anything before Spring. It would be a lot easier to add on than to move. We sing in s quartet at Church this Sunday. Its a hard number and I don’t do it very well. We went to the early service last Sun so we wouldn’t be rushed in getting Alan to the All Star Game. He batted in 2 of the 6 runs his team (the National Division) made and played the full game. Glad to have Mothers letter today and to hear the news. See you in about two weeks.

**7-27-71 – Tues PM –** This will be the last note before we leave on the trip. As I said in the last letter we had forgotten about Alan’s last game being next Sat. We will leave right after the game which will be over about 1:00 PM. They lost their last game last Sat badly, but still have a chance for the title if they win their last two games; one is Thurs night and then Sat. The two teams they play, however, are the best teams in the league so it is unlikely that they can win both games. They practiced 3 hours this AM. (Summer School is now over); Alan practiced an hour with another boy, and we just now finished an hour of catch.

We’ve had resort type cooler weather for many days now. Right now is normally our hottest time of the year. Last night Ruth and I attended the annual picnic held by the Chansonettes (the singing group that Ruth belongs to) for the husbands. They sang some which was the first time I had heard them. Ruth plans to sing again next season. School will start in about a month – before Labor Day, I believe.

Everything at work is about the same. I have managed to keep active in a number of areas and projects. Glad to have Aunt Clara’s letter and to hear the news. Our temperature was down in the 50’s one morning also. Our quartet went OK last Sun; we sang at both services. It was a short number but hard. Our minister was back so the crowds (2 services) were larger than they had been. They went to the Black Hills and Mount Rushmore where we went 2 years ago. We still need to buy some kind of a carrier for the top of the car. Just look for us when we get there – probably late on Sun night.



In Oberlin with the new green station wagon, which turned out to be the worst car we ever owned.

**8-12-71- Wed PM –** Glad to have your letter today and to hear the news since we left. Thanks again for everything. The kids plan to put some of their money (yours and Aunt Clara’s) in their savings accounts. It doesn’t seem possible that school will be underway here in three weeks. School registration is next week while we’ll be at family camp, so our children will have to register late. Lesle and Lisa will both be in Jr. High, and will take the bus together out to Crete. Alan (5th) and Andy (2nd) will both be right near here at Talala Grade School.

I went out to lunch today with Jim Elliott, one of the fellows in the car pool, and we ate at a place near that Sears store in Kankakee where Mrs. Burnell’s son is assistant manager. Yesterday (and Mon as we were driving) was hot, and yesterday evening we had heavy showers. It was cooler and clear today, and is supposed to get into the 50’s tonight. Maybe (ha!) Alec will sleep through tonight. He still gets up 1-3 times a night you know. Andy went for his dental checkup today. He doesn’t have any cavities in his baby teeth, but the Dr. predicts that he will have to wear braces. His mouth and jaw look like mine did so he is apparently the one who has inherited that the most from me. The other children have pretty good teeth, although the girls may need some minor correction. The kids tend to have larger teeth (more like Ruth’s) than I believe I had.

After we left your house we stopped at Aunt Clara’s to say goodbye, and to let her see how we were packed. As M.J. recommended we drove to Ellsworth and visited that Rogers Museum. He was there; it was very interesting. We ate at a restaurant there. We then drove on up to Interstate 70 and took it to Victoria (just East of Hays) where we visited that big church. We then drove right on through to Oberlin getting there about 6:30. Had supper with Don Musgrave and his new wife (both live at Portland, Oregon) and the Laidigs. As in Hutchinson, we had a good visit in Oberlin. Mr. L has done a lot of his corn and wheat loss (for insurance) adjusting this Summer; he had just returned from work in Wyoming. We all visited the Oberlin Museum (Mr. L has done a lot of work there) as we do every year. The Eldon Laidigs surprized ☺ us by stopping by on their way home from a trip to the East. They had stopped in Kansas City at the Dave Musgraves where we had stopped, so they knew we would be there. It was a little cooler than normal in Oberlin so the kids did not go swimming. They started to go on Sat late, but the pool was closed because of a swim meet.

