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Stensnas April 26, 1885

My dear Children: Grace and peace from God for all of us!

After a long silence I will converse with you my dear children. I have been so melancholy and downhearted and so weak in body, worse than I can express, but not God be praised I am recuperated. Little Set, he is so large and healthy, you could not believe it. Last Sunday he was baptized and I was church-ed. The pastor came to our home. Gru Lindquist presented him (Set) and the sisters and brothers were witnesses. Dear children, you think this wonderful and so it is. But God want one more praise and I pray that so it may turn out. All we desire we may ask with uplifted hands and believe. The blood of Christ cleanses from all. Dear children, what is the condition of your souls? I think so much about you when I enjoy God's great goodness in my soul. Yes, God is good and incomprehensible. Thanks belong to him.

Thanks Christine for your admonition. I shall be glad to do as you say, and how well it is to do so. Dear Children, we must trust God. He gives us as great proofs of his love. How we shall rejoice when we at last come home into the peaceful dwelling, for we most likely will not see each other before that time. Though for God nothing is impossible. But I don't look forward to see you.

After having attended to household duties I will take up my poor writing. Perhaps you can not read it. Tell me if you can spell it out and guess my meaning.

The whole family is out and working each on his own chore. Oh, may the dear God bless our work. We are sure He will do that. I have been so worried about Gust. That he should recover we cannot understand. But how we have received letter that he is recovering, so I am comforted a little. You have visited Mathilda. That was a pleasure for you. As for us we live together all in the same place and we are happy and comfortable, because we have health and so the time passes all right. We have heard to, es jere/ We have to buy both for ourselves and for the cattle. But we complain when there is no need of it, because we have peace. But now war is threatening. Dear God help us through, and we know you will.

Pray for us. You advise the boys to come to America. I dare not say anything for or against. God says. "Be still and await my help." I am so worried about their souls. And we have love abundance.

When they get out in the wild world they may depart from God. Consider that you and answer me. It seems you have had so much trouble with Gust. It has cug me to the quick many times, but what could I do? I can only think and express my thanks I thank you all for your great trouble. God will reward us. We shall receive double reward.

I suppose you are getting tired of my babbling, but my dear! We cannot say a thousandth part of what we think.. You two have had great sadness since I conversed with you. Are you well now,? Tell all your business. I will tell you also. We have much work here you may imagine, darning clothes. We have no servant girl. Selma Nasshult has gotten a baby daughter. You may believe her parents were cruel with her. When she got the pains she went upstairs, but they did not leave her there, but had to come down(bank). Speak to Emil that he must keep faith and sympathize with her. You can imagine her position. You ask about clothes. That does not worry us. Johan has fine black suit. Best regards to all og

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you. From your Mother

Explanation: 1. Christina must have written that Emil was quite a lion with the girls in Laramie. Of course she did not know about Selma.

2. After a woman has had a baby she must go to the preacher and be churched. He reads a printed prayer over her.

3. Mother was born August 17, 1840. Her last son was born April 23, 1885. So Mother was 44 years and 8 months when Set was born. That is what she calls wonderful.

4. When Hilma Nelson died of typhoid fever in 1885., Gust took sick and Mathilda and Christina thought he would die.

5. The next December 12 we three I, David, Elias came to America.

6. This word barsk I don't understand.

Dear Sister: Live well. I will now write you a few lines and tell you all that I go to school. When I am at home I read and help to pick potatoes at times. Now I will send you a present from the Fair. Pappa and Mamma send their best regards to you all. Pappa will not write until he gets your next letter. Pardon my poor writing and this is the end of my letter. Kindest regards from Niel David

David sends two stamps of the Fair (by Ottilia)
Stensnas April 27, 1885

Dearest Sister Christina:

God's grace and peace be over and with us all. I have just come home from Gøthagen where I was harrowing. We have sowed one barrel oats already. We have so much fun with Petrus while we are writing. He is so glad to have us talk to him about you. I hear you have a singing choir. I will join that when I get to America, in case that happens. I can tell you there is going to be war between Sweden and Russia, which perhaps you know.

Pastor Nyten can not sing so I have to sing for them (perhaps lead the singing) in the Confirmation class. I was sent to Pastor Ostings office by Pastor Nyten the last time. And Pastor Ostberg taught me a song that I am supposed to sing for the class next meeting.

You ask me if I want to come to America, Yes I am willing, but I am not crazy about it for I imagine that I can have better times here, than I can get in America.

We have fine weather now and we are busily engaged in sowing and planting. We are planting cherry trees and goose berry bushes everywhere on the hills. I have now nothing more to write so I will close. Yours truly, J. F. S.
Here is copied John 15: 1-2 and Jer. 3; 22

Stensnas April 29, 1885

My dear Sister Krestina. Live Well

Now this midday hour while we are resting, I will write some words to you. We wrote to Gustof a couple of days ago

after we had received your letter and that of Gustof the same time. I can tell you that we are busy with our spring planting. We are making things hum but as Karl is due to enlist in the army this year, we will have to hire. And that is a drawback. You ask if we are in need of money. Yes, we must buy seed for we had so poor crop last year, but this year the rye is

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fine and we have sowed much so this year we will be able to sell fye. I understand that you are well off in America. I am glad to hear that. And you want Fredrik and Otilia to come, but I think they are too young yet. But Anna she says she will leave this summer, but I believe that is foolish, because she is so sickly so she should not travel alone. She needs care, because if she gets sick on the way, it would be a great embarrassment. And we need her at home but if you think she could stand the trip, we will get along all right at home, because we can't expect to all stay at home all the time. Sooner or later there must be a parting. Write to Anna what you want her to do. I have only given you the facts as I see in them. But don't let her know what I have written about her. I will now close as the paper is exhausted and we fear the letter may be too heavy. Good Night, dear Sister.

Remember Jesus has suffered ^{Lovingly, John Ernst} for you, and that He loves you and wants to save you.
Read John 6; 37. God bless that here.

Stensnas Oct. 10, 1883

My dear Brother, Live well.

Since we are so widely separated one from the other so that we in no other way can converse except through letter, I will write you a few lines and let you know that we are through with the Fair, and how we enjoyed ourselves at that time. Karl Petter and Kilma Gotchult came the evening before the Fair and stayed till Sunday afternoon so Karl took them home in a buggy (horse and buggy) We had much people at the Fair. We did not have any cattle to sell at the Fair. You want me to tell you what we do. We are picking potatoes. Karl and I have not picked our own yet. Poppa, Mamma, and Anna went to Gissebo for the banquet connected with the yearly Lutheran religious Test. They have not come back yet. I am so sleepy. It is ten O'Clock so I will not write any more to night. I'll continue tomorrow night. We have had letter from Kristina since you left. I have no news to write so I send you many loving regards. With Love J. Ernst S
The Pastor sends his regards.

Explanation. Our father let the big boys plant a small plot with potatoes and in the fall they could pick them and sell them

When Karl and Johan were planting their potatoes Elias made a little plot 5 feet by 4 or less. Somebody asked him if he was going to sell them and he said, "No, I leave to the common fund of the family"

Dear Sister Mathilda: I wish you good health. Since this Sunday Morning I have the opportunity I will use it to write to you. I was to Gissebo yesterday at the Lutheran Test banquet, and we had great enjoyment. We have a little servant girl and she is going to stay with us this winter. Krestinas cape we will remodel for me for winter wear, and we have remodeled her red dress of bought fabric (explanation--As a rule all for wear was woven on the farm) for me because it was too small for Anna. Now I'll tell what I am doing. I am pick-

ing potatoes. They are very rotten. The Fair is over. We had so much people that all the beds were taken and we had to sleep on rags on the floor.

I send you my best regards. I send each one of you a Fair gift, though simple
Ottilia Nilsson

Explanation: I remember that night. Our Cousins Karl Petter and Hilma and we all the young children slept in a row on the floor upstairs in a closet.

Dear Sister:

I will write a few words to send you before I go to church. I can tell you I have been to Gissebo. I went there Thursday morning and stayed till yesterday. The reason I stayed so long was that I was waitress, I beside another girl who is sister-in-law to the schoolteacher Svensson (He was my first teacher-J. F. Nelson). She is a pleasant girl and lives in Gissebo, with the Svenssons. She and Mrs. S. are seamstresses Alfred Gissebo is married to a girl from Ed. She is a relative of the organist. Johan Wilhelm is going to get married to a girl from Mistishult i Flivik. Hilhelm is still courting Sofie Storangen, but it most likely will not avail. But he does the best he can (exertion). I have much more to write but must close.
Your true sister, Anna Nilsson

Explanation--Mathilda had, that is in her album the two pictures of Augusta Nilsson and Sofi i Storangen

Dear Sister Mathilda:

Again I will write a few words to you in order to express myself more clearly about what I wrote in my last letter. But I do not know exactly how to express myself so that you may rightly understand. You perhaps got the impression from my last letter that something new had come over me. No, my dear, it was what I have been planning for a long time, but I have also had other thoughts. I would wish to attend a school and learn to be something, inspector of agriculture or merchant for example. But Pappa and Mama are not in favor of such, so I have to forget it. Otherwise I would have no objection, for I have never had any special desire for America. But, as you now are establishing house (get married) there you naturally intend to remain there. And then I get the idea that it would be pleasant to be together in one country and as Christina wrote, you two have no objection to my coming, but it is almost impossible, for I am sorry to say, you can not imagine how we are situated in every way. As far as concerns our economic and physical situation we have not to complain. But there are situations worse. One can hardly say that one has one happy hour. But one must take things as easily as possible, otherwise life would be too hard. You may believe that Papa is not very kind. Many times we have quarrels, and it is not better since you left, but it is ten times worse. You most likely remember it, if not I should not remind you of it. But, my dear, don't be offended by what I write. I have no one to open my heart to and I just wanted to confide in you. I assure you that you are fortun-

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ate, of course you have gone through much trouble in every way, but I think that neither you nor Christina nor Gustof repent your having left. To remain here means only poverty. Give Christina my best regards. Tell her that if she can lend me money I will pay her back. Let no one see this letter. You might write a special letter to me. Don't forget that, please. Good night, Your (till givne) Faithful brother,
Carl Magnus Svenssen. Oct 14

Dear Sister Christina God is Love.

