**1972**

There is never much time to “just sit down.” There are piano lessons, oboe lessons, bassoon lessons, art lessons, riding lessons, baseball practices, baseball games, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, fellowships, choirs, meetings, concerts, contests, parades, recitals, discussion groups, parties, appointments, swimming, biking, work and school and church. And also a dog. Dad faces 41 and has a frustrating day. He “dopes up” and does double-knit. Mom does maxis and turns 35. Lesle adjusts. Lisa falls and fails. Alan keeps his confidence. Andy exercises his tongue. Alec stops nursing and hears a cow cry. The Laidigs are elusive. Tragedy arrives. Dad listens to a gentle thundershower, notices the fall leaves, and enjoys hearing his children practice. Time flies.

**1-1-72 –** Dear Aunt Clara, Hope you’re home by this time, but I’ll mail it to the hospital. Hope you’re feeling better and getting your strength back. I wrote the long letter to Mother first. Hope you and Mother don’t get the flu; I think that is what we’re having. Thanks for the Christmas check. We have applied it on some of our new furniture.

**1-9-72 -** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, we’re now through with lunch after getting home from church. I’m watching a basketball game on TV while I start this. It is a lot warmer today with the sunshine now out and our snow practically all melted. We finally had a few inches of snow the other day. It rained some last night and was misty this morning when I went from 8-9 AM to the monthly mens breakfast at the Church. The breakfast is followed by a discussion. After the breakfast I come home and get the family and then go back for s.s.

We have a new man who offered to teach in the Jr. Dept. so he is taking my place with the 6th graders. Ruth and I will continue to have the opening exercises in the Jr. Dept. Ruth didn’t have her choir today so she was with us. She had time to see some people regarding s.s. things. Ruth will have another Sun off this month since there are 5 Sundays in Jan and she is only hired for 3 Sundays a month. Later this afternoon we all go to Church to help with the Jr. High Fellowship.

I don’t know of anything too special next week – just the regular schedule. The children are all essentially well now although Andy is still sniffling. Andy had it the longest. He had a fever most all of last week and missed school all week. As I think I wrote I had last Mon off while the kids had to go back to school. Ruth took her drivers license test last Mon and passed it with a score of 100. Ruth had her Chansonettes Mon night, her choir on Tues night, and circle on Wed night. We missed choir practice on Thurs night.

The kids have new ice skates and have been skating a couple of times. Its so warm today that I’m sure the ice has all melted. Glad to have Mother’s letter yesterday and to hear that you are settled nicely in the other room. We hope you have received the flowers by now. We called here a few days ago to check on them. Glad to hear that you are gradually getting your strength back; keep it up.

I’m sending some more pictures. These are some old ones that we finally had developed. Please return them (or have Mother or M.J.) after everyone has looked at them. Before long we’ll have to record a new tape to send to Hutchinson. Guess that’s about all the news for now.

**1-18-72 – Tues evening –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I know you like to get mail so I’ll send this to you first since I called Mother the other night. After the subzero spell (Mother said it got down to zero there in Hutchinson) it has warmed up here yesterday and today, and the snow (several inches) we got just before the cold spell has just about all melted. It is supposed to get colder tomorrow however.

Ruth is just now leaving for her choir practice. She had her circle meeting this AM. I think we’re both in tomorrow night for a change. Thurs night is Alan’s band concert. He is practicing more and more on his bassoon and is beginning to sound real good. I think I mentioned once that the girls are taking private oboe lessons again; they each alternate every other week since the lessons are $4 each.

We might all go bowling Friday night although we haven’t decided as yet. Next Sat night I’m taking Ruth out for her birthday dinner and we have a Community Concert down in Kankakee. Next Sun night I have to help lead a discussion on drugs and their abuse for the Senior High Youth Fellowship at the Church. I stayed home last night while Ruth had her regular Chansonettes rehersal.

We were glad to have your letter and Mother’s letter also recently. It’s probably best that you’re where you are during this bad winter weather. Do you still line up the Pink Ladies while you’re in the hospital? Hope you keep getting your strength back.

Today is Ruth’s 35th birthday. The kids all made nice cards and things for her. I got her a new sweater and ordered her a new winter coat but it won’t arrive until approximately the 25th. Last Sun was the regular schedule. I watched only part of the Super Bowl Football Game in the afternoon after it became apparent that it wasn’t going to be close. The girls had their Jr. High Fellowship at Church in the afternoon. A week before we were chaperones for their Fellowship.

Last Sat AM Lesle had her confirmation class at church (she is doing real well), but the Youth Choir was called off because of the bitter cold. Lisa’s riding lesson (its in a barn which is not completely heated) was also called off. In the evening Ruth and I went bowling with the Couples Club at Church; there was a good crowd despite the cold. We went back to the Church afterwards for refreshments.

The boys birthday parties were last Fri. They had to be postponed because they had been sick. Andy’s was just before supper and the children stayed for supper. Alan had 2 boys over and I took them bowling and then they stayed all night.

**1-25-72 – Tues Evening –** We’ve been pretty busy recently so I just haven’t gotten around to writing. Yesterday and today have turned very cold again, after a mild stretch. This is not abnormal, since this is our coldest time of the year. Ruth is putting Alec down and will then go to her choir practice. She has this Sunday off. Last Sun the younger choir members performed a liturgical dance. She likes to do a wide variety of things.

Tomorrow is a pot-luck supper at Church followed by the annual congregational meeting for the election of officers, etc. I’m presumably going back on the Session. As I said, we have a new man taking my place with the 6th graders so I won’t be too burdened. Thurs night I believe Alan has his concert and Fri night the girls play their solos (the contest is Feb 19th at another town) in front of others for practice.

Sat we’ll probably have the two Luna children to watch as Pete (their dad) is attending a meeting in Washington, D.C., and their Mother has to work. Ruth had a rehersal at church this AM for the monthly Women’s Association Meeting next Tues. They are having a puppet show using puppets of the women of the Bible. Yesterday Ruth had a concert in the afternoon with the Chansonettes; they had no rehersal in the evening so she was home for a change.

Last week was the regular schedule except Fri the whole family went bowling. We hadn’t been for some time except I had taken Alan and his two friends for his birthday party. Ruth and I had gone bowling the Sat before with the Couples Club, so the girls were getting jealous. I bowled the highest score since we have been married and the others did fairly well. We take turns watching Alec. He got real excited since he loves balls. You may remember that I bowled awhile in a league when I was in Jr. College. I don’t remember much about it or how well I scored.

Sat was full from AM to night: Choir, Confirmation Class (I’ll be an Elder when my first child joins the Church) for Lesle, riding lesson, groceries, cleaning the house, errands, and then Ruth and I ate out for Ruth’s birthday dinner. We then drove to Kankakee for the Community Concert (Israel Chamber Orchestra). Stopped at some peoples house in Kankakee afterwards. Drove home and took the baby-sitter home. It was after 1:00 when we got to bed.

Sun AM was the usual schedule. Since I’m not teaching I’m sorting through all the Jr. Dept. materials that have accumulated over the years. Sun afternoon I studied about drugs and religion and in the evening talked to the Sr. High Fellowship (about 40) about drugs. Hope you’re all OK and Aunt Clara is still getting more strength.

**1-26-72 –** Mom writes to Grandmother – Dear Mother, Just a quick belated note to thank you for the generous birthday check. I had thought I might pick up a pair of shoes I’d been eyeing, but they were gone. So I finally bought - $13 sweater-blouse – certainly more than I’ve ever spent on casual clothes and more than I would have spent if it hadn’t been for your check! The other $7 will go either for a long slip (now that I wear a maxi I need one) or toward a wall hanging that I just like. Either way, the check will give enjoyment for some time to come.

Tonight is Alan’s 1st band concert and he’s been quite concerned about getting there on time, dressed properly, etc. We’ll record it and the solo recital tomorrow night so you can hear it, but then we’ll want to send the tape on to my folks, too. (We were using all recorders at once to make duplicate tapes, but can’t do that now that we only have the one recorder). Time to take my neighbor to the dr. Thanks again!

**2-3-72 – Thurs PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I thought I would get the Hutchinson letter off last night but didn’t get around to it. Hope this finds everyone doing quite well. Hope it hasn’t been too cold for everyone there; its going down to 0 tonight here after several inches of snow yesterday and today. It was slick part of the way in this morning to work; the slickest we’d had all winter. It was OK coming home this evening although it was very windy and cold.

Ruth has her piano class (12 pupils at the same time with electric pianos) on Thurs afternoons and is not home yet when I get here. The girls babysit with Alec while she is gone. We finally will get our new couch tomorrow. I won’t know how to act sitting on it, after being used to the old one for about 14 years. The old one has served well for raising 5 children.

Lesle has a final appointment tomorrow at the dentists for her last filling before going to the orthodontist to see what needs to be done to straighten her teeth. We may eat out tomorrow night or some other time this weekend since tomorrow is payday. The kids think they ought to eat out about every other day. Alec sure seems grown up tonight; he has a sweatshirt and pants on that make him look older. He’s maybe sleeping a little bit longer at night. I don’t believe his teeth hurt him quite as much.

Yesterday evening I babysat while Ruth and the children went over to Talala Grade School (Alan and Andy’s school). The girls went ice skating outside (there is a flat area that they flood for skating) while Ruth and the boys attended PTA. Ruth is Alan’s room mother and had to help serve. The program was the children’s art work; I guess the boys had some on display.

Tues Ruth’s Circle put on the Puppet Show of women of the Bible. Ruth said it was the biggest crowd at the monthly Womens Association Meeting she could recall. Mon and Tues nights were Ruth’s regular rehersals. The girls had their Jr. High Fellowship last Sun afternoon. They are gradually becoming less shy as they get older. They certainly aren’t quiet at home. All the children had excellent grades. Lesle had all A’s except for orchestra. Lisa had 4 A’s and 3 B’s and the boys cards were good.

Last Sat was one of the most frustrating days I ever put in as I tried to put an ice skating rink up in the back yard. It will work if the ground is level, but it isn’t where I tried to put it up so I’ll have to move. Lisa fell off a horse for the first time at her riding lesson but didn’t hurt herself. Hope you’re all OK.

**2-6-72 – Sun afternoon –** It’s a quiet Sunday afternoon. It was icy this AM so we had to drive more slowly on the way to Church. Ruth didn’t have any trouble driving over to her Church. She was later getting back to pick us up since they had Communion. We all have touches of colds, but not serious; Alec has a runny nose. I guess there is a lot of real flu in the area. The girls have their fellowship later. Lisa is next door baby-sitting. It doesn’t seem possible that my little girls are now baby sitters. We couldn’t possibly do what we do if they were not old enough to babysit.

Haven’t heard from the Laidigs recently; I assume they are OK. I don’t know when they plan to visit us next. Ruth has her rehersals Mon and Tues nights and I have my first Session meeting on Wed. The kids are out of school Mon and Tues because of meetings or something. Mom writes in above Mon – President’s Day, and above Tues – Teacher Institute. They were also out last Fri because of blowing snow which often blocks roads in our district. Mom adds: (they were scheduled to have Fri afternoon off for in-training for teachers) Back to Dad: Yesterday was the regular schedule. The kids have enjoyed watching the Winter Olympics on TV. Lesle had her first orthodontist appointment; Ruth and I both went along. Her case will take 1-1½ yrs and cost $1,000-1,300. They have improved techniques from when I wore braces. The Dr. glanced at my teeth and they still look good. Ruth has excellent teeth. Some of the other children will also have to wear braces. It’ll be at least a year before any decision is made on Lisa. We ate out Fri night. I guess that’s all the news since I wrote last week. Hope you’re all OK.

**2-12-72 – Sat afternoon –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, We’re done with the Sat errands a little earlier than usual so I’ll start this now. We were glad to have Mother’s letter within the last week I believe. Hope its warmed up for you folks; today is our warmest day (got into the 40’s), in about 4 weeks. The Jr. High Fellowship was going skating this evening if it was cold enough, but I guess its off since everything is melting today. The last time they tried to have a skating party it was also too warm.

The kids have started making Valentines. We haven’t heard from the Laidigs for about a month. We assume the’re OK. Tomorrow after Church we’re driving up to the Duvalls up in a far NW suburb. They have moved since we last saw them and now are about an 1½ from here. They were here last summer. Mrs. Duvall went to high school with Ruth.

Lisa just took Alec outside to play and walk awhile in the snow. He’s back in now and had a big time. Alec has to be watched every minute now as he is into everything. He is learning slowly about the things he is not supposed to have. Next Sat is the Jr. High solo contest at Plainfield, a town north of Joliet. The girls, of course are playing; they encourage almost everyone to play for the experience. Ruth is accompanying 8 of the ones from our Jr. High, so she has been busy working on rehersals for the kids.