Sun AM we all went to Church. The Presbyterian Church has combined with the Federated Church (American Baptist + Disciples) so they can hire a more experienced minister. They have a new man who seems very good and just right for the combined congregations. Mr. L has been heavily involved (he was also on the pulpit committee) with the merger work. After Church we all ate out and then packed the car. Coming back I got the 2 big suitcases and the little red one on top of the car so the kids had more room inside. We added some things at both Hutchinson and Oberlin. The certificates of Uncle Hoy made it OK. We drove NE from Oberlin and into Nebraska and stopped at Kearney where we visited their Museum and took a ride in a glass bottomed boat. We drove on to our motel (I had called from Oberlin) at Lincoln Neb. We found it without any trouble and the kids and Ruth had a long swim (1st since Hutch) in the pool while I unpacked and stayed with Alec in the room.

Mon we drove all the way home (over 500 miles) arriving about 9:30. Before leaving Lincoln we drove by William Jennings Bryan’s Home, but it was not open yet. We were going to stop at the Amana colonies in Iowa but it was almost 4:00 (the last tour was then) so we didn’t stop. We got home in time to get to bed in good time. Our mileage from Oberlin to here was about the same (almost 800 miles) as the milage to Hutch. The Interstates make it possible to make about double the time of former years on the old 2 lane highways and, of course, they are safer. We’ll probably leave for Michigan after Church on Sunday.

**8-?-71 - Sat –** Its a pleasant Sat here – warm but not hot. Ruth is out getting the rest of the things we need for the company tomorrow. The Duvalls are coming down here. Thats the family that we see about twice a year; they live in a NW suburb. We’ve been up there the last 2 or 3 times. We’ve been cleaning the house some today getting ready. Had company last Tues evening as John Laidig (the older brother in New Jersey) Esther, his wife, and three of their children (the two oldest girls are married), stopped by. They were on their way home after having driven to California from where they flew to Hawaii for a vacation. They have now traveled to all 50 states. They remind me of Leila Coe and her travels.

Ruth got the children enrolled in school last week and they start Mon by going part of the day. On Tues they go all day. They are starting a week earlier this year so they will get out earlier in the Spring. One reason for the earlier closing is to enable teachers to get started on time in Summer Schools. This is the year Lesle is eligible for Conformation Class at Church. Rev Reif is a good teacher. They join the Church around Easter time. We haven’t pushed Lesle, but I guess she will be attending.

Alec is 11 months old today. He doesn’t walk yet but he sure scoots to wherever he wants to be. He finally got his first upper tooth through, so he hasn’t been quite as fussy the last few days. He still gets up once or twice a night. Alec is learning many new words. Tomorrow is the last Sun with 2 services. We have to go early since Ruth and the girls are the helpers in the nursery for the first service. A week from tomorrow the children are promoted in s.s. The teachers haven’t all been worked out. There is a s.s. meeting next Tues night at which time Ruth and everyone will try to work out who is going to do what.

We’re all gradually getting over the colds and/or allergies that appeared as we got home from Michigan. This is the peak of the hay fever season and Ruth, of course, is bothered quite a bit by that. Ruth made her terrarium today using some of the bark and things that we collected at camp. Camp was fine. We went to church a week ago Sunday and then packed afterwards. It was about 3:00 before we got away. It is normally about a 2½ hr drive up to Saugatuck but the heavy Sun afternoon traffic made us late enough (6:30) that we almost missed the evening meal which was the opening of camp. Any later and we would have had to gone back into the town of Saugatuck for supper.

We all ate together in the family new dining hall. The food was good. Each family brought its own food and service to the table and then cleaned the tables afterwards. There was a worship service each AM (we had the one on Friday). After that the adults had a discussion group while the children had various activities. Several older girls help take care of Alec while he went with the other preschoolers. Alec was the youngest one in camp (about 90 altogether) so he got a lot of attention. The afternoons were free for various activities including swimming in Lake Michigan. It was the first time any of our children had been in a lake with waves. There is a large beach there which we all enjoyed. After supper there were various activities and crafts. One evening we went to see “Hello Dolly” at the Red Barn Theater in Saugatuck. The last night we had a strong wind and rain. We saw a big windmill at Holland (a few miles North); that was where I mailed the cards.

Sat AM after breakfast and then it took a couple of hours to get packed. We ate in Saugatuck and then drove on to see Aunt Margaret. She had just mailed you a letter that day and had just come in from the hair dresser 5 minutes before I called. We had a good visit and left about 4:00. We decided not to try and see Bill and all at Sawyer a few miles South. Maybe we can go up there later some weekend. My new project is on the lungs and I would like to talk with Bill about it sometime. He is a lung and chest man you know. We ate supper in Michigan City Ind and got home in good time to unpack and get to bed. We were a little late getting to church last Sun. Went to the pool awhile last Sun afternoon. Glad to have your letter and to hear all the news.