This evening I will answer your letter. It is such a pleasure to receive letters from you all. I will tell you what we are busy with. We are working in the orchard. There is so much to be done so we work in the open the whole spring, but now we have soon finished. We have made so many changes since you left as I don't think you would recognize yourselves if you came home. We have finished spinning the flax so now we will start weaving carpets. This summer we have so much to weave. I hear that you have had letter from Uncle Daniel. Uncle i Gissbo has received letters many times. You ask me if I want to come to America. I cannot answer as to that, but my thoughts have been directed that way, but as I am so young. I suppose I will have to continue slaving in the old Sweden yet. I can answer more about this. I will write more. I also hear that there is a Swedish church in Laramie. That is a pleasure for you. But do you understand? Have you a Swedich Preacher? I wish you could attend the Hjorted church at times. I will give you a memory verse. (Here she copies Isaiah 53:5)

Best regards from me to you and to Mathilda and Anna and all. In case some one of us come to America, write and tell us if we can bring you anything.

Your Sister Ottilia Nilsson

Stinsnas Feb. 13, 1883

My dear Kind Sister Mathilda

The Peace and Grace of the Lord be with and over us all. A long time has passed since we received letter from you and I have been sorry about it. My thoughts have daily flown over to you all. I may tell you that I am enjoying good health and I do not have sore throat any more so I believe that it helped me that I lived at the health resort in Krisdala. But besides I have pain in the body all the same. But they say you don't get rid of that until you continue drinking the mineral water for three years. (I think she continues 2 years, the third year she came to America). The pain is called rheumatic pain and the third year is the best (result) and if I live it would be well if I could continue. But as I look forward and wonder how it shall turn, considering the matter on all sides, it seems impossible. The good fortune is that it is nothing certain. But one must not sorrow for the morrow, for God cares for us and He his plan and knows the future and all he makes everything turn out for the best, and if we have to leave our business in His care He will bring us through both light and darkness, even if it seems ever so dark. As the song says "Forward we go ahead, both through light and darkness. My house is not on earth.

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No, it is in heaven and here down on earth is only desert and it seems only vanity (emptiness) and trouble and fight, but with Jesus alone is rest and peace and may we dear sisters meet there and never more have to separate, and for God nothing is impossible. We may even meet here on earth. Oh it would be a joy indescribable to see each other and by word of mouth converse. I would then have much to say which can not be expressed by pen and look forward anxiously as the bird waits for the dawn. May God lead us and also you that are far away in a foreign land. He has promised to be with us to the end of the world. I thank you heartily for the friendliness you have shown us and that you sent me a picture of your good looking lover and if he is as virtuous as he is good

looking I congratulate you. This summer I promise to have my picture taken when I come to Kresdala. If I can afford it I will go to Oscarshamn, because there they take better pictures. I would be glad to improve on the former for it was very ugly (poor). I hope to receive your picture in your next letter. It was pleasant that you received so beautiful Christmas presents. Don't forget to answer as soon as possible.

Hearty regards from your humble sister

Anna Olivia Nilssen

Stensnas, Feb. 15, 1883

My kind Sister Kristina, Live Happy;

The grace and peace of the Lord be with and over us all from now on and for ever. I thank you for your appreciated writing and I beg your pardon most humbly for my long delay. And I hope you do forgive me, though it is monotonous to be always expecting. But my thoughts have no opportunity flown to you daily but have had no opportunity. It is now almost eleven o'clock, but I don't mind. It pleases me just the same. It is no uncommon thing, and it was not the first time and if I live and God gives me health, may it not be the last. I may tell you I have visited Sofia i Kvarnbro and had a good time. She was visiting with us yesterday and I decided to go to visit her today, though it is hard to get away from the daily work and hurry. We had such a good time. We sang songs. Kristina Ashberg is in Pilviken and keeps house for her grandfather. We were there a while into the evening. Sofia and she sing so beautifully. Before Christmas they went to Karl Berner (my last teacher in Sweden) to take lessons in singing, so they sang in the church at Christmas (morning mass about 4 o'clock A. M.) and it was a pleasure to hear them. And we talked about God and Sofia says she is a child of God (converted). Now I will tell you I was at Storangen the Sunday of Trinity, (the 13th day after Christmas) I rode with them from the church. The next Sunday the young people i Yxered had decided to go to Frodinge church. They meant to go the Sunday of Trinity, but when they learned I was coming, they decided to wait. But I did not like it. It was not enjoyable. For they have no pleasant preacher, so I did take much interest. Aunt Lovisa did not want me to go along for anything in the world. Also Wilhelm came home Trinity eve and he told me not to go for it would be no benefit for me and I thought the same. So nothing happened. Besides we enjoyed ourselves as we were. We read and sang and stayed up till late in the night and at last we went to bed. But we did not sleep much that night. Wilhelm had much to speak about

and I liked to hear one talk about America by one that you believe tells the truth. I had not heard him before talk so freely as he did then. In the presence of old people you cannot talk as when there are just young people present. And I thought he was so frank. He spoke about you and said he liked you so much, and always when we meet him at church he asks about you all, and what you write and if you mean to come home. And among young men there are not many who are so

good and sensible as he, though he is not so good looking but one ought not to stop to consider that, though however all of us do that.

Then I will tell you that Wilhelm Gissebo gave me a ride home. He had taken the surveyor to Branstad and when he learned at church that I was going to visit at Storangen he went to Sofia and said that he could come that way home and that I could ride with him. He came Sunday evening so I was not allowed to stay very long. We had invitation to go to Norrangen and also to the Church deacon, but that had to be cancelled. I had to ride with him home as he had gone to the trouble. He did that only to get a chance to speak to Sofia, but, he did not gain anything thereby. I must now close my poor writing and wait for a prompt answer and then I will write more. Memory verse; John 1; 12.

Your sister

Anna Nilsson

Stensnas, Feb. 15, 1883

My indescribably dear Sister Christina:

Since we have received the money you have sent us, I must first thank you ever so much for them. I am sorry because perhaps you are in position in which you must skimp yourself, for you must work and earn your money, and withal you send to us. But although we do not need to earn our money, we have so little that we can hardly get along. Therefore I will most humbly express my gratitude and joy that you have not forgotten us. I will tell you that I do carpentry work. I have done that the whole winter at night and by that I have earned a little money, but one needs to buy so much that it is soon used up. I am now making a writing desk, but that I will keep for myself. I will now tell you what we will use the money for. We will buy iron for the buggy. (I remember that carpenter stayed at our home and made the woodwork for the new buggy and then we took it with the iron Karl mentions to the blacksmith and he fixed it all up ready for use.) because if we ~~did~~ not do that we would not get the buggy this summer. I am sure you will not have any objection to make. Johan has written you about the trip to Gissebo, but I will make some additional remarks about it. There were many young people there, so we enjoyed ourselves. Emil entertained us marvelously. You may believe it. He is clever and Hilma too so it was just wonderful; Selma Nasshult was there. As you perhaps know Emil is courting her. They are so in love with each other so you could not imagine it. And Emil is such a lion among the girls. The same may be said about Hilma. She has many suitors.

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The newest one is Constanz Soderquist i Lofstad, a real stylish boy. The boys of Nils Mansson were there. They are both unmarried though they are courting all around. I have no more news to relate. I send thousand regards to you and to Mathilda.

Your faithful brother
Karl Magnus

We send the letter tomorrow.

Stensnas, Feb 14, 1883 (Kristina)

Dear Sister, Live Happy!