Ruth has her regular schedule Mon and Tues nights. Wed night is the first of 6 Lenton Services. I guess we’ll all go since there will be a nursery. Thurs night the girls have a band and orchestra concert. Last Mon night Ruth missed Chansonettes. I took the girls out for new Sunday shoes and the boys went to the Library. Tues night Ruth had her regular rehersal and Wed night I had my first Session meeting of the new term. I’ll be the Education Committee Chairman so I’ll have to do a fair amount of work. I didn’t think they would put me on that Committee since Ruth is S.S. Superintendent. We’ll now have to work together more on s.s things, etc. ha!

I’ve had a cold since Tues, and I stayed home from work on Thurs. Alec has had a runny nose for a week and a half and the rest have had touches. I was in Chicago awhile yesterday afternoon to a meeting. Lesle’s Confirmation Class won’t be ready by Easter; it will be the first part of May. Lisa jumped for the first time at her riding lesson today. This afternoon Lesle had her orthodontist appointment for the initial x-rays and impressions. Hope you’re all doing OK. We’ve started another tape for the recorder.

**2-26-72 – Sat Afternoon – 3:30 –** Ruth and the girls just got home. Lesle went to her first art lesson today at the Art Center (its in the basement of the library). It’s a teen age class and Lesle says there were 10 girls and no boys. Last week was the first class but she had to miss because of the contest. Lesle had her confirmation class this AM and Lisa her riding lesson, also. Lesle’s confirmation class won’t be ready to join the Church until after Easter. Ruth will be at our Church on the Sunday the class is welcomed in.

Tomorrow is the regular schedule. Lesle and Lisa have a bowling party in the early afternoon in place of their Jr. high Fellowship. Next Tues night is the Sunday School Meeting so Ruth and I both have to go. Wed night is the third Lenten Service; I have to speak for 2-3 minutes (members of the Session are helping); the youth choir is singing also. Next Fri night is the last of the Community Concerts in Kankakee.

Yesterday I had to go to a meeting at a motel near O’Hare. It snowed some most of the day yesterday, but the main roads were not bad, although the side streets were slick by the time we got home. We had planned to go bowling yesterday but we were all tired, Alan, on short notice was invited to a birthday party (slumber party overnight), and the boys hadn’t done their jobs so we called off the bowling.

Last Thurs Ruth and I both went to choir practice since Ruth doesn’t have her choir tomorrow. A week ago Thurs we went to the monthly music program at the Jr. High. We went to the first two Lenten Services the last two Wed nights. A week ago today was the solo and ensemble Jr. High contest at Plainfield, a small town North of Joliet. Ruth played for the girls and 7 others. Most of them gave her a little gift. Ruth took $8 of her gift money and rented a painting (two children with balloons) for two months. We hung it in the living room and will decide later if we want to buy it.

Its supposed to be warmer tomorrow so a lot of our snow will probably melt by then. We often have a lot of snow in March and early April, so we can’t say that winter is over as yet. Alan registered for Boys Baseball this morning. Their first practices are in April, and it is often still cold and rainy or snowy at that time. Hope its getting warmer in Hutchinson. I suppose Aunt Clara has been out a little bit more by this time if the weather has been good.

Lesle had her 2nd orthodontist appointment a week ago. So many teenagers wear braces these days. The braces are different than the ones I wore; more of wide band thing on each tooth that can be adjusted individually. They claim the metals are not as hard on the teeth now; remember how I had a lot of cavities. I don’t think it takes as long now also. Hope you’re all OK.

**3-2-72 – Thurs –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, We’ve all finished supper and are waiting for Ruth to get home from the Conservatory. Ruth has her beginning piano lab at 4:00 and now has private lessons until 7:30; she will get them moved back a half hour later so she won’t be quite so late. It is a lot colder here today after getting close to 70 on Tuesday. Hope the weather is moderating in Hutch by this time.

Mother sent the clipping regarding your 50th year PEO pin. Congratulations, we’ll keep the clipping. Hope you’ve been able to get out a time or two by now. When Ruth gets home I’ll go to choir practice, since we’re working on the Easter Cantata. It is that well known “Seven Last Words of Christ,” which I sang in at your Church a couple of times when I was younger, and I expect its been done there several times since. We’ve never done it here. Tomorrow night is the last Community Concert in Kankakee, and Sat AM I’m supposed to go to a Jr. High in a small town South of here.

I must get started on my income tax this weekend. Mine is not difficult, mainly a matter of sorting everything out from the drawer where I store records, etc, during the year. Last night was the third Lenten Worship Service. Another man and I helped (I marked my part on the enclosed bulletin) the Pastor. Lisa and Alan sang in the Youth Choir. I think Ruth taped it so we’ll have a tape to send to Oberlin and Hutchinson before too long.

Last Tues night was the S.S. Staff Meeting. Ruth was in charge since she is Superintendent. She left at 8:45 to go to her choir rehersal which started late. Mon night Ruth had her Chansonettes rehersal. Last Sun Ruth was at our Church since it was her Sun off. The girls went bowling in the afternoon with their Jr. High Fellowship.

It doesn’t seem possible that I will have a 14 yr old daughter in 4 days. The girls are definitely getting to be young ladies. At the end of next month I will have completed 10 years in industry (two companies) and we’ve lived in Illinois almost 11½ years – time flies.

We finally had a long letter from Mrs. Laidig (Ruth had called also). She told a lot about her activities with various crafts, dried flowers, etc. She talked a little bit about their coming up for 3 or 4 days if we would decide on a specific job for Mr. L to do. That magazine I sent talked about the moving of a lot of the Greyhound-Armour people to Phoenix, Arizona. None of the people in Kankakee are moving, but I might be affected in the years ahead if they would move research there. They would have to build a new building, however.



March 6 - Lesle’s family birthday celebration.

**3-9-72 – Thurs –** We’ve all just finished supper and are waiting for Ruth to get home from her music teaching at the Conservatory. As I think I told you she is teaching through the supper hour so she leaves the food cooking for our supper or the menu for the girls to fix it. Alec learned to say “bicycle” awhile ago and really got excited. He was watching the big kids bikes in the carport and he picked the word up real well. He has a little go-cart “bike” of his own, also. I have to go to the usual Federation Meetings in Atlantic City in June. I hadn’t planned to go since the papers aren’t so relevant to my work anymore, but the Director of Research wants at least two of us to go from Pharmacology. It’ll be a hard week for Ruth but it is a meeting I should normally go to, and I can’t complain since my job requires very little traveling. Ruth, of course, couldn’t do as many outside things if I had to travel more.

I’ll go to choir practice after awhile. Lesle wants to have a birthday party sometime (go bowling and sleep overnight) but I don’t know when it’ll be. She had presents and dinner last Monday, of course. Lesle says “thanks” for the money; I’m sure she’ll write you a separate “Thank You.” She got an album of “Jesus Christ Superstar,” clothes, etc. The kids all got speedometers for their bikes; it reminded me of how excited I was when I got mine years ago. They couldn’t wait to put them on Mon evening. Ruth had her regular rehersals Mon and Tues evenings. Last evening I took the children to the fourth Lenten Service while Ruth had to go to a Chansonettes appearance at a nearby high school. I brought the kids home after Church and went back to the Church to the Session Meeting. I’ll have to miss the April meeting since I’ll be in Atlantic City.

Tomorrow night and Sat I have to finish organizing the breakfast for the Men’s Breakfast Meeting next Sun morning. Six of us are responsible for preparing breakfast for 40-45 men. Alec is “growing up” – he’s into “everything.” We just don’t have room to put everything up so he just has to learn not to open every drawer and door. Last Sun was the regular schedule. In the afternoon I took Alan to get some wood to start his Observatory science project. The girls had their Fellowship and Ruth shopped for Lesle’s presents. Last Sat was the usual tight schedule. Ruth and I consulted with the Orthodontist on Lesle’s teeth. It will be about $1200 and take about 1½ yrs. Last Sat AM I went down to help judge 6-7-8 grade science exhibits at a Jr. High in that little town South of here. Last Fri we went to that concert; I sent the program. It made us “young” (given by teenagers from Los Angeles). Hope this finds you all OK and that its been warm enough for Aunt Clara to get out a few times. Alec’s letter to you – (Scribbles on the top of the letter.)

**3-14-72 – Tues –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Glad to have Mother’s letter and to hear you had been out a time or two. We had a real warm Sat like I think it was all over the Mid-West. The kids played outside, of course; I helped the boys get their kites up in the air. After the warm spell it was colder Sun and then it rained all Sun night and into Monday when it changed to snow making it slow coming home last night. Today was warmer and a lot of the snow melted; tomorrow will be in the 50’s. Ruth was supposed to lead the Chansonettes last night for their annual benefit appearance at Manteno State Mental Hospital south of us, but it was postponed because of the weather. The girls had band practice last night. Tonight Ruth has her regular choir rehersal and tomorrow night Ruth and I are singing a duet for the Lenten Service. Fri night the girls band plays in their annual District Contest. I’m supposed to help with something on Sat afternoon. Last Sun I had to get up early to help get the breakfast for the Men’s Group. It was a bigger job than anticipated because we did quite a bit of cooking. I went out last Fri night to buy some of the things. Hope everyone is OK. I’m going over Thurs AM to do a few tricks for Andy’s class.

**3-21-72 – Tues –** Well, another week has quickly gone by. Today has been cooler and rainy after a warm (70’s) day yesterday on the first day of Spring. We don’t normally really begin to have warmer weather until well into April. Last night Ruth stayed home from Chansonettes rehersal since she had some errands to run, and Alec had been sick. Alec started vomiting last Sat night as we were going to bed. By morning he had a fever and then he developed diarrhea. I stayed home from s.s. and Church with him. Ruth had her choir so had to go out. We stayed home the rest of the day Sun except when Lisa went to Jr. High Fellowship. I worked on income tax in the evening. I still don’t have it finished.

Alec was feeling lots better yesterday, and is feeling better today, but still has some trouble and was very fussy today. Ruth missed a Circle meeting this AM. Ruth is putting Alec to bed now and will then go to her choir rehersal. Tomorrow night is the last Lenten Service. Our duet went OK last Wed night. Alan is practicing his bassoon right now. I think he sounds pretty good. They have a Fine Arts Festival this Sat where everybody plays a solo. The girls play somewhere this Fri night – 1st night of Fine Arts Festival. Last Fri night was the Jr. High District Contest at their Jr. High. Their band and orchestra only got II’s so they don’t get to go to the State Contest. Last year they got I’s and got to play at State. Mom adds: where they got I’s also.



Lesle and Lisa in their orchestra outfits, with Alec. This picture appeared in the Crete Record newspaper.

The contest continued on Sat and in the afternoon I helped control the door to the band performance area. We stayed home Sat evening and I watched the state high school championship basketball game on TV. Alec was feeling pretty good in the evening (several children in the neighborhood have had the same thing Alec has had). Hope everyone there is fine and Aunt Clara has been able to get out more and more. We haven’t heard whether the Laidigs will be here later this Spring or not. I can’t think of much else that’s different. Its the same busy schedule all the time. I guess you know how it is with M.J. Bill and all their activities.

I forget to mention that last Thurs I took a little time off from work and went to Andy’s class and did a magic show. Some of those same tricks I did in High School.

**4-11-72 – Tues 8:15 PM –** I’m listening to the Chicago Bulls (professional basketball) game on the radio; if they lose tonight their season is over. I like to listen to their games in the evening while I relax. The baseball season is supposed to start tomorrow, but the players are on strike – everybody strikes these days. We haven’t had a teachers strike in our district (teachers don’t strike as much now since there is a surplus of teachers), but they are having problems with their contract, etc.

Hope your weather has been more springlike than ours. The temperature hasn’t been above 50 for quite some time and we’ve had a lot of wet snow. Last Wed I had my worst day for driving to work all winter as we had a big snow a week ago tonight. The kids made a huge snowball but the big boys in the neighborhood naturally broke it. The children have vacation all this week. The girls have done some sewing and they have played a lot of card games. We’ve all learned some card tricks. I did one trick for them that I don’t believe I had done for 15-20 years. None of them are yet as interested in magic as I was. The kids are learning how to play double solitaire so they can play Grandpa when they come the end of this month. Ruth and her Dad always play double solitaire when we are visiting each other. Grandpa has to be watched since he’s likely to “cheat,” so the kids have been “warned.”

Ruth did not have rehersal (Chansonettes) yesterday evening since they had an appearance today at one of the local Jewish Synagogues. Ruth is gone now to her regular Church Choir rehersal; she’s calling that rehersal off next week when I’m gone to Atlantic City. She has also cancelled some other things so she won’t be gone so much. Her choir did fine for their Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday services.