**9-6-71 – Monday, Labor Day –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Glad to have received your letter and also Mothers. I’ll send an envelope of printed things separately. Mother, you might keep the magazines, especially the Armour-Dial ones, at least for now. We’re having a relaxing Labor Day, just doing some minor odd jobs, etc. We had a late breakfast, and I just cooked steaks on the grill for lunch. Lisa is just asking Ruth to teach her how to crochet. Ruth learned to knit several years ago, but has just learned to crochet in the last few days. The girls are doing a lot of sewing these days so they can have more new clothes for school.

School started last week and guess the kids are all settled OK. This week (9th) is Lisa’s birthday. I will miss it since I am attending a pharmaceutical meeting in Washington this week. I go tomorrow afternoon and come back Sat evening. Its a meeting that I don’t have to attend, but I thought the program looked interesting for what I’ve been doing. I don’t attend too many meetings, only about 1-2 a year.

In our First Day of School finery.

Yesterday was our promotion Sunday since our curriculum is based on quarters; the first quarter is Sept-Nov. Most of the teachers returned, so Ruth didn’t have to get many new teachers, and everything looks fine. I’m still teaching a 6th grade class, and will help lead the opening exercises in the Jr. Department. This will be my first year not to have one of my own children. When I started teaching in the Spring a year and half ago Lesle was in my class. Last year Lisa was there. Alan is in the Jr. Dept. but in the 5th grade.

This week is the first choir rehersal of the new year. I don’t know whether Ruth will go or not. Glad M.J. and Bill’s trip went OK and they had a good time. Maybe we can go to the mountains another year. We all enjoyed Family Camp so we might go back there, but we’ll decide all that later. Last Tues night was the quarterly s.s. meeting which Ruth was in charge of. Yesterday after Church I took Lesle, Alan and Andy (Lisa didn’t want to go) to the Chicago White Sox ball game. Bill may have been listening since it was with the Kansas City Royals. If he was, he will remember it as the rain delayed game in which Wilber Wood won his 19th game. Just as we got there (Its quite a drive up in the city) it started to rain. When we got inside we found they had played ½ inning so we had a 30 min rain delay. Then they played to the 4th inning when there were rain delays of about 2½ hrs. We didn’t get home till about 8:00. Last Sat afternoon we all drove up to Midway Airport (the older smaller one) and attended an open house. It was jammed. Hope you’re all OK. Alec is fine.

**9-19-71 – Sun 4:15 –** I’m watching a football game with Alan after listening to the Chicago Bears win their game against Pittsburgh. Their game was not televised since it was in Chicago. We’ve been in this afternoon as its a cool rainy day. Ruth has now taken the girls to their Jr. High Fellowship. She’ll practice the organ while she waits for them. I need to mow the yard badly but it started to rain yesterday just when I was ready to start mowing, and it has also been too wet today. I’ll have to do it some evening this week before it gets dark.

Alec took several steps by himself yesterday. He still gets up some at night but someday ? he’ll sleep all night. In a week or so we’ll order a screen so we can fix Alec’s “room” in our bedroom. I think I told you over the phone that Alec fell out of his stroller one day last week. He was just bruised and cut a little bit, but is OK now. Ruth had the sunshade on the stroller and when you’re pushing the stroller you can’t see him very well; he was out before she saw him. Now we don’t use the sunshade. I guess straps in strollers were not yet a thing.

The girls were starting to sew some new things today. Ruth would like to have a new real good sewing machine, and then would give the old machine to the girls. I told Ruth we might begin thinking about it; a good machine costs $200 or more. Ruth directed the Chansonettes (women’s singing group) last Mon night and will do it again tomorrow night. The girls have band practice Wed night for their marching appearance at one of the high school games.

Yesterday AM was Lesle’s first Confirmation Class meeting. At 12:30 went to a riding (horse) lesson. Lisa’s big birthday present is some riding lessons. Lisa loves horses and had never been on anything but a pony at a carnival or fair. Last Thurs night Ruth and I both went to choir rehersal and Lesle was baby sitter. Fri night we all ate out and then all went bowling. Alec was good and didn’t start to cry until we started to leave.