I will ask your pardon for waiting so long to write you. In the first place I must thank you for the money that we received today. I will tell you what we are working at. Karl and I haul logs today from Bryggisset (the farm that Pappa bought from the man that went to America with Mathilda) to Longviken i Gissjon which we are going to float to Bjorna saw mill (at the waterfall from Gissjon). We have cut 120 logs in Boyggeriet, 120 logs in forest (half way between Getterum and Bjorna on the left side. Lingviken on right side) and 96 logs in Backhagen (forest near our house) The farmer sawed at Bjorna, the latter at Kvarubro (a mill in the waterfall of the sea Hjorten). I have no special news to tell. Sunday after Trinity we went to Misterhult (parish neighboring the Hjorted). Then we went to Gatehult (the forest of the Goths) (Mamas sister was married there and lived there with our cousins Karl Petter and Hilma both came to America) so we came home Monday. The eve of Candlemass we were in Gissebo. There was a banquet for young people. We had a good time. Now I close my poor writing with the dearest regards for you.

Lovingly, Johan Ernst Svensson

Dear Sister ~~Kristina~~ ^{Kristina}. Live Well!

I can tell you that I attend the High School, and I have a good time. I now returned from the school, where we learn much. Today each one brought an Almanach in which teacher Karl Berner gave us instruction. The ice is so good here for skating. so at times I skate to school. (We had something over 3 miles to school. Well we walked 3 miles south west to get to the ice and then skated 4 or five miles to school). We have had good skating all winter for we have not had much snow. so we have enjoyed ourselves skating all winter. When we are at school we go down to Lake Hjorten the noonday hour and skate until the teacher calls us up. I have bought me a pair of skates and now I am going to pay for them with the money you sent. So finally I say thanks for the money which I was glad to receive. I must close with many regards.

Your brother, Joseph Fredrik Nilsson.

Feb. 14, 1883

Dear Sister. I wish you health.

As I have opportunity this evening to converse with you, I will compose a few short lines, because it is a long time since I wrote last. I have no news to impart. I may tell that Karl and I went to Blaxta Church and the boys of Flodhult were with us. We skated in Sangsjon and had a good time. The weather is now very beautiful. The snow is melting so it will

soon be summer and the temperature is riseing. I wish you were at home. I should enjo y your presence. Today I have been down i Bryggriet to shop wood. Now I will thank you for the money you sent. I will to come to you in America and Papa has no objection. I may tell you that I attend the confirm-ation class (Mamma was so worried because David and Elias were not confirmed). Pastor Oatberg is our instructor. He is so good so we enjoy him. We are 58 boys. (The girls were taught different class)

Gustaf Ossian Svensson
Thousand dear wishes from us to you all.

Feb. 14, 1883

My dear Children:

For a long time I have desired to converse with you. How are you both in body and soul. We are weè as to our soul. Grandma was with us. We went to Gissebo. Then was a great convention. A great enjoyment. It is repeated every month. You maybe sure we enjoy ourselves. Both uncle (her brother) and aunt are God's Children. Imagine the happiness. We had prayer together before we started home. Oh how pleasant if grandmother (mother's mother whom I remember well) lived yet. And pray-In his time shall the righteous blossom and great peace until the moon exist no more. Thank the Lord for his inexpressible gift. Now I will tell you what my job is. I prepare the meals, and keep the house in order. To get to w ave for clothes is impossible I try to do my best, but you may believe it we have to do like you do buy ready-made. I have not woven since you left. Now I was thinking about dresses and apr ns, but we have to get along, because the boys must first be attended to. You say you wish to come home. Yes, dear, I too would wish. I make summer clothes.

Dear, what shall happen, but you think about coming home, but what will you do at home? Answer me, Kristina. You are pleased with my writing, but can you make out my letters? You do well to examine well what your heart longs for. Now good night my dear. Live well.

Elias is so humorous. He says he will never get married because then he will get cranky. Think about that. Dear your Christman presents. It was a pleasure for me and also for the rest. It is a pleasure when (triyasteg)babied.

Mama

This letter was very poorlywritten. It was very difficult to read and translate

Feb. 14, 1883

Dear Sister Kristina. Live well!

I will tell you that I skate these days, but I am alone because Elias has scalded himself so he is not allowed to leave the house and jump around (ashhe used to). So now Elias must sit in the house with Mother by the fireplace. And I (emphatic "I") have to drive the cattle to water (without the help of Elias) from the barn to the well. (During winter the cattle stood in the barn all day and were let out twice a day to water). I would wish to know if you have seen any Christmas trees (in America) and what entertainment you have. Elias and I wnet to Church Christmas morning.

Many good regards from me.

Your Brother Dätid Svensson

Explanation: I remember well how Anna came in the kitchen with a boiling coffee-pot and Elias ran against her and she spilled the hot coffee over his back and left shoulder. He was 6 1/2 years old. If my memory serves me right he had been scalded that way once before

Here are two short letters from Mother without dates. The first has not much sence to it but the second you can see was written when Johan came to Hunters 1913 Or 1914.

Good Morning my Dear
I am so glad that I can finally send you a few word about my self and famly and our doings. God be praised we all

have health and can work and do our business to please ourselves and that is a great thing. Yes, God be praised for it all. May we be so situated that we may meet in his name? He says always come. May we do that howsoever things t urn out. May we have our comfort in the Word of God and in prayer. Best regards to Ethel. Thanks for the picture which I received . I surely answered before but the letter must have been lost. My Dear, live happy the short time we have to stay here (on earth) (fasebal?)

You know I am sorry for Hohan that he got so deep in debt. Maybe he cannot fight it through. He is not very strong. It is too bad. It will be hard on him. I sympathize with him. I have talked with Elias and he has promised me to care for him. And what he said is definite (When Elias speaks it with determination) God be praised. I wish that Johan would tell his thoughts to him. It is not well to tell everything always All that weighs upon ones mind. I sympathize with him. Write and speak to him, but don't say that I urged you. Elias is nearest to him. Hohan will have to cling to him. They are not accuntomed to do all kinds of work. But they will have to stand it. So you Mathilda, Kristina, Anna, as I underet nd it have had to do. Praise God. Mathilda i Storangen, do you remember her? She has visited them (Johan) She is so good and speaks with me much and sends me her home. Don't tell Mathilda that I write so childishly. Don't send this sheet but you may send the other. We have had a good crop. You will write me about to inform me.

Mama

Dayton, Iowa May 5, 1902

Dear Sister Mathilda;

After many years correspondence (she must mean of no correspondence) I will write you and family. We wish that you would come to Gust's Wedding. Come if possible all three. But Some, come Ethel and you, dear Sister. You know best yourself if you can afford it. I hope you can. And then you will visit me at the same time. I visited Gust yesterday and h heard him preach twice. I had heard him preach once before. He came to visit us last summer and stayed some time. He preached a few times in a neighboring church. Come and you will hear him too. You can't imagine how scared I was when he was to preach lest he should not have anything to say. His preaching will do. I am no good judge in the ma ter. But come and have a visit with us and our brothers. One of them will surely come and perhaps all three.

Gust says he has written to you and to the brothers about the date of his wedding so they already know. Anna perhaps can not afford to come and she can't spare the time. She has so many little children so I don't suppose she will come though she would like to.

I will also tell you that the people here are very high tone. Ethel must have a white dress Gust said, when I mentioned she should stand witness, therefore she must have it. if she can come. Let us know so Gust may know how to fix matters. It would be great if the three brothers could come. We will find accommodations for them. It would be well for Gust if he knew how many can come to the wedding. The cost his congregation will bear. I wanted to do that, but I told you, my husband was afraid it would cost too much, but I don't or didn't think so. The worst would be the work of preparation, for that is very important and Oscar does not understand that of if he does ~~not~~ he will not express himself on the subject. He prefers to have me work for both of us. But I will say no more about that. I have better health now. Hope it will last. My greatest wish is that you come. I think you lack nothing necessary. If you only have health I am sure you can come. You are more independent (your own) than I. As for me I must arrange myself to suit Oscar. Be sure and come. Will close
Your Sister, Mrs. J. O. Martin

I shall write a little more. I alone am awake. The others all are asleep so I am at liberty. If you come you will learn much news that will interest you and also brother David's sweetheart. If he cannot come, she anyhow will be here. David visited us at Christmas. We talked then about this wedding and he said he wished to come but could hardly afford it. He had to earn money for his going to school next winter. David is a pleasant young man you may believe. I should have written before, but all the work to be done that one sees around one cannot sit down. I have my black dress made now for the wedding. If the brothers come we will take pictures all the sisters and brothers gathered. It would be a pleasure. I hope you know it now in time to get ready. Give Gust a big present. Money would be the best. He has not much to start housekeeping with and preachers never get rich.

Christina

On a small piece of paper that seems to have been torn off from a small regular sheet. It is blue and the lower part dated 1903 or 1904

David: I am very weak today. Nervous creepings (goes through my body) I slept only little last night. I have no strength to write more. Now I think it will soon have an end.