Alan’s first baseball practice is this Sat AM, if its not too cold or rainy. We haven’t played any catch yet but will as soon as the weather warms up. Alan is still delivering advertising papers almost every week so he earns a little extra money. Lisa is still taking her riding lessons and enjoys them very much. The girls still alternate on their oboe lessons. They did not have any piano or oboe lessons today. Lesle got most of her braces on yesterday AM. She has a couple of small cavities to be filled and will have them finished a week from Friday. She said she was getting used to them today.

The family will drive me to the airport next Sunday afternoon. I’ll come home a week from Friday afternoon. I got my income tax in a week ago; I should get about $70 refund. We now have an Illinois State income tax like they have in Kansas.

Easter Sunday our Church had a 6:00 Sunrise Service (inside because it was so cold) followed by a breakfast but we did not go. We went to the 8:30 Service where Lisa and Alan sang in the Youth Choir. Lisa sang a duet with another girl. Ruth helped in the nursery, helped in the s.s. between services and then went to her Church as usual. We were all home the rest of the day Sun just relaxing.

Last Sat was our regular schedule. The kids dyed Easter eggs in the evening and Ruth stayed up late finishing some sewing for the girls. I went for groceries as Ruth wanted to sew. Lesle plans to have a slumber party this Fri night to finally celebrate her birthday. Alec is doing fine except he is more spoiled than the other kids were.

I was off work on Good Friday so we drove into Chicago. We had to pick up a film in La Grange (a suburb near Hinsdale where the Lester’s lived); then we went to the Adler Planetarium (built about the time I was born) and saw their show (about Apollo etc.) The girls had been to the Planetarium on field trips at school, but the rest of us had never been there. Afterwards we went over to Field Museum. I couldn’t remember whether we went there in 1944 or not. I had not been there since we have lived in Chicago. It was just 2 years ago that we went to the Museum of Science and Industry so I guess we should go there next.

My duet (Seven Last Words of Christ) went OK on Maundy Thursday. We had Communion also. Hope Aunt Clara has been getting out some and things are beginning to work out regarding her going home. I guess I haven’t written for 2 weeks but I did call that one evening.

**4-16-72 – Sun Afternoon –** I’ll start this now while I’m watching one of the basketball playoff games. I just took Lesle to get new tennis shoes; Ruth and Lisa also have new shoes. Today is cold and rainy – we just haven’t had much real spring weather. Alan was supposed to have baseball practice this afternoon but its too muddy and cold. Alan has had only one practice and that was yesterday; his first practice a week ago yesterday was postponed. We were glad to have your letter and to hear that everything is going fine. Thats nice that Aunt Clara is able to get out occasionally.

I had an unusual coincidence in Atlantic City. I ate lunch with a young graduate student from the University of Texas (the restaurant was crowded and the hostess just happened to seat me with him). After we talked awhile he said he had worked in Hutchinson for a year at Winchesters. He had gone there because his brother-in-law is the minister of the Four-Square Church at 3rd and Maple. He married a Hutchinson girl who lived out 800-900 East Sherman and who went to Sherman and he thought Wianes. I think he means Winans.

After awhile we go to the 2nd of the 3 Family Nights. The series is on Africa this year. The last two years they have been held in Feb. We had a letter from the Laidigs yesterday and they plan to arrive here on the 28th for a visit. Mrs. L has had a couple of severe digestive upsets (she has had ulcers in the past) recently and was going for tests, but didn’t seem to think that it would keep them from coming. We may have Mr. L (he always wants a job when he comes) widen our driveway. There are always cars parked across the street from our driveway, and we have to turn so sharply to back out that we have made huge ruts on each side of our narrow driveway.

A week ago at this time we were all driving to O’Hare. The traffic was pretty heavy and we didn’t have any too much time. My plane left at 5:30. I just got out and Ruth drove right back so they could attend the program part of the family night (they stopped at a drive-in on the way back for supper). The flight to Philadelphia was fine except we were delayed slightly going in because a light plane had had an accident on the runway we were scheduled to land on. The weather was clear in Phil. Since the regular buses were on strike I rode across to Atlantic City in a cab with 4 others; he charged us each $10.50.

Everything went fine at the meeting. Although we’re not doing as much research anymore, I attended many sessions just to improve my knowledge generally. We came back Fri afternoon and came down from O’Hare in a rented car. Ruth and the kids ate at a drive-in before I got here. We then stayed home on Friday night. Yesterday was our usual busy schedule. Again hope everything is fine there.

**4-24-72 – Mon night –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, It sure doesn’t seem like Spring out tonight; its cold and is supposed to get below freezing before morning. Hasn’t it been warmer in Kansas? I saw that famous mile runner Jim Ryun running on TV Sat at the University of Kansas and I believe the announcer said it was 75. I hear where some weatherman in Colorado is predicting that there will be a drought in the Midwest during the next 4 years, just like it was in the 1930’s. Well anyway, I hope it’s been nice enough in Hutchinson that you have been able to get out on a regular basis.

The girls and Ruth are out at the Jr. High at the annual 8th Grade Style Show. Lesle is modeling something she made. Lisa had to go too since the orchestra is also playing. I went last year. Alec is asleep and Alan and Andy are here. Andy, of course, isn’t interested in style shows. Of course. Alan is still having to stay home from school. He’s been sick since last Tues, and is just now getting over whatever he had. He ran 102-104 fever from Tues to yesterday and a little fever this AM. It was as much fever for that long as any of our children have ever had. We think he had the chicken pox or something (virus) very similar. He hadn’t broken out when Ruth took him to the Dr. last week and he didn’t have many symptoms other than the fever so the Dr. just called it a virus. Afterwards he really started to break out, however. He’ll miss another day or two of school. If it was chicken pox Alec may get it, but it should be a milder case with him. They say there is a lot of chicken pox around.

Next Wed night I’m having a Christian Education Committee Meeting. Thurs night is the Father-Son Banquet at Church and I hope Alan will be able to go since I have tickets for both Alan and Andy. We expect the Laidigs to drive in on Fri for a few days. Mrs. L had her tests and I guess she has another ulcer, so she’ll probably be watching her diet more when she is here. We were proud of Lesle yesterday afternoon when she and the other 20 members of the confirmation class became members of the Church after their examination in front of the Session. Lesle did an excellent job on her notebook. It will be Lisa’s turn next year.

Yesterday evening was the last of the 3 Family Nights on Africa. Poor Alan had to stay home alone yesterday morning and evening but there were baseball games to watch etc. Alan missed baseball practice Sat, but the weather was wet and cold. Andy is interested in baseball this year so we’ll play catch and maybe he can play next year – Andy plans to join Cub Scouts.

Last week was pretty much the regular schedule. We missed a choir party on Thurs because Alan was sick. Lesle is getting adjusted to her braces. She has to wear a night brace in her mouth that pulls on her jaw, etc. It still hurts her quite a bit. I didn’t have anything like that. Hope everyone is OK.

**5-1-72 – Mon Evening –** I’m here with Mr. L and the kids while Mrs. L and Ruth are at Chansonettes rehersal. I just got back from bringing the girls home from an orchestra rehersal; they have a concert Fri night. Ruth has her regular choir practice tomorrow night. Tomorrow afternoon she will take her Mother to the monthly Womens Association Meeting at Church. Ruth has circle Wed night.

The Laidigs arrived Fri afternoon and were here when I got home from work. We ate at a drive-in that evening. Sat was our usual busy day getting the kids around everywhere. Mr. L’s big job while here has been to widen the drive-way (we have to turn the new car at a sharper angle and have tended to run off the edge of the drive-way when we back out). He dug the ditch on each side on Sat and today had an order of ready-mix concrete come. It rained just after it was poured and he couldn’t do as good a job of smoothing it out as he hoped to.

Sat AM we all drove out to the stables to show the L’s where Lisa takes her riding lessons. Sun AM Lesle’s Confirmation Class was honored in Church. They received their certificates and gifts and then were honored after Church at a social hour. Ruth and I sang a duet at the service. Alan had a baseball practice in the afternoon and Lesle went to visit a friend.

Sun evening Dallas Musgrave and his wife Rose came over to visit all of us. He is one of the Musgrave foster children; they now live in a Chicago suburb about an hour and half’s drive from our house. Dallas is a district manager for a chain of restaurants which are localized on major highways. They came for supper and then stayed awhile to visit. The Laidigs plan to leave on Wed since Mr. L has a meeting in Hays on Sat. They are sleeping in Lesle’s room; she has moved in with Lisa.

It has been warmer, although rainy the last few days and Alec is thrilled to be outside. He wants to be outside every minute. He’s slowly beginning to learn to stay nearby and to not go in the street. Someone, of course, watches him all the time. He has to learn to not get close to Alan and me when we are playing catch with a baseball.

Last Wed night was my Christian Education Committee Meeting; it went fine. Last Thurs night was the Father-Son Banquet at Church. I took Alan and Andy. One of the local high school coaches was the speaker. All the boys received prizes and gifts.

Glad to have your letter. I let the L’s read it since you had said to tell them hello. Like M.J., Mrs. L thinks you might feel better in a pants suit. She has osteoarthritis also but walks pretty well. Mr. has some too, but is sure able to do a lot of physical work. Hope everyone is fine and that Aunt Clara continues to get out occasionally.

**5-8-72 – Mon PM –** I think I wrote a week ago tonight when the Laidigs were still here. They got away OK on Wed morning; we heard from them Thurs evening that they had arrived home OK. As I think I told you Mr. L had a meeting in Hays last Sat and was anxious to get home. They had been in Arkansas before coming here; they were down there on one of those trips where they try to sell you land. They didn’t buy any land this trip, but did buy a lot somewhere another time. I doubt if they will ever build there; I think they bought it primarily as an investment.

Mrs. L went with Ruth to Chansonettes a week ago tonight and with her to choir practice (Sauk Village) on Tues night. I stayed home with Mr. L both evenings. Alec really missed Granpapa when he left. We had showed him their picture before they came so they wouldn’t seem like total strangers.

I guess this will be our Mother’s Day Greeting to the Hutchinson Mothers. I suppose we’ll all eat out sometime this weekend so Ruth won’t have to cook. The Youth Choir (Lisa and Alan) sing in Church on Sunday. I have Session meeting Wed night (I missed the last one when I was in Atlantic City). Fri night the girls have a band concert. Sat is the Pow-Wow over at the grade school. Remember how I used to give magic shows. I did that once over here.

Alec has had a touch of laryngitis and has been more fussy at night the last two nights. He also ran a little fever yesterday but hasn’t been very sick. Alan got all over his spell and has gained back the weight he lost. Andy missed a day of school last week but is OK now. Ruth had circle meeting last Wed night. She taught till 8:00 last Thurs night and then I went to choir practice awhile. I stayed home Fri night with boys (since Andy had been sick) while Ruth and the girls went out to their orchestra concert.

Sat was nice and warm and we got some things done outside. We planted a new little dogwood tree in the front yard and have a couple of new bushes to put in. I still haven’t mowed the yard. Late Sat afternoon it turned cooler and yesterday and today have been cool (40’s) and rainy. The crowd was down at s.s. and Church yesterday because of the weather and the fact a lot of people were out of town. Ruth had to handle the opening exercises in the Primary Dept before she went to her choir.

Lesle is babysitting next door this evening. Mary Janet, it looks like we definitely need to buy a second sewing machine. Ruth says she is still interested in that one you talked about. Can you still get it? I really can’t afford it until later in the year, but let us know. The girls and Ruth all wanted the sewing machine at the same time last Sat night when it dawned on me we will definitely need 2 machines. Hope Aunt Clara is getting out some. Harry Truman is 88 today.

**5-21-72 – Sun 9:00 PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, It’s been a couple of weeks since I wrote to Hutchinson so I’ll get a letter written tonight. The last couple of days have been in the 80’s and were really summer days. The next couple of days will be the same and the temperature may get into the low 90’s. These warm days make up for our late cool spring, I guess.

The kids are naturally outside all the time; Alec wants to especially be outside every second. He still has to be watched so one of us or the children has to keep an eye on him; he has learned pretty well not to run into the street after balls, etc.

Today was the regular schedule except that this afternoon Lesle went with 3 or 4 from art class into Chicago to visit the Art Museum; they took the train. The kids annual (6th year in a row some of our children have played) piano recital was this afternoon at 3:00. Lesle taped her number and we played the tape. Lesle and Lisa normally play a duet but they had to forego that this year. Alan and Andy played a duet. Lisa couldn’t play as well as usual with her left hand as she has a very sore shoulder from falling off her horse Sat at her riding lesson. She had only fallen off one other time, but fell off 3 times Sat. She knew what she did wrong to make her fall. If her arm is not a lot better in the AM Ruth will take her to the Dr. to see if anything is broken. My arm was indeed broken. I played in the piano recital with a broken arm ☺

This coming Tues night the girls have their awards night out at the Jr. High; Alan has his 2nd baseball game (they won their first regular season game yesterday – they play 21 regular games) Tues night. Ruth and I have the quarterly s.s. meeting. I think our schedule will be a lighter after that and over next weekend.

