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The Mission Experience of Spencer W. Kimball

Spencer W. Kimball indicated to his biographers that during his mission he had kept a journal in a little black notebook, but he did not know where he had put it, so the biographers had to rely almost exclusively on his reminiscences for information about his mission experience. During the clearing out of President Kimball's office shortly after his death in November 1985, an inch-high stack of three-and-a-half-inch by six-inch looseleaf sheets turned up, which proved to be the missing journal. The journal includes irregular entries starting when he was fifteen; the entries are nearly daily from age eighteen to twenty-three.

The portions of Spencer Kimball's journal reproduced here are drawn from his missionary years, ages nineteen to twenty-one. They show a boy still in the process of maturation, but one with the basic qualities we would expect from our acquaintance with the man. Even though the journal is not highly introspective, it offers unselfconscious clues to the kind of person who could become a prophet. We see indications of humility, penchant for hard work, sensitivity, sociability, faith, and other qualities that in heightened form characterized him as a remarkable Church leader. We learn of his talents with people and with music. His baritone voice and skill at the piano provided much satisfaction to him and to those who asked him to play and sing.

In his reaction to events, we learn something about Spencer Kimball's feelings about war, religion (particularly Mormonism), sexual mores, big-city life, political conventions, alcohol use, and many other things. A journal is positive evidence of what it states, but we should be cautious about drawing firm inferences from what is missing. A journal writer has preconceptions about the purposes of such a record, and those notions dictate what he will include. For example, Spencer Kimball had a rich sense of humor, but little of that can be seen in his journal. He had a normal interest in romance, but there are few hints of that in his journal. He was cognizant of world events, but he rarely referred

to them unless they somehow affected his life rather directly. His journal is a record of what he did, more than what he thought. He records the daily events of work, travel, and recreation; his successes and failures; reflections on how he had been treated by others; occasional expressions of faith; and self-conscious sketches of people and places.

Going beyond the story of one man's life, the journal contributes to our understanding of missionary work. The journals of a number of early missionaries, such as Wilford Woodruff and Parley P. Pratt, have been published, but not many journals that reflect missionary work in the United States in the early twentieth century. Through the eyes of a diligent young elder, we can see the rhythms and routines of that era of missionary life.

We find in his journal regular reporting of morning study class, tracting door to door in an effort to strike up gospel conversations and lend or sell at cost pamphlets and books, evening cottage meetings in the homes of investigators at which missionaries gave talks on gospel subjects, and occasional and sometimes awkward street meetings. He also writes of attending meetings of the local branch, visiting members, administering to the sick, and such recreational activities as attending plays or movies, swimming, and sightseeing. But the more dramatic experiences are found in his country tracting, when the elders depended on the hospitality of farmers for beds and meals. These forays into the sometimes unfriendly Missouri countryside tested a young missionary's physical and spiritual mettle.

Though Spencer Kimball was probably above average in ability, as suggested by the fact that he served as a leader among missionaries, he had no dramatic accomplishments to draw marked attention to his missionary service. His mission experience appears to be typical of the time and place.

Commas and apostrophes have been inserted for clarity and ease of reading, but the occasional spelling errors, the variable spelling of personal names, and the frequent capitalization of common nouns appear as in the original. Comments in parentheses are the author's. Editorial insertions appear in brackets. Omissions within entries are indicated by ellipses. Omissions of entire entries are marked by spaced dots between entries.

[Spencer attended high school at Church-operated Gila Academy, just down the block from his home in the Mormon village of Thatcher, Arizona. He was outgoing, popular, and president of his class each year. At the graduation exercises for his small class in 1914, his father, Andrew Kimball, presided as stake president and president of the board of the Academy.]

Thur., May 7, 1914. Graduation Exercises held at Thatcher Meeting house. We 21 H. S. & 7 Com[mercials] Graduates met in hall below and marched up stairs. We had an excellent program (so we were told). I sang a Baritone Solo, "The Plains of Peace." Father informed me in these exercises before this vast assembly that I was to be called on a mission. This greatly surprised me for I had been planning all winter to go to college next winter. After the exercises we 1914's gave a surprise on Miss Mansfield. Ice cream, cake, candy, lemonade, strawberries, etc.

...

Sun. May 10. Lawrence, Ella, Iretta, Grace Layton & I enjoyed a sumptuous dinner at Iretta's. We started to Sacrament Meeting but an accident (?) happened and we returned. Had pictures taken. From the Ice cream parlor home to say goodbye then to the A.E.R.R. [Arizona Eastern Railroad] Station where I said goodbye to many of my girl friends and went to Globe to work again on the South Globe Dairy.

...

Sun. May 17. . . . This week I received a call from Pres. Joseph F. Smith to go on a mission to Switzerland and Germany in Oct. (1914).

...

Sat. June 6. Went to town (Globe) and had a long talk with Father who was down on business. I was ordained to be a priest [at age nineteen] by Father and Bishop Hunsaker.

Sun. June 7. Auto ride to Miami back to church where I sang in a male quartet.

...

