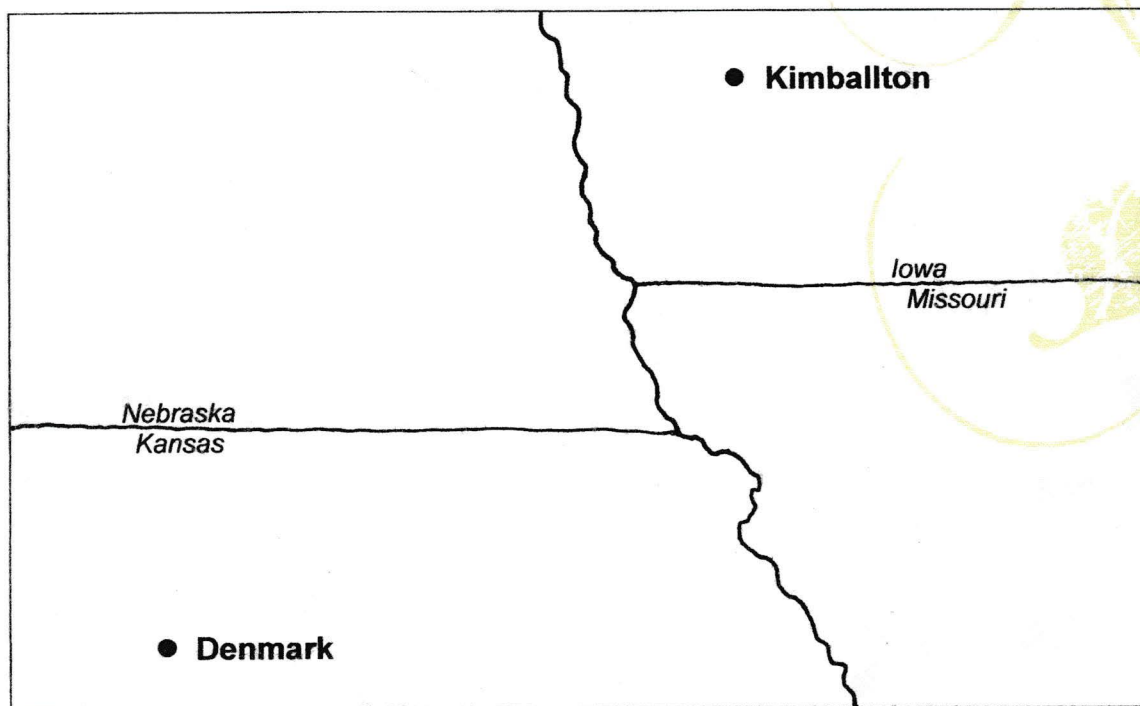
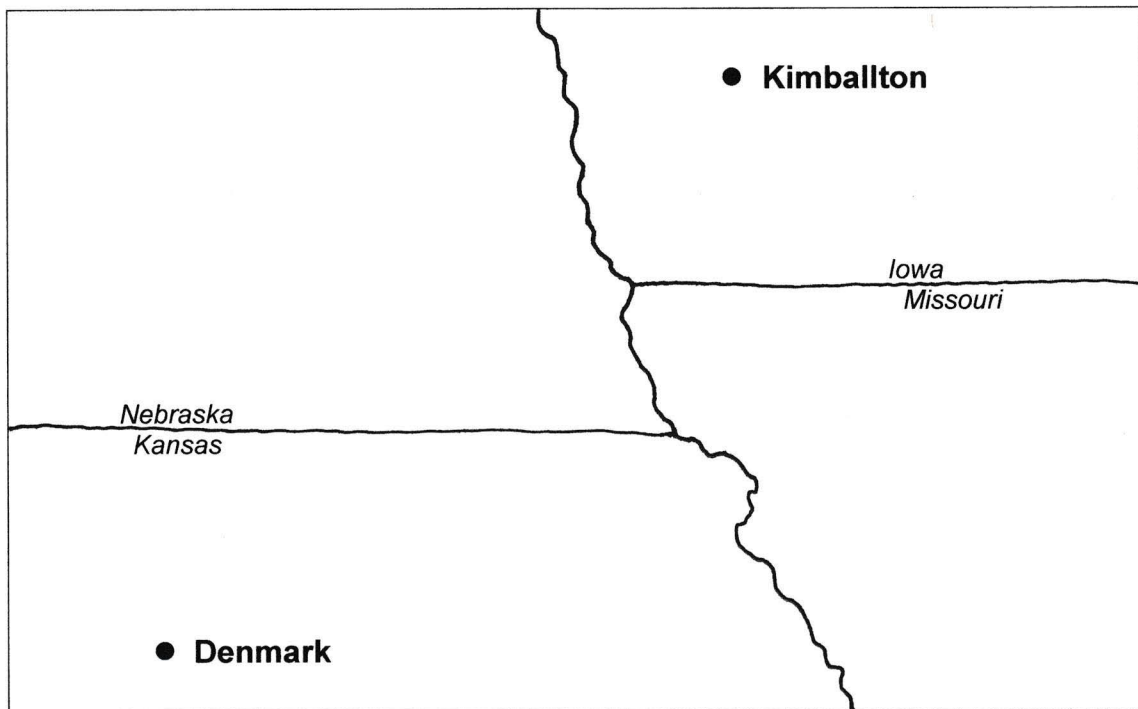


# Letters from Kansas: A Courtship



Translated from Danish  
by  
Selma Kildegaard Sloth

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Published by Ren Kildegaard LLC  
6484 Cuming St.  
Omaha, NE 68132

## THANK YOU

I owe a big thank you to my parents for these letters, especially my mother for saving Harald's letters all these years. I learned so much about both of them through reading and translating.

I also am thankful for growing up speaking Danish at home, even as adults. Without that knowledge I would not have been able to translate the letters. So "Mange tak, Mor og Far!" for the letters and a good life. (We even had a bilingual dog, Buster.)

Another huge thank you is due to Karen who offered to take the translated letters and have them put together in a book. Karen, you don't know what a gift that was to me. So to you also, "Mange, mange tak!!"

I hope this book will be a blessing to all who receive it.

Selma K. Sloth  
November, 2011



Posing with their new car in 1936: Harald, Agnes (age 9), Selma (age 8) and Buster the bilingual dog.

## PROLOGUE

Frederik Martin Kristensen, was born March 31, 1846 in Vendelev, Jutland, Denmark. In 1867 he attended a teacher's college in Jelling. He married Jensine Nielsen who lived on a farm called "Hellig Kildegaard" near Tarring. After teaching for some years, he attended Askov Folkschool near Vejen and studied for the Danish-American ministry from 1875-1877. He then came to America to minister to the Danish immigrants, serving churches in Manistee, Michigan, 1877-1879, Alden, Minnesota, 1879-1884, and in 1884 in Denmark. Kansas. Jensine joined him in Manistee.

They had five children--Sigrid and Agnes who died of tuberculosis as teens, Ingeborg, Harald and Axel.

They thought the name Christensen (the Americanized version of Kristensen) was so common, so they added Kildegaard, the name of the farm on which Jensine had grown up, to their children's names, keeping Christensen as a middle name.

Axel went into the ministry, being ordained in 1905. Two years later, 1907, their father died of cancer. Ingeborg planned on becoming a nurse and Harald, who had wanted to study engineering, took over the small farm on which they lived. At that time it was common for a pastor to have another source of income in addition to the church he was serving. Harald was 21 years old.

About that time, Hans and Ane Koch and their children Frode, Sigrid and Holger came to America and settled in Iowa near a small town, Kimballton. Hans and Ane Jacobsen had met while working on an estate near Vejen in Jutland, Denmark where Hans was a brick maker and Ane, a butter maker. They were married there and later, after a 5 year stay in America with Ane's sister, Mariane, and her husband in Ashland, Michigan, returned to Denmark and settled in Fredericia where they lived for 11 years.

In 1908 they again came to America. Two of Hans' sisters and their husbands had immigrated and encouraged Hans and Ane to come when a good deposit of clay was found and the owner of the land was looking for a tile maker. Frode had come over in 1907. Sigrid was now 19, Holger 14.

The tile works was built and soon a thriving business was established south of Kimballton. Frode married Rigmor Hedegaard in 1910. Two daughters, Lydia and Esther, were born to them. Sigrid found work as a nanny, attended Grand View College 1916-1918, and worked at a Danish Children's Home in Chicago, 1920-23. Holger also attended Grand View College and then Grand View seminary and was ordained on June 11, 1922 and the same day married Dora Lauritzen. They moved to Denmark, Kansas where Holger served as pastor of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church from 1922-25. This was the same church Frederik Martin Christensen had served from 1884-1907.

In the summer of 1923, Holger and Dora were expecting their first child. Sigrid came down from Iowa to help Dora during that time. There she met a young bachelor farmer, Harald Christensen Kildegaard. (They were both in their mid thirties.)

Sigrid returned to Iowa in September. At Christmas time she decided to send a Christmas greeting to Harald and his mother and the letter writing began, December 28, 1923.

**LETTERS FROM HAROLD KILDEGAARD  
TO SIGRID KOCH**

**December 28, 1923 to November 1, 1924  
(They were married November 16, 1924)**

Dec. 28, 1923

Dear Sigrid Koch:

Many thanks for the Christmas card! We had heard something about you were thinking about coming here again now but that did not happen this time.

We have it well. Mother and I are alone home now. Ingeborg is on vacation in Washington. She arrived at Enumclaw last Sunday.

Now we are almost over the Christmas festivities. We had a good Christmas tree celebration last Wednesday. There was just one thing I missed and that was the Danish Christmas hymns that we always used to sing so many of by the Christmas tree. I think there is nothing so good.

We have really had beautiful weather during Christmas but that you probably have also. Now the old year is almost out. We wish you all a very good and happy New Year and thanks for all good in the year past.

Loving greetings from us both by your friend, Harald.

Jan. 9, 1924

Dear Sigrid:

Many thanks for the letter which I received a couple of days ago and which made me happy.

We should tonight have been to music practice at the parsonage but then we got a snowstorm so it is good to be home. We are all anxious to take ahold again. We have not been gathered for about a month. I telephoned down there and asked if it would come about tonight. Holger answered and said he thought so. I said that I would come if Morgensens came out, he would let me know when they came but I heard no more from him so they probably stayed home.

Tomorrow night we will have Young People's meeting down at Adolph Christiansens if the weather permits. I shall give the "presentation". I wonder how that will go. That have I never tried before. Last time Mrs. Anna Christiansen spoke about Booker T. Washington and she cleared it well. Now shall I tell about another Negro, Laurence Jones who does work similar to Washington's. I think we will get something good from the Young People's Society.

I didn't mean any complaint against anyone concerning the Hymns but you probably didn't think so either.

It would be fun to come along to Studenterfest and I would like to but can't yet make a decision about that. Mother can't be home alone and I don't know if Ingeborg

is home again at that time. I have many dear memories from G.V. and it would be good to have them refreshed.

I received a letter today from Hans and Niels. They are very glad to be at the school, but they mean to come home to Denmark again this summer. Hans says that he needs our pastor to argue (discuss) with.

Yes, we have also had cold in the past week, 23 degrees below 0. It appears that there was a stretch here in the middle of the state that was colder than other places.

So now you will have to be satisfied with this for this time and in closing, a dear greeting from us both.

Your friend,  
Harald

Jan. 22, 1924

Dear Sigrid:

Just a greeting this time, it is almost time for the mail to come and I would like to get this along today. Sunday I was down to visit your brother and took a couple of pictures of little Ela. They could be better but give a little impression though about how she looks.

We have it good. Mother has been rather poorly but is getting over it again. I got started on chopping some firewood a couple of weeks ago. Now the weather is milder again so I'll take ahold again.

I was with Holger in Lincoln to hear a Presbyterian pastor Sunday evening. It was simple.

Now I must get over to the mail.

Dear greetings from us both,

Your Harald.

Feb. 3, 1924

Dear Sigrid:

Many thanks for the letter which I received on Wednesday. I would have written again before now, but it is not always so easy to get the time to last.

Maybe you have received some more pictures by this time. When I was down to photograph, I didn't say anything about you being the one who wished to have them, (though not because I had anything against them knowing that) so you have probably also received pictures from your brother.

You wrote about Morten Larsen. I am presently reading one of his books: "Life's Thoughts" 3rd edition. He has some serious and deep thoughts which one can sense come from truth. It is not the kind that one can read once and then be done with, but one can read it again and again and get profit therefrom. I will now write a couple of scattered sentences from the book which agree well with what you wrote in your letter. "God's school, where is it? It comes to be in a person's heart, when it awakens to begin to live that Life that is reborn in baptism. Those who are learners in that school learn to hear--not a person, but the Holy Spirit, God's voice, in the reborn human heart."

“Can you understand that a person never finishes learning to search for God? Can your heart grasp that gradually as it learns this, that wonder, the Christian’s life’s wonder, that wonder our Lord lived His life in, finds its way into that persons heart and life.”---  
---”It is exactly some of that godliness in people that will be beloved for its own sake, that is to say: for its love’s sake. That God will search not for his power’s, His Kingdom’s, His greatnesses’ sake, but for His own, that is to say for His love’s sake, he has let it be known in such a way that it can never be forgotten.”

“The sad condition (misery) our generation (times age) has, ended in witnesses high for the need for a new family which is run by a different spirit than the big majority of those that now are old were driven by. A new family consists of new people; no person becomes born anew, created anew, if God, Our Father in Jesus Christ does not come into that person’s heart and comes to practice his will in it.”

I will now not write the whole book. I have read only a small part of the book. I have often thought about some of that which so many gather about (agree on), and find such great joy in, become empty pleasures for a person who has become taken up by something larger. Not that I can’t take part in amusements, but there are so many kinds of amusements (pleasures), isn’t that true?

Now it is Monday morning. Today we have a raging snowstorm and cold wind from the north. I have just finished with the morning work. It is not at all comfortable to be outside in this weather. I hope the mail can get through because I would like to have this letter along and then a letter to Ingeborg. Be then greeted with the dearest from Mor and your Harald.

Feb. 13, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

So you are becoming so tired of Kimballton that you will run from it all. I will have to have a couple of words sent to you before you run away. Well, I don’t think that is the reason. One can sometimes feel somewhat lonely among others. It is hard for many to understand that the greatest joy is found not in looking in places where one can find amusement.

By reading your letter I came to think of the time I was in Kimballton for a Young People’s Annual Meeting. The evening that there was the closing meeting in the church, there was at the same time, a dance in a hall down town. I don’t know who it was who was holding the dance.

Yesterday your brother and family came to visit. It is remarkable how little Ela is developing in both body and attention(awareness). They had heard about that death-fall in a letter from Hans Baasch yesterday. I also had a letter from Hans yesterday, but he wrote nothing about that to me.

Last night I was down to play practice in the parsonage and tonight we shall have song practice at Louis Andersen’s and Monday evening we were at music practice in A.J. Christiansen’s home. That is almost too much with all that evening outing, but I do enjoy being along. One doesn’t have much time to read or practice at home. I need badly to practice on my instrument. Not much has come of playing yet. The orchestra and choir are thinking about giving a concert in the near future.



I say many thanks for the letter which I was glad for. I hope we may soon see each other again. I long to talk with you. I have often thought about a time when I was a boy and there was something that I couldn't wait for. Then said Far: "You must learn to wait."

Now I must get over to the mail with this.

Be now greeted affectionately from us both--

Your Harald

Feb. 23, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letter! Yes, I will be glad to send you a few words if it can cheer you up (be encouraging). I have never been good at writing letters. I think my letters are usually somewhat poor. But I am also a simple farmer. Yes, I knew well why you moved to where you are now. (With Rev. Michael Mikkelsen, Atlantic, Iowa). Dora told us that when they visited last week. I hope you will become more at peace and that you all have it good by this time. How good it is to feel that there is a God whom we can trust to lead all to the best. I have often thought about what V.S. Jensen said to me in the summer after I came home injured. He said "it should go so bad but not worse."

Are the V.S. Jensen's all well now? I sent him a greeting some days ago but they probably receive so many letters that he can't answer them all. I think a lot of that man and I know he does good work at the school (GVC). Have you heard when the meeting at the school will be? I would like to go to that but don't know if I can if Ingeborg isn't home by that time. She hasn't said anything yet about when she is thinking about coming home.

Now the time is almost 11 and I have to go to Denmark with eggs before noon and then have this along with the mail at the same time, so I must go.

I hope to hear from you soon again.

A loving greeting from your Harald.

Greetings from Mor.

March 3, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter received today. Now I will right away see that I get something set on paper again.

I received a letter from V.S. Jensen last week. He wrote also that they were prepared for that before it happened. His father is very old. I saw him last summer in Cedar Falls.

Now on Thursday we shall have concert with song and music. We practiced yesterday afternoon so we are allowed to be home this evening. After the concert we are allowed to dance a little. Here there was also dance on Thursday. That was the girls that invited but I didn't go. I have never been much to dance and the new dances can I not even be along for. It is not always easy to keep up with the times and modes, but if one thinks that the old is the best, then one is allowed to hold to that. What a strange

changing time we live in and so much falsehood and worldliness in the world. One can almost fear for what it will end with.

Who is the young woman whom you are with and where is she from? It is probably no one that I know anything about. I haven't been out about much and have not become acquainted with very many. (This letter was again sent to Kimballton).

What do you think of what K. Nielsen wrote about (Korset o.s.v.). I can not agree with him. I have heard Pastor Jorgensen several times and have always been glad for that. It doesn't look like anything to take after in such a way. We live in the world and are of the world and must live together with other people in the world, although there is much that one cannot do together with them. If only we can show ourselves sometime as we really are, wheat and not tares. Does K.N. maybe think that he is Paul? Well, I have heard K.N. and been happy with his preaching but there is something about him I don't understand.

(This letter was not signed, but return address was Harold Kildegaard. I looked like it wasn't finished.)

March 5, 1924

Dear Sigrid, (addressed again to Atlantic, Iowa)

Now I must again have a greeting sent with thanks for last letter.

Now the time is nearing that we must think of spring work again and see that we have something to live off for the coming year. It has been somewhat slow with the income in the last year or maybe it is the outgoing that has been too big. We farmers always hope that the next year will be better than the preceding. The outlook is also good this year. The wheat is standing well. It is beginning to turn green. I am thinking of letting the cattle out in the wheat to have some of the greens.

Tomorrow evening we are having a concert and tonight shall we have the last practice.

I don't understand Karl Nielsen. I can't see that there can be anything wrong at accepting the teaching of the Word that Jorgensen and others have. K.N. probably means that it is worldly or spiritless. But it is though, a token of appreciation of a spiritual work, let it so be from the state or whatever one would call it, but it is from people and it is not for us to judge them. What do you think?

It is nice that you all are well and it makes me happy that my letter is a bit of encouragement (cheering up). I am of course also glad with your letters and I hope and trust that our relationship will become more and more close (*sincere*) the better we become acquainted. There can probably not be found two people who are completely in agreement but that is probably also good, as long as the goal is the same.

I received a letter from V.S. Jensen a week ago. They have had many letters and much good from people, so he says "I can hardly believe that so many good people exist."

Now I have to get to work again. This is written during noon break.

So be greeted most affectionately from your

Harald

March 9, 1924

Dear Sigrid:

Many thanks for your letter which I received a couple of days ago. Yes, you are right, we people need help from each other. How good it feels that there is love in that (bevaggrund) for the help one gets from others. One can sometimes feel the world's self-love and coldness and feel somewhat alone.