Lesle’s art teacher says she is good and should have more advanced lessons. She’ll get more in high school next year, of course. Alan scored the highest in the 5th grade on the math test, so we’re proud of all our children. I don’t worry about them. I know they can do whatever they want to.

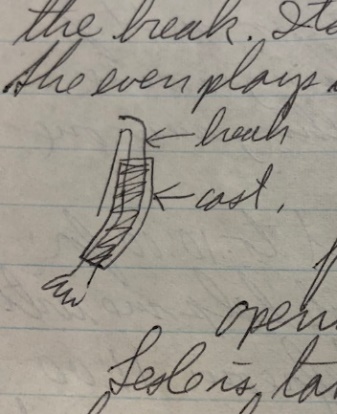
Hope you have a nice visit with Charles and Cooley; they will be there next week end as I remember Mother writing. Ruth has two more Chansonettes appearances for the year. They usually have a picnic in the Summer to which the husbands are invited. Last Wed night was Alan’s music program (band and chorus) put on by all the 5th and 6th graders. The Church Youth Choir is through for the year.

Glad to hear you’re getting out so well. How is Rev Hodges?; it didn’t sound like he had a real “heart attack” if they let him fly right home on the plane. Our General Assembly (the national body) is meeting right now in Denver. We’ll be in Hutchinson sometime in August, but we haven’t worked out the exact dates yet.

**6-4-72 – Sun –** Today has been real nice as it has been cooler after being real hot yesterday. It was not hot in Church this AM so most of the men had their jackets on. Men’s clothing is sure getting colorful, I guess I’ll have to get something new one of these days. Ruth had her final choir this AM; they went to 10:00 for Summer services so she had to leave and could not help me with the music in the Junior Dept. She was back then before our 11:00 service was out. We started our Summer schedule of 8:45 and 11:00 services with s.s. at the regular time in between. We’re continuing with s.s. this Summer but are trying to get substitutes so the regular teachers can take off. We’re doubling up some of the classes since attendance will be lower.

Ruth and I will be singing a duet at one of our 8:45 services and one of the 11:00, and then will sing the same number one Sun over at the Sauk Village Church where Ruth has the choir. We start our 7:00-3:30 Summer work schedule tomorrow. Although I was pretty much neutral, many people wanted to go to the earlier schedule so they would have more daylight hours. Our union is on the earlier hours and that had something to do with it too, I believe.

As Lisa told you in her letter, she had broken her am 2 weeks ago yesterday. As I wrote, I believe, she played her recital OK on Sunday and Ruth took her to the Dr. on Mon. He (the regular pediatrician) didn’t think it was broken, but thought she should have an x-ray and the break could then be seen. She goes to the orthopedic man for it. The break is near the shoulder, and her cast immobilizes her arm below the break. It’s her left arm so she hasn’t been too handicapped. She even plays the piano as her left hand is not in the cast. It’s the only broken bone any of our children have had. Lisa has to have the cast on for at least 2 more weeks, so she will miss the opening of the swimming pools next Sat.



Artwork by Dad.

Lesle is taking oboe lessons this summer and Lisa will when she gets her cast off. The kids don’t have any piano lessons this summer. Ruth is continuing to teach her piano students except when one or the other is on vacation. Lesle is coming along fine with her braces. They hurt right after they’re adjusted, but she complains less than I thought she would.

I believe you and Aunt Clara have birthdays this month. Mr. Laidig’s birthday is this month also. Alan is doing fine with his baseball – he’s one of their better players. His team has only won 2 out of 5 games, however. The kids pick up their cards tomorrow and are then out of school; the’re out earlier this year than other years. Ruth is through with Chansonettes for the year. She plans to sing again in the fall as far as I know and will be their vice-president. Ruth has the final Women’s Association meeting this Tues.

Our choir sings one more Sunday but we don’t have any rehersal this Thurs night. Sorry to hear that Aunt Clara didn’t feel so well all the time that Charles and Cooley were there. Hope she is feeling better now. That was real nice of them to come down to visit them. We may go to visit the Hofflands at one of their music camps in Wisconsin one weekend this summer. I don’t know whether we’ll go through Madison or not.

We celebrated our 15th wedding anniversary by staying home and eating as usual. We may eat out later. Last Tues night Ruths Church Choir had their final practice of the year at someones house in conjunction with a pot luck supper. We had a nice Memorial Day weekend doing some yard work, etc. We went on one picnic. It turned cooler and rainy on Mon. The girls had a band appearance (they carry the banner) on Memorial Day AM for a service at Monee, a little town South of us. Again, hope you’re not too hot there and Aunt Clara is feeling better. We haven’t heard from the Laidigs for some time.

**6-9-72 – Friday –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, We were glad to have Mother’s letter this week but were sorry to hear that you haven’t been feeling well at all since Charles and Cooley were there. Hope by now that you’ve been able to get up a little more each day without getting too dizzy. Keep your spirit up.

I guess we’ve finally decided on our vacation dates. Alan’s last baseball game is Sat July 29th, so we’ll plan to leave for Hutchinson either that day or the next. If Alan’s team makes it into their little world series it would be a few days. However, I doubt if they will make it as they don’t have the best record. Tomorrow is their 7th game and they play 21 games all told. Alan finally got up his self-confidence and decided maybe he could help his team by pitching so he pitched for the first time the other night and did real well. He’s supposed to pitch some more tomorrow if they have their game.

Today was cooler and rainy and it may rain some more tonight. Tomorrow is the opening day for our swimming pools but it will be too cold for anyone in our family to go, if they even open it at all. Ruth has a Chansonettes luncheon tomorrow and will be through for the year except for a picnic later to which the husbands are invited. A week from tomorrow is a Church picnic and 2 wks from tomorrow our department at work is having a picnic near Kankakee; Alan will have to miss that one because of his regular Sat game.

Our Summer s.s. schedule is worked out for this Sunday. I’ll have to have the Jr. Highs since Ruth couldn’t get anyone else. We’re working it out week by week. So many churchs stop s.s. in the Summer, but we believe a church of our size should be able to have something available every Sunday. This Sunday afternoon Lesle’s art class is displaying some of their work and having a reception.

I don’t have much next week except for Session meeting on Wed night. Ruth, of course, is still teaching at the Conservatory of Music this Summer. Her classes will be on Tues AM starting this week. Alec is doing fine. He goes everywhere but we still watch him all the time, especially outside, even though he has pretty well learned to stay near home and on the sidewalk.

Last week was pretty busy for Ruth with lots of appointments, etc. Tues noon she had Women’s Association at Church. She directed a play which went over real well she said. They will present it again sometime (Mom writes in “June 21”) in the Fall somewhere else. Lisa’s arm is coming along OK. She has to wear her cast another week or two. Lesle is going to Summer School and taking band and a consumer course. Lisa can’t take band until her arm is out of the cast. Again, hope you’re feeling lots better by now. It does look like it was meant for you to stay at the Hospital.

**6-17-72 – Sat –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Today is very pleasant, a little bit cooler than we had been having. It was cooler yesterday also. Hope you have been able to get up more each day and haven’t had as many dizzy spells.

Our big news this week is that we now have a dog. A week ago today Alan and Lisa went on the Youth Choir picnic with their director and accompanist and their husbands. The accompanist and her husband had this cute little dog that everyone played with. They told the kids that they were going to have to get rid of the dog, but they said they had someone to take him. Early last week they called to say the people didn’t want it and they wondered if we wouldn’t take it. So after years of saying “no” about getting a dog, we finally said “OK” if you kids will really take care of it. It has worked out pretty well so far and they really have done most of the work taking care of it. It hasn’t had a bath yet so that is the next thing for them to learn about. Its name is Thumper and he is about 9 weeks old. He will grow to be about medium size, I guess; he’s not a pure breed. We’re teaching him to stay in the kitchen and utility room, since we can’t afford to have him damage things in the rest of the house.



Thumper in the kitchen, before he was banished.

This evening Ruth and I go to the annual church steak fry sponsored by the adult s.s. class. The kids will all stay home and babysit Alec won’t go to bed until we get back home. Vacation Church School is the next two weeks. Ruth, as usual, will have the music. I guess the boys will be going since they have classes through the 6th grade.

Lisa got her cast off last Wed. She can go swimming, but otherwise is supposed to wear a sling when she is out of doors for a couple of weeks so she won’t hurt it again until it is entirely healed. Alec is doing fine – he talks more all the time and, of course, thinks he is as big as anyone else. He essentially sleeps through at night on occasion, but still gets up at least once most of the time.

Alan’s team won their baseball game today. Alan pitched his allocated 3 innings. They play 6 inning games, and each pitcher can only pitch 6 innings a week. Alan has now pitched 12 innings and has given up only 2 hits and no runs, so we’re quite proud of him.

Lesle is going to Summer School, taking band and a consumer course. Tomorrow she is taking a friend to the all day Senior High Fellowship Retreat for the incoming freshmen. She has to go real early in the AM. I’m gradually getting used to our 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM working hours, but it is hard getting up everyday at 5:30-5:40. Again, hope you’re getting some strength back. We were glad to have the anniversary card from Mother today, and “Thanks” to Mother for the gifts.

**6-27-72 – Tues 6:30 PM –** Hope this finds you all about the same and not too hot. Its been gradually warming up here after a cool spell. Today was in the 80’s and a nice summer day. I sure don’t know where the Summer is going, here it is almost the end of June already.

The older 4 kids just left on their bicycles to follow the bike route around town. It is a marked route laid out over the city by the Recreation and Parks Department. If you follow the whole route it is about 12 miles long. If they don’t get back in a reasonable period of time I’ll go out in the car and find them. We only said that Andy could go if he went with the others, and they didn’t get ahead of him.

Alec didn’t have a nap today so he got sleepy right after supper (he dosed off while he was sitting at the supper table) and Ruth has put him to bed. As a matter of fact, Ruth hasn’t come out of the bed yet so she must have dosed off with him. This is the first evening this Summer I can remember when I could just sit down, since the older kids are gone and Alec is asleep.

Tomorrow night is one of Alan’s big games. He is pitching against the best team in the other division of their league, so he’ll have to be at his best to beat them. He still has plenty of confidence, although he gave up some hits and runs the last time he pitched, but they still won. Their record is 8 wins and 4 losses, but they probably can’t take first since the first place team is undefeated. They play 9 more games. They don’t play over the holidays. We always have a carnival here in the park at the ball park area over the 4th and then there are fireworks on the evening of the fourth. Alec will either be excited or afraid of the skyrockets and bombs. I think he cried some last year when he was a baby.

Alec is doing fine and says almost anything he wants to; although he doesn’t say Lesle very well. He was excited late this afternoon when he got to go to the swimming pool. I drove today, but since I get off work earlier now, I could take them over for about 45 mins. Thurs night I may take Alan, and one or two others, to the Chicago White Sox major league baseball game.

Ruth just came out and started practicing on our duet for Church this Sunday. We sing at the early service. I have to preside; its the first Sunday that our minister will be on vacation. The Summer s.s. is working OK. Ruth will have a song fest this Sunday (it will be low attendance because of the holidays) for the 1-6 graders. We had about 27 last Sunday in that group. We’ve had some games (religious), and hope to have some crafts later on. As I told you, the plan is that we let the regular teachers off during the Summer so they are more likely to come back in the Fall.

Last evening we were all out visiting ball games, Ruth went shopping, the girls swimming, etc. Last Sat was that Department picnic. It was several miles south of Kankakee where I work and we had a little trouble finding it, but we did and had a good time. Alan didn’t go, but went to one of his teammates houses for lunch and then to his game. We left a little bit early so we could be back in time to see the last part of the game.

Lisa sees the Dr. on July 5th to get her final OK on her arm. She says she wants to take riding lessons again. The dog “Thumper” is gradually getting “trained’ but it’s a slow process, and we really have to keep nagging the children to make sure they take care of him. As I told you Ruth is teaching on Tues mornings this Summer. I drove today, so she walked over to the Conservatory. The other 4 days this week and last she has been working at Vacation Church School. They don’t have a final program any more since its hard for the parents to hear what the children sing and do, and it takes so much time to get ready.