June 22. Nothing extra. Usual work. Arise at 8 A.M. Eat breakfast. String 30-40 bales of hay to the mangers and cut off the wires. Help wash about 300 bottles. Put strainers & cans in readiness. 9:40 yoke up the cows. 10:30 Milk cows, about 15-16. Turn separator, feed calves, clean out refuse hay from mangers. Sweep the outer boards of the barn floor. Rest from 2-5. 5 P.M. Help wash bottles again. Saw wood. Put strainers, separator, etc., in readiness. 11 P.M. Milk 14-16 cows.

...

July 10 & 11. Practiced and prepared my talk for Sun.

July 12. Gave a brief talk on "Baptism" in church.

...

Aug. 16. Gave a brief talk on "The Reception of the Holy Ghost" in Sacrament meeting.

Aug. 17. Preparing to go home.

Aug. 18. Mr. [L. J.] Walliman [non-Mormon employer at the dairy] took me to the train in the "Hup." Went to home (Thatcher). Had a dandy visit at home with the folks. Went to town and met many old friends. Went to Safford for a ride with Frank Martineau. 8:30 Went to a dance at L. C. Snow's and had splendid time. [At the dance he was introduced to Camilla Eyring for the first time.]

. . .

Sept. 7. . . . I received a letter from the 1st Presidency changing my mission field from Germany to the Central States.

. . .

Sun. Sept. 13. . . . I was ordained an Elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood by Bro. S. J. Sims [after three months as a priest].

. . .

Wed. 16. Went to a farewell party in honor of Elder Paul B. Talmage [son of James E. Talmage] who was called on a mission to Eastern States. I contributed my "mite" toward helping him financially.

. . .

Sun. Sept. 20. Work in day. Attended the Band Concert then Sacrament Meeting. I was called on to speak. Everyone said goodbye to me and Bro. S. J. Sims slipped a dollar in my hand to help on my mission.

. . .

Tue. 22. Work as usual. P.M. I went over to Miami and visited Milas Larson. He presented me with a little pearl handled knife. I returned home to the dairy. About 7:30 while I was talking to Clell a crowd of guests assembled. Mrs. Walliman called me to the telephone where I was terribly surprised by being carried into the room full of company. I was made acquainted with those who were strangers, then the fun began. Games and music with some dancing on the porch. We drew our partners and went to the table of ice cream and cake. Miss Bessie Walliman presented me with the Dairy boys' present to me—an excellent gold watch—More music and games. The party broke up about 11:25 all saying they had a splendid time. O! how grateful I was to think my friends cared so much for me, to show their kindness and regards by the splendid social and valuable present. "Appreciation" is too weak a word to express my feelings. Long will these dear people the Wallimans and the dairy Boys live in my memory. Geo. Lee, Clell Haynie, Rue Harmon, Jesse Cluff, Walter Cluff, Earl Larson. Louis Walliman, Clara Walliman, Glenn & Bessie Walliman. Many thanks to you.

Wed. 23 Sept. Same work. Visited Miss Elsie Glenn and played the piano and sang with her. In the evening a social was given in my

honor by the Globe Ward. A large crowd was present. Some outsiders. A program was carried on. I sang twice. Refreshments were served. A collection of \$21.50 was taken up to help me on my mission. . . .

Thur. 24. Left Globe for Thatcher. Lawrence got on at Pima and we were met at the train by the girls. I helped prepare the ice cream for the social for me. The boys and girls and my dear parents honored me with a party. A large crowd of my best friends assembled. Games were played, then dancing on the lawn. Punch, ice cream and cake were served. All had a good time. Miss Iretta Layton was my partner.

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Sat. [26.] . . . Attended Priesthood Meeting where I was passed upon to be ordained a Seventy.

. . . .

Tue. 29. Helped Iretta wash clothes, get dinner, eat it and wash dishes. At 8 P.M. the Elders Quorum gave a program in my honor. I spoke.

Uncle Tom K.	gave me a dollar	1.
Albert Sims	gave me	\$1.
Ralph Bilby	" "	.50
Mr. Chandler	" "	1.00
Jesse Green	" "	.40
Henry Maloy	" "	.50
Katie Martin	" "	.50

Aunt C and Iretta & Carrie gave me an "old woman" fitted out with comb, brush, scissors, buttons, needles, pins, etc.

Verne Pace gave me a neck tie and a pair of socks. All expressed kindest wishes. I was very much disappointed, however. In Globe the Ward had treated me so well & given me \$21 besides a nice farewell party. The Thatcher Ward—as far as I know—did nothing for me, did not even recognize me at all. I felt slighted very much. Individuals treated me royally tho!

Wed. 30. Visited and said goodbye to Nettie, Ella & Iretta and O! how sad I felt!! I boarded the A.E.R.R. at 11:20 and said goodbye to my sisters and many friends for 2 years or more. . . . Tears dimmed my eyes as the train rolled out of Thatcher and my friends & sisters sank from sight.

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Fri. [Oct.] 16. 9 A.M. Andrew Smith and I met with others in the annex of the Salt Lake Temple. After meeting we went thru' the temple where I received my own endowments. The temple gave me the impression of Sacredness divine and it was all wonderful, getting thru'

at 2 P.M. We ate dinner at Aunt Alice's [father's twin sister, married to President Joseph F. Smith]. I went to Uncle [J.] Golden Kimball's office where he ordained me a Seventy in the 89th Quorum of Seventies. . . .