I have to go into Chicago Wed AM to meet a man on business. I may have to go to Boston again for a day or so sometime this fall. S.S. is going OK with attendance almost the same as last year. As I told you Ruth is coming back and helping with music in the Jr. Dept. As I said over the phone the Washington meeting was interesting and worth attending. It was the first pharmaceutical meeting I’ve really attended. My usual meetings have been related more to pharmacology. I saw some people I hadn’t seen for several years. It was an international meeting and some of the sessions were given in 4 languages. Glad to have letters from you and Aunt Clara. I came home Sat morning (I was scheduled to come home that evening) and surprized everyone. Hope you’re all OK.

**10-?-71 – Sun –** We hope Aunt Clara will be home by the time this letter reaches Hutchinson. We’ve had several days of hot, muggy Summer-like weather recently, with very little breeze. Today is rainy, cloudy, and cooler. Ruth was just talking about checking into a couple of jobs listed in todays paper. One is the organists job at a Presbyterian Church just north of here. The other job is a choir director somewhere. Tomorrow night Ruth directs the Chansonetts again as the regular director is having company. A lot of the women say they like Ruth better than the regular director, so maybe Ruth would be considered for the job (it pays a little bit) if the regular director ever decides to retire.

Ruth will take the girls to Jr. High Fellowship in a little while. Last Sunday afternoon the Fellowship had a bicycle hike. We took them and their bikes to the Church and they went from there. This morning at Worship Service the girls served as the acolytes; they will serve the rest of October. Jr. Highers serve as acolytes. Lesle never volunteered before, but was willing to do it with Lisa. Yesterday Lesle had Confirmation Class. Lisa and Alan are now singing in the Jr. Choir. Lesle says she doesn’t like to sing. I guess they are all 4 doing OK with their piano. I hear them practice a little bit before I go to work in the morning. I don’t hear any of them practice their instruments much; I guess the’re doing OK. Lisa had another horseback riding lesson yesterday. As I may have told you, we gave her some riding lessons for her birthday. She likes them very much.

Ruth did the grocery shopping yesterday. She only goes every 2 weeks since I get paid every 2 weeks. In the afternoon yesterday Ruth checked into prices on kitchen equipment. She’s working on plans for a possible addition. Alec had a nice birthday and says “Thanks” for everything. We blew his candle out for him. He got a lot of new toys, of course. It was really on his birthday that Alec started to really walk for any great distance. He now walks a lot, but mixes it up with his scooting. He can still scoot faster than he can walk. The Laidigs will be so busy this fall that they don’t plan to get up our way. I suppose they will get up here in the Spring. As I told you over the phone Thurs night, I had stayed home because Lesle had forgotten she had something to look up at the Library. Ruth left her there while she went to choir practice. Again, hope Aunt Clara hasn’t had any more trouble and everyone else is OK.

**10-?-71 –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Hope this letter reaches you at home rather than in the hospital. You can look at the enclosed pictures of Alec’s first birthday, show them to Mother M.J. and Bill and one of you can return them please. I wrote the letter to Mother today. Alec has been into everything today. I have an extra days vacation at Christmas time so I hope we can get to Hutchinson again for a day or so.

**10-11-71 – Mon –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I hope this reaches you at home. I thought we would have heard more by now about how everything had worked out. Maybe we’ll get a letter tomorrow. Hope you’re feeling OK and your woman is still working out. Our schedule has been about the same. Alec has a sore throat and some fever so Ruth took him to the Dr. today. He is feeling better this evening after his supper and some aspirin. Andy had his eye checkup today and he is still slightly far-sighted, so it will be at least 1-3 yrs before he get nearsighted, if he does, maybe he won’t be as near-sighted as the others. It looks like Lesle and Lisa will both have to wear braces. The Dr. says Lesle should start now. I guess she inherited my mouth and jaw. I always remember wearing the braces while I played the cornet.

Ruth goes to her singing group tonight. She is definitely the Assistant, which means she gets paid occasionally, when she has a chance to direct. Maybe someday she’ll have a chance to be the regular director. Yesterday Ruth directed the choir at Sauk Village Community Church. She answered their ad in the paper about a week ago, and went to their rehersal last Tues night. Its a small choir, and is a fairly new church. She helps me in the Jr. Dept. with the opening exercises and music; she then takes care of her S.S. duties, and will then drive to this other Church, which is about 15 mins away. After she is through she will drive back and pick us up after our service. It worked OK yesterday for the first time.