You asked how Holger and family are. Work does he not need. He is involved in leading both this and that. In the recent time he has had four or five evenings a week taken up. I think they would like to see people in the congregation become more interested in the work of the congregation and that I would also like. Most of the people in our circle are polite and kind, but have more sense for society than for the spiritual. I hope it gets better with time.

It is a joy to see little Ela. She is always so cheerful and glad. It is not easy for her to be still. It will probably not be long before she can walk.

We are going to have a play. It is a piece called "Under Blue Skies". I think that Holger had it when you were here, but you probably haven't seen it. It takes two hours to play (put on). I am "Old John", an old harmless man, 60 years old, but not a big role. Dehlins are all three in it. We couldn't find anyone to take the leading part, so we'll maybe go outside our circle and get an Irishman, Pat McQuilliam, to play that. The others are Hulda Andersen, Axel Andersen, Viggo and Louise Andersen, Una Andreasen, and Chester Jensen. Do you know them?

So you have been reading about "simple farmer". I also like that song and so many others. There are not so many of the Danish songs being used here. How many good songs we have! I very much like 182 and many others.

Winter is really holding on here this year. Yesterday we had pretty snow weather. It mostly thawed right away but today it is cold. It was a good snow for the wheat.

Ingeborg says that she does not know when she will come home. She is thinking about looking for work in Seattle for a short time to earn some money to help with the trip home.

You said that you will soon go home. You are probably still at Mikkelsens so I will send this there.

So, the end, the dearest greetings from us both.

Your Harald

Just come with your questions. I will answer if I can.

March 14, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter which I was happy to receive.

Now I will first try to see if I can write something about the thoughts you have therein.

You said first if only you can write about what you think and feel. The same is what I wished also when I wrote my last letter which I wasn't satisfied with and then waited a day and it became another letter.

I can say that at the bottom of it all I am completely in agreement with you. You wrote about "Give to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's". I had thought about the same before I got your letter. There is also something else I thought about in that connection and that is about the "tares among the wheat". It is not always so easy to tell what is of the world and what is not of the world. We hope that we sometime can raise ourselves above the world but we are all tied more or less to this world and we are also set here in the world to enjoy what is here. May we then take it as a gift and not as spoils. We know well that here is so much that drags us away from the Lord of life. I have today been singing some of "There is a Way" and I have especially thought about the last verse:

Even as we go  
We though of God are learning  
To understand,  
We uplift and we bear,  
We carry on with life's Spirit  
And of our Father's heavenly host.

You wrote that when you care for me, you are not satisfied with a present from Mother or another. But there is just one thing, and that is not less than selflove. That I don't wish either, Sigrid, but it will not make my love less if you should receive such a gift. I don't think so anyway.

A Pastor is first and foremost in God's service and that we should all be. How should we serve God? To that I would answer: By serving mankind with love. I don't know if you understand me right here. I mean that those who in truth and love try to show mankind the truth, they serve both God and man.

We naturally have to judge man to a certain degree in order to take a stand in this colorful world. If anything belongs to Caesar or King, it is not necessarily bad. Do you know the song "Heaven's Sun and Star flock"?

Well, about this much more could be written. But may we just manage to live life in faith, hope and love, then shall everything come about in the right manner. Do you not think so, dear Sigrid?

Dearest greetings,  
Your Harald

March 20, 1924

Dear Sigrid:

Many thanks for the letter which received just as I sent off my last letter. We are now being closed off from the rest of the world. We have really had snow so it can amount to something. On Sunday a good foot fell and yesterday some more came, and we had a good deal last week which melted right away. So far in March we have had two feet of snow.

The mail has only been out once this week. I think he will come today and then there will probably be a letter from you.

You wrote in your last letter about the differences in people. Yes, I think you are right, Sigrid. One is at times inclined to think that if someone is not as we think they should be, then there is something wrong. But we can't see what lives inside another. Yes, it is difficult many times to know oneself. I am thinking now about one of Zak Nielsen's stories, I think it is called "Kilderne" (the springs, sources?). It is about two people who were very different, but the differences disappeared as their lives unfolded, and they came to work happily together.

The other evening I was making some more pictures of Ela and I found a film from last summer. Here is a picture from that.

Today we have nice sunshine weather and that cheers one up a great deal. It is very depressing with the weather we have had and then one can hardly go anyplace. But it is good that the ground is getting softened up so all will grow good when the warmer days come.

Now I will not write more this time. When I receive your letter, which I am expecting, you shall have some more.

Affectionately  
Your Harald

March 21, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter which came yesterday as I expected.

Now I will try to answer your questions. First I will say something about myself and mine. I don't have so much to do, that is, that should be done right now. I don't know that there has never been something that I can do. As soon as the snow thaws and the ground thaws enough again then comes a busy time. Most of my land is in wheat (100 acres). There are about 60 acres which needs to be planted and sowed with different seed. Here there are 80 acres in that here at home which had been Father's. Of that there are 45 acres plowed. The other land which I have bought (with other people's money, but have gotten a good deal paid off) lays a half mile east from here. There I have the wheat this year and then that which still shall be planted, besides that which is here. Well, maybe that isn't really what you wanted to know. Your question is such that one doesn't know really what the central is. At this time, I usually get up at 6 o'clock and make heat in the house, go out and milk 3 cows, come in and run the milk through the separator and give the milk to the calves. Then we eat and I go out and feed the cattle and chickens and pigs. In the

evening I have about the same chores. Mother takes care of the house and cooking. I help sometimes a little with washing floors or other things. Mother is not so strong, but she is around more than she should be, but she probably can't quit. She doesn't have real peace unless it gets done. I shall soon have to get the garden planted, as soon as one can get into the ground.

You asked about my foot. It is going quite well. It is tiring to walk in this snow. It pulls more in the snow than when one can walk on the ground.

Thanks for the invitation to drink coffee. I will come sometime. I cannot yet say when. You say you long for Kansas. Thanks! That makes me happy. I hope that the longing will grow. I am ready when you are. Maybe I am becoming too forward but I mean it. I have complete confidence in you, Sigrid.

I don't know if I have been successful in answering your questions. If there is anything else you would like to know, just say so and I will answer again. There are maybe many other things which you would like to know more about and I would also like for you to know all.

Loving greetings to you and yours from.  
Your Harald

March 23, 1924

My Dearest Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letter which came yesterday. I am so happy so it fills me with joy. And thanks for your hopefulness you bring. May I now just have "luck and good council" to live up to them in some way.

I had thought of waiting until we can talk together but I don't think I can wait longer and therefore I will ask: Shall we than promise each other faithfulness for life? May I be yours and will you be mine? If you are not ready to answer you can wait awhile. After your last letter, I thought you had taken a final decision.

Yes, the winter has been long but it has been equally long for both of us, and I think we are going to meet a happy time.

Hans and Niels came to Dahls last night. They had driven since last Monday and had to walk the last ways. They got stuck on the other side of the big hill south of Denmark. I have to go to Denmark now. I will have a little practice with Holger and Albert. We have not been any place since that snow fell last Sunday.

The lovingest greetings to you and yours,  
Your Harald

(Harald played both the viola and trombone.)

March 26, 1924

My Dear Sigrid:

There was something more I would have written in answer to your last letter but I didn't really feel at peace last Sunday and then didn't have much time either.

I am glad that our thoughts fall so well together. I have though not entirely given up hope in finding a lifes companion. I thought many times about you last summer and when you left to go home, I comforted myself that if this should be thus, we will be led together one way or another. I was glad that you came to me when I was injured.

We are not so very young any more. It is not easy to understand that the time has run so long. One learns something as time goes. There are many things I see somewhat differently than I did for some years ago.

This afternoon I have to go to Vesper after some oats to plant. I will go with horse and wagon as the road is still not good. We have otherwise the nicest sunshine weather today and the snow is almost all melted now. Now we have begun with our practice again. We have decided to put on our play a week from Friday. We received some days ago two packages from Ingeborg. It is something she has picked in the mountains. It must be nice in the nature out there.

I greeted Hans and Niels last Sunday. They had a difficult trip from Des Moines, They droved into a blizzard in Missouri.

I am now in Vesper. I thought maybe there would be a letter here from you. The mail wagon left at the same time so they couldn't wait for the mail that comes in the morning. However here is no letter. I expect one tomorrow. Now I must be on my way home. The way takes quite a bit of time.

So greetings to you most affectionately, from your Harald.  
Greet your parents.

March 30, 1924 (Sun.)

Dear Sigrid:

The letter I expected Friday did not come but then I got two yesterday instead. Thanks for them both and the picture. And thanks for the little word "Yes". But I am like you: the more I get, the more I want. I am now looking forward to the time when you are here. I wonder when that can be? When can we celebrate (holde fest)? You are probably not ready to come with me if I come sometime in May? I don't want to be premature but you can probably understand that I long for the time when we can be together. I will try to work so diligently so I can have some time to leave home in May whether you can come back with me or not. I hope that you can.

We have it rather winterly. We had a couple of days of fine weather last week and I also got the oats planted. The wheat is not damaged. It just lays and waits for warmer days and they will come.

I now have to go to music practice. So: more this evening.

So that day went. I was down at your brothers to play and now I have finished my evening work and had something to eat. If only you were closer so I could visit with you a little bit, but it is good we can write together.

It is today you were at a baptism. Congratulations with the little girl. The snowstorms you asked about didn't reach us. It was more in the east part of the state. We had a bad storm yesterday but it didn't become snow.

Yes, I was glad to read "Hans Nielsen Harry". "The Wise Stones" have I never seen. I was in church this forenoon and glad to hear Holger's preaching. He preached especially about we people's influence on each other and about living a life in truth for the sake of both oneself and others. We sang two hymns that were so fitting with what he had preached.

Tomorrow afternoon we are going up to the hall and prepare for our play and I was asked to oversee it and get different ones to bring what we need to use. We shall practice in the morning, evening and again on Thursday so we hope to be able to put it on Friday. It is also good that that comes to an end. I must see to getting a book about or by Sunder Singh. I have heard and read something of that man.

Now we will go with gladness and openness to meet the future, trusting on Him who arranges all for the best.

With all dearest greetings,  
Your Harald

Monday morning, March 31

Good morning, Sigrid:

Today is my Father's birthday. If he had lived he would have been 78. Last fall it was 16 years since he died. I can't believe it is so many years ago.

I worked for Kintzel that fall and heard then that Father was sick. I came home. The doctor said that it was a serious stomach illness. He got another doctor along out and they said then that it was cancer in the stomach and there was nothing to do for it. Father lived only a few weeks after that. Since that time I have been home, so to speak, all the time. I was at that time thinking and making plans about what I should do in the future but I was not the one who was to rule. So it often goes: we make plans but they don't always come to pass.

Now I must go out to work. I have to get some more firewood brought home this forenoon. It is sawed but I couldn't get it home lately when the ground was so soft.

Affectionately, Your Harald



A letter from Harald's mother--

My dear Sigrid!

Now I can say that, since you and Harald have given each other that promise that you will join together so long as God will allow you the fortune to wander together on the road, forward and homeward, to our right and true home. Yes, there and only there is our fortune fulfilled.

God has been so dear and good to me. He has let me look into his Paradise and there I saw a wonder which is not to be described. Oh yes, there were flowers, music and birdsong. Ah, peace without comparison. I long after them. Forward and homeward and it is good for us to know we have all the best left and that we are allowed to long after and be happy about and that in every age, although most in old age days when strength leaves.

Will you then, my dear, good Sigrid, greet your dear parents from your and Harald's old, weak mother who wishes you all the best I know. God's peace, yes that peace which passes all understanding. It is heart's peace. And then we live in the hope of the joy of seeing each other again. God's peace. Goodbye, your sister in the Lord

April 1, 1924

My dearest Sigrid,

Thanks for the whole "mass" that I got yesterday. It was all welcome. I have it steadily in my thoughts and I don't think that your joy is any bigger than mine.

Yes, Sigrid, let us try to make us a good home. That has been and is one of my biggest longings, to make a home together with one that can understand me and that I know you can. It seems to me that I am so small and have so many faults, but when we lift together and help in success and reverse then it will go well.

Wednesday morning:

So, good morning, Sigrid, I started to write late last night but I was sleepy so that I couldn't gather my thoughts about anything. I now have just a short time at my disposal. I have to help my neighbor saw some firewood today. They helped me so I have to repay.

You asked what I thought about getting engagement cards. I have nothing against that, the only thing I think is if we begin with that we won't know where to stop and will it then become too many if everyone has acquaintances that should also have it. I say as you say, I am just as glad whether I get to know on paper or not. Yes, I am actually just as glad if they don't even get to know. I will tell the ones that are closest to me. I wrote to Ingeborg so she got the news. I have not told Holger but will go down to wish him congratulations about his sister.

Had I known that you felt as you do, as you wrote, I might have been a little different than I was. I thought about you so often but it wasn't what you would call "love at first sight" but my love grew as I became better acquainted with you. I heard that you thought of coming here for Christmas. Had I known that you were not coming, I would have sent a Christmas greeting to you, but then your Christmas greeting came and so I had to write and I think that all is going as it should.

I would like to write more but now the clock is after 8 and I must get to work.

So we will believe that the Lord always will lead and direct our ways for the best even if we don't always understand them.

Be affectionately greeted from Mother and Your own Harald

April 6, 1924

My dear Sigrid:

It is a shame that I have not gotten anything written in answer to your last letter. But thanks for the letter. I have thought that it was strange that you answered my questions the same afternoon that I wrote them and maybe you read my questions about the same time as I read your answer. Yes, I can understand that you can't (break up) all of a sudden. So we rejoice in the day when we can give each other the final (eventual) (livstofte) I shall try to come and visit you some time before that time. If it can't be in May, then maybe in June. I wrote to Ingeborg that I thought about travelling to Kimballton in May, but the other day we had a letter from my brother and he said that Ingeborg had written that she is thinking about coming home in a couple of months. That will be around June 1. They would like to have her come that way past Cedar Falls and visit them. Theodore is thinking about coming with Ingeborg here and visit us this summer. Theodore shall be confirmed the 27th this month. He thinks it would be fun to be on the farm in the summer.

I had thought that Ingeborg should come home in April so then I could travel in May. I can probably get someone or other to be with Mother but I know she would not like it, so I will do best to wait until she is home. Maybe we can find out this week sometime when she plans to be home. I would like to come with Holger and Dora but it is not always one can get what one likes.

Yesterday forenoon I was in Denmark to get some things that we used for the play the evening before and I helped also Holger to drive some of their things home. When we came into the living room, he came with a bottle of wine. He poured and then he said "Now we drink a toast for our parent's children". It tasted good. Wouldn't you like to have been along to drink it? Tomorrow evening all those who were along in the play last Friday are having a celebration in the hall. We will really have a party. Everyone can bring either family or a friend. Will you come? If only I could come and get you, then you would come, dear Sigrid, but we will have to wait and with longing a little while yet, but that time will soon go.

So now you have probably gotten some warmer weather. The other day we sent some warmer air in the direction of Kimballton.

Sunday evening:

Yes, dear Sigrid, if only we can really learn to take life as a present and give ourselves to our Father's caretaking. Today in church we sang "God's Little child in this World, Here hold your Father near". I think the life on the farm gives the best opportunities to do that, but how often we see the opposite happen. One slaves and works to get as much as possible of what this world has to offer and then one forgets to "live". Fortune (happiness) is not something one can conquer but it is a state of mind which is given to those who seriously give themselves to Jesus' Spirit in force. It has probably been answered many times but I think that we have both experienced something of that. It is probably why Sunder Singh is so fortunate because he is so given toward God.

Monday Morning: A beautiful morning with sunshine and Lark song. Now I'd better put an end to this letter before I go out to my work. Now we have to start thinking about our work in the field. The first is now potatoes and garden which shall be planted. The other day I planted some trees here south of the house. This afternoon I shall take a trip up to help with our celebration tonight.

My time has been taken up in the last days or I would have written sooner. Be then greeted most affectionately from your own Harald.

April 10, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

You are probably waiting for an answer to your last letter. Yes, I should have written sooner, but it is not always so easy to find time for that. I am not so skilled at it and need a good deal of time. But many thanks for the letters. They came both on Monday. I was just writing a little letter to you yesterday and then I had to hurry to get it in the mail and was going to drive over with it in the Ford but then I couldn't get it to run and then it got too late. Now you will get the same letter but somewhat bigger.

Yesterday forenoon I planted potatoes. So now I hope that we shall have some potatoes to eat. Yesterday afternoon I was planting the garden. Last night I was down at Dehlins to help to decide about a fence for the parsonage. Now I will soon go down and measure the gates that are to be. (If I can get the Ford to go). I shall also have a pail of buttermilk down to the pastor family so they can have some pancakes.

We had an enjoyable evening last Monday. We danced until 12 o'clock. We had oysters for the evening meal.

Yes, I don't believe either that what one calls "love at first sight" is really love. It can maybe become that but that word "love" is often misused.

Yes, it doesn't matter that you don't have so much in your "pay desk" (kasse). We will get what we need. I got something done to the house some years ago (I was unfortunate to build just when everything was very expensive). It isn't such big things that I have but I am looking forward to sharing all that I have with you, dear Sigrid, but the greatest we can share with each other is love for as you say the more one gives the more is left over. Yes, the homelife is and always must be the biggest. That is what we need in these times. How good it is to come into a home where one can feel the living is right.

This should be a picture of me but it isn't very clear. I'll send along another taken the same day. That is also not very good. That must be the worst that are left over.

Now I had better get something done. There is so much work that waits for me.

Tomorrow is then your Father's birthday, and I send my congratulations in that regard.

Be then herewith greeted affectionately all three.

Your Harald

Greetings from Mor with thanks for the letter!

April 12, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Now it is Saturday morning. It rained a little last night. I have just finished a letter to Ingeborg. We received a letter with congratulations from her yesterday. She thinks that is the most sensible thing I have done for a long time. She wants to know if we wish for her to come home in the middle of May. I let her know that I would like to have her come home but I will not say that she "shall". She must decide that for herself. I almost think that she will come.

I look forward with joy to the day when we can meet and I hope it can be in May.

Many thanks for the letter. I was both happy and amused at reading it. I think you are becoming somewhat mysterious.

So there is a condition which I can be allowed to taste. But poor me, if I now cannot fill that condition. I hardly know what I shall guess. I don't know how big a claim you place, whether you will have "Nap eller Klap, Kys eller Klo" ("Pinch or pat, Kiss or claw")

You ask if it hard up with money here with us. Yes, we can never get enough of that, but that is about the only thing we need. I have more debt this year than ever before, but then I have also more property so it is not going backwards. It looks like a good harvest so I have good hope.

Now it is noon. We have had something to eat. I am thinking of driving to Lincoln this afternoon. I will see if I can get some alfalfa seed and then plant alfalfa.

Yes, we will hold Christmas together this year but it is not for that that you are baking Christmas cookies. Maybe you need practice in that. They should be good when Christmas comes.

So Rigmor thinks that she knows me a little. Where from? What was her maiden name? Greet them from me. I am looking forward to meeting them.

Yes, Axel's wife has also been after me several times about whether I can find a girl or if she should help me.

Now I got the mail and with that your letter. Thanks! Now I must get off to Lincoln. I will see that I get some more written tomorrow. Greetings from Mor and Ingeborg.

Affectionately, your own Harald

April 13, 1924

Dear Sigrid:

Now it is Sunday, 4 o'clock. I was a little tired so I have just been in on the bed to snore so now I can hold out again for awhile.

Yes, you can be sure that I want letters from you and write just whatever you have in mind. It will be read more than one time.