Getterum 20 (fote) about 1897 (Dec. 20)
Dear Mathilda. The Peace of God

After a long delay since we communicated together. Now we will resume our conversation. I have so much to tend to here of everything. The orchard. If I could reach you I should let you taste my fruits. Just now I have a little quiet. So I have put up the weaving frame and I am weaving blankets. I have sent one already to Gust. (When I was home in 1809 I received a blanket that is now in possession of
He says he is feeling well and goes out every

Sunday testifying for God. May God strengthen him. We ought not to forget to pray one for the other, because that gives strength. Only we get saved, all other things may turn out as they may. If we take every thing as it comes we will feel well. Just now we are overwhelmed with the goodness of God, both as concerns body and soul. Yes, praised be his name. We may always sing and praise his name. Yes, dear, what is the condition of your souls? Have your conversation with God and seek with fear and trembling that ye be saved. "We get down here what we need and the inheritance in heaven is still reserved for us". Thanks and praise to God: When I let my thoughts hover over to you. I take comfort in those words. And I think most about the poor boys, who do not work to earn a living. I cannot understand how they can get along. If you can ease their way any. We see here what it costs to keep Petrus in the school. He is already in debt, that is to you. We have done nothing for you. On our farm here we have no debt and we can live on our interests, as long as papa is strong enough to cut the forest. He goes out once every day and cuts--- and sometimes digs in Golge Hasen. We have both potatoes and oats there this year. It helps to keep the coes. We try to get along the best we can you may imagine. We sell all the butter we get. John is a good business man in every way so he is spoken well of by all. He works hard. He is thin, only skeliton but alive. He buys and sells cattle. And makes changes up in Stensnas. If you come home you would see how everything is improved. He has changed the stable, made a door that leads from there to the cowbarn. He works alone with his cattle, but he does not think of getting married. It is hard on Ottilia. She has to slave and work herself to death. But she is well off, better than she ever had it though she has no salary. So she is no better off than when she was with Karl (i Nasshult) (before 1895). Yes, her youth is passing. You ask how Karl is getting along. He tries hard, but he has much to do, you may imagine. His wife is not much help to him (married about 1895) so they don't do so well. They did not need to have the farm rented because they could not get along. We (papa and I) ~~persuaded him~~ were much against that. But she (Selma, his wife) persuaded him. The future will show who was right. I better stop. I have said much that should not be said, but you may take of it what what you will. They both of them, Karl and Selma are living well. And we do not say anything to them to hurt their feelings. They are so big and fat. They don't tear to peices what is whole. This you may keep for yourself. I was to Kongbo and visited grandmother and grandfather. He died Nov. 6, 1903. They are as if they were the seventh year. Mother works and weaves one waft after another. I am sorry she works so hard, because she would not need to. You write to her. She has done us much good. She bends over much. Now she does not weave, only works. My dear, tell me how Krestina is. She never writes. We have heard nothing about her since Fred was there (Sept. 1896 or 1897). You, please, commune with all of them for us. Because it is so difficult for me to write to all. We wish you

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a Merry Christmas. Much grace and pardon for the old year
and a good continuation. Write soon. Good night my dear ones
Your Mother

About 1903

Dear Fredrik. Peace be with you and thanks for the letter.

As you say, you are well, and so are we. God be praised.
As a rule we do not appreciate it, but now we are tested. God
help you to bear the trials you have to go through. You may
be sure my thoughts are most of the time with you all. I pray
and believe I dare do nothing else and then God comes and says
"Don't be worried, trust in the Lord and he shall do". Then I
praise God and thank Him. Dare do nothing else. May God help
Gust. We have no other way out. Can you think of some way how
best can help him. We don't want to shirk our duty. My
father was weak that way. It lasted about two years. But he r
recovered and could do his work as before with the help of
mamma. She took a hoe and went to work and then he followed
and did as she did. So gradually he recovered. I don't know
how long he was in Korsbarga, but when he came home he was
settled. Only make it joyful for him. He wept when he spoke
of how they maltreated him there. Give regards to all.
Mama.

Getterum Dec. 3, 1897

Dear Mathilda. Grace and Peace from God; Hosea 11:8 (quoted)

Yes God has treated me that way, as in the latter part of
the verse, it has been fire of Grace and love. To him be-
longs the praise therefor He has allowed us health. And we
enjoy on earth what we need and more than we need. We have
no sorrow about our children as far as I know. Five of them
are studying. Of a simple farmer family, that is more than
one could have expected. What the future has in store for us
we don't know. Nils pa Tullen will be buried next Sunday and
shall follow him to his last resting place. He was to church
the fourteenth and got sick, and died Nov. 29, buried Dec. 5.
About our children we must expect the best. If God has begun
the work He will have to complete it, if we do not deserve
punishment by our sins as -- did. (almost a prophecy)
God does not want to punish us but to do us good. When it
goes well for us we might think "I shall never fall, but
when thou hidest thy face for me, I got scared". 26 says
King David. "God is opposed to the proud but to the humble
He gives Grace." If God keeps us humble we can live through
our desting much better. A preacher lately here preached on th
the text cited above from Hosea. He spoke of how parents can
do for their children, but they can do it not to be compared
to God's love. "What shall I do to my vineyard that I have
not done?" May the Lord help us; "Happy is he who has found
that way and happy is he who continues that way, but happier
is he who has reached his destiny and blessed it he who en-
dures to the end." It is due to the Grace of God that I am
not at the end yet. My contemporaries go one after the other.
Asberg in Pilviken (one of the fellows of my age) died and was
buried last Sunday. I am old and according the order of Nature
I should have gone first because I am older than he. But here
I am sitting 8 o'clock writing, but it is not quiet so it goes
badly. Mamma sits and weaves blankets. She is busy. Well now

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she is finished (He must have left his writing for some days) Tomorrow she is going to help dress the corpse. She is preparing a cake for the funeral banquet (That sounds strange but that is what they used to do in Sweden. And she will have to feed the cattle for I must go to Stensnas and help Johan to thresh the last oats. You may believe he is a great farmer and business man. He sold a pair of oxen at our Fair and bought one pair in return. These he sold at our Fair and bought one pair in return. These he took to Knsdela Fair and sold them and bought another pair in return. One of these he sold to the butcher. He went to Kanale Fair and bought a steer in return, so now he has three pair. The biggest are 13 quarters. Two pair and one steer he has sold, besides two fat colts he has bought and traded for. One of these he has sold for 255 crowns, three years old, a queen four years old. One mare he has bought that is going to have a colt for 375 crowns. Hope he gives God the honor for success, but I fear he is getting worldly. But can also punish and take away. One cow gave birth to a dead calf and one sow died, which intended have for pigs.

Karl Magnus is merchant in a smaller scale. He sells fruit last fall and bought sheep and butchered and sold the meat. He has rented his farm so he has plenty of time. He keeps house and two cows. Ottelia stays with Johan to keep house, but she does not get much salary. But can leave at times. For the preacher she worked pressing shirts and collars, and other work so she earns a little on the side being his housekeeper. Petrus is in Westervik. He will be home for Christmas, but we do not expect Gustaf, for he will be preaching during vacation. From Christina we hear nothing, so we do not know whether she is dear or alive. We have written to her a couple of times but have received no answer but from the other five we get the news. Fred says he owes you two letters. From him we learned that Christina got twins. After that we have learned nothing. Anna has written also. My greatest regret is that I am so slow to write. Yes, that is so. I am so anxious that I judge myself good for nothing. Mama urges me on. She is so zealous for writing and now I have done my best. "As my day has been so has been my power" It did me good to think and remember that you send our letters on to the others. May God give you all a Happy Christmas and God's blessing. Your Father, S. M. Nelson

About Dec. 1897

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Laramie:
Mama and Papa have written sister Mathilda but as I don't know her address I will send it to you and you send it on to her. You may read it. I should write to you, but have had difficulty to start. I wonder if Anna Johnson (Emma's Aunt) has come to America. I remember her well. She was so pleasant. I forgot in my last letter to ask her address to write to me. Give her my best regards. We had woven cloth for dresses that I was supposed to take with me. We thought to have Anna Johnson take it to America, but we had not enough time to get it ready. Now it lies pressed. We will see if Gust leaves for America this summer. At last I wish you a pleasant Christmas and that the heavenly light may shine in

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Your and our hearts. Best regards from your loving and ~~my~~
faithful sister, Ottilia Nilsson.

Getterum August 23, 1903

Dear Son Fredrik: God's peace and Grace:

I will now write you a few lines before my weakness dominates me. I can't make other excuse. We have received the second letter from you and perhaps more and we have kept silent. But now I will thank you for the letter you wrote about Christina and for the comfort it contained. I will always believe that all is for the best. I have been comforted by her letter and the verse, Issiah 60;20 "The Lord shall be my eternal light, and your days of sorrow shall have an end" Behold I have refined thee, but not like silver: I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" Issiah 48;10 She said in her letter it was a hard blow for her when became widow, but that she trusted God. It was a great comfort for us. Then she wrote 6 days before she died that she was weak in the head and that she could not sleep (could not get the sleep) that her weak head needed so much. We clung to that, before this sad blow came. When we received that letter we received one from Elias and also one from you that she was dead. The first two had been kept in Rosanders Sotre some days so we received them at the same time. (Mine came from Berkley, Calif and must have been written much later. Notice, our first care was for us to comfort our parents. The worst blow for us was to learn she caused her death herself.)

We are sorry for Gustaf, that he has not improved, and that his weakness is melancholy. May God be his help. We thank you for what you are doing for his good. If the need be too great we will help, if you want us to, although our Swedish money don't go far in America.