Alan had a game at 12:30 Sunday (the extra game that they won’t have this weekend) so we had to take him before Church was over. I had to serve communion, and Lesle took communion for the first time. Lesle said I looked “skinny” beside the other men, ha! Hope Aunt Clara is getting some strength back.

**7-12-72 – Wed –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Today and the last two days have been just about our hottest and most humid days of the Summer. It clouds up some but we haven’t had much rain, and the grass is getting dry. Hope your Hospital room is cool, I assume you have an air conditioner in your window, or maybe there is central air conditioning by now? I guess years ago all they had was fans.

Its 5:00 PM and I’m here alone since everyone went to the swimming pool this afternoon; they should be getting home almost any minute. On our Summer work schedule I go from 7:00 AM to 3:30, so I get home a little after 4:00 PM.

Alan’s next baseball game is tomorrow night – it’s supposed to be a little cooler since he is supposed to pitch some. Andy is really used to playing in the water at the swimming pool, and is now really ready for swimming lessons. Its just this Summer that Andy has really wanted to spend lots of time in the water. Alec still has a runny nose but it is better. Alec goes wading at the pool for awhile, and then likes to play in the big sand pile. You may remember that we have a big sand box in our backyard surrounding the tree that holds our tree house. Alec really talks now and thinks he is just as big as anybody.

Sat – July 15, 1972 – Its now Sat so you see I didn’t do a very good job of getting this letter off earlier in the week. It stayed warm and humid most of the time since Wed. It is a little cooler today after thunderstorms last night. We haven’t had a lot of thunderstorms this Summer as it has generally been dry.

Lisa had her riding lesson again this AM. She has been enthusiastic about getting back to the horses, and I believe is more determined than before her fall to do a good job riding and is even less afraid. The final x-ray this week showed that her break healed perfectly.

I visited with the orthodontist today to discuss more braces and work for our children. Lisa needs a full course of treatment like Lesle is having. Andy’s tongue goes the wrong way and needs to be retrained and Alan has some problems. The work planned for the boys may mean that they won’t have to have full braces later. The trend now is to do things as early as possible to prevent later problems. It used to be that most everyone waited until they were 13-14.

Alan’s team won on a forfeit this afternoon because the other team didn’t have enough players. They may have been lucky because the other team borrowed a couple of players and beat them in a practice game. Alan pitched his worst game of the year last Thurs night and they were tied in the last inning by the other team after having been ahead 6-2. The game ended as a tie since it was dark; it counts as ½ game and ½ game lost. They have 4 games left to finish the 21 game schedule. Last night Alan’s manager took all the boys out for pizza; he had promised them he would do that if they beat Miami, the first place team.

Ruth and I sing a duet tomorrow AM over at the Church where Ruth directs the choir. We’re all going over there since their service is at 10:00, about the time of our s.s. Hope you’re having enough strength each day to do something you want to.

**7-26-72 – Wed 8:40 PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I called Mother last night so I’ll write the letter to you first. I guess its been a little longer this time since I’ve written. We can’t seem to understand where the Summer is going; here it is almost August, and our school starts August 29th. We start a week earlier than we used to, and get out a little earlier in May.

We’ll get to Hutchinson sometime the middle of August, but it won’t be quite as early as we first anticipated. When I wrote earlier that we would come the first week I had forgotten that Lesle had promised her good Baptist friend in our block that she would go to Green Lake with her the first week of August. She goes on the bus next Sat and will come back the next Sat. You may remember that Mother and I went there once when I was in high school. This will be the first time any of our children have been away from home for that long. They have been eligible for church camps for several years but have never wanted to go. I guess I only went once by myself to Camp Christy at Scott City, Kansas.

Alan has never joined Cubs or Scouts and he’s too old now for Cubs; I don’t know if he plans to join Boy Scouts or not. I believe Andy plans to join Cubs this Fall, so maybe he’ll be more like Jimmy. We were glad to have Mothers note today and to hear that she is getting around better; it sounds like she was pretty lucky if nothing was broken. That is good that Mother is finally getting railings for the stairs; I know that she is careful, but anyone can fall, especially when you’re older and have arthritis.

Congratulations to Jim on his 15th birthday. Lesle and Jim will both be in high school this year (our high school here starts with the 9th grade or freshman year). That was nice that you could get out for awhile. It seems to be working out pretty well for you to have two homes.

Lisa just got home from baby sitting next door. She and Lesle have done a lot of baby-sitting for these neighbors (to the South), but they will be moving away in August so they will have to find jobs elsewhere on the block. I went to the dentist this evening, had one small cavity. My teeth have held up pretty well over the years, after having a lot of cavities from wearing braces. I’m thankful for having worn the braces, however. Ruth is out to a Chansonettes (singing group) board meeting. She is vice-president. They have had several good singers move away, so they have several openings for next season.

A week ago tonight I had Session meeting at the new home of one of the members. We, of course, normally meet at the Church. The wives were invited so Ruth went along; they visited in the basement while we met in the dining room. I guess it is just understood that there are no women on the Session ☺

Last night Ruth had her recital for 4 of her piano students. There were supposed to be 5, but one girl had a chance to go out of town. At the Conservatory the students have to appear periodically in a recital before they can receive their various awards. Ruth has her students on Tues AM this Summer. I’ll enclose the program. I helped with setting up the refreshments, taking pictures, etc.

Last Mon night Alan had a game which they tied. They have one game left (the 21st) this Sat and the season will be over. Alan can play one more year in the Junior Division, and when the’re 13 they go into the Senior Division if they still want to play. The team (and Alan) hasn’t done as well since they were eliminated from a chance at the championship. The team taking first is real good, and Alan’s team lost too many early season games. Andy is eligible next year and will probably play. With 42 games next year I doubt if we will attend all of them.

This Sat night we’re attending a going away party for some people who used to live in our block. Sat Ruth and I have to practice for our duet which we sing at Church this Sun at the 11:00 service. We were to sing it that other Sun at the 8:30 service when I got sick; I’ll try to stay well this time. Next Mon night is the Chansonettes annual Summer picnic.

I suppose the Centenial celebration and things are still going on. I have a Christian Education Committee Meeting a week from tonight. Ruth and I both have a lot of work to do before the Fall s.s. program starts the first Sunday of Sept. It sounds like the Church there is really redecorated nicely. We’ll want to see it. Yesterday turned cool after our longest hot and humid spell in a long time. It was in the mid 90’s for several days in a row. Fortunately, Alan’s game last Sat was at 9:00 AM; even so it got hot and they lost to the 1st place team in the other division by a score of 15-0.

The girls had their oboe lessons and are starting to learn to make their own reeds. The reed making kit is expensive, but it will save money over the long run, and they will have a better tone. Last Sun we took the children to a Walt Disney movie. Alec was excited but couldn’t stay seated all the time. Lisa’s beach bag was stolen at the pool last Fri, but it was found later without the diving goggles it contained. They were later, however, when the person stealing them left them hanging up. They had Alan’s name on them. Andy is having his swimming lessons now and is doing fine. Hope you’re all OK.

**8-6-72 – Sun 8:00 PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, We’re having a gentle thundershower right now. Its been cooler the last few days but we hadn’t had much rain until some last night. Ruth had thought we would go to a drive-in movie, but its too rainy. Alan finished mowing the yard today. He begged yesterday to let me let him use the power mower, so I let him run it awhile for the first time. He’s really growing up except he still has a “smarty” streak, when he is with other boys. Baseball is over now. Alan watched the playoff games; the last one was yesterday AM – I went over awhile also.

Alan and Andy are building a new fort at the edge of the field out back of our house. Many forts and playhouses have been built out back over the years and, of course, somebody tears them down almost as soon as they are finished. As far as we know there are still no plans for any development of the field back of our house; it’s a bit off the beaten track and is in the adjacent town. It makes it nice as we mow back into it for room (thats where Alan and I play catch) and we take the dog out there, etc.

Thumper, the dog, is gradually getting trained, but not as quickly as I would like to see him. This AM was regular church, etc. Had a pretty good crowd at the second service. It was cool this AM. On the average, we have about 6-8 really warm Sundays here. Lisa is enrolled in Confirmation Class for next year. Lesle was in last year, of course, and it will be two more years before Alan is in it.

I have Session meeting this Wed night. I was sick again last week. Sorta like the bout I had over the 4th of July holiday. A week ago Fri Ruth and I practiced our duet. On Sat Alan had his last game which they lost 3-2 in extra innings. Alan pitched well and was not the loser. I was tired and then in the evening we went to a party at a neighbors house honoring a family that is moving to Washington. I had a fever before we went but I doped up on aspirin. Took aspirin all night and went to s.s. and Church where Ruth and I sang our duet. I was in very good voice – I suppose from all the aspirin. I went to bed after Church and stayed in bed most of Mon and Tues. Went back to work on Wed. Ruth and I had a Christian Education Committee Wed night. We ate out Thurs night.

Lesle got home OK from Green Lake. She went to a camp (Baptist) across the lake from the hotel side where Mother and I went. She said the weather was cool and rainy most of the time. Lisa went to a Jr. High Fellowship picnic and swim Sat afternoon. I finally got some odd jobs and cleaning done this weekend.

Hope you’ve been out a time or two recently. I’m sorry we won’t be coming as early as I had written we would. Ruth is checking again tomorrow about whether Lesle can avoid being here on the 18th in person to enroll for High School and be assured of getting her classes. We’ll either leave a day or so before then or on the 18th right after she enrolls.

**8-13-72 – Sunday PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, This will be the last letter I’ll write before we leave for Kansas. We’ll hope to see you a week from today. Today and yesterday have been hot and humid again, more normal for this time of the year after we had been quite cool (with some record lows) for a few days. We’ve had some rain also. Hope M.J. and Bill have a good trip this coming week. I guess we’ll both get to Hutchinson about the same time. We have the last two Sundays in our Summer s.s. schedule lined up. We change s.s. classes 3 weeks from today on Sept 3rd, the first Sunday in Sept. We still have some teachers to line up. Ruth is calling a s.s. meeting on Aug 30th, the Wed before. We’re going to try and build up the s.s. attendance this year. Like most Churchs, our attendance has been off some, partly because we just don’t have as many children in the church.

Thumper, the dog, is gradually doing better. He is supposed to be mainly Lisa’s responsibility, but she doesn’t work hard enough at training him, and the rest of the family just isn’t that interested. Yes, I carry the guilt of this failure still. I wasn’t able to train Thumper adequately, and as a consequence he was sent into exile for the rest of his life. But, to be fair, I was 12 years old and had no experience with either dogs, or the training of dogs. There were no examples for me to follow, and no YouTube videos to help me. I am guessing his first owners gave him up because they too were finding him difficult to train. In any case, Thumper deserved better. Ruth has spent a lot of time with him and has him out for a walk right now. I’ve taken him out a few times.

The kids have started to practice their instruments more than they were doing earlier. The girls are still taking private oboe lessons, and they will all start piano again in Sept as far as I know. Our school starts the 28th but they might miss the first day if we don’t get back in time. One reason we’re not leaving before Friday is Lesle can’t register in advance for High School. She worked all her classes out with a good friend and they want to be sure they are together. Lesle has an orthodontist appointment Fri, will then register, and we’ll leave after that, spending the night in St. Louis. Lesle got contact lenses yesterday and is quite excited about not having to wear glasses. It, of course, will take her awhile to get used to them. She says she sees better. Lisa will get them in a couple of years, and I suppose Alan will want them someday also. Alan and Andy have built a big, strong house out back at the edge of the field. We hope the neighbor boys don’t tear it down or burn it while we are gone. It has a roof, and is high enough for an adult to walk around inside it. The neighbor lady and her baby have a fever and so we thought Alec was extra hot and tired this afternoon so Ruth and I stayed home while the older kids went swimming. Alec is “running” the vacuum right now in the living room and seems fine, although he has a runny nose. Ruth’s older brother John’s older son (in high school) drowned in Hawaii while they were on vacation. We’ll see you a week from today. We were glad to have Mother’s call last night and to hear the schedule.



August 23 - in Hutchinson with Jim and Jana Kay. Mom and Grandmother in the background.

**8-29-72 – Tues PM –** Alec is here by the couch playing with his little train engine (it makes sparks inside) that we bought in Dodge City. After leaving your home we stopped by to say “good bye” to Aunt Clara we checked the map and saw that Dodge City was only about 30 or 40 miles farther than our usual way to Oberlin. We had stopped at Fort Larned and Fort Hays other Summers. We ate lunch at Stafford in a restaurant near the highway. Alec saw a big truck that hauls cattle and was very excited about the truck with the “cows all gone.” We drove on to Dodge and spent about 2 hours visiting the rebuilt Front Street, Boot Hill, shops, museum, etc. Alec and I rode the stage coach while the older kids went to “funny house where the gravity is off.” We ate supper at Cimarron west of Dodge and drove straight North to Oberlin getting there about 8:30-9:00.