Axel wrote in the letter I got yesterday that it was good that I wrote and told them about our engagement when I did or else the news would have been old in Cedar Falls. Mrs. Axel Holst got a letter from her mother two days before where she told about it, but Axels had not heard about it before they got my letter. Axel was not home when the letter came and Ellen wanted him to guess, but he couldn't. When she said your first name he guessed it, and they rejoice with us. Ellen would like to have us come and visit them when I come to Iowa.

That was just a beginning to this letter. Tonight I am going to a meeting in the hall where Holger is speaking about outside (foreign?) mission. So more tomorrow.

Monday noon--So I say thanks for the letter I have just received. I will just get a little more written now. I asked Holger and Dora last night about when they plan to drive and they said May 5th. I didn't think it would be so soon. So now I have to get going if I have to get all my work done before that time. I should hopefully have all the land planted before then. I sent Ingeborg a letter today and asked if we can expect her by that time. Maybe you will not get so much in letters from me but then we can talk together instead. What you write about time for a wedding we can also talk about.

So now it is Tuesday and I must get this off today.

I would like to write something about what you said in your last letter but I can't find time to gather my thoughts about that now. Yesterday I planted alfalfa and today I have been after a load of corn and now I shall be on my way to Denmark with eggs, etc.

I was in Vesper last night. We had music practice at Margensens.

Accept then the dearest greetings from your Harald.

I will try to write a little every day and then send it once in awhile. H.C.K.

April 16, 1924

My Dearest Sigrid:

Heartily thanks for the letter and picture which I just received. You have to know that I became glad to read it. I think I feel now more than ever before how much we care for each other and I believe that our relationship will become still more heartfelt when we are allowed to see each other and talk together.

So you think I am not really happy. Yes, happy am I. There can be times when one thing or another will try to disturb the happiness but that is only small things or else it is something one brings on oneself. But because one is sometimes somewhat sober does not mean that there can't be something behind it which brings joy. I know there is much in life out around that can make one sorrowful but then there is also so much one can be glad and thankful for. You wrote once that if one is happy then one is also good, yes, that I think also but you can also say that if one is good then one is also happy. Let us help each other to get as much real joy in life as we can. My brother wrote: "We wish you all the happiness you can stand."

Now it is evening. Helene Strange is speaking tonight about "Danish Peasant life in Olden Days" and is showing pictures from Denmark. I would also like to be there but I decided now this evening to stay home and write to you. Last night she spoke and showed pictures from a trip to Europe, then I was along. She is speaking again tomorrow night. This afternoon I had two men over at the other farm to help me pull a pump from the well and the pipe was split and we dropped some of it in the well, so now we have to fish after it tomorrow. The well is over 200 feet deep.

You asked why you were not good to me. But, dear Sigrid, when have you ever been other than good to me? I don't think I can repay all the goodness you have shown towards me. I can still see your gentle look from last summer. I remember clearly that day we had a party and I didn't know where you were but then when it was time to go home you came with Dora and Ela from the house there and you greeted me. I will never forget your gentle questioning look and I can name several times. I think also about the first time we had a party (fest) when Mor was down by you, Ingeborg and I came in to get her and you came running out to me, you were eating a cup of ice cream. What did I see from you that time? Love.

I hope that something will come of the meeting in Des Moines, and I hope that we can attend. I think that it would be good for the pastors to get together and talk together for a better understanding. I don't think that there is such a big difference in outlook as there many times seems to be, if only people can really come to understand each other.

I have not said thanks for the two pictures I got last week and then again thanks for the picture I got today. Had I only one for you, but I have not been photographed since I was in Des Moines and you probably don't want a picture that old. It is 18 years ago now.

You asked what Dora said and if she was surprised. She hasn't said much and it seems like she knew more than you suspect. Where from? That I don't know but they were here to visit once about the time that we became engaged and Mor talked with her alone but she knew just as much as Mor. She told also to Mor that your brother thought about taking over the tile works in Kimballton and your parents move into town. That you had written to me but I have not said that to Mor or anyone else and she told it to me.

So Goodnight with a kiss.

Now again a nice morning but it was close to freezing last night. I must get to work again. I wish you and yours happy and good Easter time. Greetings to you all.

Affectionately,

Your own friend, Harald



*Dora & Holger Kansas*

Sigrid's brother Holger Koch, pastor of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church (background) in Denmark, Kansas, with his wife Dora. This is the same church where Harald's father had been the pastor, as well as the church where Harald and Sigrid were later married.

April 20, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

“The one who has, longs for twenty years.”

Yes, it is a long time but it is good that you have learned to bake cookies. I am close to believing that I tasted some of your “kisses” last summer. I think that I can remember that I received some “sweets” down with you.

You wrote once that you have gone and worked only to be overlooked. Now that I don't believe you are and we received yesterday a little “evidence” note to testify to that. It was a “good wishes” card from a K. Andersen in Kimballton. I know that your work has been appreciated by the best.

You wrote also in the same letter that you would rather come here and be here on the farm. Yes, that would I also rather, to begin with, but whether we stay here very many years, that I doubt, but we can always decide what we shall do. I am coming to believe that before very many years there will not be a Danish congregation here. One knows not what will happen, but let us bravely see the future as we meet it.

So you wish to plant Kansas corn. What kind and color do you wish? I will see what I can do about it. I think I will begin to plant this week. Tomorrow early I think I will move the cattle over to grass on the other farm. I have 44 cattle. I bought them last year and went to get them on March 3, 1923, a good 20 miles west of here. It started to rain and blow from the north and that we had to be out in. (I had two others to help me.) We were on horseback and had to walk most of the way to keep warm. We were well received when we got home late in the evening. That night I was close to being a night owl, but our bedtime is usually 10 o'clock. I am good at sleeping, but in the morning after it is light I cannot sleep, so in that area, we can well agree, but it is good that I get one to take me by the ear when it is necessary.

Holger preached today about that Jesus' preparation for Easter consisted of “becoming finished with this world”. It began with temptation in the desert and ended with being nailed to the cross. He talked also about the time Jesus asked “Who is my mother or sister or brother?”; then he freed himself from family ties in the world, but then Jesus said “My mother or sister or brother are those who do God's will.” Then he founded a spiritual family tie.

I am glad that we two are in that family tie and it is my prayer that we all our days may be therein.

Now it's Monday and almost mail time. I became interrupted with writing yesterday. Now I have been out to drive cattle and now shall soon go to Denmark.

Last night I was down to hear “The Easter Lily” which Holger read for all who wished to hear. Many greetings to you all.

Affectionately, your old boy, Harald

April 22, 1924

My Dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letter which came yesterday. That was a shame (or it was my fault) that I didn't get that letter off before. I started to write on Sunday and would have it off on Tuesday but was hindered in getting over to the Post Office that day, so it didn't get along until Wednesday. You mustn't worry about me. I got my lesson last summer and shall certainly take better care hereafter. That should probably be thus last summer. Maybe it helped us to find each other, and if that is true then it was good that it happened.

Yes, I got the alfalfa planted, now it is coming up.

How I would like to talk with you today, my dear one. There come so often questions to me when I am alone, questions like these come to me: Is it true that you care for Sigrid? Are you worthy of her? Can you give her the devotion (troskab?) she deserves, and the more I think about it, the more wonderful becomes my love for you. Oh, what good fortune (luck) that we found each other. May then our God's Holy Spirit help us to live.

Today I am driving the "disk" on some land here at home. I shall have some Sudan Grass planted there. Tomorrow I shall be on road work. That shall we do usually once a year.

Now I must go out and get the horses out of the barn. Then you must have it so good, so long.

Wednesday evening--

So good evening, Sigrid, and thanks for the letter which I received this evening when I came home from work on the road. But I am not in a very good mood this evening. I received also a letter from Ingeborg and she says that she can not be home for the 5th of May. She wrote that Agnita Slott, whom she is visiting out there, is being married around the 10th and she would like to stay until after that time, so I don't know what I shall do. I don't think that I can give up going with your brother when they are driving and I can also not travel from Mother when Ingeborg is not here. Can you give me some good advice? Should I wait and come as soon as Ingeborg comes? Then I could go with you to Des Moines and stay there for some days. I don't think I can go with Holger on the way home. He is traveling so far around. I would so much like to be with you while you have a visit of your brother and family, but they will come also to visit you awhile after the meeting in Des Moines?

You asked if I had read the sermon of Singh. Yes, I have but I was rather sleepy so I shall have to read it again. It makes one somewhat tired and sleepy to be out in all this spring wind which we have.

We shall now set up the incubator and raise some chickens. I set 7 hens of eggs this evening.

You must excuse my simple little letter this time. I must also get a little off to Ingeborg.

Lovingest, your Harold

Greet others.



April 30, 1924

My Dearest Sigrid.

Many, many thanks for your letters. Now you should not think that I go here and think "sad thoughts", but that I long more and more to meet with you. I wrote today to Hojbjerg and said that I look forward to coming to the meeting.. I hope to come on Saturday, May 17, or at the latest Sunday, if nothing unexpected happens. Yesterday I had a card from Ingeborg. They have now made other decisions and Agneta Slott will come here instead of having a wedding out there. Ingeborg doesn't think they can be here before the 19<sup>th</sup>, but I wrote that we would like to have them come a couple of days sooner. If not then, I may have left before they come. If they don't come on Monday, then I think I may get someone to look after things here for a couple of days and then I'll leave on Friday. I will come as soon as I can.

I have no worries at all for the future but say as you do, it will surely go. All will be put right as we shall have it if only our purpose agrees with God's purpose.

Thursday morning: Good morning, Sigrid. I got cut off from my letter writing yesterday noon because I had to go after some pigs that had broken out, so now I will write some more before I have to go to work.

You wrote that you don't know what you should do with yourself if you mustn't think about me. Yes, that I believe I can also say about you and you mustn't think that I for a second have thought about deserting you. The "thoughts" I wrote about in my last letter have not at all tempted me in that way. They should just come to test me a little. I think that we belong together and it is not at all an accident that we have been led together. Have you never been so glad that you were close to crying for joy? Sometimes I have been like that. I don't know if that is a weakness, but I think it is closest to being because one feels his own insignificance.

Now I must go out and plant some corn. Today it is fine weather so it can be very enjoyable to set out on the planter. We have otherwise had so much wind lately and that makes it somewhat uncomfortable to be out in it.

Now you must just have patience until I come. I shall come as soon as I can. You may long but with moderation. Now it will be only two weeks until we can have the great joy of seeing each other again.

Lovingly your own little Harald.

Greet your loved ones!

Enclosed--

A letter from Harald's mother.

My dear little Sigrid,

Many thanks for the greeting from you and your dear Mother. It would be nice if we could see each other and talk together. I am sure that we two could understand each other. It is sad that we live so far from each other. I am too weak to travel any distance. I must stay in the quiet of the home. I am much weaker than I was last year. The winter is always hard for me when it is so cold. Sigrid, how glad I am with you that you will come and be my replacement and my dear Harald's wife and helpmate. I thank God for

you and for the day He brought you together. And He will be with you throughout your life and after that He will take you home to his heavenly home, all of grace and love. Never can we thank Him enough for that. And dear good girl, that is of course something you know as well as I and that am I so heartily glad for.

Greet your parents and brother with his family.  
The very dearest are you greeted. Mother yours.

May 4, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letter and picture. But if I didn't know it was a picture of you, I would not believe it. It is not because you are not pretty enough, but there is a change. You must have had good days that time. It does not look like you have gone hungry.

Yesterday there came a telegram from Ingeborg. She says she can come on Thursday, but says I should postpone my trip if possible. I don't believe I can postpone my trip and sent her a telegram about coming so I hope she is here on Thursday, so I will travel early on Friday. If weather and roads are good, I think I will come in the Ford. I can't say just when I will be in Kimballton, but if it is too late on Saturday, maybe I'll go straight to Des Moines either Saturday or Sunday morning. But I can maybe give closer information. Maybe it is wisest for you to take the train to Atlantic if I am not in Kimballton before that time, then maybe we can meet there, or shall we wait in Kimballton and then drive to Des Moines early Sunday?

It is not so easy to make plans when we know nothing about weather or roads. As far as I can see on the map there are good roads through Lincoln, Omaha and Atlantic to Des Moines.

I am very glad that we can come along to that meeting. I have often felt myself somewhat alone with similar meetings (maybe "left out"). but this time I will not be lone or either alone.

I was in Denmark this afternoon and watched a ballgame between Denmark and Vesper, but I left for home before it was over so I don't know the outcome. Tonight I'm going to a lecture. Holger is speaking on missions. Tomorrow they are traveling. I wonder if they will get to Kimballton before this letter..

My thoughts are somewhat flighty so I think I will finish this later. I don't have any real restfulness right now. I'll go out now and do the evening's work.

Good morning, Sigrid! Now it is Monday morning, 5 o'clock. Can you hear me or are you still sleeping? I will now hurry and finish this before I go out to milk, etc. Your brother is not leaving until Tuesday. I shall go today with the corn that they will have along. I hope then that it grows good.

I am finished with planting corn now but have some sorghum corn to plant yet. It would have been difficult to get ready to leave tomorrow but now I will have more time to get all in order. Hans Baasch would like to come with me but doesn't think he has enough time. He works for both Dahl and P.C. Jensen where he worked last year. Jensen isn't able to get a hired man. So just this little greeting this time. So late in next week you'll have me, I hope.

All dearest, Your friend Harald

May 7, 1924

My Dear Sigrid,

Now this day is almost gone and it brought a letter from you. Thanks for that and for both letters I received Monday, but if you keep on caressing me you may go and spoil me. I also have my corners and short comings. Those you will learn to know in time. I hope then that you will help me to make these smaller.

Now when you get this letter you will be so busy that you won't have time to read letters. This will not be much you get from me tonight and it will soon be time to go to rest. Yes, dear little Sigrid, it is good that we haven't become so big that we can't shed a little tear once in awhile. I think that that will help to make sorrows less and joys greater. It has sometimes happened that those who have sorrow and can't cry, feel the sorrow more than those who really can have permission to cry out.

I wrote Sunday about having received a telegram from Ingeborg. I now have a feeling that I didn't understand it correctly and I nearly think that Ingeborg and Agneta are coming tomorrow. I will tell you about it later when we can talk together.

Now I must have some sleep. So you must sleep peacefully until I take up the pen in the morning.

Good morning, Sigrid! It is a pleasant cold morning. We have a little fire in the furnace today. It has been close to freezing and the wind is in the N.W. I wrote last night that I had a feeling that Ingeborg will come today, and now I know that. They are now in Salina. Ingeborg talked with Mother a little while ago. I will tell you later how the telegram was misunderstood.

I shall go to Vesper after them tonight. Then we will be four instead of two. I shall now see to getting Ingeborg taught to take care of the livestock for the time I will be gone. I have now planned my work to leave next Friday but maybe I can get it arranged to leave a day sooner. It helps to get over the work. We would like to see a little rain and then some warmer weather so the corn and everything else can grow. I planted some Sudan grass awhile ago but it is growing badly. It has been too cold. Maybe I will have to plant it over. I am now plowing where I will plant for feed, either grass or cane.

Now think, just a week more then I will think about leaving to visit "my dear Sigrid". Won't that be nice? Yes, it will be enjoyable. Now I have to go to work. So a little kiss and goodbye,

Your little Harald

May 11, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter. You poor little thing, now it won't be many days then you can look at me all that you will. Now we are having more summer like weather again. Today it is fine sunshine. It has been an ugly uncomfortable week we have had. We did escape the frost but it was almost trying to snow the other day. One could hardly keep warm in the field.

Now the "girls" have come and George Errebo has also come to Denmark from Pittsburgh, Kansas. I shall soon go out to drive a little. I'm thinking also that I will talk with Hans B. about going along to Iowa, so I will wait to write more after I have talked with him.

Now it is evening and soon bedtime. I was down at Dahls this evening to talk with Hans but there was no one home so I know no more.

This afternoon I was first over at Niels Petersens to make room for Kjeldsen who comes tomorrow morning and then I came home and we all three drove over to our neighbor, Mrs. Larsen, so we got coffee two times this afternoon and I don't think I have taken any harm. We had a letter from Axel some days ago and he said Ted won't finish school until June 6, and he asked if I couldn't wait until summer for my Iowa trip, but that I can't because I have now made my plans for my work in accordance.

Axel said also that they have received a greeting from Pastor Bodholdt from a girl who was with Pastor Jorgensens who will soon be married. Axel wants to know "when".

If all now goes as planned then you can't write to me after you get this letter and maybe you won't get more from me before you have me. Maybe I can be in Kimballton Friday but if I can't, I will be there Saturday or also meet you in Atlantic. If I am not there when you come in then maybe go over to the other station and wait and if I can't come before time for the train to leave, don't you think it best that you travel to Des Moines. It would be sad for you to go and wait there in Atlantic very long. I will be in Des Moines Sunday Morning if I have to drive all night. I think now most likely that you will see me in Kimballton before you leave for Atlantic.

Maybe you will get a little greeting from me tomorrow again. I will be very busy the first three days. So goodbye til we meet. This is hasty work!

Lovingly, your old boy

May 12, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Now has another day gone and it will soon be time for me to be on my way. Many thanks for the greeting I got today. It is good that your brother and family came through well. That has not been so comfortable a trip in the cold weather we have had!

Today I have been planting corn and if I am really industrious, I can finish with it tomorrow. Then I have been over all my land. I have some other work to do on Wednesday and if I can finish that I will leave on Thursday. I hope then that we will meet sometime on Friday. I would like to see some rain but I would also like good weather on Thursday and Friday. We need rain.

Now it is Wednesday. Thanks for the letter. So tomorrow I will be off. Maybe I'll come as fast as this, but I can also become delayed.

I have much to do today. Maybe I will get Hans along. He is coming tonight and then we will decide what we will do. Now just this greeting in a hurry.

Lovingly,  
Your little friend



Photo taken during Harald's trip to Iowa to visit Sigrid in May, 1924, at the house by the tile works where Sigrid and her parents lived at the time. Soon after that they moved into town (Kimballton) and Sigrid's brother Frode took over the tile works. The tile works were just a short ways south of Kimballton.

After visit to Iowa, on the way home to Kansas, three post cards sent:

Omaha, Nebraska, Tuesday May 27, 1:45 p.m.

Dear Sigrid! Now I have eaten and ready to drive on. It has rained much more here so the road could have been better. Thanks for the days we had together. Greet everyone, Lovingly, Your own Harald

Kronberg, Nebraska, Wednesday May 28, 1924

Dear Sigrid! I arrived here well tonight at 12 o'clock, and got Holger Strandskov out of bed. It has rained much in the eastern part of the state so it took time to come along the road. Out here the road is good and the weather is also good today so I should reach home this evening so I will see if I can get a little letter off to you. Greetings to all of you, Lovingly, your Harald

Formosa, Kansas, Wednesday May 28, 4:10 p.m.

Dear Sigrid, I left Marquette at 12:30 p.m. so it has gone fast. It is raining a little but I will reach home safely. I am over half way home from Marquette. They have had much rain since I left home, but the road is good. Lovingly, Harald



Harald's visit to Kimballton, Iowa, May 1924. Sigrid's brother Holger was also visiting Kimballton at the time along with his wife and daughter, Dora and Ela. Back row: Ela, Dora, Holger, Sigrid, Harald, Rigmor (wife of Sigrid's brother Frode), Frode. Middle row: Sigrid's parents Hans and Ane; Rigmor's mother. Front row: Esther and Lydia (children of Frode and Rigmor.)