Now I will write about us at home. I can not accomplish much. But it could be said about me I hope. What he could that he did. I shovel and dig on the farm. and breaking up stumps and roots (these stumps are thousand years old. They don't rot because the earth is always moist around them) It does not hurt my back, so it surprises me that I am so strong. But I am like an old dish. I need bandages, I have rupture on both sides. I am not strong but can handle light tools. I can also use the axe so we have plenty of wood. I also go out with fishing tackle and nets. so we have almost every day. But when I sit down to mend the nets, I get pain in the back, though I enjoy doing it. But when I think of writing, then I shrug my shoulders. I am sorry I am so good for nothing, but it is because I fear I can't do and put it off one day after another to start and try. But Mama and Set encourage me and persuade me that I am able.

The Bible says "Dont drink to get drunk of wine from which comes an indecent life" Here in Getterum is indecency from

beer. The village officials, with those interested, have had a meeting to stop it. We neighbors even wrote to the governor

that unlawful business was carried on here. But we got answer

from Kalmar that we should decide for ourselves. So we had another meeting on my birthday (Namesday) I celebrated my names day by a speech, but I had not much to say. But I ~~applied/led/lo~~ appealed to them from the Bible. Others gave good reasons so it will be harder for P. W. (Br Wilhelm) than if he had not made his declaration. It has caused much trouble in many families. And they themselves are suffering, because both are drinking and the daughter also (I don't remember that Pr Wilhelm i Gastgioregarden had a daughter. I remember two sons of almost my age). The lady that sells the beer is drunk very often. But we believe and hope that this misery shall have an end.

Today, Wednesday, Set came home from Misterhult from his classes he has been teaching with 60 kronor earned and 15 as a tip, together 75 crowns for 5 days a week. On Saturdays he has taught a classmate for 15 crowns. He is not lazy about what he has to do.

Since I now have gotten my cold nature warmed up a little, hope old Adam will not come and put P. (a stop?) to it. I will speak about Carl, how he sets up with machines, about Johan I suppose you know. Moving machines he had before, but this summer he has bought a threshing machine driven by steam, and delivers the grain all cleaned. They are three in the company. The threshing machine he bought at an auction but the steam engine he bought in Kresasia. There is America manufacture there.

As for myself, you may be sure, if I only can get away a little from my laziness, I have confidence and believe that God is able to feed and care for me on these swamps and (mountains rock.) I work to improve the field. I make covered ditches and for lack of rocks I use branches of Spruce. Karl uses Sagskoik? (sawdust or slate thrown away as useless) The people in general don't believe they can get along in the ancient manner. They want to find new ways of earning money. Johan could not get along in the ancestral form. Now Karl has it. The future will show. The farm is many times improved since I was young. My father used to say that "Tjortammer" was freighted while the horse-their backs had to carry the weight. Now that is a fact and general and particular ways are made in every direction. Must now close. If the meaning is not plain you will have to fill in with your own thinking.
 your Father Sven Magnus Nilson

Getterum Oct. 8, 1903

Dear Son David--Grace and Peace from God.

Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" Jn 11:21. I am as weak in my thinking as Martha when something sad happens. When I began to read your letter that we received today and for which I thank you, I shivered as I expected to find that he might have done as Kristina, but as I continued and found that he was still alive, a spark of faith glistened and there came to my mind the words of Jesus to Martha; "If thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God" Jh 11:40 I never take anything too seriously to begin with, but put my trust in God. But the devil wants to send arrows of doubt, that the bible is not in accord with my faith.

Then I need the guidance of the Holy Spirit to extricate me from the meshes of the devil. "Is his mercy gone for ever?" Ps. 77;8 "And I said, This is my infirmity. The right hand of the Most High can change everything. Ps. 77; 9-11.

I agree with you, David, you have borne the heaviest burthen. But St. Paul says. "I can do all, through Him who make me strong." So you and his beloved wife will have to say. Yes We thank you for all you have done to help Krestina and Gust and as far what you can continue to do for those abandoned? I will say; what you could that you did Krestina received what you did for her as a deed of love. (Kaslekgarnang) I thank God that his goodness is not ended, and that Gust is alive and that God has not withheld his mercy Ps 77;8 but hears our prayers and I can believe. "The right hand of God can change it all." Give these quotations. Is 49;15 Ps 103;8-15 to his wife and to all our family with my regards. At home everything is as usual. Set is in Upsala University. As you know perhaps, he has earned his own money by teaching, and there he has scholarship. But now the 7th of Oct. he needed more so I sent him 70 crowns, which I got by selling timber. We have butchered two fat sheep for ourselves. One for Mina Rosander of the Store, for the banquet at the funeral.

Rosander is dead so she is widow. The funeral takes place tomorrow. The sheep weighed 18½ Kils and we received 13;27 crowns for it. Karl is to the Fair at Tuna today. He is going to buy oxen. At Gotterum Fair he sold a cow of ours. I expect 100 crowns for her. It failed. He brought her home again. (I remember I with father went to Tuna Fair with two cows and brought them both home. I was so tired and sick I lay down on the bed. They thought I was sad because we just got a letter that day that Gust was sick in Laramie about 1885) We have not picked all our potatoes yet. It is raining now so I have time to sit here and write, the land is wet.

We went to Konglebo the 6th of Oct. Then grandfather was sick. Oct. 18 he died and was buried the 27th. Mama was there from Oct. 25 till Oct 28th. Karl and Selma were there, at the selling the estate Oct. 16 (seems should be Nov.) after that grandmother comes to live with us, so we will be three old people. The difference of ages is 8 and 11 years, from the oldest to the youngest 19 years (1821, 1829, 1840) "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage" Gen 47;9. So Jacog answered Pharaoh. The time of my misery is 74 years and how long it will continue I don't know, but so far it has been better than Facob's. Like Jacob I have trouble with my hip. I halt a little. My shoulder are a little weak, but they are strong enough to serve. The left one was the worse first but now the right one is poorer. Mama has the right shoulder weak. It is worst when we are in bed and when I chop wood and shake up the shoulders. If the body does not tire I am all right.

I am glad that Minnie (Plant) is so patient and the girl (Louise) is a help to encourage her. When sorrow comes we have to say like David (King) Ps. 43;5. (all quoted)

Your Father S. M. Nilsson.

Getterum, Jan 13, 1898

My de r ones. Peace be with you all that ar in Christ Jesus.

Now as I al alone, Petrus and Papa have gone to Morhult to a Prayer meeting, so I will speak with you a while. If you were here you could have a taste of my bread that I have baked in my little comfortable home. I cannot express to you how well I am off here as long as God grant me health and lets me putter aroung here with my business. We had a Merry Christmas. Petrus is such an entertainer in the evenings. He plays the organ or he reads so we stay up as long as we can.

But now is the time for him to go to his (he is 12 years)Manar? So brave that one must not mediatate and worry about matters but take everything asit comes. Then we are best off. But I only speak about myself. Thanks for your letter and all your love,greetings it contained. That I cannot answer. But how fortunate it is that youare all well. It is a great gift from God don't forget that! Thanks little Alvin for your communicating with us. Do that every time, because that stirs our courage when we can talk a little to our dear ones. When you grow up to be a man you will come to see us, I hope.

Your Mother Good Night.

Getterum Jan, 1 1898

Brother David:

I will write a few lines to you. I have written to Ethel and to Alvin. Ask Alvin to write to me. Pardon my blots in many places, especially in my last letter. Papa did not like my blots, when he learned about them. But he did not learn before the letter was sent. I write poorly, but that is the fault of the pen. That is the excuse of all poor writers. And I am (I suppose one of them. We received letter and pictures some time ago from Mathilda. I suppose you have received the same kind also. I am learning how to bind books, taught by Berner and I have bound "Den Lilla Missionaren" which you sent me together with a couple of calenders which belong to it. I have also bound another magazine and now I am working on a book. I will now close for this time.

Your Brother Set Svensson

(He was 12 1/2 years old)

I have translated all this without any dictionary (even English) Sometimes it has been hard to find the right word. If the reader thinks of a better word he may write it on the margin. I found in the possession of Ethel left by sister Mathilda a bunch of letters from Set and from Gust from Johan and many that I do not translate. Is the hand writing inherited? Karl, Ottilia, Elias, Gust have Mama's hand. Otherwise they have Papas character. I Johan, Mathilda, Anna have Papa's hand and I especially have Mama's character. David is an exeption. Christina, I would say Papas and Set exeption or a little like Mamas.

Getterum Jan1, 1899

My dear children and you Mathilda:

Thanks for your de r letter which I received 4 days after Christmas. It made us so happy. You can't imagine to get new from all of you and especially fr m Kristina. Papa was so exceedingly happy. Always when we talked about her he said "She must be dead"! Now we thank God. Now we have celebrated

Christmas and enjoyed ourselves very much. In the first place because we are well--a great gift; Jesus be praised; Yes dear ones, We are so well off. We lack nothing. Oh that we could praise and thank God for so great gifts that we always enjoy. I find myself speechless. God forgive me. We are sitting here in our little pleasant home. While others run about we prefer to stay be ourselves. Then we feel best.