Our weather has been cool and Fallish the last few days. We have nice Falls here. I got most of the storm windows up yesterday. I still need to mow the yard at least one more time before winter. Last Sat was our usual busy schedule. Ruth worked at the Church from 10-12 selling the UNICEF cards. You may keep the enclosed clipping as we have several. We went to a Kiwanis pancake feed for lunch. Afterwards I went to the Christian Supply Store to buy some prizes to use in my S.S. Class (6th grade). Another teacher and I are working together. A lot of teachers work together now. Last Wed night Ruth had Circle; Thurs night I went to choir practice. We stayed home Fri night. Again, hope this finds you at home.

**10-12-71 –** Dear Mother, I wrote the longer letter to Aunt Clara at home. Hope to hear from you tomorrow. Everything OK here. Alec has a cold.

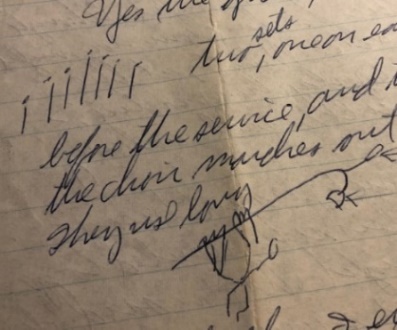
**10-21-71 – Thurs –** Today is warm again; we’ve had several days of about 80 degree weather. Most of the days it has been a new record, I believe. I had put most of the storm windows on a couple of weeks ago when it was cooler, but I left a few of them off in case we had a warm spell, which we’ve had. The trees are beautiful, although there is a lot of green yet because we haven’t really had a hard frost. Alec is fine now and his nose hasn’t been running as much as before he had his fever. We thought maybe he had allergies, but maybe he doesn’t. He really has had a very healthy first year. All of our children have been pretty healthy. They are, of course, nearsighted, and the girls may have to wear braces on their teeth, but they could have worse things. Alec is a real tease and a lot of fun. This has been one of our “wildest weeks” ever. Last night we had a baby sitter and Ruth, Lesle and I attended the Community Concert in Kankakee. It was Frula, a group of Yugoslavian Dancers. There are 3 more concerts, and we may be able to get some of the kids to go to them also. Alec was awake before we got home but was getting along OK. He gets along well at nurseries and with all kinds of people.

Tonight we miss choir practice and attend the Jr. High Orchestra concert. Both girls play and had to have new long black skirts which Ruth made for them. Tomorrow night we’ll be at home. I have to get ready for the Junior Department Party at the Church on Sat afternoon. In the AM (Sat) there is an area training session for S.S. teachers, with another session on Sunday. Lisa is still taking her horseback riding lessons on Sat. Lesle missed her confirmation class and Alan and Lisa choir practice last Sat AM as we all went to the Crete-Monee High School Homecoming Parade. The Jr. High Band marched. Last Sat night Ruth and I went to the Couples Club Halloween Party at church. We dressed as hippies and won 2 and 3rd prize (there were 20 there). Where are the pictures of this?!

Mon night Ruth had her Chansonettes practice. Tues night was her choir practice. Tues was also open house at the Jr. High. Ruth went awhile before going on to her choir. I stayed for all of it. The kids stayed home and were baby sitters. Glad to receive your letter today. I’m looking for it now so I can answer your questions but I can’t find it. Glad that Aunt Clara is getting along OK. Hope you’re all OK. Ruth has had Church meetings during the day.

**10-26-71 – Tues –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Today was warm again ~18 degrees above normal, I believe. The weather report says that we probably won’t have any frost till November. It came close a time or two, but has been very warm for this time of year since then. One weatherman even said we will have a milder winter then normal. Alec is doing fine. He is a very happy boy most of the time. He still likes to nurse. Alan was the one who nursed the longest; he stopped at about this time. Alec goes to bed about 7:30 – 8:00 depending on whether Ruth is going out for the evening or not. But then he gets up at least once before morning. The girls are gradually learning to be better babysitters, and are now learning to change diapers. Ruth has her church choir rehersal tonight although she doesn’t have to direct this Sunday. Tomorrow night she has an Education Committee Meeting at the Church. Thurs night is our regular choir practice. I don’t believe the next week will be quite as busy as was last week. Today Lesle went to the Lyric Opera in Chicago. It was a field trip for 8th graders who wanted to go. She finished a new dress last night. As I’ve said before, both girls are getting very good at sewing.