May 29, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Now I am home again. I arrived last night at 7:00 pm. The last 4-5 miles I came into a rain cloud and it rained hard but I kept going until I was half way to the house when the car slid sideways and I could not get farther without chains. I walked home and came back later and put on chains and drove home. Yesterday afternoon I drove an average of 30 miles per hour, but Tuesday it didn't go so good. I got off the way and it had rained much in the Eastern part of Nebraska. We have had much rain here so the earth is well softened up. I will soon go out to see if the corn is standing. Some of it has come up.

Everything is well here at home. They expected me home yesterday so it is good that I came. I should have been on my way a half hour sooner. Then I would have come before that rain, but it wasn't so bad.

Ingeborg is washing clothes today. I had quite a bit of clothes that was dirty but they also had more here.

I can't help wondering if you are writing a letter to me today! It is good we can write together so we can live along with each others life work but that will be much better when we can be together everyday. Then it shall not be in part and divided, but one whole.

Now I stay here and long for you but it is not the first time I have longed. It was good we were allowed to be together in some days. I don't know if the longing will get less but it is good we have hope and trust that it will soon end.

As soon as it can dry up some on the ground I will have much to do and that will help the time to go fast. I think the first I will do is to make a fence around the house so the chickens stay away. That I can work at while it is wet.

I hope you get the two cards today that I sent yesterday from Formosa. I sent them there because it is on the Rock Island railroad which goes right to Atlantic. Mor says I should greet you and say "Thanks for the loan". She means it was good you let me go again for awhile.

So greet everyone in your house from us all, but you be my dear Sigrid.

Dearest greetings from  
Your little Harald

June 1, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Many thanks for your letter. I have begun to work again but it hasn't come to much yet. It has rained so much that I couldn't do much work in the field yet. It's good I got home when I did or it would not have been good to drive. Good it was that I got away to visit you, that visit I will never forget but do you know what? There are some around here that had heard that I was married when I got back and they seemed to be glad at that thought. Yes, that time will come and then I hope that we not alone will be happy but also others.

The other day I was down in Denmark at Holms and Skov. Fred said he had heard that I was married and asked me if that was true. He meant that I should know that. Holm meant that I was old enough and that that was not the worst that could happen. The Holms all came back to Denmark the first of the week to be here for the summer.

The corn I planted is standing good but the sorghum has not come up. I don't know if it will come. There may be some to plant over. The wheat is short and in places thin. It was probably late when the rain came. You have probably had more rain also?

I made some pictures last night but had only some old paper I had several years so they are not as clear as they should be but one can see what they should be. I'll get some other paper when I come to Lincoln and try to do it better. I hope the pictures Knudson has are better.

Now tomorrow Holger, Dora and Ela will leave so you will again be alone with your parents and then I think that it will go earnestly with preparations for the fall. Let now the preparations be for your parents future more than for ours. We will be alright but there are probably some things you will have to arrange for us two. I hope your father gets a satisfactory arrangement with the Tileworks.

I have been home all day today. It rained almost all day yesterday so the road is soft. I have shaved so you may come and sit on my lap. I think you understand me better than any other person--yes I know we understand each other and we will come to deal with each other in good understanding.

Now it is evening and I must go out to milk, etc. so I will end this later. So, now it is morning, Sigrid. Now it is Monday. I shall now go out to plow something for the pigs. I will plant some Sudan grass which they can eat. Now we will be getting better weather.

Now, with that, the dearest greetings to all of you from all of us, but a special greeting and a kiss to my dear Sigrid from your little friend, Harald.



June 5, 1924

My dear Sigrid,

A greeting I just have to send to you today, but that will be about all. Thanks for the letters that came yesterday.

I am busy now and will have much to do for a longer time. Alfalfa has to be stacked, Sorghum planted and corn plowed. Yesterday I was in Lincoln for several errands.

I would like to write more but must go out to get something done.

Good courage

Lovingly, Your own Harald

June 8, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter which I received on Friday. I am always so glad to get a letter from you, and glad to know that you constantly have me in your thoughts and you know also that I think constantly about you. I think I am so confident that I can so gladly see the future and though I am alone for the present, we are so close in thought so also though there are some miles between us, we are though so close. I am glad to be with my work again. Now the work goes so easy. I know that I am working for a future, that I have not always felt. I have though meant that there was a future but it was so far away in the blue. Now it is so, as well, not my future but our future.

Now it is beginning to become somewhat more summerly. It is really amazing how the wheat has come since we had rain. There will probably be an usually good harvest. I think it will be bigger than last year. I have now gotten alfalfa made into hay and a share of Sorghum planted over. Now it is not more than three weeks until harvest. Yes, we shall get the summer to go!

Tonight Holger was here. Yes, now he is all alone in that big house. It has gone very well with his travels. Yes, you have probably heard from him. Last Sunday he visited a lady in Audubon who has a son here and today that lady was at church here.

Holger preached well today about fellowship and it seems like there was more a feeling of fellowship in the church today than there was at the meetings at G.V.C. Yes, we need the feeling of fellowship in society today.

I shall tonight see if I can get some better pictures made. I have now gotten some better paper.

So now it is Monday afternoon and I am in Salina. I drove for Ingeborg, she shall have something fancy for Saturday when she shall be bridesmaid. Many thanks for your letter which I now have just read. We drove by the mailbox on the way here and got the letter. I have now some other pictures. They are a great deal better, don't you think?

So be lovingly greeted from your old boy.

Greetings to you all from us all!

June 9, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

So now I am home again and it is time that I should be in bed but I have to make a beginning of a letter.

So you think it is your fault that the pictures aren't better than they are. I hope you have changed your mind after you have seen the pictures I sent today. You are as pretty anyone else. There are a couple of pictures where you have come to stand with your face turned a little too much from the light but the pictures are otherwise good. What it then concerns that you think that you should be prettier for my sake I would just say that you are pretty enough. There are so many people that are so fine to look at but that does not much concern me. There are many times that that does not go very far. When I now care for you, you can trust me that it is not for your beauty but it is you I care for just as you are. Yes, you can get something at the drug store so you can come to look very fine, but I don't believe that I would therefore care more for you.

Thursday morning: Now I have to see to get this in the mail so you can have it before Sunday. I am finished with planting Sorghum and shall get to work in the corn. Yes our "Kansas corn" is standing also very fine. It makes me glad that your Kansas corn is also coming good. It is sad that the other Iowa farmers are not having such good corn.

I was down to have a cup of coffee with the Pastor the other evening. We had music practice there. Mrs. Olga Morgensen and Mrs. Mabel Mattson served coffee. Do you know Peter Bernhardt? The other day when I was at the Post Office in Salina he came there. He had also heard of our engagement and said congratulations.

Now I must be on my way so goodbye.

The lovingest greetings, "Kiss"  
Your own Harald

June 15, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letter that came on Thursday. The mail was a day late and yesterday there was also nothing but it will probably come tomorrow.

Last night at 7:00 we were at a wedding in the church and thereafter at a party in the hall. All was so good that one could not wish it better. I care much for George and I think also that he has gotten a good wife. There were over 100 people along to the fest.

There were several who asked me if we will be next. I hope so. At the end Holger thanked the bridal pair for the lovely evening and he hoped that the next pair hold as good a fest. I thought to myself, "I wonder if he means us?"

Yes, I would like to have a little party. What do you think?

I can not know if the time shall be as long for us as Holger seems it is for him. On Tuesday when we were there for practice, he said "tomorrow it is five years since a wedding." Albert Matteson asked him if not he had figured wrong. Then Holger answered that it seems to be that long. It seems like Dora is ready to come to Kansas again so she probably won't stay away so long as she once had thought.

Now we have finally gotten warm weather. In the last days we have had over 90 degrees. We wish for rain. It is going fast for the wheat to be ready in the next week for harvesting. That is faster than we expected and I think the kernels will be good. It is good that you got rain but it was close to being a flood.

Monday morning--

Good morning, dear Sigrid. So now I must again take ahold of the work. Today it is nice and cool working weather. Today I shall work in the corn. It is beginning to grow better now.

Yesterday after church Ingeborg and I and Holger were together with the Errebo family and ate leftovers from the party in the hall and then we helped each other get things in order so now the hall is ready for one more party.

Greetings to all of you.

Lovingly,

Your own friend

June 17, 18, 19

My dear Sigrid,

You shall have so many thanks for both of your letters which came yesterday. I had expected that there should be one but then I had the joy of getting two.

I shall first tell you something more about the wedding on Saturday. That was not much I got to write about that in the last letter.

Pearl Andersen played "Bridal chorus" and then they came in, first Adel Morgensen with a little basket with Rose petals that she spread before the bridal couple and after the bridal couple came Ingeborg and Edward Larsen as bridesmaid and best man. Pearl Andersen sang a solo and the gathering sang. Holger spoke well about the meaning and fortune of being two just like a child is more secure and satisfied when it wanders together with one that has the same needs. The grown-up person also needs one to wander together with and rises up to a higher plane where there is more light and the view is larger. Pearl Andersen sang another solo and the gathering sang again, then they became wed and they marched out with the same melody as they came in with. We gathered in the hall then and after well wishes we had a good dinner. Around 10 o'clock Dancing began and kept on until 12 o'clock. There were some who had taken Errebos car and drove it down by A. Rasmussen's house, down where we had a party last summer, but he found it. About 1:30 George and Agneta were to go home to Errebos and as soon as they came out of the door there was a flock that encircled them and they were showered with rice. George has still a red spot in his eye where he was hit with rice.

So now you shall have "Good Night".

Wednesday noon--So now so many thanks for the letter just received.. Now I have had something to eat and am sitting out on the porch out to the East. Here it is more comfortable in this heat than in the house.

Now it was the wedding I was telling about last night and now you ask what I thought about it. I think it all went so fine so that it was a joy to be along with it. It was stamped with simplicity and seriousness but joyful also. Holger said in his talk that he could but wish that they would make their home nearby when he meant it would be one of that kind of home that one needs more of. They are moving to Pittsburgh, Kansas where George works for his brother Willis.

How our wedding will be will we now get to decide. Yes, I will gladly make more of those pictures. As soon as I go to Lincoln again I shall get more paper. I got only two dozen last time and I made pictures on all of them (four of each kind). Have you received the big picture yet?

It is amazing all the kinds of weather you have had. We wish for rain. The wheat can take care of itself without rain but the other things can stand more. The wheat now begins to get yellow so it won't be long until it is ready for harvest.

Now it is Thursday morning and I must see to get a tail put on this. Last night I was at music practice in Denmark at the Snodgrass's or I would have written more. Mother says I should greet you and say thanks for the letter. Greet your girls and your parents and then be greeted many times from your Harald.

June 22, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Many thanks for the letter that the mail brought yesterday. Now I have had my afternoon coffee and shall then gather my thoughts about something that can be called a letter to my girl. We begin today on a new week and in this week begins the harvest. I don't know yet which day I will begin.

We were to church this forenoon and after the service (in Danish Gudstjeneste means Godsservice) it was decided that we should have English service twice a month, and that is maybe also the right thing after the situations now. There are of course several of the older who would rather have Danish services for their own sake. For my sake I can just as well understand the one as the other, and there is no danger that I will ever forget the Danish.

I don't know if Holger meant anything with it when he said that he had been married for 5 years. It was said as a joke. I think mainly that he wished us to know that it was his wedding day so he came with that way of saying it. That the time has been long, that I don't think.

You wrote about estimating how many will come to our fest. That I haven't tried to do yet. When George and Agneta invited, they used the method that when the Errebos had been often together with families, they invited the whole family. With others they invited only the young people. I think if we use the same method then it would be about the same number. Then there comes another question--shall the party be here at home or in the hall? In the hall there is more room and in a way more comfortable and it will go faster with the meal, but on the other hand it will take more work with the preparations than here.

Now there is some time yet, before that day, but we have the right to think about it. Ingeborg shall help and maybe you can come a week or two before the time and then we can all help with what preparations are needed and then we can also get others to help. We also don't have to have so big a party, as they did, just so it is enjoyable.

Good morning, Sigrid! Now it is Monday morning. Last night after I had written to you I drove over to the pasture to see after the cattle and when I got home the Holms were here and awhile after came your brother. Holger says it is not going very well with keeping house alone and he wishes soon to get his wife and daughter home.

I have to go out now and get the horses for the cultivator. This is a little poor that you get this time but it is written with joy and love.

With the dearest greetings from your Harald.  
Greetings to all from Mother and me.

June 30, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Many thanks for all the letters, one last Monday and two on Saturday. It is amazing at all the rain you are having this year and sad for them that must suffer under it. We here need rain. We have only had one or two small rains for over a month . We will though probably be without rain for some days when the harvest is ready.

You say that I probably think that you are " becoming unfaithful". What about me, today it is a whole week since I wrote last. I have been so taken up with my harvest work and in the evening have been quite tired so I thought I couldn't write. I should wish that I had sent a little greeting nevertheless for I can understand that you were afraid that we also were about to wash away. I would now also have it a little too dry than to be drowning. That was sad about Frode's tile works. I hope that it can be repaired again without too much cost and delay. It seemed like he had a good beginning in the business. (Here I think that my grandfather had retired and given the tile works over to Frode, my mother's older brother.)

Now I am at the harvest. It is going good, but I had to repair a little on the machine yesterday. The kernels are good and there will be quite a bit more than last year. I am using horses this year. It is nice and cool weather. The wind has been in the NE so we have gotten some Iowa air here.

Yesterday Holger drove to Dakota right after noon. He would like to have his wife home again.

Last Thursday evening the Dehlens had a little dance at the hall for her two sisters who are here. They are traveling tomorrow to New York and sailing then to Denmark to be there for the summer. That can be a very enjoyable trip. Maybe we can sometime make such a trip.

Now I must go out and get some more wheat harvested. One must make use of the time. I hope you can read this because it is hasty work.

So may you have it so good. Lovingly,

Your Harald

July 3, 1924

My dear Sigrid,

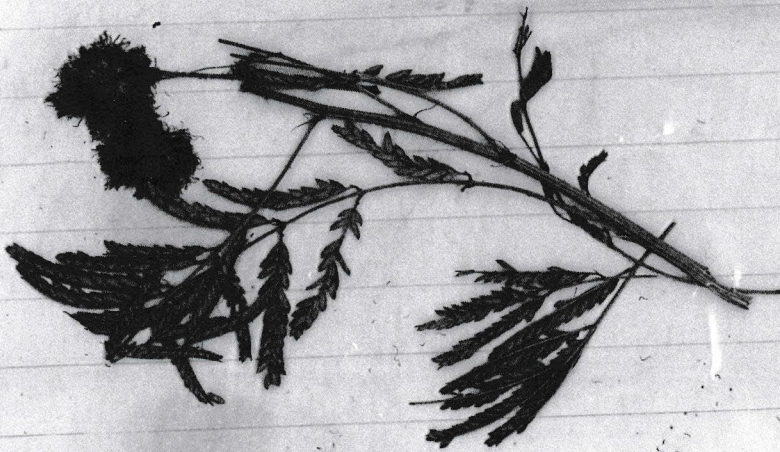
You shall have many thanks for the letter which came yesterday. Last Saturday you were probably disappointed because you got no letter from me, so I shall try to get one off today so you can have it on Sunday. It is now noon and we have just eaten. I am still harvesting and it is going good. If the weather holds I think I can be done tomorrow. The weather has been unusually good this year, dry but not warm and the wheat ripens right. It is some heavy sheaves this year.

You ask what one thinks about that you will rather that our wedding shall be here. Mother will like that it should be here and feels good about it. I don't know what others think about it. I have not said that to more than maybe one or two but they will all get to know in time.

No, I don't know what that flower is called. I picked it when I brought the cows in that morning when I sent it to you in the letter.

If you wish I will send you a little sample of a wheat spike so then you also will have some Kansas Wheat. I hope the Kansas corn is coming to grow well. Maybe it needs some Kansas sun.

You will now have to excuse me. I have to go off to work. You will get more next time. Greet all at home and be then lovingly greeted, your Harald.



En lille Blomst fra  
Prærien.

July 5, 1924

My dearest Sigrid,

Many thanks for both of your letters which I have just received. I will now right away see that I get a little letter off and see if I can get it sent either to Vesper or Lincoln so you can have it on Monday. I have to go to Denmark with a load of wheat for my neighbor Svendsen. They shall start to thresh in a little while. Next week I will probably be along to help. I don't know yet when they will be coming here.

I finished harvesting, not yesterday but this morning at 10 o'clock. Then I was in Denmark on a little errand. The harvest has gone well and the weather has been unusually good and the wheat is good so I can easily be satisfied. Our wheat buyer in Denmark said that he has bought wheat for 9 years but the wheat he is getting this year is the best.

Well, this is just a greeting which shall be sent either with our banker who lives in Lincoln or our elevator man who lives in Vesper.

I think they will soon come with the machine so I have to get going, so I will get some more written tomorrow. Can you read this?

With love, Your Harald

July 6, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Now it is Sunday afternoon and I have been here and had a good long sleep and gotten rested out after the busyness. I and Ingeborg were in church this forenoon. Our Pastor family came home Friday afternoon. They seem to be in the best condition except that Holger has a cold. He said it was so cold in Nebraska when he drove to Dakota.

Several of us who will be working together in the threshing were together last night and we decided to start on Tuesday. I will be last this year so I don't know when they will come here.

You asked about the strawberries. Yes, there were a lot of them. They started to ripen when I got home. Mother has canned a portion of them so you can maybe get to taste them when you come. Ingeborg has been cooking some gooseberries which will be saved until later. She was over at C.C. Niensens several times to pick. They have so many. They grow wild at Spillman Creek. She has also canned mulberries which we ourselves have many of.

Thanks for the dollar. I will herewith send some of the pictures I have made. You shall get more when I get them made. (I unfortunately cannot find the pictures today so you will have to wait.)

Now it is Monday forenoon. It is trying to rain but nothing has come of it yet. I am today getting the wagons ready for threshing and other things that have to be done here. I also have to fill in some dirt in the portal where the wheat has to be driven in.

Now in four months you will be here, so we won't have to write anymore and then we can more easily follow each other in our thoughts and work. Yes, Sigrid, that ~~were~~ be enjoyable. I think that we will know each other very well, but a little disagreement once in awhile is not harmful if it is done with love.

Now I must go and take hold again. I just had to get this finished to get in the mail.

Greet everyone. Many loving greetings, Your Harald



July 10, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Just a couple of words today. I have to be off now and help with the threshing. I drive the wheat to town so the work is not hard but one has to be there on time. They threshed 900 bushels yesterday afternoon. It rained a little the night before so we could not thresh yesterday forenoon. They will probably be here next week.

So with the dearest greetings, Your Harald

July 14, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letters, one Friday and one Saturday.

Ingeborg and I were in Lincoln last night and heard a cantata at the Presbyterian church and we had a lovely rain during that time, but the roads were not bad to drive on and we are glad for the rain which we needed, but now we can't thresh in the forenoon.

So you are singing "It was a Saturday evening". Yes, so I can sing, too "It has so lately rained, and the trees, they are dripping still." It has otherwise gone good with the threshing. We got a couple of small rains last week, just enough to stop the threshing for a half day.

You asked how Ela looks now and how she is. I can hardly answer that. She was along to church a week ago and that is the only time I have seen her. I was there at their house just for a short time Saturday but then Ela must have been sleeping and I didn't see her. Holger shall now be out to help George Madsen with the threshing. He will drive sheaves to the threshing machine.

So you don't think that it is unreasonable that we again have a visit. I don't think that either and there is nothing better I would wish to do, but if it happens that is the other question. I could take one more trip in my Ford but I don't think it is right that all the work here at home shall be put on Mother and Ingeborg.