We all had a good visit with the Laidigs. They were fine except that Grammy was pretty tired from her bus trip to the East coast and back. They said that our nephew who drowned could not swim, but even a good swimmer would have trouble in the whirlpool near the base of a waterfall where he went wading. Mr. L drove to Oklahoma to visit them (at their daughters) on the way back to New Jersey. In Oberlin Ruth, Grammy and the girls did some shopping and I visited the two druggests. It rained all day Thurs in Oberlin. We all (except for Grammy and Alec) went bowling with Grandpa on Thurs evening. Fri we visited the museum and then went out to the big new cattle feed yards North of town; it was quite interesting and Alec heard a cow “cry” when it was being branded and inoculated.

We left Oberlin about 10:30 Sat AM and visited Uncle Edgar (Mrs. L’s older brother about your age) and Aunt Dova in Norton (35 mi East of Oberlin) awhile. We ate lunch at a drive-in and drove on to Hastings to visit the museum there. We ate supper there and then drove on to a motel in Lincoln. Ruth and the kids went in swimming a bit but it was cool. The main swimming was done those two hot days in Hutchinson. We drove hard all day Sunday and got home about 8:30. Lesle had plenty of time to get ready for school. Lesle was the one who wanted to get home no later than 7:00 PM.



August 26 - in Oberlin with Grammy and Grandpa.

The kids are all settled in school. They went part time Mon and all day yesterday. Ruth had her first Chansonettes rehersal Mon night and last night was her first choir rehersal. Tonight is the s.s. meeting. Thanks to everyone for everything. We used your money for the trip to Dodge. We’ll let Aunt Clara know how we spend the birthday money. We’ve used the sherbet (or wine glasses) already for a jello dessert. The kids have played with Ola’s little cabinet with the three drawers. We felt we had a wonderful time and were all glad to see you.

**9-8-72 – Fri PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Glad to have Mothers letter, but sorry to hear that you got “off your feed”; hope you’re back on it now. We’ve had some Fall-like weather also, but it has warmed up some the last couple of days. The evening and nights cool off like Fall now. We’ve had a real invasion of mosquitoes in our area. Alec is covered with red spots, so we are trying to keep him inside more. Alec’s birthday is in about 3 weeks so I’ll say “Thank You” in advance for his share of the birthday money. Lisa’s birthday is tomorrow and mine and Jana’s are 2 weeks from tomorrow. I believe Lisa is having a birthday party sometime, but I’m not sure what type of a party it will be.

Lisa’s birthday! I am wearing my Vietnam War POW bracelet in the picture on right. I still have it.

Andy had a dental appointment today and the dentist told him he was his “best patient” all day. He had a couple of small cavities. The children are pretty good about brushing their teeth, but not as good as they should be. Andy has to have those tongue and swallowing exercises like Jana has, before he can wear braces or whatever is needed. Lisa will probably start after Andy and then Alan who doesn’t have to have as much work done. Lesle is wearing her contacts longer each day and has almost reached the maximum time she is supposed to wear them.

Sat: That was nice that Lucille stopped by. I still haven’t written her to tell her why we didn’t make it to the family reunion. I started to read that little booklet “The Art of Living” that you gave us, and found it most enjoyable. We’ve already used those stemmed sherbet dishes for a jello dessert. The girls have put the things they brought away and we all say “Thank You” again. Lisa starts confirmation class next Sat morning so she will take her horseback riding lessons probably on Tues after school. Lesle had confirmation class last year. Andy starts Cub Scouts this week. Alan was never interested in Cubs, but Andy is excited. They still have weekly den meetings and monthly pack meetings similar to when I was in it.

Our first adult choir rehersal was last Thurs night. I stayed home Wed night while Ruth went to circle meeting. Tues was Ruths choir rehersal. We were going to visit those friends of ours in another suburb on Labor Day, but didn’t go because the man had to work. So we spent Labor Day working around the house and finished shampooing the carpets. We had rented a hand rug shampooer. The Fall s.s program started OK last Sunday. The attendance wasn’t as great as it should be tomorrow because of Labor Day. Hope you’re back on your regular eating schedule by the time this reaches you. We all thought we had a fine vacation. Hope you have your phone in. Call us up sometime.

**9-?-72 – Wed –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I guess its been a little over a week since I wrote so I’ll start a letter now. Its almost 6:00 and Ruth isn’t home yet from taking Lisa and Alan to their oboe and bassoon lessons. Lesle didn’t take today because of her schedule – she has to go to a band rehersal in a little while and has a lot of homework to do before tomorrow. The last few days have been like Summer here, although it cools off at night. Hope the weather has been fine in Hutchinson. I guess I have to face the fact that I will be 41 on Sat; a lot of people “stop having birthdays after 40,” you know. Alec’s birthday (2 yrs) is a week from tomorrow. He says he is going to be two years old and holds up two fingers. Alec goes a little bit on his own right in front of the house but is having trouble learning how far he can go on the sidewalk by himself. Ruth and I are both home this evening. I plan to do some more s.s. calling like I did last night. We’re working to make sure all the younger (non-members) children of members and friends are on the s.s. role and have been at least contacted. We’re trying to average about 200 in s.s; there are 830 members in the Church. We now have all the teachers lined up to be recognized this Sunday at the Worship service. It’s always a job to get new teachers; so many turn you down who could do a good job. People are so “busy” in this day and age with “everything.” Its 6:10 and Ruth just came in with Alan, Lisa and Alec.

9:45: Ruth did go out this evening to sing with the small ensemble from Chansonettes. She just got back and put Alec to bed. I just finished some more s.s. calling. I talked to Mrs. Kenneth Cotton. She is a Hutton girl (grew up near Pretty Prairie) of the Huttons who own the red brick house where Mrs. Davis lives. Said she lived there for awhile and remembers Mother. He is from Hutchinson also and works for the Santa Fe. They were in Topeka for 7 yrs or so and he has been transferred to the Chicago office and they live in Chicago Heights. A real interesting coincidence.

I had Session last Wed night and choir practice on Thurs night. Friday night was Lisa’s slumber party. She had 5 girls and we all went out for pizza first. The girls talked most of the night. Lisa didn’t have her riding lesson on Sat AM. We did a lot of shopping on Sat and in the evening went to a party at a neighbors house in honor of some of the newcommers in the area, and those who are moving away. This has always been a friendly block and area. Sun we took the minister and his family out to eat. Ruth and the children came on home and I worked with Rev. Reif on the Church roll getting ready for this calling I’m doing. Ruth picked me up at the Church when she took Lisa to Jr. High Fellowship. Hope everyone in Hutchinson is doing OK. Hope you got your telephone installed OK. Alec wrinkled this letter.

**9-27-72 –** Thanks so much for the birthday present and card and Thanks Again to Aunt Clara for the birthday check. The family gave me a lot of new clothes so lets say that I applied the money to help pay for the clothes. The Department took our secretary and me out to lunch on Friday since her birthday was Friday and mine on Saturday. I got two new pairs of trousers, one a heavy fine corduroy like material for casual wear, and the other one of the stylish new patterns that’s not so loud that I won’t wear it to work. I also got a new dress shirt and a new long sleeved casual shirt. Also received a new heavy fine double-knit, blue sport coat to wear to work with my blue double-knit trousers.

I had to take Lesle and another girl out to band practice, including marching practice for their first marching appearance at the homecoming game a week from Sat I believe it is. Practically all high school football games in the Chicago area are now held in the afternoon because of violence, fights, etc at night. Tomorrow is Alec’s birthday, but we won’t have his cake and presents until Friday night since Ruth will be teaching tomorrow. Ruth starts teaching at 3:00 and teaches until 9:00 except for a half hour break at supper time. I either get a ride to choir practice or take Ruth back after she comes home for supper and then pick her up on the way home from choir.

There was a big article in the Chicago Daily News yesterday announcing that Dr. E. Lawrence Chalmers, the former Chancellor of the University of Kansas, has accepted the job as Director of the Art Institute of Chicago. I guess thats quite a big administrative job and they want him for his administrative experience, since he has no museum experience.

Alan just walked in with finished cave man project. The boys tore down their fort out in back here, and are rebuilding it in a neighbors yard where it is fenced in. They were having fights and we were worried that somebody would get hurt so we, and the neighbor boys parents suggested they tear it down and rebuild it over there. Some older boys have built a real house out in the middle of the field.

Last night we had a baby sitter (since we were going out of town) and Ruth and I went down to Kankakee to the first Community Concert of the year. It was “I Do, I Do,” a modern version of the play the “Fourposter.” It was a man and wife during 50 years of married life. This Sat afternoon I’m taking Andy on a Cub Scout trip to a nearby small college football game. Andy joined Cubs last Fri night. I finished the Church s.s. calling last week. Last Sun was Christian Education Sunday and Ruth did not have her choir. Ruth bought Alec’s presents Mon night as she stayed home from Chansonettes rehersal. I suppose we’ll get to Hutchinson sometime this Fall but we haven’t worked out the schedules as yet. Hope you’re all OK and your knee is better.

**10-2-72 – Mon 7:30 PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, Haven’t heard from Hutchinson for a few days so we assume everyone is OK. We hear from Hutchinson more often than we do from Oberlin, however. Mrs. Laidig writes less often but when she does it is a very long letter. I don’t believe we have heard from them since we got home from vacation. I don’t know whether the Laidigs plan to visit us this Fall or not; they usually have in most other years.

Today was warmer after a few cool real nice Fall days. Ruth got Alec’s red birthday wagon today. His birthday was last week (28th) but we didn’t have time to get his wagon then. Alec, of course, was quite excited last Friday night when we had his birthday supper, cake and presents. He got several nice new toys including trucks, etc that he likes so well. He bought a dump truck (he picked it out himself) with part of Mothers gift. He says “Thanks to You” for your birthday gift also.

Ruth had to sing with Chansonettes this evening and was home earlier than when she has a regular rehersal. I then took Alan to get new shoes and picked up Lesle and two neighbor high schoolers from band practice. Over the years Dad picked us up from band rehearsals many many times. He would drive without saying much, and quietly flash the peace sign, from where he sat in the front seat, to all the kids in the back. Our friends thought he was pretty cool. The band is having extra rehersals this week because of homecoming this next Saturday.

I have to start calling this next weekend to help line up more people for some small discussion groups we are starting at Church. They will tentatively meet on one or two Saturday evenings a month. Andy is just now starting his tongue exercises so he will be ready to wear braces later. He has started working on his Cub things. Alan just came (10:00 PM) to ask his Mother for help on English; I don’t believe he’s too interested. I believe I had a bit of a problem getting motivated about English when I was about that age. I believe they occasionally diagram sentences like Mother always taught.

Yesterday AM was Communion and reception of new members at our Church. Ruth had her choir; she will be off next Sunday. Yesterday afternoon Alan and I mowed our yard and the neighbors yard to the South where the house is for sale. They will pay Alan for the mowing. Lesle went to Sr. High Fellowship Sun PM. I have the storm windows out ready to put up as the nights get colder. Last Sat I drove Alan and Andy and another man and his Cub Scout son over to a nearby (Valpariso, Ind) college football game. It was Scout Day at the game with a couple of thousand scouts there from around the area. Last Thurs night I took Alan over to register for boy scouts. He finally got interested after Andy joined Cubs. Some of his friends are scouts, of course. Alan is back for more English help and I’m afraid he still isn’t “interested enough.” I told him I had a little trouble that way, but he should try to do better. Hope you’re able to eat everything you want now. Ruth’s schedule is such that Thanksgiving is about the only time we could go to Hutchinson this Fall. We’ll let you know later.

**10-12-72 – Thurs PM –** Hope you’re all OK, we’re about the same. Alec is recovering from a fairly bad cough and cold; he never felt badly, but did a lot of coughing. As I walked out the door awhile ago to take Ruth back to work (she teaches from 3-6 and 7-9 at the present) I noticed this piece of music “Spooks on Halloween” by Jane Smisor Bastien. I told Ruth that I bet that she is the Mary Jane Smisor who used to come in the A & A with her Mother. Ruth says that she and her husband James Bastien are well known for the new world of the “Music Through the Piano Library.” Am I right, M.J., on this? Someone penciled in ‘yes.’

I’m missing choir practice again tonight as I want to visit Andy’s room where his teacher is explaining their objectives for the year; Ruth can’t make it because of her teaching. Alan is getting ready to go on his first “overnight” with his Scout Troop. They leave from the Church where his Troop meets Friday evening and will come back Sunday noon. We had to get a new sleeping bag, backpack and canteen for him. Andy hasn’t done much Cub work yet but I suppose he’ll get busy later.