. . . .

Tue. 20. We met many other Elders at the Pres. office where we were tested by a Dr. who pronounced me "sound as a Dollar." I was proud to tell him I kept the Word of Wisdom in full, for I have never in my life drank tea, coffee, liquor or never used tobacco in any form. We Elders met at 2 P.M. in the annex of the Temple where we received many valuable instructions and were set apart for our missions. Bro. Seymour B. Young set me apart. He prayed among other things that all dread and fear should leave me and that my tongue should be loosed like the pen of a ready writer. We all went to the Pres. office where we received our transportation and more instructions. . . .

Wed. 21. . . . I left at 6 P.M. . . . on the Union Pacific. . . .

. . . .

Fri. 23. After a long lonesome journey I got in Kansas City at 4:30 and easily found my way to Independence where I was treated well by Pres. [A. O.] Bennion and others at the Mission House. . . .

Sat. 24. Bot my grip, books, tracts, etc. Studied a few hours on my tracts. Went up town with Mrs. Clarene Quinn & Miss Rose. Came home and entertained family with music. [Typical home entertainment was singing, playing games, making ice cream.]

Sun. 25. . . . Went to Sacrament Meeting. I was called on to speak but my speech was very short. I bore my testimony. . . .

. . . .

Tue. 27. Worked all day on the sidewalk around the new building [a chapel about to be dedicated by President Joseph F. Smith]. Attended choir practice at night. Elders I. O. Brown, Smith Gibbons and I slept in one bed.

Wed. 28. Worked on cement sidewalk around and grounds of church. Went to M.I.A. at night.

Thur. 29. Worked hard all day on Zion. I considered it quite a privilege to work on building up some of the buildings in Zion. I often thot of this being the ancient "Garden of Eden" where Adam walked & talked with God. Went to bed early. Had a cold.

Fri. 30. Worked hard all day on sidewalks & grounds of the L.D.S. church here. Just a week since I landed here. A week of pleasure. To bed early again.

Sat. 31. Halloween day. Worked extra hard all day on walks and yards, awfully tired. A letter from Floyd Mack says he is married. Surprise. [In 1943, twenty-nine years later, Floyd Mack's son married Spencer's only daughter.] Attended a party here given by Sisters Quinn and Tuckfield. Ghosts galore. Beautiful original decorations and unique games. I sang "Till the Sands of the Desert grow cold," on request of Pres. Bennion.

. . .

Mon. [Nov.] 9. Worked hard till noon when we finished up the work of laying sod. Bro. Cardon and Pres. S. O. Bennion took 8 of us Elders for a joy ride in their autos. About 55 miles. We went to Lee's summit then thru' a millionairess's horse & cattle farm where we saw \$10,000 horses. Then thru' the beautiful Swope park to Kansas City where we went thru' the new Union Depot which is huge & gigantic. Pres. Bennion took the 10 of us to supper then thru' the Hippodrome Show where we saw a splendid performance of acrobatic stunts. Enjoyable day.

Tue. 10. Elder Gibbons & I got in Kansas City at 10. Went out tracting. The first door I knocked at was slammed in my face. Got along fairly well. At 4 we quit and bot groceries and began "baching." Went to Dr. McCartney's home and practiced quartets for a funeral.

. . .

Nov. 12. Tracting till 4 P.M. Study, a bachelor's supper. . . . Attended a cottage meeting . . . where I was called on to speak.

Nov. 13. Mush for breakfast, "Bachelor's delight." ha ha. Tracted till 3 o'clock, bot doughnuts for luncheon. Got along fairly well. Met some Reorganites. After returning to the rooms and eating supper, Elder Selin, Shore & I held a cottage meeting. . . . I talked a short time on prayer. Very good meeting. In going to & from work today I have walked some 120 blocks, so I am tired. I am very thankful to the Lord that with His help I have done as well as I have so far in my work and I pray for a continuation of his blessings. (I weigh 153 lbs., a gain of 7 lbs since coming here.)

. . .

Wed. 25. Elder Peterson and I [assigned to do country tracting for several weeks] fixed up our grips and bot every necessary equipment in Jefferson City [in the center of Missouri]. We left Jef. City at 11:30 carrying our overcoats and grips weighing about 35 lbs. We walked about 12 miles, then as it was getting dark we began seeking entertainment. At House after house we were turned away. On, on, on, we dragged our tired limbs. After walking another 3 mi. and having asked 12 times for a bed without success we were let in

a house, not welcome tho. 15 mi. Very tired, sleepy, & hungry. No dinner, no supper.

Thur. Nov. 26. Thanksgiving Day. Hurrah! As for the year's blessings we were very thankful to our Lord, the "Giver of all," but as for a Thanksgiving dinner we had none, but had a very enjoyable conversation with some reorganites. We tracted all day till 5 o'clock and found entertainment the third time. Very nice people. Oh! how thankful were we for the supper and bed. Our travels were from Jefferson city to Osage to Bonnots Mill to Frankenstine to Luyston to Voschell to Linn, Osage Co., Mo. [towns east of Jefferson City, within about twenty miles].