It is amazing with all the storm and bad weather Iowa has this year. We had a letter the other day from Cedar Falls. Ellen wrote that they had been on a trip to Hampton and saw the damage that happened from the storm. The ones that had born the greatest loss is P. Lund. Almost all the houses except the apartment house are destroyed. They think that there is damage costing 8-9 thousand dollars.

Now I must go out and get something done. There is enough to take ahold of. I don't know yet for sure what I will do. I think that I shall, among other things, go over to see how the cattle are doing.

Be greeted the dearest from Your own Harald.

Greetings to all!

July 18, 1924

My dear Sigrid!

Now tomorrow you will not get a letter from me. I wonder what you will say to that? I hope that you get this on Monday.

It rained last night so we could not thresh today. They should otherwise have come in the afternoon, but we will probably get them on Monday, and then there is only one place more that I will be helping this time. You asked about the price of wheat. Yes, that is better than last year. One can get \$1.00 per bushel now and then there is about twice as much wheat. We have heard that some have gotten as high as 40 bushels per acre but it is more usual between 20 and 30. It is usually nearest 20. I expect to get 20 or maybe a little over.

It was a nice rain we had last night. We needed that. The corn has just begun to set ears.

We got a letter from Cedar Falls some days ago. Axel and Ellen are thinking about taking a trip that we talked about when we were there. They think about leaving C. F. the 11<sup>th</sup> of August and will be here about the 9<sup>th</sup> of September. "Could we then come for a wedding at the same time but they will probably wait a couple of months" says Ellen. The children shall be with some others while they are on the trip. That is not a very long time to make such a long trip. They will go to Canada and then through Oregon, Washington and California and then through Kansas on the way home. Did you get the wheat I sent on Monday? I was thinking about sending you a whole sheaf as it comes from the machine but then I thought that there was no need to and so I found an old paper box and made the wheat fit in the box.

It is such a comfortable evening tonight. Out here on the east porch it is just right to be. I just wish that you were here too. I think that it is just as good as Iowa tonight. Now it is not so long until you will be here but then we might have to be in where it is warmer but then next year there will come a summer again. We have only had one day lately which was very warm and that was last Wednesday. That was over 100 degrees.

Now you must greet "your girls", your brother and wife and all in the home. Greetings to all from Mother. The dearest greetings, Your Harald

July 20. 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Many thanks for the better. It is so quiet in the house. Mother and Ingeborg are both sleeping a little now right after noon. We were in church this forenoon, Ingeborg and I. There were not very many there. It rained last night so driving was not the best but the road was almost dry again when we drove home.. You asked about the threshing. We have not had them here yet. We have had a great deal of rain lately which has postponed the threshing but it will probably be the first of this week. There will not be such a little flock to cook for. I think there will be about 24 for dinner at noon. Morning and evening are there not so many. How will you like to cook for these?

This morning I was reading the report from Tyler. It seems like they had a good meeting there. There were probably many along from Kimballton. You don't have so far to go from there.

Saturday noon

Dear Sigrid, now it is almost a week since I started this letter. It is good that you can't reach so far or else it would have come to something with pulling me by the ear. I started this letter Sunday afternoon and thought to finish it in the evening but then we drove to Lincoln with Holger, Dora and Ela and it has been a busy time since then. Now the threshing is over. We got finished Thursday forenoon. We had them here Tuesday and Wednesday forenoon. I got 2085 bushels and that I am well satisfied with.

Dora said on Sunday that I will have to come and take care of Ela because I taught her to go up the stairs. That she wants to do constantly now.

This forenoon I began to plow for wheat. It plows fine now. Now I have to go to Lincoln to pay some bills, among others my doctor bill.

Thanks for the letters, one on Wednesday and one today. Tomorrow I shall see to get more written and shall then be more diligent with writing hereafter. I just want to get this along to Lincoln now. Greetings to all.

Dearest, Your old Boy

July 26  
Sunday afternoon

My dear Sigrid,

Now I must see if I can get a more or less orderly letter written to you. You have only received a little once in awhile lately but now the busy threshing time is over and I can have permission to be home again. There is of course always something to do and that is also good when it is not overdone. Yesterday I got started on plowing, I use the "Fordson" tractor so it shall not take a very long time. It depends on getting it plowed early because the early plowed land usually gives the best wheat. The ground shall have time to become packed together before it shall be planted again. You maybe don't care about getting a lecture about farming in Kansas so I will see think about something else to write about.

I was yesterday down with Dr. Sutton who came here last summer. When I came in to him, the first thing he asked about was whether I got married. That he had heard. He said then that he would give a wedding gift if I would let him know when it will happen. He said that it would be an aluminum pot or pan. It shall be big but light so it will not harm me if I get it on my head sometime. He always has so much fun to tease. He hasn't seen me for 7-8 months and I had to take my shoe off so he could see how the ankle looks now.

Yes, the time goes fast and it is not long until the day when we mark the reality that we are wife and husband and no longer children. We have both become so used to living as we do now so it seems like it can't be otherwise, but I believe that it will be a lovely change.

I was in church this forenoon. alone, Ingeborg had some headache. It was English today, we now have English service the second and fourth Sunday every month. This afternoon I read the "Dannevirke". There is some good reading there this time.

So now I will see to getting those pictures made one of these first evenings. I will have more time in the evenings hereafter. In the time I was threshing the clock became many times 9-10 before I was finished with my work. I had ahold of my viola a little today. That is the first time in about a month so I have forgotten the little that I had learned. We shall probably have practice again now.

It has been a warm day today and we hope to soon get a rain again. The corn stands good still but a rain will do good. We have otherwise not had it bad with heat this year. Just an occasional day has it been uncomfortably hot.

Now it is soon bedtime. I started at 6 o'clock and then was interrupted when I had to eat and milk, etc. So Good Night, Sigrid.

Good morning, Sigrid! Now I have milked and shall just begin to eat, so I must be off to the field. Mother asks to greet you all and then greetings also from me.

Dearest, Your Harald

Vesper, Kan. Aug. 2, '24

My dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letter which came yesterday. It made me happy to hear from you, but it is sad that your Mother is not well. I hope that she is again up and around.

It is now Saturday morning and I must just have a couple of lines off before I go out to plow. It is going well. I have plowed every day this week. I think that I can be finished sometime next week.

So Arne thinks that it has taken me a whole day to find those spikes. You may greet him and say that you misunderstood him. It took not very many minutes. I took only two sheaves, naturally nice sheaves, and then I pulled some spikes out from the top and let some of the shorter straw fall from underneath them, tied them together and took a saw and sawed them off so they could go in the box which I had.

You wrote about all the different meetings you shall have soon. Do you think you will miss some of that when you come here? Here we have not much of that kind.

Now the clock struck seven and I would have written more last night but then I had trouble with the engine of the light machine (generator?). I could not get it to go. Now I have be off. So tomorrow I will have better time.

The lovingest greetings, Harald. Greet your Mother and Father.

August 3, 1924

Dearest Sigrid,

Now is this day soon over. It has been a warm day. Ingeborg and I were in church today. Holger preached well today about "The Solid Stand" or "A Life Vision", Only the one who with Peter can say "You are Christ, the Son of the living God." has that solid stand or life's vision.

I greeted Holger from you today. He said he has expected a letter lately but now he can understand that it is because Mother was sick. I hope she is up again now.

Wednesday morning. Dear Sigrid, again it is past time to get a letter off to you. I got started on Sunday evening but was interrupted and on Monday evening I had to go to song practice to practice some songs for a funeral which will be at 10 o'clock. It is Mrs. Louis Nelson who will be buried. She has been sick for several years. Some years ago she had one leg taken off to save her life but now the sickness took overhand.

I read quite a bit in "Ungdom" (Youth) yesterday. There are many good readings this time. I was especially glad with V.S.Jensen's "Folkelig Fælleskab" (Simple Community). He has common sense and good meaning in what he writes. I thought also that it was some crude remarks they came out with--Herrer, Møller and Nielsen. It is strange that they can live in all that wickedness there is here in America. The most of my schooling has been in the public school and I have respect for all those that have been teachers for me.

Now you must excuse me but I must be off so you will not get more this time.

Many dearest greetings,  
Your Harald

Greet your parents!

August 7, 1924

My Dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for both letters, one yesterday and one the day before. The first had been in Sylvan Grove.

Now I am finished with plowing for wheat. Now if we can just get some rain to soften up the soil but it will come. The corn also needs rain but today is cloudy so maybe we can get some moisture. Yes, the cattle have become a great deal bigger this summer, there has been good grass. I think that I will send them to Kansas City sometime in the end of summer or first in the fall. I had thought to fatten them up with corn but I have not enough for that and it is too expensive to buy, so that will not happen unless corn goes down in price.

Yes, we have also had some warm days but it has not been bad all the time. The other day it was up to 104 degrees but I could stand that well enough, even though I was on the tractor and got heat from that, too. No, it is not hard work but one gets as black as a negro from all the dust and then gets well shaken up, and it gets somewhat tiring.

So you will visit the other old women, no, pardon me, that should be Young Women. Yes, that you can certainly do. Yes, I don't think that it will be difficult for us to be in agreement.

There is so much more I would like to write about, but that had better wait until tomorrow so I can have more time. I have to go out and get something done, but you should just have this little greeting today.

Dearest, Your Harald

August 11, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter today. I wrote on Saturday but then I was too late with it for the mail and Ingeborg had driven away with the Ford so I couldn't go anywhere else with it, so it got away first today. I meant that you should not get two letters in one day so I didn't write yesterday. It was also tight with time yesterday. We had a funeral yesterday afternoon. Old Mrs. A. Rasmussen died on Wednesday, (that is Mrs. Kintzelo and Julius' mother.) They waited with her funeral until yesterday so two daughters in California could come. Mrs. Rasmussen had been sick just 24 hours so it was somewhat unexpected that she died. There was a big attendance for the funeral and many flowers. That is now two of the older who are dead in the space of one week.

You wrote something in your last letter about F.O.F. I cannot say anything about that because I have not seen F.O.F. all summer. I cannot really join myself with that spirit and tone which rules in that paper. I think they could well have used "Dannevirke" and "Ungdom". I think that what can't come along in those papers isn't worth much. Maybe my meaning is not right. Yes, I mean like you that it is the home that is and must be the boundaries (guidance) and not the school. There is one thing more that has seemed offensive for me in what K.N. and Aa. M. write and that is that one gets an impression that they think that they are so much more intellectual than other people. That is probably also why they can't use public schools. I am afraid they scatter instead of gather. That will the time now show what they can do, that is to hope that they can get something straightened out. I think there are others who could better lead Højskole (Folk school) than Aa Møller.

So you think that we should first try if we can be happy with being together and then have a party or not. Now what takes place with the wedding party, I don't know really what I would rather do. I think well about a wedding in the church and what then takes place with a party after that, that will need a great deal of work and effort but one also has the right to take as many or as few along as one will. If we could just talk together about it, I think we could soon decide how it shall be. What takes place with what is custom that the brides family puts on the party, that custom can be broken.

Be then most dearly greeted from Your Harald.  
Greetings to all from us all.

August 14, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Just a greeting today. It is now time for the mail. Finally I have been serious about getting some pictures made as you see. I have more that you shall get later.

There was a letter from you yesterday for Ingeborg. Maybe I will get one today, but I have no reason to complain. I had to have a cord around some of your letters otherwise they could not be in the drawer.

Now I have to be off...

Dearest, Your Harald

August 23, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for the letters, one today and one on Wednesday. It has again gone over time with getting something off, but now this afternoon I shall go to Lincoln on business and will then get something along for you.

I don't mean at all that I get too many letters but I can see that you are better at writing than I am.

Yes, we have also had it warm lately. There was one day this week that the thermometer showed 106 degrees but it hasn't been quite so bad the last days. We have been cutting corn with the binder the last days. It became too hot and dry for it, so it got ripe too early. We have now not had any rain but they have had some not far from here. They say that it rained 3 inches in Salina the night before last.

So you are getting an idea of where the new house will lay. No, it does not lay to the East but to the North. The old lays more South-east but it is so far to carry water up there, so that we shall not have any more of. It has not been much yet with building but all shall have its time.

You should just be here so then you would not be bothered with all those mosquitoes. It is seldom that we feel any of them. It is probably too dry for them here.

If only I could sit here all afternoon, then you would get a long letter, but I have to go, so I will see if I can get some more off tomorrow.

Dearest, Harald

August 24, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Now is this day at an end and now we shall soon be off to a lecture in Denmark Hall. Holger speaks tonight on Livingstone. Today there was no time to write a letter. Ingeborg and I were over at S. Andersen's this afternoon.

That is good that the mood has become better again at your place. I can understand that one sometimes feels alone among other people. That I do also at times. I don't know more than one of the men here in our congregation's circle who is not married or older than me and there are not so many of the young that I feel really together with, an old boy like me, and I can believe that you have something like that, but we will soon be over that. Then we shall be more sensible as man and wife. You can believe that I am thankful that you will leave "that group you have now known for 16 years" to follow with me.

Now Ingeborg says we shall be on our way so I will come again later. Good morning, Sigrid! Now it is then Tuesday morning. Yesterday I finished with harvesting corn but it is not all in shocks yet, but that is what I will do today.

I will gladly get you in Vesper but if you can surprise me by coming before I expect you, that would be fun. If that should happen, you can just call 1805 on the Denmark telephone, then I shall come. It would be nice if your parents could come along but if they can't, then we will accept that.

Now you have had U. meeting in Kimballton and now it will be in Nysted. Mr. and Mrs. Morgensen and Vendela, Ingeborg, Edna Andersen and Niels Nielsen are going along to Nysted. They will be on their way now on Thursday. I hope that we will be able to come outside of Denmark once in awhile when we really come into our nest. Then we can maybe visit Karl Nielsen and Aage Moller and others.

Yes, I got those pictures somewhat too dark and I didn't notice it before the day after I made them. I should have discovered it sooner.

Now I must go out to shock the corn, and so in the morning get started to work on the hen house again.

Affectionately, Your own Harald

U. meeting--maybe Ungdom's (Young People's meeting)



August 28, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Many thanks for the good letter which I received yesterday. I was thinking about going along to Nysted and Ingeborg would have let me go instead of her but we have not had wind for the windmill to pump water so the cattle needed water, so as much as I would like to go, I can't go and let the cattle need water.

Can't you come with them to Nysted? If you can then I will drive to Mankato, Kansas when you shall go home again, and then I will also drive the car home for you to Kimballton. Mankato lies about 50-60 miles north from there on the Rock Island train line which goes right to Atlantic and I think that one can travel from Mankato to Atlantic in about 12 hours. It would be nice if we could get together, wouldn't it? You would have to decide for how long it would be. Now Ingeborg will soon be leaving. If I could I just go along, then we would have it good together for some days, but that will just happen if you can come.

Lovingly, Your own Harald

August 30, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Thanks for the letter received today. I thought that you were in Nysted, therefore I have not sent a letter but I sent one to Nysted with Ingeborg. I meant that I should try to get you to go along with them on the trip, but then you stayed home. Maybe then you will come here much sooner. Now it is just 62 days until November 1 and that time can soon go.

When I heard that you thought of going to Nysted, it almost became that I took off for Nysted instead of Ingeborg, but then it happened that we had almost no wind for three days before Thursday and the cattle needed water when the windmill hadn't pumped. On Thursday I let Ingeborg travel and I took over and pumped water with the Fordson. I had promised Ingeborg \$10 if she would stay at home and let me travel and that she would have done.

I can't imagine how you will go about coming and surprising me when it shall be a "surprise", but I will not know how!

It is too warm today to be comfortable but now we have almost September, so it will get better. We had a little rain the other night, but we can stand a great deal more.

I will try to get this off today by one or another way.

Lovingly, Your own old Boy

Sunday evening  
August 31, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Today I have been home all day except for a quick trip over to see after the cattle. We have had nice weather today, we had again a little rain this morning which helped to cool the air.

Last night I dreamed about our wedding but it got disturbed when I woke. We were at the school in Des Moines.

Today I was reading some of Holger Brytrup in "Dannevirke" also, that about him at the meeting in Kimballton. You are not the only one who has been glad to hear him. Yes, I wish that I could have been along to that meeting. Holger said that we can get the young Brytrup here but I haven't heard more about what will come of that.

Wednesday evening--

My dear Student! You will have to begin to teach me. I got started on a letter to you on Sunday but then that was all.

Thanks for the letter today. Yes, we await the Cedar Falls people in the next week. We also got a card from them and Axel said that he has just written a card to Miss K. I didn't know who he meant with Miss K, but I thought that it was you. Last night the Denmark people came back from Nysted. They have had a good, big meeting. Holger, Adolph Morgensen and Vendela played for them in Nysted and Mrs. Morgensen sang a solo. It rained so much in Nysted Sunday night so they didn't leave until Tuesday.

I have been planting rye today which shall be for the cows. Tomorrow we will start to harrow the ground for wheat. I say "we" because I am thinking about trying to get Sheppard who lives over in the Hut to harrow so I can get to work on the hen house again. I have not yet seen out Pastor since they came home from Nysted, so I can't tell anything about that.

Tonight I got ahold of a letter which I wrote home once when I was in Des Moines in 1906. Ellen was also in Des Moines and Axel was in Grayling, Michigan. Among other things I mentioned that I seldom got a letter from Axel and I was not really satisfied with that because Ellen got letters 2-3 times a week. I can understand that better now.

What do you think about the piece in "Ungdom" about "One of the Young"? I think that it is good. It falls so well together with V.S. Jensen's answer to H.U.

So Good Night Dearest, Your Harald

Axel was Harald's brother. This was written before he married Ellen.

September 7. 1924

My Dear Sigrid,

Thanks for the letter. Now it is Sunday evening. We have today had a visit from Holger, Dora and Ela. Ela is thriving well, she is not so little bigger than the last time I saw her, but she is very active.

It seems like Bytrup has not been as successful with the Nysted meeting as in Kimballton. They say that much of what he talked about was not fitting for a Young People's meeting, especially for the young from this country.

Tomorrow I think I will be finished with harrowing. I have to do it myself because the man over here in the hut has work at other places.

I have a question for you to answer if you will. I am thinking about letting Mattsons order a new set of clothes for me for our fest and would like to know what color clothes you think I should get. There is no hurry yet but it takes some time when it has to be ordered and made in Chicago. I have once ordered some clothes there and I think it is the best I have had.

Now it is time to go to rest. I was up early this morning when I helped a neighbor drive some cattle to the station.

Good morning, Sigrid. Now we have another work day. It is probably not long before frost in Iowa in the mornings. Here it is about 50 degrees. It is good the corn in Iowa was allowed to ripen. They say here in Kansas this year that if the corn in Iowa doesn't get ripe then they will have the animals eat the soft corn, and then we can better sell our animals. I don't know it that is true.

Mrs. Dora had big company on Saturday. All the women around here came for coffee. That was decided at Ladie's Aid meeting last Wednesday. You asked once when the Bazaar will be. I have not heard yet anything about that so I think it is not decided yet.

I don't think either that we will become more sensible, but one sees though, not so seldom, that when a couple gets married they become at once more sensible. Now I must get to work. It is not long until the wheat must be planted. Greetings to all of you, also from Mother.

Dearest, your Harald

September 11, 1924

My dear Sigrid!

Now we have had a visit from Axel and Ellen. We got them in Ellsworth yesterday morning, but it will be just a short visit. They leave again tomorrow morning early. They have had a good trip. There was a letter from Theodore here for them and he told that Lars Nielsen, who lived in the second house south of the parsonage, died after an operation for gallstones. That is so surprising for them because he was one they got most together with and he drove them to the station and was then the last man they saw in Cedar Falls. In the last "Dannevirke" it said that he was doing well after the operation.