Alec just quit nursing about 3 days ago and has slept all night the last two nights. He still sleeps in our bedroom and, of course, will have to continue sleeping there until such time as we might add a 2nd floor on the house. We need to get a screen to kinda partition (Its now Sat 5:30) off Alec’s corner of our bedroom.

We stayed at home yesterday evening after eating out and getting Alan over to the Church (nearly) so he could leave on his camp out. It has been warm for them today but is supposed to get colder tonight and be in the 30’s tomorrow so they may get cold before getting back. I expect they will go out even when it is colder. Ruth took Lisa to Confirmation Class this AM and she opened the UNICEF card shop at Church from 10-12 (there were no customers she said so she got the grocery list made) and did the shopping this afternoon. I put the rest of the storm windows up this afternoon so we’re set for the cold weather.

Tonight we go to someones house for a small discussion group that will meet once a month thru May. Tomorrow night we are going to the Ringling Bros Circus at the International Amphitheater in Chicago; it starts at 6:00 so we won’t be real late. I took one of my last 4 vacation days last Mon on Columbus Day since the kids did not have school. I spent the day cleaning up the carport and storage area. On TV I just saw that K-State beat KU 20-19 so I expect Bill and M.J. are happy this evening. Alec’s cold is better so he can go to s.s. tomorrow. Ruth stayed home with him last Sun (She had that Sun off). Hope you’re all OK. We’ll let you know the Thanksgiving schedule later.

**10-21-72 – Sat 1:00 PM –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ve just sat down to watch the 6th and possibly the last World Series game, if Oakland wins. It’s a good day to stay inside as it is cold (in the 40’s) and has been raining most of the day so far. We had our first snow this past week; it was pretty since it was wet and most of the leaves are still on the trees. The roads didn’t get slick since it wasn’t that cold. The leaves are right at their prettiest. We had our first frost this last week also.

Lisa went to choir this morning at 9:00 and then had Confirmation Class at 10:00. Lisa has only had one horseback riding lesson in the last few weeks because of mix-ups and scheduling problems. She is supposed to take her lesson on Friday because of her Class on Sat morning. The kids are all still taking their piano, oboe and bassoon lessons, and are making progress, I guess. None of them practice as much as they should, but Ruth is good about seeing that they get practice in. Like you, I enjoy hearing them play. They all four like to sit down at the piano and just play for their own enjoyment.

Ruth is still doing her teaching on Thursdays and will have a recital a week from Sunday, I believe it is. I go over and help her when she has a recital, take pictures to give to each child, etc. Ruth is taking a nap now while Alec is taking his. I took off work yesterday afternoon so I could take Ruth to the oral surgeon. She has had a bad wisdom tooth that has known about (I just took Alan out to get some colored cardboard to make his Halloween costume – he wants to be a 7-UP bottle) for 11 years. It had bothered her off and on, but she never had to have it out. It started bothering her more than ever about a week ago today, and she went to our regular dentist last Mon to have it checked. She was running a fever and he said it was now badly infected. He told her to have it out as soon as possible so she got in yesterday. She had a general anesthetic. When he got in the tooth next to the wisdom tooth was also found to be infected so he took it out also. As a result her surgery was quite extensive and her jaw and mouth is quite sore and swollen today. It should be a lot better by tomorrow. She has her regular choir tomorrow and she hopes her face won’t look too misshapen when she is in front of everybody. She had a chance to play for a wedding today but had to turn it down.

We’re having the Junior Dept Halloween Party a week from this afternoon. We all had a good time at the Ringling Bros Circus last Sun evening. We’ve now been to one circus and one ice follies since we’ve lived here. They both come here every year. Last Tues night I took Alan to a meeting (chemists) in Kankakee because the program was at the new planetarium at the small Nazarene College there. Their planetarium is maybe a little bit larger than the one at Hutchinson Community College.

Ruth switched some of her pupils to Wed night so we could both go out to the first Thurs night Music Group Program. The Jr. High Band played (Lisa) and the High School Orchestra (Lesle) played. Alec went and was very good for a program of that type. Lisa says she wants to go on the 8th Grade trip to Washington next May. They went last year but Lesle did not go as she remembered a lot of the things from the time we were there. We were glad to have the letters from Mother. We finally heard from the Laidigs (one letter Mrs. L said she had written apparently never got here) and they are OK and busy.

Alan got along OK on his campout last weekend, but came home with a cold. I’ve had a cold all week also. Alec is essentially over his cold. Glad you got to go to your Circle meeting and nice you’ve had so many visitors. Also glad to hear that your phone has worked out OK. With Ruth’s music schedule, the kids school etc the best time to go to Hutchinson in the Fall is at Thanksgiving. I have 3 of my 10 vacation days left so may take one for Wed before Thanksgiving. The Friday after Thanksgiving is one of our regular vacation. Glad your strength is holding so you’re still able to do the things you want too.

**10-29-72 – 8:00 –** We’re all kinda tired tonight after a typical busy weekend. Lesle is out this evening to the Sr. High Fellowship Halloween Party; she dressed up as a fat man so they shouldn’t recognize her since she is on the thin side – she has put on some weight recently, however. Lisa is always saying that she is on a diet, but she really isn’t fat.

Alec is doing fine and is completely free of a cold right at the present time. He is playing with his cars and trucks on the bed beside me right now. As I mentioned, Alec has completely stopped nursing now, and is sleeping all night now. He usually gets up about the time I do (sometimes because I turn the light on) and then takes a 2-3 hour nap in the afternoon; he then gets to stay up until about 9:00 PM. All the kids stay up a lot later than they used to.

Ruth didn’t have to direct her choir today so Rev Reif had her sing a special opening solo at the Worship service. Lisa stayed home this AM as she didn’t feel too well. This afternoon Ruth had her second recital at the Conservatory. She had 10 students playing, some of whom received their first or second awards. They have a series of awards for students to earn; they have to memorize a certain number of pieces, learn scales, etc. Ruth has 12-13 pupils which is just about all she can handle during her 3-9 time on Thursdays. When Alec gets older she might be able to teach more if she wants to. For right now she just can’t take on any more. This Conservatory has a very good reputation and some of the teachers come from other areas. Ruth has a good reputation as a teacher and choral director and got on to the job via another woman in Chansonettes. Lisa had a fellowship Halloween party this afternoon but went over to the recital instead and passed out the programs. There were about 40 people there with all the families and friends.

I’ve told Alec that I’m writing Grandmother so he asked to see your picture; he pointed right to where we keep it so I got it and Grammy and Granpa’s picture down and he studied them and called the correct names off. Yesterday afternoon was the Junior Dept. Halloween Party at the Church. We had about 40, a lot of whom were guests and friends of the regular members. I dressed up as a funny magician and did a few tricks. The other man had some games and relays and with the refreshments we filled the two hours without any trouble. I had the floating lady set up and used Alan. Also did the die box I’m sure you remember.

Friday night was Andys monthly pack meeting. Alan and Alec went along. I don’t remember that when I was a Cub Scout parents were invited to all the pack meetings as they are now. Andy is working on his Wolf Badge. They had a Jack-O-Lantern contest also. Andy got his Bobcat which is the first badge. The kids aren’t making as many fancy Halloween costumes this year, partly because Ruth just hasn’t had the time to make highly original costumes, and the kids are getting older. Alan, however, has made a huge 7-UP can costume which is exactly like the real can with all the words, etc. We’ve had a lot of rainy weather the last few days so we hope it won’t be rainy next Tues night when they go “trick or treating.” Ruth will take Alec out early (he’s been talking about it for days) and couldn’t understand last Tues why we couldn’t go right then. Ruth will go to her rehersal next Tues night (she couldn’t get it changed) and Alec and I will answer our door for trick-or-treaters.

The girls both went to their Fellowships last Sun afternoon and evening. I had Christian Education Committee on Wed (Ruth did not go) and I got to choir practice on Thurs. The rest of the schedule were the regular things. Ruth has pretty well recovered from her oral surgery that she had a week ago Friday. She had the stitches removed Thurs and has to go back again tomorrow. Hope you’re all OK. We’ll see you at Thanksgiving time.

**11-7-72 – Tues evening –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, My regular black ball-point pen gave out at work today and it was too late to buy a new one at the little store we have in our cafeteria, so I’ll use this green pen for a change, even though it isn’t Christmas. Its election night, of course, and they are just announcing that Nixon has definitely won by a big vote. I left work 30 minutes early and Ruth and I went over to vote (at the nearby Grade School where Alan and Andy attend) as soon as I got home. The kids are all quite aware of the election, and talked about it a lot at school.

Hope you’re feeling more normal now; Mother wrote that you had spent a couple of days in bed I believe. I guess we all feel better some days than others. Hope Mothers legs and knees are gradually feeling a little better since her fall. I know the osteoarthritis won’t get much better, especially when you’re older.

Ruth is out at her regular Church choir rehersial this evening. She’s in her second year with that choir. Since Ruth had Women’s Association at the Church today, Alec took a late nap and he is really full of energy this evening. He is having another cold, but it is not as bad as the one he had a few weeks ago. He started having colds as soon as he quit nursing; I guess he is not getting as much protein and antibody as he used to.

Tomorrow night I’m supposed to attend (at a Church in a nearby suburb) a Bible study meeting with our Minister. I’m taking my 8th vacation day on Friday. The kids have Thurs afternoon and Friday off because of Teacher’s Meetings or something. We’re having the Church Small Discussion Group at our house Sat night so we’ll need the extra time to get ready, especially since our kitchen is all torn up. Ruth started redecorating it last Friday. The wallpaper that we put up 6 years ago right after we moved in was all worn and dirty. Ruth has painted the ceiling and bottom cabinet doors light blue, and the walls and upper cabinet doors white.

We’ll leave Joliet at 7:30 PM on Thanksgiving eve (exactly the same as last year) and get to Hutchinson early Thanksgiving morning. I’m taking my 9th vacation day that Wed before Thanksgiving so we won’t be rushed getting ready. (I won’t have 3 weeks of vacation until 1974 after I’ve been at Armour 8 years.) The train coming back leaves Hutchinson early Sunday AM and gets into Joliet about Sun noon. We’ll have time to rest up before we go back to work and school on Monday. As last year the schedule works out better for Thanksgiving because Ruth has to be here on Christmas eve for a program.

Ruth and M.J. are each buying new sewing machines. I guess M.J. already has hers; we’ll bring ours back on the train. Last night Alan and other 6th graders all played solos out at the Jr. High. Ruth played for Alan and two others. Alan did fine; he gets a real good tone on his bassoon (he is practicing right now and I didn’t have to remind him). Sun was our regular schedule. Lisa went with the Jr. High Fellowship to visit the group at the Church (in a small town about 90 miles away) where our Minister came from. I worked in the carport and storage area in the afternoon and Ruth worked in the kitchen. Lesle went to her Fellowship Sun evening. A week ago last night was Open House at the Jr. High (Lisa – 8th Grade). Ruth and I went. See you at Thanksgiving.

**Tues PM –** Glad to have your recent letter and to hear that everyone is doing fine. As I think I wrote a week ago tonight, the only Santa Fe (Amtrak) train left that goes beyond Newton and through Hutchinson is the El Capitan – Super Chief that goes at night. It leaves Joliet (where we drive to and leave our car) at 7:30 PM and goes through Hutchinson about 5:30 AM, I believe.

I’m playing on the bed with Alec. He likes to get his cars and toys out and play with them on our bed. It helps to keep some of the toys out of the living room. Alec, of course, still sleeps in our bedroom. Alec thinks he is as big as anyone now.

We had wet cold snow yesterday evening, and last night and this morning. Ruth went out yesterday evening to Chansonettes rehersal; some weren’t there because of the weather, but Ruth said it wasn’t slick when she drove over. Ruth directed rehersal last night because she has to direct for an appearance this Thursday. Ruth has her Church Choir rehersal this evening. I’m supposed to sing a solo part in the Christmas cantata they are doing, probably on Christmas Eve (I’ll have to miss our own Christmas eve service). Ruth needs me since she has no one in her choir who can do it. Her choir is small, but very enthusiastic; they usually stay late to practice because they are so enthusiastic. Lesle is at a math (algebra) contest tonight at a high school in another suburb. Ruth took her out to our High School for her ride, and will leave her choir rehersal early to pick her up for a ride home.

I guess it was a disappointing football season for both KU and K State, but all the other teams in the Big Eight were just too good. I would imagine that KU and K State will finish in the last two places. I always thought of M.J. and Bill on the Saturday afternoons that the K-State games were in Manhatten. Like last year, the big Oklahoma Nebraska game will be on Thanksgiving day and will be on TV I’m sure.