Fri. 27. A good breakfast with our new Catholic friends, then we tracted. Most of the people were Catholics and would not converse on religious topics. I had a very good conversation with one Catholic and we were invited in and I sold him a "Voice of Warning." We tracted till nightfall and after one refusal gained entrance to the home of friendly Reorganites, where we had a supper & bed.

Sat. 28. After a good breakfast with the Mantle Family we tracted on to Linn, Osage Co., Mo., meeting very little success. The Catholics seemingly are forbidden reading any other literature. They do not know enough about their belief to converse. We arrived in Linn and rented a room and two meals for 75 cents each.

Sun. 29. Wrote letters and studied all day [since Sundays were not spent tracting]. Played the landlady's piano and sang for them. We visited the Methodist church, which was interesting. The Pastor among other things compared the people's Sun. lives with the Soldier on dress parade and said, "A thinking people judge religionists by their weekly works, not their Sun. manners and good acts." He explained that anyone could be a Methodist just so they believed in the Apostle's creed. I thot, "I am glad that any one or every one cannot be a Mormon, but just those who accept the principles of the gospel of Christ." I dread the thots of walking again tomorrow in the mud.

Mon. Nov. 30. Hurrah! I sold 2 books today. We walked about 7 miles tracting. Were invited in to dinner. From Linn we went to Potts. We stayed all night with a widow lady and her son named Potts.

Tue. Dec. 1. Tracted on to Lane, Mo., where we got the Union Church for a meeting. We were invited in to dinner, supper, and breakfast with a bed. Our host was a Mr. Lockwood. We had a good meeting, there being about 100 people present. "They liked us fine," we heard.

Wed. Dec. 2. On awaking we found it steadily raining. After a good breakfast with Lockwoods we began tramping thru' the sticky miry mud and clay [heading south]. We were invited in to dinner with

Scotts. On we went toward Judge. It was steadily raining and we came to the creek. I started across the creek on a log but it broke. Throwing my grip on an island I jumped back, but wet to my knees nearly. We went down a little farther and I threw my overcoat over, then my shoes & socks, the latter falling in the stream and being lost. Removing my trousers, I forded the stream which was swift and deep. Barefooted on the sharp rocks with wet clothes and it raining on me I limped back and gathered up my belongings and with chattering teeth and shaking limbs I redressed my freezing feet. On for miles thru' the miry bogs. We stayed with a baptist good hearted fellow, with whom we had a long conversation.

Thur. 3. A fine long pull or walk thru about 15 miles of the most miry, sticky roads without a bite to eat from early morn till late at night. We crossed the Gasconade river 5 miles from Judge. We went to one home to ask for entertainment but found the husband and wife in a "spat," so we drearily dragged ourselves along another mile or two thru' loose sticky roads till we came to Summerfield where we, the second asking, were invited in for the night with a young couple, who treated us very well.

Fri. 4. A long, cold, but cheerful walk along the muddy county road between Summerfield and Vienna. I sold four books today. Up and down hills and jumping creeks. We asked for and obtained a good dinner. We were unable to talk gospel today. At about 5 o'clock I asked an old man for entertainment. "No chance," he said. "I wouldn't keep anybody free if they would all turn to apostles." On we walked. Darkness came on but still no shelter. One lady says, "I am not very well, besides Lizzie'll tak yu' in, she's got more room'n us." We crossed the Gasconade R. and plowed our way slowly thru' the deep slushy mud, falling in ditches, running into banks and fences and stepping into puddles. We were again nearly refused but put up such a hard plea that we gained admittance. We have walked and tracted 18 miles.

Sat. 5. After a good breakfast and a mile's tracting we reached Maries Co.'s county seat, Vienna. We got our shoes soled and got a room in the Hotel [for the Sabbath]. Had a good talk with the 17 yr. old Prin. of the Vienna Public School called Hutchison. Did a lot of writing.

Sun. 6. Went to Methodist church and heard a "punk" sermon. The preacher said Baptism was not essential to salvation & mode was not important. Played piano and sang for the hotel people.

Mon. 7. Walked from Vienna toward West of Co. Ate dinner with a Catholic family. A kind gentleman let us ride across the big Maries R. We lodged with a man who said he did not believe in God. We talked to him but could get no satisfaction. He treated us well. Tom Connor, by name.

Tue. 8. Still cloudy. We have not seen the sun for about 8 days. Met some Christian people. After tramping around to the Directors' homes all afternoon, we got consent to hold meeting in the school house. After a good supper with the young man and family, we went to the school house and were greeted by about 50 people who had come thru' the rain and darkness. I took charge of the meeting. I talked a half hour on the 1st Prin. of the Gospel. Elder Peterson spoke. The people were delighted and quite insisted that we stay and preach another night. We stayed with our friend Dolph Coplan. Were treated fine.

Wed. 9. Behold!! A snow covered forest meets our gaze. How beautiful. How grand and exquisite. It is still snowing. All day it slowly snowed and was very wet under foot. We walked about ten miles. Were unable to hold meeting in the meeting house so went on thru' Vancleve. We stayed with young family by the name of Wm. Barnhardt and we held a fine cottage meeting with them. He was humble & good.