Now it is noon. Thanks for the letter received today. Yes, I think too that the time goes fast, but it seems, too, that it is more than a year since you were here but it is not quite a year since your left for home. Yes, it can be arranged that you can come down and stay with Dora for awhile.

We were down for a quick visit with them yesterday afternoon but Holger was working so they are coming here this afternoon instead. Maybe Axel and Ellen will come here for our wedding, but they will not promise it.

(It is amusing to tease when there are Love letters to write. Ellen cares much for Harald and I now write for Harald to Miss K.--Axel)

Now I was disturbed by Ellen and then Axel took over to write for me. Ellen teased me also before noon that she would not let me have your letter. Now I again have peace.

We got a letter from little Ingrid awhile ago and she wrote that we should greet Aunt Sigrid. She is the only one of the children we have received a letter from. She has been out on a farm. Now they are all in town to go to school.

Yesterday it was 18 years since Axel and Ellen were married and 19 years since Axel was ordained as pastor here in Denmark. Yes, it is strange to think that it is that long ago. Greetings from all of us. We are all well.

Dearest, Your Harald

Dear greetings from Ellen.

September 20, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Many thanks for the letters, one today and one on Monday, no Tuesday it was. Yes, I would also really like to have been along on Tuesday, but we will have to wait some days yet.

This morning I was in Denmark and arranged for two freight wagons for my cattle and on Monday I will travel along with them to Kansas City. I hope then that there may be good prices for the cattle on Tuesday. I expect to be in Kansas City Tuesday morning by 4:00-5:00 o'clock. Today I have been busy to get ready for Monday, but you shall hear more from me the following days. You must greet your parents and Frode and Rigmor from me. Yes, if there are others who would like a greeting from me you may greet them also.

I think the freight will soon come with the "cars" so I must get to Denmark and have them in order to travel on Monday. I will have to work some tomorrow also.

The dearest greetings,  
Your Harald

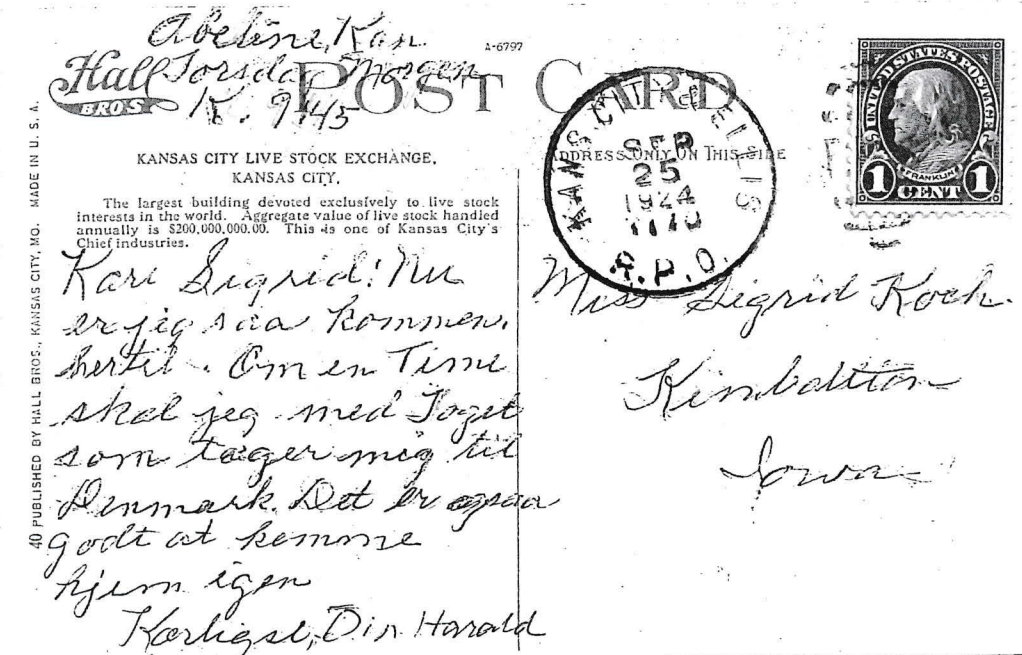
A postcard from Kansas City with a photo of the Kansas City Live Stock Exchange, a very large nine story building. On the back it says "The largest building devoted exclusively to live stock interests in the world. Aggregate value of live stock handled annually is \$200,000,000.00. This is one of Kansas City's chief industries."

Abilene, Kansas  
Thursday 9:45 AM

Dear Sigrid,

Now I have come this far. In an hour I shall take the train that takes me to Denmark.. It is also good to come home again.

Dearest, Your Harald



September 27, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

It is best that I get a letter off to you again or you will probably get long in the face. Yes, it has also been little that I have written lately.

Thanks for the letters! One lay here and waited for me when I came home the day before yesterday and then I got another one yesterday. It is good that your mother is improving. I hope that she is well again.

Yesterday Ingeborg left so Mother and I are alone again. Maybe Ingeborg has told you that she is going to become a nurse. She traveled to Wichita, Kan. That is about a good 100 miles from here.

It is probably best that we have a wedding without a party, now that Ingeborg can't help with it. I have thought about a wedding in the church and inviting all that would like to come. Maybe have Holger announce that on the Sunday after the service. What do you think? It would be enjoyable if all your parents and brothers and families could be along. I had been thinking some about coming up to visit you when I was in Kansas City but I knew Ingeborg wanted to get going and I went home as fast as I could. I didn't get as much for my cattle as I had hoped. I sold 30 for 2 ½ cents (per pound) and 13 for 5 ½ cents and three old cows for 2 ½ cents. I am thinking about buying some smaller cattle again in about two months before the price goes up so maybe I can have a bigger profit from them.

We have it quite dry. We would like to have a good rain now before the wheat shall be planted. I was glad to read your little story by Mrs. Madsen and I know also that it was written with love.

Now I have to go out and make something with the corn binder. (I shall soon start to harvest sorghum). I also have to go down to Denmark Bank this forenoon and have some business things taken care of..

Greetings to all of you.

Dearest, Your own Harald

September 30, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

Thanks for the letter yesterday. I shall now go to Denmark and have a greeting along to you. I have been out to harvest sorghum and it is almost noon so I don't have much time.

I was last night along to music practice. Holger told Mother yesterday afternoon that it would take place and asked how she is. She answered "It is not good. I have so much to do." So he said "That will soon be better." "Yes, that I comfort myself with." said Mother.

There is more I should write about but it will have to wait or I shall get too late for the mail. Greetings to all.

Dearest, Your own Harald

Vesper, Kan. Oct. 1, 1924

Dear Sigrid!

You would maybe like to have a letter from me again. The last one became so short. Now we will see if this can become somewhat longer.

Now we have the first of October, when it becomes 1<sup>st</sup> of November then you will be in Denmark. I have gone in this bachelor's life for so long so it is a little hard to understand that it soon will end, but the reality will soon show us how it shall be and it will certainly be good. We shall surely try to make it as good as we can understand.

You ask if that cattle business isn't actually a kind of gamble. Yes, that it is, but so also is the whole farming business here. One never knows if one will produce anything and if one produces something one never knows how the payment will be. There is though that difference that if one keeps on with farming one will more often win out in time than compared to if one keeps on gambling will one most often lose. The cattle I sold I paid too much for so the earnings became not so big. I am thinking about buying some small cattle again in a couple of months while they are still cheaper so maybe next time I can have a larger earning. This year as a whole has not been bad. It could of course have been better. I have though paid over \$1000 of debt this year. If I can do that every year I will in a few years be without debt. I don't know if you want to know what debt I have. I owe a loan business \$2000.00, Ingeborg about \$2000.00, Mother \$1500.00, Axel \$500.00 and the Denmark bank \$500.00. I paid \$9000.00 for the land I bought and then I have also this at home. It is this I owe Mother \$1500 on. So you can figure out about how the situation is. We shall get what we need and I shall certainly eat your kringler but I don't know if I can make any. I usually have a good appetite. The other day I was up at Mattson's and looked at some proofs, then Niels (he works there) came and asked if I shall have myself a wedding suit. I said yes. I have not yet ordered that, but that will soon be. Now you will not get more this time.

The dearest greetings,

Your "Studepranger" ?

Monday, October 5, 1924

My dear Sigrid!

Many thanks for letters yesterday and Thursday. Yes, it fits very well with the plan for the wedding on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The only thing that might be in the way is if Axel's can't so well be away from home on a Sunday. That I don't know, but we can ask them. We got a letter from Ingeborg yesterday. She said that she can get a week off and will like to know when the wedding will be.. She has been sewing clothes, "Uniform" for herself. I will write to her also now.

So there is another thing but I don't know if it is so much to say. If there are not so many in church that Sunday forenoon, then folks might say "We would like to have come but didn't know anything about it." I don't wish that there should be an overflowing number only that there are enough to make it cozy and festive. I don't know if you can approach this in a different manner. I don't mean that we shall send written invitations. It can also be that that there can be enough coming with it only being announced in church in the forenoon.

So you would like to have an account about the cattle. Yes, that you can have. When I bought them they cost 7 cents and weighed 450 pounds. I had them two summers and one winter. Now they weighed 835 and it cost 40 cents per 100 pound to get them to Kansas city and get them sold. Shall we then figure that pasture is worth \$4.00 per animal for a summer and \$5.00 to keep one for one winter and also 8% interest 1½ years on what they cost and tax in addition then you can figure out that the profit is not very big. I hope now that gets better next time. I got 6 ½ for 30, 5 ½ for 13.

I shall now start to plant wheat. We need rain though, it is so dry the wheat can't sprout but if we get it in the ground the rain will come sometime. How did it go with the corn in Iowa, did it get hard before the frost came? Here we had frost last Sunday night.

It is sad that it is taking so long for your mother to become herself again. Greet her!

This morning Dora and Ela rode with Adolf Morgensons to Salina so Holger has been home alone today.

So good day: now it is Monday morning so one must again take hold where one left off. It has not come any farther with building the house for the hens but as soon as I can get the wheat planted I will see if I can get a man to help me and then it will go.

Today it is cloudy so we hope that it will be rain but that I hoped almost all summer but it has just become so little but we will get by anyway.

Now we shall try to get another month to go. Next month it will be our month.

The dearest greetings,

Greetings to all from Mother.

Your Harald



Vesper Kan., Oct. 11, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

It is hard again to get the time to last. I am busy now with planting wheat but when that is done I will not do any more work in the field for this year. It is almost half planted. I am early on my way with writing today. The clock struck five. The moon was shining so bright so I had to get up and see what time it was, then I crawled back to bed and lay here now to write this. I had thought to write last night but was hindered when Mrs. Olga Morgensen would have me come up to Denmark Hall to be along in a program that we are practicing for the Women's Society's bazaar which will be next Friday. What shall I buy for you?

When we are done with that, then I will be along to play comedy. We are going to play a little piece by Karl Hansen, "Victor". Do you know that? I shall play an old farmer in Nebraska and Mrs. Morgensen shall be my wife. I think it shall be performed either the first or second Sunday evening in Nov.

We received yesterday a letter from Ellen. She asked me to greet you. The letter was written in Illinois. She has been there to visit her parents and family. It looks like it will happen that they will move to Los Angeles. I have not gotten it read in K.S. as you mentioned but tomorrow I will get it read.

Now it has become day and I have done my morning work and had something to eat. I wrote yesterday to Axel and asked if <sup>it</sup> works for them to come for Nov. 16. We had a letter from Ingeborg yesterday. She is coming and expects to be home for 3-4 days. Nothing will come of your parents moving into the house in town for the present?

I can understand that you worry some of going away from them, but there are so many times something we can't really understand how it can go but it goes well anyway.

Frode is not so far away and he will surely come to help them if needed. Now, over to the mail box with this and then the wheat.

Dearest,

Your old boy

Tuesday evening  
Oct. 14, 1924

My dearest Sigrid!

Now three days have gone of this week and I have not sent a word from me but that is not because I have not thought about you. I can now tell you that I have been somewhat naughty in that I have not followed your advice, but I don't know if I have acted right and I can also make you aware that I don't always do what is right, but you will help me to make it right.

I have now ordered my suit and it will not be brown. Mother says that I have a set of brown so I should get either gray or black, so it will be gray. If now you will know me and will be known with me when you see me in the gray clothes, then it will be good. It is now a long time since I have had gray clothes so I don't know really how it will suit me.

Last night I was at music at Albert Mattson's. We shall play Friday evening at the bazaar.

Holger's sermon lately has been warning against gathering wealth, and there is of course a big danger that one can become taken by it so it becomes the center of one's life. I have noticed that danger, but I don't think there is any evil to own property if only it can earn life, but one sees though so often that people set all on earning money.

Now I have about three days more work left to plant wheat. I am planting about 110 acres in all. Now if only it will soon get some rain so it can grow

I have been away the last two evenings so I will go to bed and get some sleep that I feel that I need. So goodnight! Can you then pull my ear in the morning?

Now we should say good morning again, but we can not hear each other. Now I am about ready to go out in the field again.

I am waiting now to hear from Axel one of the first days. I hope they can come on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

It is good that your mother is about well again. Now the work at the tile works is almost over for the year so your parents can take it easy all winter. They must have gotten a great deal made at the tile works this summer. Where shall Harald go when he leaves you? He will probably stay in Kimballton.

It is good that the people here in Denmark were glad with you and that I can well understand, so they will be glad to see you here again. It is always good to have good friends.

Now I must go. If I get a letter today, you shall get more tomorrow.

Dearest, Your own Harald

Oct. 15, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

I promised you a letter if there was something from you today and it was there. Thanks for that.

I have now read that by Kjølhede that you wrote about a week ago. It was good. That is probably so that most of what people worry about is something that never will happen or if it is not most, then probably a great deal.

You asked today where you should send your freight. I think you can send it to Denmark. Santa Fe R.R. Co has now a railway here and that should come as fast here as to Vesper. I think the freight company from Atlantic is just as good with that railway as with U.P.

No, we have not yet had rain so we are longing for it, but it will come. The wheat will still be good if we get rain soon. We had a little shower last week but it was not enough to do any good.

It will not be a long letter this time, but a letter it is. I have not yet heard from Axel so I don't know if they can come.

Many dear greetings,

Your Harald

Oct. 19, 1924

My Dear Sigrid!

Thanks for the letter on Friday. Now it is Sunday afternoon. I was in church this forenoon. Holger preached well about that we cannot unite (combine) Jesus' thoughts or life with the worlds. We must become familiar with the thought that we are here in this world as pilgrims. There were many in church today.

On Friday was the bazaar. It was well attended and the women did a good business..

There was also a good program under Mrs. Olga Morgensen's leading. That was a pageant called "Grandmother's Dream". An old grandmother came in on the scene and under the tones of a song, she sat down and fell asleep and then she dreamed that which was shown: Scenes all the way from her childhood and up through her life. The first was a little girl who sang with her doll, then her first day in school and then several scenes from school with speaking and song, first some little, and then bigger and bigger. Thereafter a woman with dance and then her wedding day and then a scene where she was in her home with five small children, then a scene where her son was a soldier on the battlefield. At last came Grandfather in and sang a song and Grandmother woke up and sang with him and then came all that took part and sang a song. There were over 30 in all. I bought something for my wife but not of great value.

Now we will begin with "Victor". On Friday evening we shall have practice. It was the meaning that it would be put on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Nov. but I don't think we can hardly get it ready until the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Now I am done with the wheat. Yesterday I was in Lincoln and bought a new rug for our living room here. They had a rug sale and I got a good rug 9 x 12 for \$25. The old one is about worn out. I had thought that you should have been along to buy it but because of that sale I took it upon myself to get it.

It is good that we can soon have our wedding. Now two others of ours are married, I think. Iver Damgaard got married on Wednesday. I don't know the girl, and Edward Larsen and Sara Nielsen (Mrs. Dehlin's sister who was in Denmark this summer) have moved away and I have heard that Mr and Mrs. C.C. Nielsen were going along as witnesses. When I also come along are there four of the old bachelors here from Denmark who are married this year. Niels Nielsen thinks it is because it is leap year.

Now it is Monday and soon time for the mail. I meant to get more along today but didn't have the chance to.

The dearest greetings,  
Your Harald

Sunday evening  
Oct. 26, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Now it is soon time to go to rest but I first have to have a couple of lines put on paper. We got company this evening in that Mr. and Mrs. Kintzel came so no more came of writing.

So now you are busy getting ready to move. It could be fun if I could be there to help with packing together, so I shall help with the unpacking if I may.

Now it will be certain in three weeks, or shall I talk with Holger about it or have you written or shall it wait until you come. Maybe we should also have a little decoration in the church but that we can decide when you are here and Ingeborg comes also and can help some with that, maybe also with other things.

When you shall start writing shorter letters, then I should try to make mine somewhat longer or the mail won't get enough letters for the money. I think I can get more made up but then it depends on if there is anything to it.

In this week the time is somewhat taken up for me in the evening with comedy practice every other evening. We have decided that we will try to put it on next Sunday evening. If only Loise Andersen can get hers, she if not very good in the Danish but maybe it can go better than one thinks. Here there are not very many girls who can use the Danish language.

Monday morning--Good morning, Sigrid mine, I wonder what you are doing today. Now I shall take ahold on the new hen house again. I wish I had it ready now, but that won't happen by itself.

We have it still dry here so there is not any wheat that can grow yet. This will not become so overly much with writing this time. I must get to work.

Dearest, Your Harald

Denmark, Ks. Nov. 1, 1924

Dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for letters. It is hard to get time to write letters this week. I work in stones in the daytime and in the evening I have been to practice three times and shall again tonight.

Yesterday I was in and told Holger what our plan is for the 16<sup>th</sup>. He thought well about it. He was here for practice along with Niels and Hans Thursday evening and he wanted to know how you are and when you are coming, etc. so I thought I should go down and tell some more.

Yesterday I got a letter from Axel. He asked if I would want to buy his car. Then he would drive it down when they come and let it stand for \$250.00. I didn't think that I would want a car so big and I have my Ford but it is starting to get old.

Now Marie Hansen is married. She traveled out to Idaho and married a man who worked for N.C. Jensen last harvest. I have seen him but did not get acquainted with him. Now we will be the next. Mrs. C.C. Nielsen had a party for Sarah and Ed Larsen last Monday evening. Mrs. Nielsen is Edward Larsen's sister. Edward has a farm 2 miles west of Denmark.

I must work some more. I thought you should have a little greeting.

Dearest, Your Harald

Sunday afternoon, Nov. 2

My dear Sigrid!

Maybe this is the last time I write a letter to my girl on a Sunday. I don't know when you are coming but I have a feeling that next Sunday you will be here or just ready to leave your childhood home, but we must see that we make a home here for us both and that I am happy to do.

I have this afternoon been to our last rehearsal of "Victor" and tonight shall we then entertain. I think it will be good. We have really been to practice this last week, but it has been enjoyable.

Monday morning: Now that evening is over and all went well. We had a full house.

I am going to start cutting the top off the sorghum so next week it will be threshed. I will see if I can get a man up to help me for a couple of days.

On Thursday evening we are going up to visit Iver Damgaard, as many as would like. Both of the two newly married couples were along last night, the first time I have seen them as man and wife.

Now it is probably not necessary to write so much when we can soon talk together, so now I am going to work. Maybe there will be a letter today so I will know when you are coming.