Ruth sang with the Chansonettes last night at a Nursing Home. They did not charge as it was their first concert which is mainly for practice. They normally charge. They use the money to pay the Director and Accompanist, and to buy new music. Sun afternoon I stayed home while Ruth went to the Church awhile to a teacher training meeting for the Presbyterian Churchs in our area. I went awhile in the evening and also on Sat AM. Sat afternoon was our Jr. Dept. Halloween Party. We had games, refreshments, etc. and I did a few tricks, including the head chopper that I bought when I was in High School. Lisa had her riding lesson. It was a “wild” Sat. Fri night I got the magic out and the kids and I worked on some tricks. Yes the girls, as Acolytes, light the candles two sets, one on each side up in the choir loft before the service, and then put them out before the choir marches out at the end of the service. They use long snuffer. Dad draws a picture to illustrate:



I see where Oklahoma beat K-State badly. I expect M.J. and Bill were there? Hope you’re still getting along OK.

**11-7-71 – Sun 2:00 PM –** It’s a cold day here. We’ve now had quite a bit of cold – real fall like weather the last few days, after that abnormally warm spell. Yesterday it was very windy. Alan and Andy stayed home from s.s. this morning. Andy has been sick since Thurs night when he started feeling badly. He stayed home from school on Friday. He hasn’t felt too badly, but has definitely had some kind of bug. Alan said he was extra tired last night and this AM he was feeling worse so he stayed home with Andy. The girls and Alec have been OK so far, but Ruth has been hoarse and has practically lost her voice part of the time. I guess she got along OK with her choir this morning. Its a small choir as I’ve said, they had 13 today. We had about 24 in choir which is about twice as large as Ruth’s Church. The girls have their Jr. High Fellowship this afternoon at 4:00 PM.

Ruth hopes her voice is all back by Wed when the Chansonettes sing. Next Sat she is directing the group at one of their big concerts of the year. Next Thurs night I fly to Boston with Dr. Dailey, our Director of Research. Its to visit that place where we went last Spring, and involves the same project. We’ll visit the man on Fri AM, possibly visit someone in the afternoon, and come back Fri evening. Last Sun was a busy day. Everyone was rushing to get their costumes ready. The girls had their Jr. High Fellowship Halloween Party in the afternoon. During that time Ruth took the washing to the laundermate. Our washer wasn’t working right but it is fixed now. Sunday evening, of course, the kids all went out “trick or treating.” Ruth even took Alec out awhile after putting a clown suit on him. I think the kids get about excited on Halloween as they do on Christmas.

Ruth had her regular rehersals on Mon and Tues nights. On Wed night she had Circle. I went to choir practice on Thurs night. We stayed in on Fri night. A week ago yesterday we ordered a new couch. Our current couch is the only one we’ve had. We bought it in Kansas City when we started to live in the house up on the hill. Our new one will be more comfortable and will have a higher back. I’m not sure whether or not we’ll put the old couch in the family room. We also ordered a bookcase which will stand on our record cabinet. It will give us more room in the living room for some of the small things. Lesle has an appointment for dental x-rays which will be followed by an appointment at the orthodontist. I guess its definite that she will have to wear braces of some type. Haven’t heard much from the Laidigs. As I told you they are not coming up this fall; they will probably come in the Spring. Hope you’re all OK.

**11-16-71 – Tues –** I trust that Aunt Clara called you last Sat to tell you that we will be coming for Thanksgiving instead of Christmas. I called Aunt Clara since I had talked to you about a week earlier, and I hadn’t talked to Aunt Clara on the phone in a long time. Ruth has a Christmas Eve Program at her Church. That means we would have to travel on Christmas night I believe and would have Sun and Mon (I have the Fri before and Mon after Christmas off). Anyway, we’ll have more time at Thanksgiving. We’ll take the Super Chief (the one train left that goes through Hutchinson) from Joliet at 7:20 Wed night, ride all night (the first time for the children to ride all night on the train) and get to Hutch about 5 or 6 Thanksgiving AM. Bill doesn’t have to bother to pick us up. We’ll have all day Thurs Fri and Sat and then leave at 1:43 Sun AM to return getting back here on Sun afternoon. The Texas Chief goes from Newton overnight but I’d have to go to work and the kids right to school after traveling all night. I think it will be a nice change to come at Thanksgiving. We’re having another warm spell which is fine with me. I finished sealing the storm windows Sun afternoon while listening to the Chicago Bears game (Like Bill, I like to follow football), while it was warm. The girls had their Fellowship Sun afternoon as usual. Yesterday evening Ruth had Chansonettes and tonight her Choir. I believe she had circle today. I drive the car pool (still the 3 of us) tomorrow and Thurs.