Thur. 10. The ground was covered with snow. We walked back thru' Vancleve, then stopping in nearly every home to get warm. In one vacant house we stopped and with ice water from the creek shaved the extra long whiskers from our faces. With numb feet, face & hands we trudged on to a home where we accepted an invitation to a chicken dinner. On to the Tavern Mill where we tried all afternoon till late to make arrangements to speak in one of the two churches near on the school house, but were unable to get either (thru' prejudice, we believed). We stayed by invitation with a New Light or Christian man who was rather radical.

Fri. 11. Walked on thru' the cold on the frozen ground and thru' the ever falling snow. Had many conversations. Were invited to dinner and walked on thru' Tavern. Met a Mr. Moss who invited us to stay all night. Then a Mr. Crone who insisted we stay with him. We previously met these gentlemen. Another invitation for the night we had to decline. We stayed at Louis Crone's and were treated exceptionally well. We sang & played for them and talked and felt quite at home. Conversed till 12 o'clock. He is a very broadminded man. We were invited back any time to stay a few days. He seemed impressed with us and our doctrine.

Sat. 12. Visited Mr. Jim Moss, then walked ten miles arriving in Vienna at noon. We had to wade the ice water in the Big Maries R. which nearly froze our feet. Went to the Maries Hotel and cleaned up.

One day while we were riding along the road with a man and woman in a wagon the conversation drifted from crops in Mo. to Ariz. crops, then to oranges, when she asked, "Well, how do they plant oranges there? Like we do wheat?"

Played and sang all evening to a crowd of Vienna young folks. There is about 2 in. snow, which has just fallen.

Sun. 13. Wrote letters and fixed up things generally. P.M. I played piano and sang for some young Vienna people.

Mon. 14. Oh! it is cold!! – 6 degrees F., a sharp cold wind. We made arrangements for the schoolhouse. Studied all afternoon. Held meeting in the schoolhouse. Only a few attended. I spoke about 35 min. on first Prin. of Gospel. Sun is shining for 1st time in 2 weeks.

Tue. 15. Another very cold day about 5 below zero in the morning. All day we walked over the frozen rough ground and thru' the snow with only two invitations in. Cold and disagreeable. People very prejudiced. After canvassing unsuccessfully for some time, we finally were taken in reluctantly. Unwelcome.

Wed. 16. All day thru' the snow and over the cold frozen rough roads [eastward]. The cords of my ankles are stiff and pain on and off all thru' the day. No success at all in selling books or getting conversations. Very discouraging. About 5 o'clock we got into a home where the people had the Book of Mormon and other books. A very pleasant evening, a good supper and conversation. We were made very welcome. Mr. Durrett's father-in-law told us of the war and of the hard times. "Often," he said, "food was very scarce. We took flour from a store or home and spreading a handkerchief or blanket mixed flour & water (no salt or soda). Winding the dough, which they had pulled in the shape of a rope around a stick they baked it over the campfire."

Thur. 17. Walked in to Vichy, a town of possibly 75. Here we tracted all day and found the people very prejudiced. On toward St. James we made our way and stopped with a very poor family, Barns. They made us welcome to the best they had, which was scant, also they slept 5 in a bed in order to give us two a bed and place to stay. God bless these worthy souls! Such generosity we have found nowhere as yet.

Fri. 18. O! how my feet pain. The cords back of my ankles are swollen and pain at every step. The sun came out and thawed out the frozen ground making it very muddy and hard walking. 'Twas quite late when we finally found shelter for the night. A touch of rheumatism in my leg caused me some pain.

Sat. 19. My feet pained so badly for the first few miles that I could hardly walk. Polygamy, Polygamy! thrown up to us continually. 8 miles of hard walking over frozen ground and snow brot us to St. James where Elder [W.] Lindsay met us. We visited Elder Berry who is doing good missionary work there. We took train [thirty miles east] to Sullivan and walked 10 more miles to Pea Ridge over rough frozen roads. Met the family of Bro. Strauser [where missionaries were always welcome and routinely stayed at holiday times].

Sun. 20. Sunday School at Bro. Strauser's. In the evening we all went down to the pasture where I had my first sled ride. I was not very good at guiding, so we went on our heads on the frozen sleet. At night we held meeting at which I spoke a few words on the efficacy of prayer.

Mon. 21. Bro. Strauser, Elder [J. C.] Henderson and I walked to Sullivan over the slick ice and I bot some Xmas cards and trinkets. My feet hurt badly by the time I got back.

Tue. 22. Did a lot of writing and sent off a few gifts. P.M. We rode sleds down the hill all afternoon. Again after supper we rode sleds till 9 o'clock. Lots of fun but also lots of bumps.

Wed. 23. Went hunting with Elder [W.] Lindsay. Washed dishes for Sis. Strauser. Made ice cream.

Thur. 24. Thur. night had a Xmas eve party. Program, games and a jolly time.