Greet yours

Dearest, Your Own Harald

Vesper, Kan. Wed. evening  
Nov. 5, 1924

My dear Sigrid,

Many thanks for your letters, one on Monday and one today. So I got the "last regular letter" from you. Then it is good that I can expect something better than letters, and look forward to meeting you on Tuesday whether Holger or I pick you up in Vesper. That will be a pleasure to plan and decide all for the following Sunday. I don't know how much practice we shall have so we can come really in step etc. but we will get over that part in one or other way.

Last Sunday after we were done with playing comedy, all of us who took part had our coffee at a table on the scene, and then Mrs. Morgensen said "Next time we drink coffee together it will be in a completely different occasion". So I am close to thinking that Dora has told her something, but that she may as far as I am concerned. I didn't say anything to that but she looked at me when she said it. Holger is the only one I have said anything to about it. People know though that it will soon happen that we will have a wedding.

I don't know yet when Axel and Ellen are coming. Ingeborg is coming either Wednesday or Thursday.

I don't think I can write a letter tonight. I can only think about and long after that you will soon come and then look forward to it. Yes, it is good that you are coming soon.

This will probably be the last letter you get from me. Maybe you will not take off before the mail comes on Monday so maybe you will get a greeting from me then.

Will you then greet everyone, both parents and brother and family and then I wish you a good trip here.

Then the dearest greetings from always Your Harald

## EPILOGUE

So the letters ended and, as Harald wrote in that last letter on Wednesday, Nov. 5, he could now "expect something better than letters". Sigrid arrived the following Tuesday, November 11, just five days before the wedding day, November 16.

They had not sent out invitations, but just asked her brother, Pastor Holger Koch, to announce the wedding day in church and that everyone was welcome. The wedding was in the church, the party afterward would be at Harald's home.

Axel and Ellen made it, as did Ingeborg. Sigrid's parents and brother, Frode and his family, did not. Looking at the crowd of friends gathered outside the house, many came to help them celebrate that wonderful day.

So Sigrid began life as a farmer's wife. She had longed for Kansas and her longing had been fulfilled. She had never lived on a farm, so this was a new life for her. She took ahold right away and helped Harald in any way she could, even milking cows.

There were many good times, and it wasn't long before they expected their first child. Sigrid had spent many years taking care of other people's children, and now she would have one of her own. But it was not to be--the baby was stillborn. A short note written by Sigrid, found with the letters said briefly---

Eva Christensen Kildegaard,  
Born September 26, 1925, Sunday  
Died on the same day--8 lbs.  
Denmark, Kansas  
Buried Tuesday--Holger Koch, Pastor

But life goes on, and is evident in the letters, both Harald and Sigrid had a strong faith. It must have been a terribly hard time for both of them. But a year and three months later, December 19, 1926, another little girl was born to them, Agnes Christensen Kildegaard, and again a year and three months later, another little girl, Selma Christensen Kildegaard on March 1, 1928.

In 1930, during the time of the great depression and the dust bowl days in Kansas which made farming very difficult, Harald and Sigrid decided to move to Michigan to a large Danish settlement where Harald's brother, Axel was then serving as pastor. His sister, Ingeborg, had also married and moved to Michigan. Harald sold the farm in Kansas and borrowed money on an additional 300 acres he had purchased but was not able to sell. In November they bought a farm of 120 acres near Gowen, Michigan, for \$6500. When his first payment on the mortgage in Kansas came due, he cashed in a life insurance policy and sent the money. It came a day late and the bank had already foreclosed on it and his money was returned. With the money they decided to buy four cows and get on with farming. Although the times were hard for many people, on the farm there was always enough to eat. They were near family and surrounded by many good people. Harald sang in the choir at the Big Settlement Lutheran Church and became director of the one room Settlement School. Sigrid was active in Ladies Aid and Mission Group. When times were hard, Sigrid would say "Det bliver nok snart bedre." -- It will soon get better.

They both trusted God and knew that he would see them through.



Song from Wedding of Harald Kildegaard and Sigrid Koch

November 16, 1924 – Written by Holger Koch

Sigrid Koch and Kildegaard,  
How good the names do sound  
When one so gets to know  
Wedding bells are ringing.  
Gladly one thinks thoughts of joy  
As this is life's desire  
For one's love to meet.

Her praise I will sing,  
Just as her I knew;  
Ever since she came here  
And until now has waited,  
Traveling to this Kansas land  
Where today she can be found  
In the midst of the married number.

Both with big and with small,  
Can she herself enjoy,  
And with them that burdens have  
Can she rather endure;  
She can weed, she can sow,  
Best in a child's small heart  
All with wisdom for life.

Often has one seen and heard  
Where she, mildly and quietly  
Has told so children were moved  
And were filled with wonder  
Opened their souls a crack,  
For what there is above them  
In God's big world.

And when Christmas came  
Was she their good angel;  
Made the room light and warm,  
Picked a bloom of a stem  
Laid deep in a child's mind,  
Seed that sets glow on the cheek,  
Light for their way.

Sigrid dear, we thank you  
For what you have been.  
Through sickness and in play  
All that you have borne  
With your childlike faith,  
By your calm, sound manner  
And your entire being.

Kildegaard, an escort you'll have  
From a butter maker.  
The heart warm toward her beats;  
She is not someone false.  
She has Martha's busy way,  
But Mary's need to listen  
Was though her strength.

Sigrid Koch and Kildegaard,  
Build then together a home.  
Where life is not at a standstill  
God does not become a stranger;  
He in loving relations lives,  
The home's haven on this earth,  
Life's best possession.







Harald and Sigrid Kildegaard at home in Denmark, Kansas



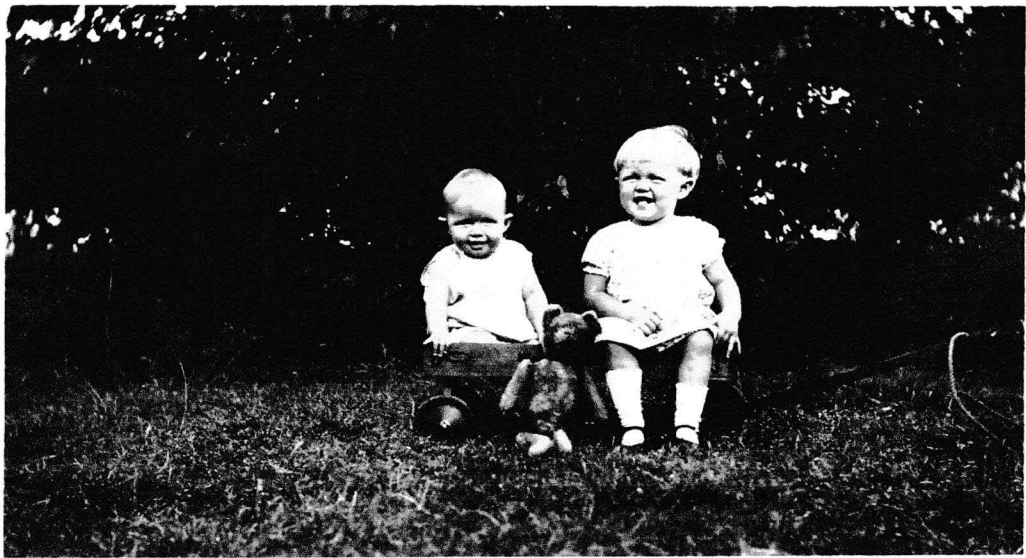
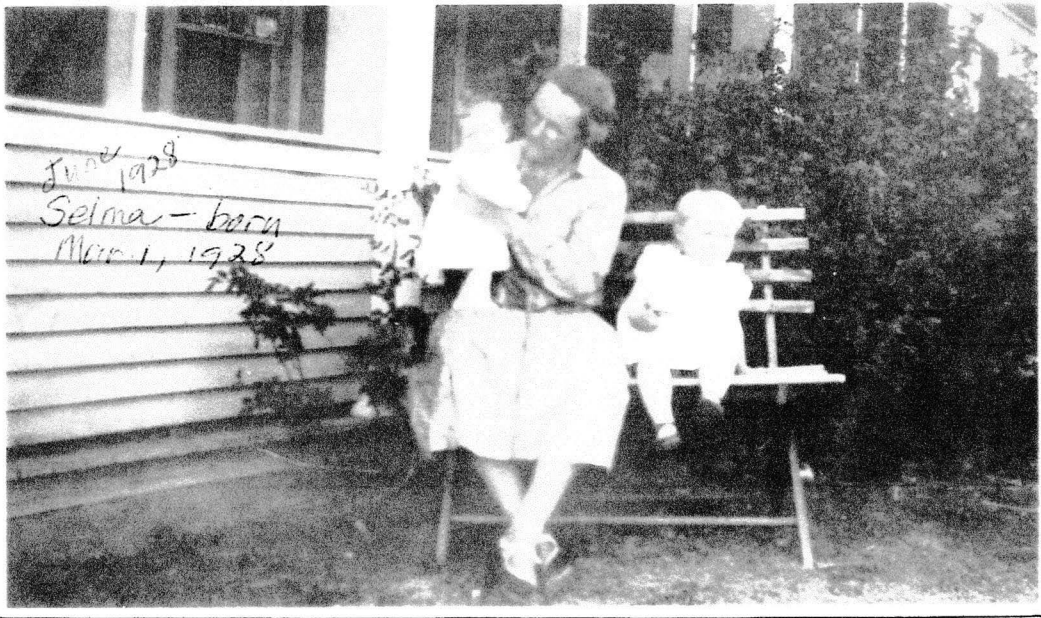
Sigrid, a farmer's wife, though she had never lived on a farm before. Behind her is the new hen house.



Summer 1927. Sigrid and Harald with Agnes (born Dec. 19, 1926.)



December 1928. Harald and Sigrid with Agnes (age 2) and Selma (born March 1, 1928.)



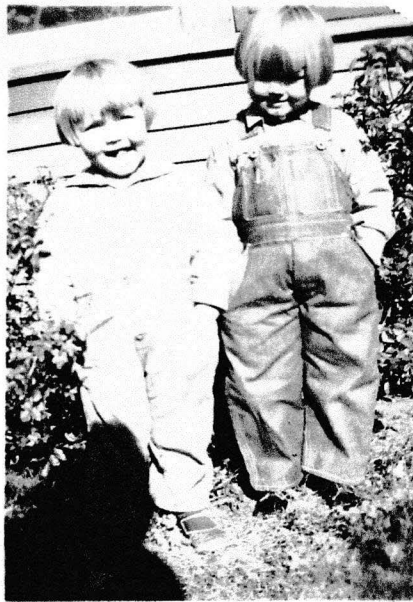
Agnes and Selma, 1928-1929



*Kansas*

*April 1930*

The swing Harald made Agnes and Selma.



The last picture taken in Kansas before moving to Michigan, Nov. 1930.

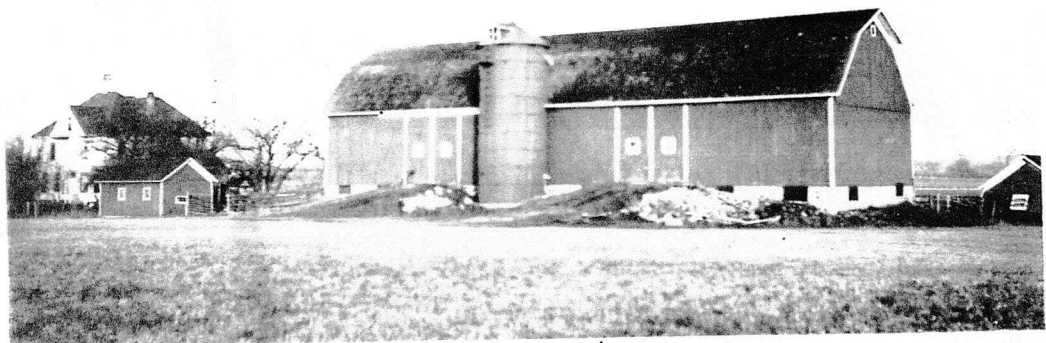


*Farmer Tante Ingeborg Uncle Chris Far*

Harald's mother Jensine, Selma, Ingeborg, Agnes, Ingeborg's husband Chris, Harald.



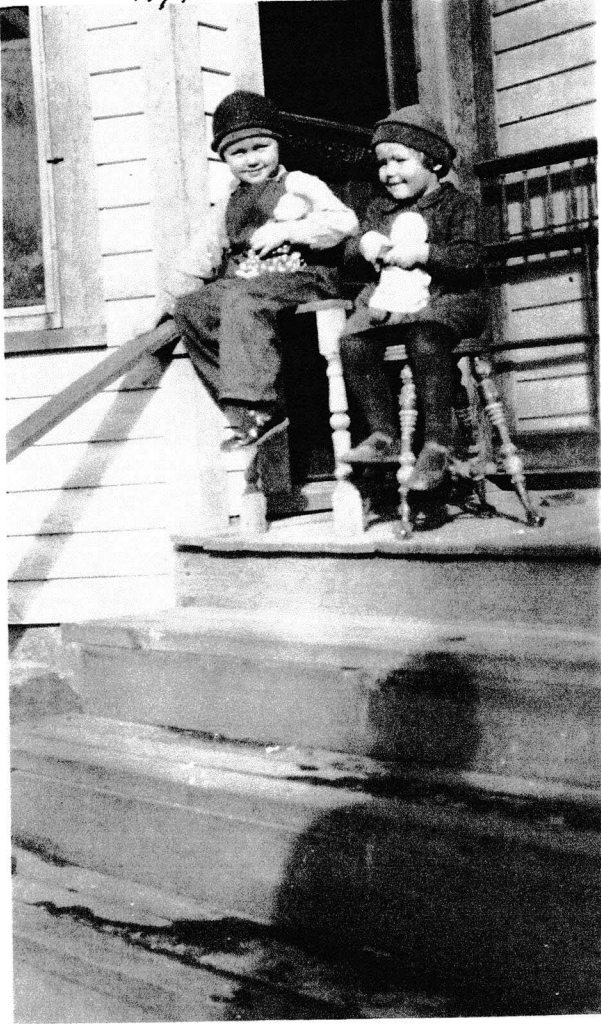
The new home in Michigan  
and the big barn.



*The big barn*

Agnes

Selma



Buster

Buster watching for Agnes and Selma to come walking home from school.



Agnes Dick Selma

3 cousins: Agnes, Dick, and Selma.





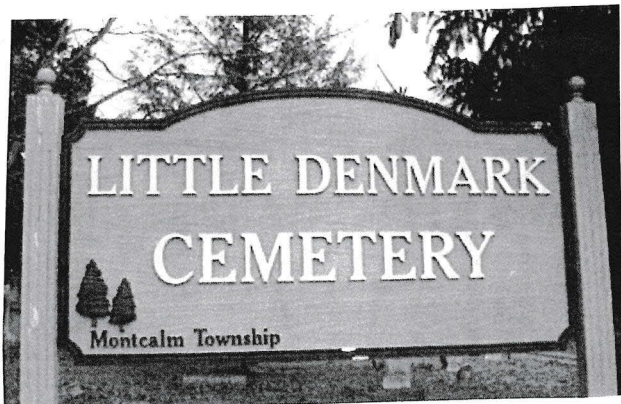
A trip to Iowa in 1936 for the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Sigrid's parents, Hans and Ane Koch.  
Back row: Sigrid, Harald, Holger, Dora, Rigmor, Frode, Esther, Lydia. Middle row:  
Ela, Ane, Hans. Front row: cousins Verner, Agnes, Helga, Selma.



A visit to Kansas in 1946. Harald and Sigrid picked Agnes and Selma up from Grand View College (Des Moines, Iowa) in June. It was the only time they went back to Kansas since they left in 1930.



Sigrid and Harald Kildegaard  
25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary  
November 16, 1949



Jorgen Koch

-1893

Last name of

Marie m. Peter Larsen 2 girls 2 boys	Henrick (took name of Johnson)	Dorothea m. Andrew Jacobsen 5 children	Bertha m. Andreas Aagaard
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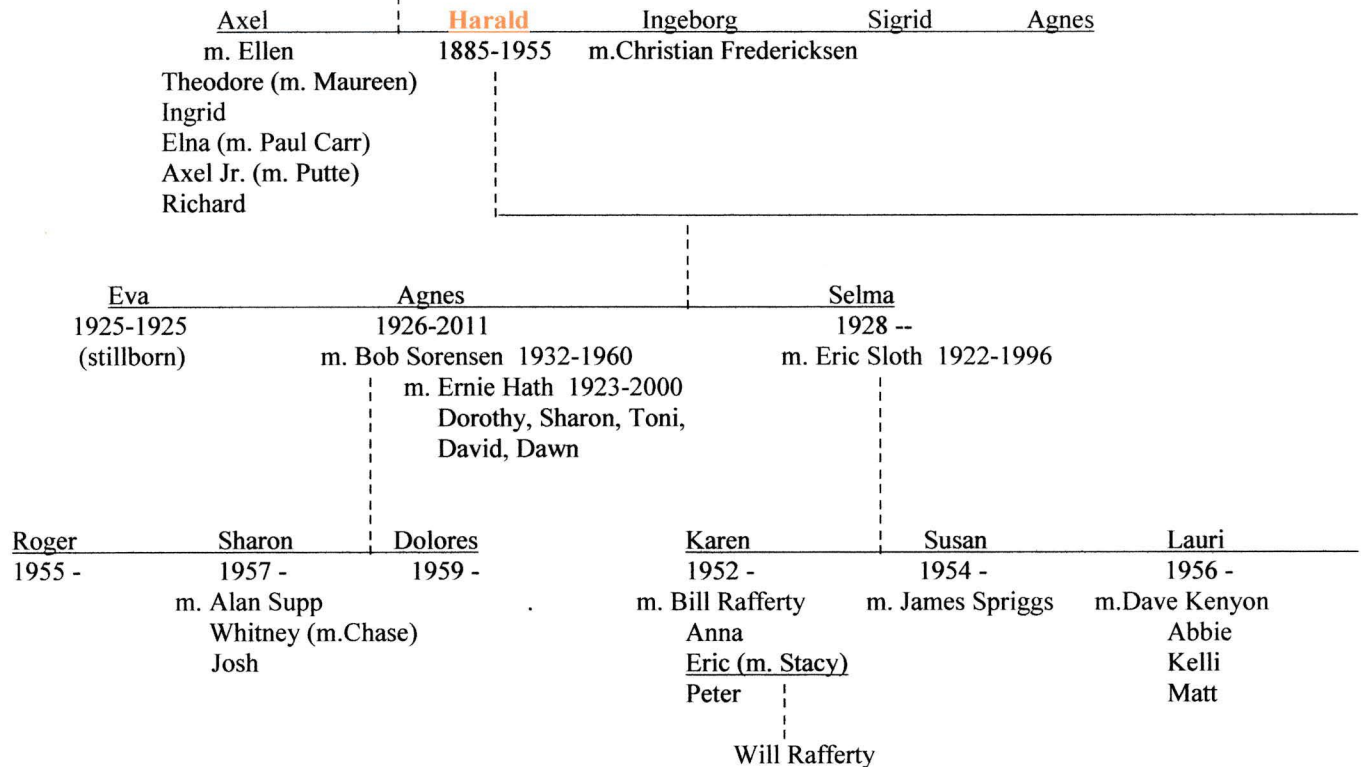
Frederik Martin Kristensen

1846-1907

Jensine Nielsen

--1933

*Jensine was from "Hellig Kildegaard" which means "Sacred Springfarm."  
The last name of their children was changed to Christensen Kildegaard*



Eske Øvlesen (1703-1779)

Niels Rasmussen    Ane Eskesdatter    Øvli Eskesen (family farm ownership maintained through Øvli Eskesen descendents)  
1735-1787

Maren Nielsdatter    Peder Jakobsen  
1761--    1757--

Ane Pedersdatter    Peder Hansen    Marianne Pedersdatter    Simon Jakobsen  
1786--    1795--    1790--    1790--

Meta Marie Ravenskov

Marianne Pedersdatter

Jakob Simonsen

1821-1906

1821-1899

children is Koch

Last name of children is Jakobsen

<u>Regina</u> 1853-1928 m.Soren Petersen (children) 2 girls 2 boys	<u>Rasmus</u>	<u>Hans</u> 1861-1954	<u>Simon</u> 1850--	<u>Peder</u> 1853-- m.Kirstine Pedersdatter Agnethe Dagmar Anker Karen Rasmus Einer	<u>Mariane</u> 1856-1922 m.Simon Kjems (children) Hjalmer Olav *son Uffe Magne Frode Astrid	<u>Ane</u> 1859-1957	<u>Hanna Marie</u> 1862-- m. P.J.Nielsen (children) Svend Olav Sigrid Gunner	<u>Maren</u> 1864-1869
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<u>Frode</u> 1887-1937 m.Rigmor Hedegaard (children) Esther Lydia	<u>Sigrid</u> 1888-1979	<u>Holger</u> 1893-1979 m. Dora Lauritzen (children) Ela 1923-1985 Verner 1925-- Helga 1927-2004
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<u>Eric</u> 1959 - m. Stephanie Kraus Michael (m.Emily) Evangelia (m. Bo) Lillian	<u>Heidi</u> 1963 - m. Jonathan Coe Brooke Jonathan David Daniel	<u>Karl</u> 1966 - m. Shelly Huntsman Bryce
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\* extended lineage of Ane and Mariane Jakobsen as recorded by Mariane's grandson Uffa Kjems follows in "The Family Farm."