On the first day of the year I will give you a memory verse. May God guide us. "It is impossible for him to (Komma Piskam) to be ashamed that trusts on the Lord. Praise the Lord oh my soul and forget not the good He has done thee". Yes, we shall keep as close as possible to God in the first place and then as near each other in the humble simple way that He has given us. I who am the poorest in writing however do my best. You speak about your girls and what they occupy themselves with. Yes you must enjoy listen to their music. When Petrus is at home we too have such enjoyment. But time passes so quickly. (When vacation is over) There we have to sit and think just as you say. But we have a hope that when he has finished if it is God's will he will be our support. So he says. I meant to go to grandfather's to celebrate his twenty fifth anniversary of his wedding, but there came a storm weather and I stayed at home. Staying home is the easiest for me. They are well as far as I know. Dearest regards from me to all of you. ~~God~~/ God be with you. Write soon

Your Mother

Getterum Jan. 1, 1899

A good conscience is a daily visitor. That is my favorite memory verse (Valsprak). And I try to make it my practice. But I have experienced that humanity has defiled (fordarvat) their way. And when I think of the first commandment "Fear and love God above everything", then I am ashamed. But it is good for Jesus' sake God does not lay our misdeeds to our discredit. Thanks Mathilda for the letter we received for Christmas. You must have received one from us after you sent yours. We were in doubt about the address, so Ottilia sent this to Elias and asks him to send it to you, either to you or to David first. We have heard from Elias. We have received letter from Gust and he has had letter from Christina and she is well. He also is well. He forced her to write. He did not send her our gifts to her before she answered him and let him know she was alive. I am so happy to know that you all are well. And the youngest that could strive ahead with his education and "Skon" give Petrus his "life rent" money. Petrus is doing well. He is the first in the fifth class. He takes the classical course (Latin). May be he will change to science. He studies English (private lessons). Now he is at home. At times he plays the organ. He also is making a book case. He has also helped to saw wood. He helps me more in the winter than in the summer for then he spends his time swimming. (I went swimming with him when I was home in 1906) Mama demands that in the first place. He himself is not so interested. I am old and vanities (vain things) don't interest me much. Spiritual things also. But whatever

is is from God, a gift of God. I would wish that it could be said of me what Jesus said about the woman (Mary Magdaline) "What she could that she did. Yes, I do what I can-Sit and make nets". I humble myself under God's mighty hand so that he may lift me up when the time comes" But I drive with "the old"

I do more than look after the cattle, chopping wood and so forth as my strength permits, but the natures law; I cannot say like King David that I am young and strong like an eagle. Ps. 103; 5. We are comfortable, we have much to thank God for. God is better than gold. If you children and I have Him then we are rich enough. If we have his spirit and His knowledge. "Without God there is no Joy
Without God there is no peace". S. M. Nilson

Jan 1, 1903 "It is God grace that we are not exhausted"
Dear Mathilda: The grace of God and peace be with you.
Thanks for the letter we received New Years day. It was the fifth we received from you all;;Fred, David, and Elias for Christmas. We have answered you all.(not?) Because we expected to get letters from many of you. Then we had one letter from Gust which we have answered. We have also sent all the letters to Johan and to Ottilia. Christmas is now past and it is the 14th of Jan. and according to the reckoning of the Christmas is driven out the 20th "Knut". But we reckon the 13th because then Jesus was worshipped. I do not know the date he was persecuted (by Herod(. But persecution is not over yet, because he that is not with is against. And it seems when we are together in prayer meetings for example, in Asen, then the children of this world stay away. But if there is a dance then they are interested. But we that value the Christmas gift which is light and bread and clothes (Hogtedskader). Him we enjoy and praise and thank and exalt. We have had the week of prayer and we have made our desires known to Him who does not shut his ears to those that call to Him because He has said. "Before they cry I will answer and while they yet speak I will answer their prayer." I have received more than I could have asked or thought of. In respect to the economy I am so well off. I am only enjoying what the Lord gives me. I am sitting here with my good fire and make nets, and sometimes I read and tend to the cattle. I enjoy to think of you my children also. In the first place children is a gift of God. God will want to receive them back. Wants them to serve Him on earth. And it is a service to Him to gather together with Him. Seth is keeping Sunday School Tomorrow his school and studies begin and his vacation is past. Those I have in America studying is a word of the Spirit? May they continue worthily. I am proud to think that from a humble family can grow such men. But it is not the work of man but of God. He can make "a vessel for honor or for dishonor". Paul had to be made small by God and then he accomplished

something good. God wants us to be humble so that His grace may work in us, because over flesh is always a hindrance and always leads us the wrong way. But we must crucify it daily and kill it with all sin and wicked lusts so that a new man may arise daily which will live eternally for God in righteousness and holiness. I do not have your letter now, but I remember that you wrote that you did not get the profit that you expected. Yes we always live in hopes and God makes everything come out for the best for those that love Him. As for me I get along well, only must not be too proud. (overdadigt) But until now I have had money enough to keep Seth in school and had besides. If God grants me to continue thus as in the past I will suffer no need. And if He turns the leaf one will have to take the evil with the good. (Almost a prophecy)

In Flodhult the evil day has arrived. Lotta has fallen sick so they have to watch over her continually. Lift her from the bed to a rocking chair and often a short time back to bed. It tires them out. Mama has watched over her one night. Lotta is not patient. Mama was to Konglebo the 13th day (I translated this Trinity in former pages). They are so happy when she comes. She was their also a little before Christmas. She visits them often. (Did she walk on foot the distance, some 12 to 15 miles?) They are rather well but grandma is worse off than grandpa. The household work she has left in the hands of the servant girl. She is a daughter of Anders of John Person who was employed by Uncle Nilsson i Gissebo. It is seven O'clock and Seth is sitting writing French. He is busy but I hope he will write a few lines to you. And Mama is busy hurrying to get Set's things ready, looking out for his clothes and darning. We all have health at present. We have received letter from Johan. His girl is named Nana Elizabeth, baptized New Year's day. She was born Nov. 17. She is big and strong and very good. (that means she does not cry) Hildur writes also. They missed us at the banquet of baptism, but they had it even without us. She wrote about what she cooked and prepared for she likes to converse with us. Best regards to you and family as far as it may reach.
Your father, S. M. Nilsson.

Oct. 21, 1903

It is the grace of God that we are not exhausted (ute med oss) After much ado Grandmother is with us. She brought a cow with her. She is a widow. She moved to us the Oct. 21 when the servant girl had finished her year. She (the girl) last duty was to lead the cow. Grandmother is weak. She lies down at times and at times she is up and spins yarn (linen), so I have (Kaste pa ett nat) a net which I am making.

In the summer I am fishing so we have meat (sagel) for dänher, I also wrok in the fields at times from which we get our support.. I have hoed on old "ake" where the land has been poorest broken . I have also plowed where it was better. But I had to stop for a time because I got sick. Fire wood I cut as usual. As you now have taken up raising sheep, I will talk about our. We have ten. We butchered four and have 6 left. We sold one to Mina for the funeral banquet of the storekeeper. We received 13.27 kr. for the carcas. The entrails and the skins we kept. The price was 70 or the Kila Seth is in Upsola. He is well. But it costs much money. He gets 500 kr. from a fund in Westeroik, so that helps a little. toward his expenses. We sent him 70 kr. once and 50 kr another time. He has saved from his former stipend (Fellowship) and what he earned giving lessons to a boy in Misterkult 75 kr So it has cost between 400crowns the fall term which ends Dec 1
Your Father

Getterum Nov. 21, 1908.
"it is the Lork's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassion fail not Lam. #;22.

That applied to me when I fell and they had to carry me home Nov. 2. Twelve weeks I could not take any food, only enough to keep me alive. But I am better off now so I occupy myself with nets for fishing so the time has not seemed so long, but I feel the cold more than ever. I thank you David for the letter. You have delayed long to write, but I will encourage

you with Issiah 55;12 "For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace". We cannot reach heaven any other way. It pleased me so when you said. "We will meet there if not in this life." Mathilda writes that you visit her at times and that you are going to get married in December. But as you say you are short on money. I have no money before in March. If Karl could send now I would pay him back in March. I wonder if Johan has sent money to Mathilda as he was supposed to do.

Anna with Fred are received. I owe Gustof letter, but I have a delayed, because I have waited for receipt for (frera) money wh which Johan was supposed to send. He wrote about what he sent. I have not answered Mathilda letter. I am waiting to hear if she has received any money. You may tell her about this letter. She will send the letters addressed to her. Elias and Emma write often. We understand they are a happy married couple. I hope David that yours may be happy. "Go out with joy and be led forth with peace." The young Tobias had that good fortune. He got an Angel to be his traveling companion, and he came back with the money and also happily married. She was destined for him and no one else could get her and they celebrated their wedding in joy and fear of God. (This is a reference from the Apocrypha which is not found in our American Bibles) Well, now I have written about much adventure, but there comes to my mind also that Hannah had to do spinning for them to keep them. My wife had to tend to the cattle and the home, bring in wood and water and that is quite a job. What I do is to pass the time. Now we are far from the lake and I am no good (obrukbar) for work and my lower hip is swollen so I am washing it with (skevatten) alum water.