Fri. 25. Xmas morning. Bro. & Sis. Strauser gave us handkerchiefs, garters, armbands and straps for grips. Games and a good time. Xmas dinner of Turkey, duck and all other dainties. Excellent dinner. Games & singing wore the afternoon away. To the frozen pond we went and skated and danced, then to the hill where we sled-rode. Back home and games again took our attention. O! What a glorious Xmas. A most happy one. No thots of home hardly.

. . .

1915

Mon. [Jan.] 4. Left after dinner for the country. Traveled a couple of miles and found Mr. Thos. Collins. He had bot books from Elder Lloyd & Elder Papsworth. We stayed with him, explaining the gospel to him & family and held a meeting with him, which they enjoyed.

Tue. 5. Traveled thru' thick mud all day without any dinner. We ate our Xmas cake given to us by Elsie Strauser. umm it was fine, tasted more-ish. To Decamp where we tried to get the schoolhouse but failed. Found a kind host & hostess in the persons of Mr. & Mrs. John Hale.

Wed. 6. Walked to Hale Schoolhouse and got permission to hold meeting. Only 5 listeners came. We both talked very poorly. Stayed with a Greig family.

Thur. 7. "Back to St. Jas." the slogan. By 11 o'clock the ground had thawed and it was terribly muddy. We wired on our overshoes with "Mormon buckskin" bailing wire. A long never-ending muddy walk bro't us to the Central Hotel in St. James. A visit with the Saints in that place and some good meals were followed by a meeting of Saints. At the hotel we (H. E. Peterson & I) went to bed but at 12 o'clock,

then 1-2-3 and 4 I awoke and looked at my watch. At the last named hour we arose and hurried to the depot just in time to catch the St. Louis bound train. An hour's sleep, an hour's study & one of sightseeing, then St. Louis the great [after five weeks in the country and one with Strausers]. After getting cleaned up I found my way to the Headquarters and found the Elders ready to go and I went out tracting. Found lots of mail, among which was the Xmas cake from Ruth. The Elders entertained the Lady Missionaries to supper. A splendid spread considering men cooks. Out to a cottage meeting where I took up the time. To Sister Haskell's.

Sat. 9. Meeting each morning. With Elder Phippen I went to Sister Favre's and administered to her. I anointed the oil and this was my first experience at this work. We visited the Mississippi River, which was full of floating ice. Went thru' a river boat. Very interesting. Went to the "American" Theatre and saw the musical comedy "Bringing up Father." Extra fine. Splendid. Attended Priesthood Meeting.

Sun. 10. Began Janitor work for a week in the church. Built fires, etc. Attended Sunday School, Priesthood Meeting. Went to Thurmans' and practiced songs. To Sacrament meeting, then [St. Louis Branch] Pres. Martin took two Lady Missionaries & me to ice cream.

Mon. 11. Class at 7:30. Out tracting. Cottage meeting. Elder Melvin Earl Phippen is my companion. . . .

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Mon. 25. Tracted, selling six small books. . . . O! How cold. My feet, ears and fingers!! Door after door was slammed in my face. Most of the people were catholics and when I had introduced myself they said, "O!! I am a Catholic and don't want any of your tracts. I thank God I am one, and God forbid that I ever change." They seemingly expect us to run when they say, "I am Catholic." A hard day's work without any results, seemingly. Visited Sister Hall who had pie for us. Cottage meeting.

Tue. 26. Tracted alone, it being too cold for my companion. Very cold.

Wed. 27. Put in a hard day at tracting and sold 9 small books which is the most I ever sold in a day up to this time. It was so cold I would tract a few doors then walk around the block to get my feet, hands & ears warm. I felt fully compensated when I sold the books.

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Mon. Feb. 1, 1915. Tracted. Met an old "Mormon Hater" who was terribly blasphemous and cursed us shamefully. I was Bishop at a cottage meeting at Hoyts'.

Tue. 2. It was snowing, so we did not tract. We went to the New Catholic Cathedral which is immense & great. We climbed to the top.

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Sat. 20. Took a new elder to Sister Hall's. She did not let on as tho' she was a "Mormon." She talked to him awhile then introduced herself as a Mormon. Tracted till noon. Got the pictures and went home to write letters & reports. Priesthood meeting.

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Sun. 28. S. S. Officers meeting then Sunday School. I took charge of my class. Then followed an officers meeting, then Elders Ritchie, Hill, Sisters Beardshall, Ritchie & I went to see the Infirmary or Poor House. Here we saw thru' the buildings and were invited to hold service. I played the organ and we all sang the beautiful "songs of Zion." "Please sing more" was the begging petition of some of the poor cripples. We sang about 7 or 8 songs, prayed, and Elder Hill preached to them. The poor unfortunates enjoyed the services and asked us to come again. We saw the lame, blind, sick, etc. Also we went thru' the hospital. To the Mo. Crematory we made our way. Here we saw many shelves full of vases, urns, jars or boxes which contained ashes of the bodies. Some ladies had the ashes of one of their friends out in a paper and were raking thru' them. There was about 2 quarts of ashes to the body.

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Mon. [Mar.] 8. At morning class I learned I was called to go to Hannibal, Mo. . . .

Tue. 9. I was feeling very blue over the idea of leaving the Elders Ritchie, Phippen, Hill, etc., whom I had so learned to love. Elder Henderson and I left St. Louis for Hannibal at 7:50, arriving at 11:40. . . .