## KOCH FAMILY HISTORY

Hans Mikkelsen Koch (1861-1954) was born in Sønder Jylland (South Jutland), an area also known as Slesvig-Holstein. This area changed hands between Denmark and Germany several times. Hans was the son of a coppersmith. His uncle, Peter Christian Koch, was Sønder Jylland's champion for freedom for Danes under German rule, and also at one time was the editor of the Danish paper, Dannevirke, which is still being published.

At the age of 18, Hans Koch fled to Denmark to avoid military service in the German army, since Sønder Jylland apparently was under German rule at that time.

Later on Hans' brother, Rasmus, served in the Danish Military. Two sisters, Dorothea and Bertha, emigrated to America with their husbands and homesteaded in Audubon County, Iowa.

Hans became an apprentice to a German brickmaker in Denmark, traveling from farm to farm, making bricks right on the farms and putting up buildings.

This is the process by which bricks were made:

Clay was dug and then worked to the right consistency with a horse and cart. It was then placed in 2-brick molds, smoothed and flattened, taken out to a place with short grass and shaken out of the molds and then sun-dried. When ample bricks were prepared, they were piled 10 feet by 20 feet, 12 feet high, with firing channels going entirely through the stack at 2½ foot intervals. They were then fired with peat that had been dug and prepared by the farm staff. They continued to stoke until the top bricks were red hot, and then the stack was allowed to cool. The top layers

were utilized to build inside walls because they could disintegrate with moisture. The lower layers were used for exterior construction. They were hard and waterproof, having been fired to a higher temperature.

At the end of his apprenticeship, Hans got a position as brickmaker on a large estate near Askov Højskole (a Folk School) in Jutland. The bricks were also sold to the surrounding area by the estate owner. The estate was called "Dorotheasminde" and was near a small town called Vejen. It was owned by a Dr. Bøjsen, an outstanding name in the Folk School movement in Denmark.

While working there, Hans met Ane Jakobsen who was a butter-maker on the estate. She apparently was a good one, because she won prizes for her butter.

Ane Jakobsen had come from near Vitved, a small town between Aarhus and Skanderborg, where her father was a small farmer and well-digger. His name was Jakob Simonsen. She was one of six children - Simon, Peter, Marianne, Ane (March 11, 1859-March 11, 1957), Hannah Marie, and Marin. Jakob insisted that all his children attend Folk School. Ane attended two of them, one being Valle Kilde on Fyn (Funen.)

After attending Folk School, she worked on farms and learned buttermaking. Eventually she came to work at the estate where Hans was employed, "Dorotheasminde". Hans and Ane were married in 1886 and remained on the estate. Two children were born to them there--Frode in 1887 and Sigrid in 1888 (September 16).

Ane's sister, Mariane, had married a Free School teacher, Simon Kjems. In 1890 they emigrated to America with their five

children, Hjalmer, Olav, Magna, Frode and Astrid. They settled in Ashland, Michigan, where Simon assumed leadership of the second Danish Folk School in America. The first one was at Elkorn, Iowa. Soon after arriving, Simon Kjems was ordained as a minister in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

In 1893 they urged Hans and Ane Koch, with Frode and Sigrid, to come to America. Sigrid was then five years old, Frode six. The Kjems' were very happy in America. Hans and Ane came to Ashland, Michigan, and Hans immediately found work building a brickyard for a local man, a Mr. Bartlett. Holger was born there in 1893.

In 1897 Simon Kjems became ill while on a lecture tour to Chicago and died of pneumonia. Mariane decided to return to Denmark with her five teenage children.

Hans' brother, Rasmus, who was an officer in the Danish Military, wanted a brickyard built at Fredericia, Jutland. There was a severe depression in America at that time, so Hans and Ane decided to return to Denmark. Hans accepted his brother's offer to build the brickyard. It was named "Mølledal". The house at Mølledal was still being used in 1965. When built, it was at the edge of Fredericia but now is in the city.

Hans and Ane, with their three children, lived there 11 years. The children received their grade school education while living there. At the age of 14, Sigrid went to work as a "barnepige" (one who takes care of children). By the time she was 16, she was working for a family in Fredericia by the name of Masbjerg. Her formal education was over, and she spent many years lovingly caring for children.

In 1907, Frode who was a journeyman buttermaker, emigrated to Audubon County, Iowa, where Hans' two sisters, Dorothea Jacobsen and Bertha Aagaard, with their husbands, were homesteading. Frode became buttermaker in a creamery near Kimballton, Iowa.

An excellent deposit of clay had been found on the property of a farmer near the creamery. He was looking for someone to build a brickyard. Hans and Ane accepted the opportunity and again came to America. The year was 1908. Holger was then 15, Sigrid 19. Sigrid left the Masbjergs and on coming to Kimballton found employment again as a "barnepige" with the Madsens. On the way over, on board ship, she had met a young man by the name of Otto Buchwald. Otto stayed in Kimballton for a short time and helped with the brickyard, but when a group of Danes were moving to Alberta, Canada, Otto decided to join them.

The brickyard was built on property adjacent to the creamery where Frode worked. Hans Koch and Ole Jacobsen, the farmer on whose land the clay had been discovered, built the kiln and buildings and soon a thriving business, the Crystal Springs Brick and Tile Works, was established.

Frode married Rigmor Hedegaard in 1910. Two daughters were born to them, Lydia and Esther. In 1934 Frode became owner of the brickyard, changing its name to Roxy Clay Works. He died in 1937 as the result of a fall while building a silo.

During the years between 1908-1923, Sigrid worked for Madsen's, attended Grand View College 1915-16 and 1916-17, was active in Young People's Society in Kimballton, taught summer school there and also taught gymnastics. Following the years at Grand View, she spent some time working at a Danish Children's Home in Chicago,



probably around 1920-23.

Holger had attended Nysted Folk School in Nebraska for two winters. In 1913 he finished high school, and 1913-17 attended Grand View College and pre-seminary. In 1917 he joined the Army (World War I), but the Armistice was signed before he was shipped overseas. In 1919 he started Grand View Seminary and was ordained on June 11, 1922. The same day he married Dora Lauritzen. They moved to Denmark, Kansas, where he served as pastor of the Denmark Lutheran Church, 1922-25.

Two children were born to Holger and Dora while they were in Kansas, Ela in 1923 and Verner in 1925.

When Ela was born, Sigrid came to Kansas to help Dora. There she met a farmer, Harold Kildegaard, whose father, Frederik Martin Christensen, had also been pastor of the Denmark Lutheran Church, 1884-1907, when he had died of cancer. Harold was about 21 when his father died. In addition to being pastor, Frederik had also farmed 80 acres. Harold took over the farm and bought an additional 300 acres. On November 16, 1924, Harold and Sigrid were married.

Three girls were born to them in Denmark, Kansas---Eva, still-born in 1925, Agnes born in 1926 and Selma in 1928.

Holger and Dora left Kansas in 1925 and moved to Nysted, Nebraska, to teach at a Danish Folk School there. Helga was born in 1927. Holger later served as pastor of the West Denmark Lutheran Church in Luck, Wisconsin. In 1937 the family moved to Kimballton to manage the brickyard following Frode's death. Holger died in Solvang, California in 1979.

In 1930, during the time of the Great Depression and the dust

bowl days, Harold and Sigrid decided to move to Michigan. Harold's brother, Axel, was pastor there, serving five churches in a large Danish settlement near Greenville.

Axel and his wife, Ellen, had five children---Ted, Elna, Ingrid, Axel and Richard. Harold's sister, Ingeborg, and her husband Chris Fredericksen, lived nearby in Trufant where they had a furniture store and Chris was an undertaker.

Harold sold the 80 acres and mortgaged the 300 acres. The price of land was so low, so he decided to borrow money on the 300 acres, hoping to sell it later on for a better price. In November, 1930, they bought a farm near Gowen, Michigan, from a man by the name of Albert Petersen, 120 acres for \$6500.

Harold had not looked into the condition of the land, and after buying it, found it to be very poor soil. There were some rough years ahead. The first two years they were able to pay the interest on the mortgage, but the third year there was not enough money. Harold decided to cash in his life insurance policy to pay it. He sent the money, but it came one day too late. The man in Kansas had already foreclosed on the mortgage and sent the money back. With the money Harold and Sigrid decided to buy four cows. Harold never complained, was always happy and good, a very quiet and gentle man. Prices were very low--9¢/dozen for eggs, 10¢/bushel for potatoes. Although times were bad for many people, there was always enough to eat on the farm. Harold cut up old "stump fences" for firewood in the winter. Sigrid canned food for winter (there was always a big garden and many fruit trees) and sewed clothes for their little girls, and helped Harold wherever she could.

Harold was elected to the church council of the Big Settlement Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, sang in the church choir (he also played trombone and viola), and was Director of the one-room Big Settlement school for nine years. With relatives close by and with good neighbors, those were good years even though there was very little money. Harold had grown up in a good pastor's home and Sigrid never complained if times were rough. She would just say, "Det bliver nok snart bedre." --"It will soon get better". They both trusted God and knew that He would always see them through.

Harold and Sigrid continued to live and work on the farm, and with time and much hard work it became quite productive. Harold passed away in March, 1955. The farm was sold some years later. Sigrid lived with Agnes for awhile and then moved to a small house in Trufant. In 1967 she married Otto Buchwald and moved to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. In 1978, after Otto had died, Sigrid lived with Selma in Bellwood, Nebraska, until her death in April, 1979.

Harold and Sigrid are buried at the Danish Settlement Cemetery near Gowen, Michigan.



*Little Denmark Church (now Settlement Lutheran Church)  
Built in 1877-1878  
Dedicated May 18, 1879*

## THE FAMILY FARM

*by Høffe Kjems*

Mariane Kjems, born Jakobsen, was out of the "Øvle family" which has since the middle of the 1400s been bound to Vejelgard matr. nr. 14 in Malling.

There it remained until it burned down in 1908, within the town of Malling, about 200 m (meters?) from the church, and was thereafter rebuilt on its own land a little north of the town. Now the town's industrial quarter has reached out to it, and some of the outbuildings have been leased to other businesses, but the farm is operated continually by the family.

The farm is mentioned a long time back as a half-farm, and it was as late as around 1770 that it was put together with the other half-farm. The farm courtyard then had a considerable size ca 40x40 m.

In 1688 the two half-farms of 112 td. land, had cultivatable land besides meadow, forest and swamp, but the farmland was divided into not less than 312 lots. Despite the fact that it was a self-owned farm it was operated jointly with the over-seeing townsmen. It may be assumed that the farm had been in the family's possession since the mid-1300s, as it is the document from 1463, that 24 Dane men at Malling churchyard were witness that the farm is Jes Persen's direct inheritance, that he had not given up his ownership of the farm. There lacks knowledge of a generational relationship between Jes Persen and Mickel Øuli, who owned the farm from 1524 until 1567, but the relationship between Jes Persen and Mickel Øuli comes from the document from 1463 being read at the Viborg "landsting" in 1567, herewith to show Mickel Øuli's ownership of the farm as Jes Persen's heir.

The condition that documentation had found a place at the "landsting" points at noble status, although it is clear it is a lower nobility that is spoken of. Although the farm always seemed to have been a self-owned farm, there has been throughout the time disagreement with the estate Vilhelmsborg about property rights. It appears that someone from there had sought to make the farm an attachment (like a serfdom) under the estate.

Since 1524 when Michel Øuli took over the farm, it has gone from father to son in six generations until 1783, after which Øvli Eskisens widow, Maren Nielsdatter came forth, until the son Eski Øvlesen took over in 1803. Eski's father's father, Eske Øvlisen, who had the farm from 1732 until 1765, stands out as a strong personality with order in the economy. He bought the farm in 1733 at public auction. There seems, as fore-mentioned, to have been some confusion about the farm's ownership.

Then Eski's greatgrandfather, Øffli Pedersen, who owned the farm from 1690 to 1732 gambled the farm away to "Junker" (a noble title) Stal at Østergard who played with false dice. Eski Øvlisen operated the farm until 1847 and was followed by his son Øvli Eskesen who died in 1855, only 35 years old. He was married to Karen Rasmussen, but none of their children took over the farm. Karen was married again the next year to Christian Sorensen who was the owner from 1856 until 1885. Their son, Øvle Christiansen, then took over the farm.

The farm would then in that way have gone out of the family, if Karen Rasmussen had not been the great granddaughter of Øvli Eskisen, the farm's owner from 1765 to 1783, and in that way assured the farms remaining in the family's ownership.

Øvle Kristiansen, who took over the farm in 1885 as mentioned above, operated it until 1917, and was also the one who, after the fire in 1908, rebuilt the farm where it now lies. It was also him who was responsible concerning the family registering with the land inspector A. Eriksen, Odder.

After Christian Sorensens time, the farm again goes from father to son in this way:

Øvle Kristiansen	1885-1917
Kristian N. Kristiansen	1917-1956
Knud Kristiansen	1956-ca 1985
Stig Øvle Kristiansen	ca 1985

#### OUR BRANCH OF THE FAMILY

Our family branch separates with Ane Eskesdatter, born in 1735. Her father Eske Øvlesen had the farm in Malling from 1732 until 1765, after which Ane's brother Øvli took it over. Ane married twice, first to Niels Rasmussen and then to Rasmus Mogensen. The oldest daughter, Maren Nielsdatter, born in 1761, married Peder Jakobsen in 1781 who was born in 1757. They had three children. Their daughter, Ane Pedersdatter, born in 1786, married Peder Hansen from Lojenkaer. Their youngest daughter, born in 1821, married about 1849 with Jakob Simonsen from Vitved. He was a well-digger.

Jes Persen	1421-1470
Seven generations later:	
Eske Øvlisen	1703-1779
Ane Eskesdatter	1735-before 1788
Maren Nielsdatter	1761-?
Ane Pedersdatter	1786-?
Mariane Pedersdatter	1821-1906
Mariane Jakobsen	1856-1922 (sister of my grandmother Ane)

#### FATHER'S MOTHER'S PARENTS

Mariane (and Ane's) parents Jakob Simonsen and Mariane Pedersdatter must have married late in the 1840's. Anyway, the oldest of their children, Simon Jakobsen, was born in 1850.

In 1852 Jakob Simonsen bought a small property of 4 td. land by Praestevejen on Vitved Hede matr. nr. 13 C. The closest neighbor was Vitved Hedegard and Pilbrogarden. Jakob Simonsen was day teacher and welldigger and also did other domestic work. He spent all three years in the Three Year War.

After Jakob Simonsens death in 1899, great-grandmother sold the property the next year for 2000 Kr. to Niels Chr. Jensen. In 1906, he sold it to the owner of Pilbrogarden who tore down the buildings and added the land to his own property.

The property lay just east of Vitved Hedegard which was bought by Jakob and Mariane's second oldest son, Peder, in 1887, and his son Anker tells from his childhood about the grandparent's house which lay so cozy under the hill. In the livingroom was a table with three chairs, bedstefar's chair stood at the end of the table and bedstemor had her own chair where she sat and carded and spun. The kitchen was small and had an open fireplace. Behind that there was also a special room where there was a chest of drawers and a flat chest. In back of this room was a

small room where milk and cream were kept and where butter was churned. In an outhouse was a little barn and stall for two cows, a sheep and some hens.

#### FATHER'S MOTHER'S BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Mariane was nr. three in birth order, and was born in 1856 and married in 1877 with father's father.

The oldest brother, Simon, was born before Jakob and Mariane moved to Vitved Hede.

Nr. 2 Peder Hansen Pilegard Jakobsen was born in 1853. He received in 1887 12500 Kr. at an auction settlement at Vitved Hede. He first married Kirstine Pedersdatter. They had five children: Anker, Agnete, Dagmar, Karen and Rasmus. After Kirstine died, he married Kirsten Sorensen and they also had five children: Stinne, Astrid, Ejner, Marius and Arne. The oldest, Anker, took over Vitved Hedegard in 1920 for 32000 Kr. After his widow's death in 1973 the farm was bought by Inga Fredslund Madsen and her husband Svend Østergard Grundet. Anker was "morbror" and Kirstine "faster" to Inga. They are both dead and the farm has been sold to strangers.

Nr. 4 Ane Jakobsen--Moster Ane, born in 1859, married Hans Koch. There were three children, Frode, Sigrid and Holger.

Nr. 5 Hanne Marie Jakobsen--Moster Mie, born in 1862, married Peder Jorgen Nielsen. They lived on Ingerslev Hedegard. They had 4 children: Svend, who took over the farm, Olav, Sigrid and Gunnar.

Nr. 6 Maren Jakobsen, born in 1864. She died at age 5.

#### SOLBAKKEN

Simon Kjems erected a free-school at Solbakken in Balle Odder Mark in 1874. He and "farmor" were married July 23, 1877. They conducted school there for 15 years until they moved down to a newly built high school (folk school) in Odder. Grandmother was also teaching in the free school although illness was troubling to both of them. In the summer of 1880 there were 26 children in the school. Grandfather (Simon) also held evening school in the winter of 1880-81 with 10-11 students. In the winter of 1882 he held evening meetings every 14 days, and in the winter of 1886-87 he was involved with others with evening school teaching in an assembly house in Odder. There were 30 taking part. From 1886 he taught also at a new school in Odder for big boys. There were 11 that year. His hours were in the late afternoon every day.

In one letter to Simon's sister Ester whom they had close contact with, he expressed that it is good that there is enough to do, if one can only earn enough to live on. One place he remarks that states office men sit in fat jobs (positions) and you can be sure that most of them are not loaded with work. It was also the economy that drove them from Solbakken. They were happy to be there but that couldn't last.

There were also quarrels with parents, and among other things in 1881-82, a dispute about gossip and pride. In a letter to Ester in March 1883, tells about a situation in general: On Friday we had a yearly meeting where we figured up the books (expenses?) both one way and another.

(In 1891 Simon left for Ashland, Michigan to teach at a folkschool.)