Last week was the usual schedule. I left Thurs evening (Dr. Dailey picked me up) from our house to go to the airport. It was a nice evening and the flight to Boston was fine. We got to the Cambridge Hotel about midnight Eastern time. Our meetings the next day at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Mass. General Hospital lasted from 9:30 to 4:15 (with time out for lunch). They were productive and gave us new direction to the project. This is the new project involving an aerosol fog of a chemical that might save the lives of some newborn infants that have problems breathing. Premature babies, babies of diabetic mothers, and babies of mothers with bleeding problems are all especially prone to respiratory distress syndrome/hyaline membrane disease (thats what the Kennedy baby that died had).

I got home about 8:30 Fri night. Sat was our usual schedule except that Ruth had to sing with the Chansonettes in the early afternoon (she directed). I watched the KU-Oklahoma game on TV. Aunt Clara said over the phone earlier that M.J. and Bill were at Manhatten. We’re gradually getting over our round of colds, laryngitis, etc. Hope we’re all fine by Thanksgiving. We’ll see you early that AM. Mom adds: Just a quick addition – what color is Jana’s coat? Would white go with it all right? Or would some other color be better? Also, would you ask Bill if he has access to old Farm Journals that Andy might have for school. His teacher especially wants him to get pictures from that magazine if he can.

**12-6-71 – Sun 4:45 –** We’ve had our usual busy weekend so I’m just now getting down to writing a letter. Alec is just now crawling up on the couch beside me. I’m not sure that he crawled up on the couchs in Hutchinson, but he sure has since we got home. That means we have to watch him so he won’t flip off backwards. Alec likes to bounce on our bed, but we have to watch him there also. He can get down by himself, however, if he thinks about it. Alec is working on some new teeth and hasn’t been sleeping too well the last two nights. When he feels good he’s a real joy, as you all know.

This AM was our usual schedule. Ruth was a little later picking us up after church as her church had communion. They have communion the first Sunday of every month like I remember at home. I got the Christmas things down this afternoon, but we won’t unpack everything until we get our tree next weekend. We have a lot of cleaning to do before we can get all the Christmas things out. We’ll probably have to tie the tree some way so Alec can’t pull it over. The kids are already working on presents, etc. The girls are at their Fellowship right now. Ruth took Alan out for some things and will then pick up the girls. This Tues night is the quarterly s.s. meeting. Ruth will have the meeting and then go over to her choir practice. She had 17 in her choir this AM, the most the’ve had since she started. Our choir is singing a Christmas Cantata next Sun AM. As I told you Ruth’s choir is having a Christmas Eve Service. We’ll all go there (I’ll help sing) rather than to our Church.

We certainly enjoyed our visit to Hutchinson. It certainly was well worth it. As I said over the phone the trip back went OK. We lost a couple of our seats when we went to breakfast, but we found other seats. The train was more crowded going back and there were lots of mix-ups on the seating. We ate at the drive-in before coming on home. Last Mon and Tues night Ruth had her regular schedule. Wed night she had her regular Circle meeting. Thurs night we both went to our choir practice. Fri night Lesle had a slumber party out at Crete (the town where the High School and Jr. High are located). Ruth had a singing appearance in a suburb north of here. Lesle did not have Confirmation Class yesterday AM. Lisa and Alan has Youth Choir rehersal. Alec is just now looking at the Advent candles that Ruth just fixed. He’ll really be excited when we bring home the Christmas tree. Again, we certainly had a nice get together. Hope you’re all feeling OK.