Wed. 10. . . . We began our baching it. Spent all our money but 20 cents for coal, room, groceries, 15 cents more went to coal oil. We began to get nervous. The landlady lent us a quarter for the quarter gas meter.

Thur. 11. Good breakfast. Ate up all the bread and most of the food. Room rent of \$2.00 due. Called for mail, but no money came. "We'll have to sell some books or starve," so we went to work. We sold some books, but did not get the money for them. No money for laundry, food, rooms, etc. P.M. I sold a "Ray" and gave 5 cents to Elder Henderson to get bread. Almost cleaned up our meagre stock at supper. We joked and laughed about our plight, but it was nevertheless serious. We didn't know where our breakfast was

coming from. Our office money was due but delayed. We held class at Sister Miller's and Brother Walker brot me mail. A letter from Clell Haynie I was impressed to open. There was a dollar bill. Hurrah! "The Lord will provide," I joyfully exclaimed. We rejoiced to think the Lord had provided at such an opportune time.

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Wed. 24. . . . Down to Sister Gordon's at night to spend evening. My throat began getting sore and I took a severe cold in my head. Before we reached home I could hardly walk. I went right to bed, but slept not at all. Rolled and tumbled all night. My back, head, legs, and every bone in my body ached and my throat was intensely sore.

Thur. 25. No one knowing of my illness, I was very lonesome all day. Elder Henderson nursed me well. Elder H. went to class at Rardens' and told them all of my condition, so immediately Bro. Daniels and Forest came down and I enjoyed their company & visit.

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Sat. 27. . . . Sister Daniels & Hazel came about 5 o'clock with a large box of carnations & ferns from the florist. They had gone out and made up a small collection from the Sister Saints who made me a present of the flowers to cheer me in my illness. "God bless the dear people." . . .

Sun. 28. My Birthday. I awoke about 2 a.m. with a severe earache. I did what I could for it, then walked the floor and groaned until 4:30, when I went back to bed. The coal oil for my sore throat had burned the skin off my neck. Elder Henderson went to S. S., leaving me alone. I ate a fairly good meal at noon. He went to meeting & Forest Daniels came to stay with me. We talked gospel. O how my ear did pain!! What a pleasant birthday!! May I enjoy a few more like it!! I should say not. The pain became almost unbearable. I was left alone again while they all went to the park. How lonesome & painful no one knows.

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Thurs. Apr. 1. My weakness, earache, sore throat, etc., not being enough afflictions, I was visited with a sore boil on my neck. Dr. Blue came and put me to bed, said I had tonsilitis or quinsy and punctured ear drum. I had much company. . . .

Fri. Apr. 2. . . . The Dr. said he would come next morning to lance my tonsil as it was enlarged and so sore I could hardly talk. O! the pain & torture I suffered for those few days!! My ear still throbbed constantly. No sleep at all but early Sat. (Apr. 3) my tonsil broke and I gained a great deal of relief. The Dr. said I must have my ear treated by an ear specialist.

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Sat. 10. . . . With Bro. Daniels we walked to Oakwood and found a place to baptize under the old covered bridge in the New London road. . . .

Sun. 11. I took charge of Sunday School, after which I went down to Sister Gordon's and with her and Mrs. Fuller went out to Oakwood, where we held the baptismal service. I preached on Baptism. Elder Ritchie baptized Frank C. Daniels, his wife Amanda Daniels, his daughter Hazel, and sons Earl & Forest, also Minnie Rarden. . . .

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[Mission President Bennion sent Spencer and a companion to visit a dying member near the Missouri-Iowa border. Afterward they took advantage of the opportunity to make a quick visit to Nauvoo.]

Sat. [May] 15. Crossed the Mississippi to Nauvoo. Walked up Parley St., named for Parley P. Pratt, [to] the home erected by grandfather Heber C. Kimball. A stone was engraved thus: "H. C. K. 1845." On we went to the homes erected by John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Erastus and Lorenzo Snow, Joseph Young. Also the home of Brigham Young and the homestead and mansion of Joseph Smith. In the lot near the old homestead (which is in ruins) we saw the grave of Emma Smith, the 1st wife of the Prophet. We went up into the town, which now has about 1200 people (rough guess). . . . The Nauvoo people generally recognized us and spoke. Much prejudice has disappeared. . . . Arrived at Hannibal 11:15. . . .

Sun. 16. . . . A contention arose among the Saints, which hurt us Elders very much.

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Thur. 20. Went to say goodbye to all the Saints. Found contention among the Saints. Boarded train and arrived at St. Louis 3:30. All were amused at my moustache. Went to Mutual, after which we all had a jollification. Elder Hubbard & I are pals.

Fri. 21. Had picture taken with moustache.

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Tue. 25. Very sore & lame from exertion in ball game [after missionary conference]. Bad news from Hannibal. Saints all in quarrels & troubles. Aunt [Rose Bradshaw, a distant Kimball relative he had baptized in Hannibal, 9 May] very angry.