Tomorrow night is the annual Sphaghetti Dinner at the Church. It is sponsored by the High School Fellowship (Lesle will help serve) to help raise money for their retreats. Afterwards I may go with the Minister to a Bible Study (Dead Sea Scrolls – very interesting) session at a Church in another suburb. Ruth has some of her regular Thurs lessons tomorrow night so she can get away for the Chansonettes appearance. Alan has a concert on Thurs night, also.

People are calling the girls quite often now for baby-sitting. Lisa likes to do it better than Lesle, I think; she has a regular job on Mon evenings for a woman who attends night school. Last Wed night I went alone to the first session on the Dead Sea Scrolls since the minister couldn’t make it. I stayed home from choir practice last Thurs night. I took off Friday as a vacation day and we visited our former neighbors who have moved to Kankakee.

Although it was a big job we got the house ready for the small discussion group which came on Sat night. The kitchen looks a lot cleaner and nicer after the fresh paint. Sun was the regular schedule except that I led the discussion at the early mens breakfast. We had a short Session meeting after Church and then we relaxed in the afternoon after a typical busy week. Hope you’re all OK. See you early Thanksgiving AM.

**12-2-72 – Sat AM –** Glad to have your letter and to know that you “survived” our visit in good shape. This week since we got home has sure gone fast, but thats the way they all go with all the activities. There is sunshine this AM (we’ve had more this past week than we had before Thanksgiving) but its not as clear as it was in Hutchinson.

Lisa is at Youth Choir and Confirmation Class this AM. We don’t have anyplace special to go to today so we’ll probably work around here most of the time. Lesle does have a birthday party to attend later in the day. Hope Bill got their car without any (Thanks so much to M.J. and Bill for letting us use their car – we couldn’t have done as much as we did without it) trouble. I parked it right in front of the Station; the man in the Station asked about it and I said it would be picked up by 8:00 AM; he said that would be OK.

The train got there about 2:30 so we didn’t have too long a wait. We all had seats OK although we weren’t close together. Four of the seats were the exact numbers that were given us on the reservation which was better than a year ago. They were all out of pillows when we got on so I didn’t sleep much. Alec slept some and I think the kids slept more than Ruth and I did. They turned the lights on at K City about 6 or 6:30 so didn’t sleep much after that. We ate breakfast in the dining car. I don’t believe its quite as expensive as it used to be; as part of Amtrak they are trying to improve business.

We got to Joliet about 1:30 or so, which was later than the scheduled time. It had snowed up this way also (the fellows said it snowed here on Sat) but the roads were OK. The car started OK and we drove on over here and had lunch late at the Burger King (where we often eat). Got home about 3:00 PM. We were all tired so rested some and unpacked the rest of the day.

I’m watching the Notre-Dame, Southern California football game this afternoon (its 3:30 now) as I expect Bill is also. This about ends the college football season. I’ve only watched a few of the big college games but several of the pro games on Sun afternoon. The kids have all been back in school all week and busy as usual. Ruth had her regular Chansonettes rehersal on Mon night. They have several Dec appearances lined up, including 3 or 4 days in a row during one stretch.

Alec still has his cold but has felt good all week. He’s been taking good long naps and should get over it soon. Tues night Ruth and I had a s.s. meeting and then Ruth went on to her choir rehersal. Wed night I went to that 6 week (missed the Wed night we were on the train) Bible Study Course on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Essenes and other groups that were in existence about the time of Christ. Thurs night I went to choir rehersal and Ruth worked. We stayed home last night, except the girls went to a movie with some friends.

Thanks to everyone for everything while we were in Hutchinson. I thought it was a wonderful trip and we were glad we could do it again. I’m glad the cousins have gotten to know each other. I hope they will stay close through the years since they don’t have too many other relatives. Glad you and Aunt Clara are feeling pretty good. You have such fine spirits – keep it up. We have to get the family room clean so we can get the tree next weekend. Made it OK with the sewing machine. It’s been used several times already and they have already sewed up all of the material they bought in Hutchinson.

**12-17-72 – Sat AM: 10:00 –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I’ll send the letter to you first this time since I’m sure you look forward to the arrival of mail. Hope you’re feeling as good as usual. Be glad you don’t have to get out in the cold and snow. We’ve had a lot of cold, snow and ice since we got back from Hutchinson. We’ve been late at work several days since we couldn’t drive as fast as we normally do. We’ve had a lot more snow than usual for early December, and we may have a White Christmas. Its supposed to snow more tonight and tomorrow. We’ve had very little sunshine also. I don’t mind the Winter so much when there is sunshine and its cheery. Hope it hasn’t been too bad for Mother to get out to the things she wants to.

I just heard over the radio that one of the astronauts is a graduate of the University of Kansas and they were trying to awake him by playing the Jayhawk song. It was a sad day in Chicago again yesterday because of the plane crash. The plane was starting to land at Midway which is the older airport that is smaller than O’Hare. In that train crash they have decided that one of the trains was going too fast.

Ruth called her folks the other night and invited them up for Christmas, but they are quite busy as usual and I doubt if they will come before Spring. Its possible for them to go up to a town in Nebraska about 30 miles from Oberlin and take the train (Burlington Line) to Joliet. I’m playing in the living room with Alec while Ruth is out shopping for groceries. Lisa is at Church for Youth Choir practice and Confirmation Class. We get our Christmas tree this afternoon. Tonight Ruth and I go to Kankakee to our Department’s Christmas Dinner. There is something on almost every day for the next 2-3 weeks with all the Christmas activities, etc. Ruth has to sing a number of times with Chansonettes I’m singing with her choir on Christmas Eve to help them out since they don’t have many singers. Our own Christmas Cantata is a week from tomorrow morning. Had regular Church schedule last Sun AM. Tues night I went with Ruth to her choir rehersal to help them. Wed night Ruth had Circle and I went to that Bible study session in another suburb (about a 30 min drive). Thurs Ruth did her regular teaching at the Conservatory of Music and I went to our choir practice. Last night we all ate out at a new family type restaurant since yesterday was payday.

It was interesting to have a Christmas card from my cousin Dr. Lester and to find out that they have moved back to their home in Sawyer, Michigan. We’ll try and drive up and visit them some Sat next Spring after Lisa’s Confirmation Class is over. They’re about a 2 hr drive from our house. I don’t know how old my cousin is but I expect he is semi-retired. He will probably lecture, travel, etc. since he has a good reputation in his field. Hope you’re having a nice Holiday Season.

**12-28-72 – Thurs –** Dear Aunt Clara, Mother, M.J. and Bill, I started to write several days ago but didn’t continue it, since you all would be getting Christmas mail etc. Thanks to you and everyone for the Christmas gifts. We’re planning to use some of the money to buy a ceiling track for one of our lights so we can slide it back and forth. We’re also planning to cover a long board for behind the couch in the family room. The board will rest on top of our steel files which will be put behind the couch.

By the time you receive this letter the Hutchinson box should have arrived. We had had most of the presents ready for some time, but Lesle was slow getting her things finished. We have always encouraged them to make their own gifts if they are short of money. I took my 10th and last day of vacation yesterday and we went up to the Museum of Science and Industry. They have several new exhibits we hadn’t seen, and we had never seen the numerous Christmas trees they always have every year; each tree is decorated for a different country.

I suppose you’ve gotten through all your Christmas cards by now and I’m sure you enjoyed them all. Alec and I looked at our cards every night after I came home from work; he was quite excited about all the pictures of Baby Jesus. The kids, of course, are out of school all this week and next. As you may remember, the boys have birthdays on Dec 30 (Alan, who will be 12) and 31st (Andy, who will be 9). They may not get as much as they usually do since they have been very slow about getting their room all cleaned up and all their many things sorted out. We believe they are old enough to begin assuming more responsibility.

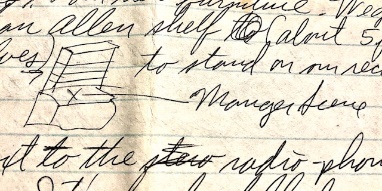
That was nice you got out for awhile on Christmas Day and could go up home, and also that you got to see the presents opened. We all opened one present each on Christmas Eve and had the rest of them on Christmas morning. Christmas morning is the one morning of the year we don’t have to get the kids up. We tried to call Hutchinson in the early afternoon of Christmas Day, but the lines were all busy. Ruth couldn’t get through either until later in the day. She talked to her folks at Manhattan where they were visiting two of the Musgrave (foster children) children and their families.

I took the boys out this evening to get more paint for their models that they are working on. We also stopped at the library. Again thanks for everything. Glad you had a nice Christmas. I’ll write more about Christmas to Mother in my next letter.

**New Years Eve 9:00 PM –** I don’t know where the time has gone; I thought I would get a letter written before this, but just didn’t get around to it. The kids are all up right now, but Alec will go to bed in a little while. The big kids may stay up to see the new year in. Alec is still up now because he’s feeling so much better after being fairly sick. He had a fever for a couple of days and wasn’t himself (that was right after Christmas), then he seemed better but had a fever again yesterday and he got a shot of penicillin since he had bronchitis. He was feeling better last night and felt lots better today. When he’s not feeling good he whines most of the time.

Alan also has had a cough and he also went to the Dr. and has been taking some oral penicillin. He is gradually getting over it. Andy has had some too and the girls less although Lisa had more than Lesle. Ruth and I have been very tired but that has partly been because Alec has been getting up so much at night. He’s been awakening just about every time he coughs. I think I told you over the phone that I stayed home the Wed before Christmas.

Thanks to everyone for the Christmas presents M.J. and Bill: I’ve never had a complete set of nail clippers, etc. so they will be very handy to carry. I guess we’ll say that we’ve applied the money gifts to our new furniture. We got a new Ethan Allen shelf (about 5 ft tall and with 3 shelves)



Dad draws the Ethan Allen shelf.

to stand on our record cabinet which is next to the radio-phonograph in the living room. It’s already filled and we have the manger scene (bought with Aunt Clara’s gift several years ago) at the bottom. We’ve ordered a new good couch with a higher back but it hasn’t arrived as yet. It’s been just as well, as the money has really disappeared for all the children’s Christmas and birthday presents. I got home from work early today as everyone was let out at 3:00 PM. Our New Years Day holiday is next Mon. I’ll do some baby sitting then while Ruth goes in to take her drivers license test. You have to be reexamined once every 9 yrs in Illinois and she got the notice the other day when her license renewal notice came. I’ll probably have to have my test in a couple of years when my license comes up for renewal. I believe Ruth is going over to the little Conservatory of Music near here next Mon to begin seeing more about the piano group she is going to have, starting sometime soon. It will be a lab group of some type, and will be composed largely of beginning pupils. Will pay about $10 a time, I believe. I’m sure she will be good at it. (Ruth is good at anything she does). I believe it will be after school. Ruth got several small kitchen things for Christmas. Also an Owl, a clothes hamper, a kitchen tablecloth, a music stand with case, a wastebasket, a nice skillet, etc. Your tie goes perfectly with my things. I sorted out my ties and I’m finally in very good shape with wide ties that go with my new suit and shirts (I got 3 new shirts). Grammy sent me a tie she had made. The kids made me some things.

We hope you all got your presents OK and that you got the tape recorder to work. We got Alec’s bigger baby bed (we bought it used from a neighbor) moved into our bedroom last Mon (I was off the Friday before Christmas and the Mon after). Ruth has been cleaning in there and we’ll soon have his corner fixed; we’re getting a screen to separate his corner off from the rest of the room. I got a few other odd jobs done over the holidays. Alec has so many toys, and we get out a lot of the old toys that have been saved. He’s gradually beginning to play with his toys more; it has seemed like he has wanted to play with everything but his own toys. He is learning fast however, about the things he can and cannot play with.

Sat AM – Its warmer and generally sunny this AM we had a lot of rain several days ago, but we never got any snow. We’ve only had a couple of inchs of snow which way below normal. The kids are anxious for snow and Alec has never really played in snow. We have been watching the parades. Lesle got sick during the night and is running a fever. She is rarely sick so we must really be having the flu viruses. Alan vomited just after midnight and is running a fever again, so I guess it will be a while before we’re all well. The boys birthdays were both OK – Ruth, of course, has the next birthday. I think I told you that we all went to Ruth’s Church for their Christmas Eve Service; I sang in their choir to help them out. It went fine. Sat 6:00 – I’m watching the bowl game. Lisa went to her riding lesson this afternoon but started feeling bad afterwards and has a little fever. Andy started feeling worse this afternoon also. Alec feels the best right now. I’ll stay home from Church tomorrow with all the children. Ruth has her choir tomorrow. Happy New Year. Hope none of you have the flu. Carroll and family



Merry Christmas from 1972! Lisa must have taken the picture.