**12-?-71 – 10:00 PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’m sitting in the family room watching the Monday night football game on TV. I expect Bill is watching also. I don’t know what it is but I enjoy watching more than I used to. On Monday nights I usually do some reading while I watch. The girls are starting to take private oboe lessons. They will alternate each week. Lesle took the first lesson today – Lisa will take her first lesson a week from today. Dec 7th – We had Mother’s letter today. Hope you’re feeling better and getting your strength back. I hope we didn’t expose you to some new “Chicago Area bugs and viruses.” I guess you can’t worry about that when you’re having a nice get together. We were all so pleased with the trip, all the visits and everything. You keep your good spirit up and I’m sure you’ll gradually get your strength up. Ruth started the Christmas cards yesterday and got some mailed today. She is not making them this year – just not enough time. We have a Sunday School meeting tonight. Hope you get your sewer fixed. I continually have to work on our drains to keep them open.

**12-15-71 – Wed PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I expect you may still be in the hospital when this reaches you since it takes awhile to get over the flu and, of course, its a little harder when you’re older. I usually get a flu shot at work. I never know whether they work or not. I guess they change the vaccine every year depending on the viruses that they think will be predominant for the given year. Hope you have a better room by this time. We may have word from Mother in a day or so giving your room number, hope you got the envelope of things OK. I didn’t have your room number at that time.

Andy stayed home from school this afternoon since he was not feeling well. He didn’t have any fever at noon but had almost 102 by the time I got home from work. He vomited in the early evening. He was disappointed that he couldn’t appear with his classmates at the grade school program this evening. Ruth and I went over (Lesle and Lisa stayed home as babysitters) and heard most of the program, including Alan’s class. There was a big crowd since all of the classes had a part. I saw Alan’s teacher and she was complimenting Alan again on his creative ability. I guess he’s like Jim – they are interested in many things and can do a good job at everything they try. I think I wrote that the girls have started oboe lessons.

Ruth has just about finished the Christmas Cards. She just didn’t have time to make them this year. She used UNICEF Cards since the Women’s Group at Church sold them at Church. Tomorrow night is our regular choir practice. Friday night Ruth’s Choir is having their annual Christmas Dinner. I am invited and everyone will eat at a nice restaurant. Sat are our usual activities and Sat evening the Couples Club at Church is having a progressive dinner. Sun is Christmas Sunday and Ruth has her choir.

It has been rainy and windy (there were tornadoes in Ill last night) here the last few days. This morning was warm setting a new heat record, but this evening it is cold again. We’ve had little or no snow and the kids are quite anxious for some. We get most of our snow in Jan Feb and March. Yesterday evening was the girls Christmas concert out at the Jr. High. There was a big crowd there also since all the music groups performed. Ruth went with me but had to leave early since she had her church choir practice. It was at 9:00 PM since there was a concert in that community also and many of her choir members were attending there. Mon night Ruth had her regular Chansonettes rehersal.

Alec is doing fine except that he doesn’t sleep for any longer than 3-5 hrs at a stretch. He had a check-up yesterday and had a shot (vaccination) which he didn’t like at all. Alec is into everything but is learning fast (he may lie down and cry) about those things that he can’t have. They have asked me at Church to go back on the Session (the ruling board) for another 3 year term. My first meeting will be in February. Since we have some new people who have volunteered to teach in s.s. I may ease out of teaching the 6th graders but stay on as Superintendent of the Jr. Dept and with Ruth’s help, have the opening exercises every Sunday AM. Last Sunday at our Church was the Christmas Cantata. My little solo part went OK. Ruth made that Sun her day off and sang with us. I had a men’s breakfast before s.s. so it was a busy morning. The weekend was otherwise filled with getting ready for Christmas. Sat afternoon we drove out to one of the Christmas Tree Farms and cut our own tree. Alec, of course, is quite excited about the tree. I can’t remember exactly when I wrote last.

I guess I wrote that I was going to St. Louis last Fri. I drove down with two other men. We left from Kankakee at about 7:00 AM and got to St. Louis about noon, with one stop on the way for gas and coffee. It rained hard and was very windy so we didn’t get there as soon as we had expected. We visited K-V Pharmacal Co., a small drug company that manufactures drugs for other companies. They make two of our drugs, and we talked with them about new product possibilities that they could make for us. We left St. Louis at 3:30 and I got home about 8:00 so I got to see the family before they went to bed. Last Thurs night was the final rehersal for our Cantata and last Wed night Ruth had an appearance. Hope you’re feeling lots better by the time this reaches you. You’ll enjoy sharing Mothers Christmas gift from us which will arrive later. Love, Carroll and family