Your Father, S. M. Nilsson

(This is the last letter of Fathers that I find. He died March 23, 1910)

Jan 14, 1902

"If somebody is fighting he is not crowned unless he fights honorably"

Yes, dear Mathilda. Let us run so that we may receive the reward. We enjoy down here so great and good advantages in every way. But we ought to lay up treasure for eternity. Thanks for the letter. You cheer us with your letters, so we get much cause for joy in our way home. When one is happy everything goes well and we have so great joy so the pen cannot express it, praise the Lord. How is Ethel? What is she doing. That I wish to know. We are well and strong. Which is the best of all. We have been busy with Set, with his cloths That is a great joy for me as long as I have been able to work for him, but if God is willing I will get rest for working for him when he gets far away. Then he will be to me as you are, an object of thought. I have not needed to worry yet for I have sewed underwear for him myself. You may be sure I am proud of myself. Many young women don't know how to do that. When one considers that one can not have low thoughts about one's relatives. The Lord be praised for what we can do. That we will do. When Set goes heleaves a vacant chair. But God fills all vacancies. We have to stand it. So my dear, we put our trust higher and higher, because so all has come about. God be praised and honored.

Grandfather and grandmother are well. Best and heartfelt greetings from me. Your Mother.

(I have on former pages translated regards for greetings)

Jan 14, 1902

Dear Mathilda; My peace I give you, says Jesus and so I say and all good things that God will grant you in the New Year We too are hoping to see you if God is willing. As to money there will be some way out. As you know Johan was supposed to send you. He got so deep into business so only God knows how it will come out for him. But we will have to find some other way with you. Karl and I felt very sorry for you. Fred let us know about it. He has always and I what happens. Papa is so --- we have to keep things to ourselves then it is best. Karl is very well provided for. But that is because he has lived near us. But they don't consider how you have had to break through your own way, with industry and economy you are where you are. Ottilia and Karlson have a big farm, (beautiful). But have a big debt in it. Hope they can work themselves through. She has a exceptionally good and kind husband. He does good business as far as we understand. But what will they do if they don't earn enough to pay the interest. We tell them if you don't see your way out, sell. Now my dear, I am telling you much unnecessary. Who will tell you if I don't? We have to take things as easily as possible because here is nothing but one test after another. And we who have so many children to worry about. And now we begin to not be able to bear all the worries of this life. We who are so far gone on our way home. And the dear God has had such a patience with us. "May He who has been a good work in us complete it." Now I begin to believe it. As I did not have the address of any one but yours, so I ask you to send this to Gust. "Some money"?? You know I am busy weaving three long weaves? Oh, that I could share it with you. Tell Emma that the Christmas present did not arrive. We cannot (forn po en) (gang) Let Gust see this and hear how all is. It is nothing pleasant but we are well in body and soul.

Greetings from Your Mother

Getterum Oct. 21, 1902?

Dear Mathilda. Peace be with you and your family. "The Lord is pleased with those that fear him, those that trust in his goodness" I have wished a long time to commune with you and you all. So now I will tell you that our old father has ended his course here on earth. He was buried Sept. 27. when we said our last adieu to him. Papa and I were with him and we felt such a satisfaction because he needed grace and pardon. As you know we have visited him many times but never have we given him so great pleasure as when we came and sympathized with him in his last suffering. He had been saying; "I wonder if Emma won't come." And when I came to visit him he was so glad and said, "I was sure you would come". "Now I am past and this will close with death" He had been weak all the summer, but now worse than he could walk between the house as you remember. He had great pain and when the attacks came, we thought several times that he was dead. But between times he got up and sat and talked with us and we the surviving we were to leave for home he said as usual that we should have a farewell drink of coffee. I drank with tears running down my cheeks. He could not see very well but he gazed at me and put his hand so heavily on me for his hands were heavy and

swollen. They said the last month the whole body had swollen. We drove home in the morning the 6th or 7th and he died 18th. Set had visited them bringing them berries before he left. He said "You must if possible to and visit them for they are weak."

Now I am sitting writing. It is 5 o'clock in the morning. Grandmother stays with us and Aunt i Gotehult is here. She came to see her old mother. You can't believe how glad we are to be able to do something for her. She is up. She is well enough for her high age (Kry) (I can't find a word in English for "Kry" She sits and spins yarn for nets for papa. My sister is fixing clothes for both mothers and because you may believe my time is well taken up as usual. Well, now the great festival is coming on. Hope we may be able to celebrate it in the name of the Lord. We wish you a Merry Christmas with health and strength with victory over sin. We have so great promises. Let us take them in and if God can get us, it is a great wonder. especially myself. Tell me how you stand with your God. The dearest greeting from all of us
Your Mother.

Getterum Jan 3, 1906

Dear Mathilda: God's peage rest over you my dear ones.

Heartful thanks for your welcome letter in which I see that you are well, which is the best, God be praised. We are well and like yourself am doing my work. I do it myself. The children (in Stensnas) like to come down (to Getterum) when I am butchering or scrubbing. They love us so. They are our company. Without them, we would sit here alone. This is the first Christmas that we have been alone. We are used to have our dear Set, who would run around us. We felt so poor Christmas morning when I got up so I did not know what to do. You may imagine, we always have all your pictures put up on the table. If Set had not reminded us in his letter we would have forgotten it. And then we sing, "Var halsad skona Morgonstund" After I calmed myself I took up the usual order. He used to sit at the organ before he went to church (4 a.m.) Now there was a vacancy. He is traveling holding meetings for the Blue Ribbon Society (Temperance) in order to earn money. You may believe it costs money for him (at university). You too had that experience (Ethel was visiting Aunt Anna 1906) Thank you my dear for the picture. It was pleasant for Ethel to be with her Aunt and for them to evtertain a relative. Yes, we do not value enough to have each other. That has not been our good fortune, but these poor lin s may serve as substitute. I say to Set that I do not long for anything else than to get news from my children. Their news is do dear, they may be good or otherwise. In any case it gives subjects for prayer. Yes my dear ones that is all we can do, and with that we will continue. It is fortunate for you that Ethel has this opportunity for the future. Tell her as I tell Set "Take good care of yourself, so we get a little joy out of your life, dear little Ethel" because there are so many dangers for all in this sinful world, but God helps his children on through the world wants to captivat them. Set is so good (moral) as all our children have been. M Many of our neighbors have had to go through with their children "slemma" things. We have not, great praise be to the Lord.

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to serve us. And now I can sit and see them how they are busy and work, if I can't get out. Papa agrees with all I have written and asks to be remembered to you. Many greetings from me contained in every line.

Fare well (live well)

Your Mother

1910 because David was married 1910

Memory verse (and here she quotes the Ps. 78:1. Yes dear little David and wife:

Thanks for your dear letter in which we see you are well and strong ("kry") which is the best we have. May these lines find you and your betrothed with a wife. God give you good fortune (and a long life of joy (bliss). That is all we can say. We should so willingly do something for your setting up housekeeping. But all we can do is to sit and think about how you will get along. Yes, dear ones, Have your desire in the Lord and He will give you what your hearts may wish. You are not accustomed to get help from home, but to fight your own way through. May God strengthen you in every way. That He will do. That is our sure hope. You say that if not before you will see us up there where no sorrow more shall be. Oh that we were there; We were so glad to learn so we shed tears of joy. May God bless you with looking to Jesus. Let everything else go with the wind (for vag) And you Gust comforted us by telling that you met Karl Martin at a prayer meeting. And you say he believed in God and that all the children are turning out well. That made us very happy. Tell us more about them. It is hard on Gust. He takes life so seriously. Yes he is severely tested as we know. May God help him through. It is perhaps with him as with me. "erra kjens" and a question that has no solution here. May God keep us until the end of our days. Live well my dears. I wish you a Merry Christmas. Write and tell us everything. Fare well,

Your Mother

Getterum, Dec 29, 1908

God's dear peace rest over you. Col. 3.

Thanks dear Mathilda for your letter. We felt lonesome waiting to hear from some one and then we got your letter. Heartily thank We were accustomed to have some one run around and do what he could for Christmas peace both for us and for others, but now all is so quiet. We have to sit and talk with one another. Papa says, "Now you have no one to take your part, Emma. And then our tears often run, but it is good we have each other and besides also God. "Det gor igenou Det stannas icke. I jammerdalen. Gud vere Pris". (quotation from a song) We are well, God be praised and everything goes on as usual. I have my animals to tend to. That must be done no matter how bad the weather is. For my age I am unusually strong.

These last days it has been very cold and snow so I must shovel through the snow. Remember you have an old mother who does not always have good days. But the merciful God grants me good health and besides all that we need. We have such an abundance of God's gifts, praise the Lord (greatly). That is a good thing for now-a-days people care for themselves and let their parents get along best they can, in every kind of weather. Well, we pass one day at the time toward the goal. The sooner the better, we say. Papa's sore mouth is not getting any better, it does not matter what we do. Otherwise he is well. His worst is to "olas" that he dare not eat much. Yes, the time will soon come when we shall move (to Stensnas). I should not look forward to moving, for we will not be so well off

up there as we have been here. But our remaining days can not be so many and the mercies of God are sufficient. We will remain satisfied. (There is Stensnas) we will have our relatives near us. It has been such a vacancy here. You say nothing about coming home. If you are strong so you can, we would be glad to see you any time. I have always wished to see you while we are here. I dare not suggest that you travel in the winter, however much I should want to see you. As we now are going to have auction, in case you would want something. We would so gladly let you have it. A mattress or pillow or sheets. We so amny. Tell me if you want anything. We would feel so satisfied if we could share some of those things with you. As Papa says "We will soon be able to send you." Yes very dearly beloved. We will make appointment at the throne of mercy every minute on this journey that we make only once. Time passes so fast for one that has no pain. For us old people it is a great thing and we hope to God that ours get no physical pains and we will give God the honor for all and intrust ourselves in His embrace and he brings us home. Dear ones, read my poor writing and look up. We have all good health. Karl and his family were down here the third day (after Christmas) His mother-in-law has been with them during the holidays. I was not able to go up there on account of my duties and during the bad weather. Since then we know nothing about them. I was glad to hear about David. May God bless them. How I envy you that would be with them. I wish you all good things, for you all, from your father and mother. Live well. Peace, Peace we wish you. That is all we can do.

1910

Now dear Mathilda. While writing to David I will accompany a letter to you. Peace and Blessing rest over you. Ps. 23 for the holidays that are now coming on. May God let us celebrate it with joy and gladness in the Lord. He is our strength. We are so poor as you know. Only the Stensnas people to visit, but they always come down Christmas day and we share sorrow and gladness. Oh that we could do so with you; We feel so abandoned when we remember how Set ran about among us and did what he could understand that we wished. You say that Ethel is a good girl. The Lord be praised because that is a great thing. I said always "Mathilda be good to yourself and then we get some benefit too. And he was good and read his testament every night. I was so pleased with that. There are so many wrong side tracks for the poor youths. The youngest daughter of Selma i Nasshult is with child. They have written to the King. (Perhaps the boy is too young to get married and he had to get government permission). May God keep you all and the dear ones who has united with our family. We have a great to read Emma's letters. How glad I am to know she is a worker. She says she would not feel right if she did not have much to do. Yes Amen. I have had a hard year since I became a widow in every way, because this farm is so abundant with all that one needs, so I have had much work to reap all. We are so well provided for both to body and soul and we wish you be so situated. We are sorry we have not been able to do anything for you there. Now there will be much excitement for us before we get away. I hope God will help us. You have always said you were coming home. Come now and help me, but if you think it costs too much, we have to be satisfied as it is. I will alwaysso my best writing as long as I live. Tell

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Alvin. Would you please send him my letters. To Mathilda
Good by for this time.

Student Seth Svensson
Vastana Nil Gr
Vastervik.

Getterum Jan. 2, 1899

I am writing 1899 and this time to you for the second time I wrote to Ethel yesterday, but the letter turned out both short and with errors. You ask her in return to write a long letter to me, she who can write. I will now describe Christmas in Sweden (at home). because I suppose you have forgotten about it during your 18 years of absence. Papa, Mama and I live here together in Bryggeriet. Brother Johan, sister Ottelia, and the hired boy of Johan Gustof, the hired girl Anna and the adopted boy Albert. On the evening before the John the Baptist day I went up to Stensnas and slept there that night in order to chop wood in the morning (4 a. m.) At 3:30 A. M. we were driven out of bed, we had coffee and we went out to the wood shed we four men. We chose a dry gunnery tree stump (this stump is dug up from a swamp where it has lain covered with water for some thousand of years) and piled more wood on this and set fire to it and then we began to chop wood. Albert and I manipulated the saw. Johan and Gustof chopped. When it was day light I went to give my rabbits their Christmas dinner extra oats and milk and to tell them it was the John the Baptist day, Christmas Eve. After having tended to various duties, I began in the afternoon to dress the Christmas tree. I worked on that until it was dark, when I sat with papa who was reading. All of a sudden there came rushing in a package.. The door to the porch was slammed to and Mama looked out from the kitchen through the door of the front room. I rushed out, and in my hurry did not know which way I took. Then I heard the kitchen door open. I tried to pursue but lost the track and hurried in. In my ~~course~~ I picked up two packages one to mama, one to myself the first one was for papa. (The one was thrown in first) Papa after having with much trouble opened the well wrapped package discovered a pocket knife. Papa had lost his and needed one. (That is the giver knew what father was in need of). In mama's package were frames for pictures and in mine-- Well some one was playing a trick on me-- was a stone. Papa began to read again. Mama had entered the front room and was standing in a corner of kitchen. Very soon several packages all tied together were thrown in. I ran out and recognized Gustof. Then I decided I did not need to run further, so I just called out. "Thanks Gustof:" and hurried back in. There were rubbers, handkerchiefs, candy, and birds for the Christmas tree for me. For Mama an apron and as she went out into the kitchen she stepped on a piece of soap for papa. Papa and I decided that Albert threw in the first package. Then he hid behind the porch wall, while I ran out. While I was running he threw in the other two packages. I tried to pursue him, but could see him. We thought Gustof threw in the second, while we were opening the first packages. As you will remember he came too late. Mama did not seem to agree with us and only smiled and her smile to say "I know how it all happened"; As for myself I knew that ~~Mama was right.~~ It was she who threw in the first package. I ran out and hurried back to throw in the second. Then I pretended to pursue Albert. The stone for myself I had thrown in myself in order to free myself from being suspected. Mama however saw through my trick. The last time it was really Gustof who threw in Christmas presents from Stensnas. A couple of days later papa thanked me for the pocket knife, because Mama had told him. (Notice that

before in the "Decision" Set had deceived papa for the fun of it). Christmas morning we lighted the Christmas tree and put candles in every window. The Christmas tree (and the candles) are not for a but for the people that go to church. But generally there/~~remains~~ remains of the candles enough to light up the coffee table at Christmas banquets. Yesterday we had a young people's banquet in Stensnas. A church organist entertained the guests with music and singing, by a choir trained by him, without pay, without position, and most of his singers were present. (This is a puzzle. It seems he means himself as the organist and leader of a choir).

I will now close

Your brother, Seth Svensson

He is only 13 years and 10 months old.

1912

My dear Children all of you. Peace be with you.

Received our simple words and "do" "read" what you can. Tell Emma we received her package (kind?) With every lines go the dearest greetings. Give Gust this. Live well. Look to Jesus.

Your Mother

Stensnas, Dec. 3, 1908

Dear Brother and Sister-in-law

I wish you God's peace and Grace.

Thanks for the card I received some days ago. I wanted to write to you, but I do not know why I put it off. I see you have received the pictures. We kept 4 The money was more than necessary. They cost 2.20 so there remains 2150. You may tell me what to do with them. We all have health and are well. The winter comes early. The ground froze in beginning of Nov. so I had not finished fall plowing. But now it is thawing. We received letter from David. It seems he needs money. He says he is going to get married but has to put it off until his finances are better. I don't understand why he does not earn money now. Elias wrote us a short time ago and also his wife. They are so Happy and satisfied with their position. I have not heard from Johan for some time. I wrote to him last so I have long waited to hear from him. I hope they are well and that he gets through, though he has much care that he get into. Let us know something about your school and your school and your students next time.

I wish you a happy Christmas.

Your Brother, C. W. Svensson

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You will notice all through these letters that there is a religious streak in our family. This streak is twosided; 1. Repentant, melancholy humility and 2. Heretic, quarrelsome, self assertion. This latter trait we find in Jesus. He picked a quarrel with the Pharisees every opportunity. He had. Now I would have wished to soften or even suppress this trait, but what is history for except to tell the truth? Well, Luke 13;18 softens the exaggeration of Mark 4;31 which says that the mustard seed is the smallest and Luke 11;29 suppresses the word adulterous of Mt. 12;39 and 16;4 because he did not like it. But in doing that he is not a good historian and he really misrepresents the character of Jesus. In Mark Jesus is a strong energetic, active propagandist. This trait Matthew and Luke, to say nothing about John, try to soften and make Jesus out to be mild and lowly, but they were forced by tradition and by the documents they copied to include the sterner side of the Gospel. I have not followed their example.

But some one of you my readers may say: "If our parents fell into pitfalls, we should not warn our children against them but let them carry on their destiny and get their own experience. That is what they are on earth for, to make their own mistakes, misdeeds, and errors. These make material for novels and history. You could not write a novel about----here I was searching for an antonym of error, but it seems the English language has not any. Am I ashamed of this family trait? Well, I would have to be ashamed of humanity, the followers of Jesus, Mohammed, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy et alii. But I will even admit that with this psychosis, sickness, go some virtues and morality. A small dose of it may be good, just as a small cup of coffee might be good while too much is harmful. As the radio announces tobacco without the nicotine, the harmful without the harm or at least with milder harm