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Sat. 29. Went tracting till noon. When I came in, Pres. Guymon said, "Bad news for you." On the table was a telegram which said, "Your sister Ruth died Thur. night. Letter to follow." Oh! the sorrow, grief and anguish to lose my dear sister. It seems like a terrible dream. I can hardly realize it.

Sun. 30. I lay in bed till ten o'clock with a headache and a terrible heartache. I was excused from my meetings. Went to Shaw's gardens with the crowd. Everything reminded me of Ruth, Ruth. A most noble, almost perfect spirit returned to its father.

Mon. 31. Decoration day. Tracted till noon. We Elders & Ladies went to cemetery and saw countless people decorating most beautiful graves and wonderful monuments. My thots were of my dear, dear sister who was to be buried today.

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Tue. [June] 15. Tracted all day. After supper 5 of us Elders went down on the street (20th & Franklin) and held a street meeting. O! how frightened I was for it was my first experience in that line. 3 of us got out and sang two songs and quite a crowd collected, mostly children, negroes, foreigners and a few white adults. Elder Peterson preached, I introduced the literature and dismissed the meeting. We came up to the "Full Gospel Assembly Mission" and heard the preacher, then as one man went up to the mourner's bench they began all to sing, shout, pray and say, "Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, Bless Jesus, Glory to God," What a confusion! Is it of God, I wondered? "If they would only come up and be saved," he said. O how it made me appreciate the gospel and Mormonism. We came to a mission, the "Apostolic Assembly," where some were trying to get the Holy Ghost. Shaking, singing, Praising & shouting until it was ridiculous. (European war goes on in its terror.)

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Mon. 21. Good luck at tracting. Elder Reed & I held a street meeting. We sang 4 songs. A number of little tots stood before us. A "tough" nearby said, "You'd better begin the Sunday School." Had a fairly good meeting.

Tues. 22. Met new Elders J. F. Seeley, J. L. Tidwell, N. J. Wadsworth. Took one out to work. Went to street meeting at which I talked. While out tracting a Policeman stopped us and demanded our business. I explained the nature of our free work and he walked off and would not accept a pamphlet. It is appalling to us Mormons to see the constant string of old and young men, women, and children file into the saloons (which are on every corner and in the middle of the blocks) & come out with their pitcher & can filled with the foamy hell-juice beer. The curse of the nation.

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Thur. July 1. Discouragement was ours when we found ourselves tracting among the idle rich, who treated us with indifference.

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Wed. 7. As it rained very hard all day, we did not tract, but made one revisit. Missourians say this is the most rainy season Mo. has known. Nearly every day. The daily paper says the world war in Europe is going on in its fury, men's lives are lost in the air, in the sea, in the trenches, etc. It is a most horrible slaughter of human life.

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Tue. 13. . . . While tracting, one man yelled with a curse to me saying, "No, we've got too d--n much religion now."

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Fri. 30. Tracted in the city. Met a woman who had been visited by the Lady Missionaries two years. It had no effect. O! ye hardhearted & stiffnecked people. How long will ye treat with indifference the truth?

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Fri. [Aug.] 13. Arose at 6:30. Breakfast at 6:45, then to class. When I got there one of the Elders said there was an excursion to Chicago for \$6.00. We began joking about it till class, after singing and prayer Pres. Guymon asked how many wanted to go. We decided to go so class was dismissed. The next two hours were full of excitement getting ready. Some backed out, but Pres. Guymon, Elders Ritchie, Hill, Call, and myself and Srs. Ritchie and Salmon boarded the "Illinois Central" 10:35 A.M. and soon were flying across the bridge into Illinois and across the country. . . . Never in all my life did I see so much corn. The grain was being harvested and many threshers were active along the R.R. tracks. . . . I sat alone most of the way. When we were nearing Chicago a fellow came up and talked to me. Tried to get me to read a vulgar book with obscene pictures. I told him it didn't appeal to me. He began tempting me then to go with him in Chicago and I knew he'd lead me down to hell. I shut him up but after he was gone I could feel myself blush for an hour. I tho't—"Oh! how hard Satan, thru' his imps, tries to lead young people astray." I thanked the Lord that I had power to overcome it. The ride was very dirty and tiresome before reaching Chicago at 6:30. We ate supper, then took the surface cars to the Mission Headquarters. . . . We had to transfer several times and we went thru' the poorer part of town, consequently our impression of Chicago was not very good. The streets were muddy and poorly lighted. Reaching the L.D.S. Mission office, one of the Elders took us to Madison St. where we stayed. We rode there on the elevated R.R.

Aug. 14. Sat. . . . Taking the elevated, we rode to Sears & Roebuck & Co., the largest Mail order house in the world. . . . We went to the Chicago River and when the iron bridge turned we had a splendid view of the ship "Eastland," which had . . . turned over

on its side, drowning nearly a thousand people. . . . Walking up in the city we gazed at the huge skyscrapers. . . . The surface cars took us to Riverside Park. This was an amusement world in itself. . . . The fireworks at the "Opening of the Panama Exposition" was splendid. We saw the Baby Incubators. . . . We were told that from 80 to 90% of the premature children were now saved, whereas 10% only were saved before.

Sun. 15. By noon we were to Lincoln Park. . . . We got in line of hundreds waiting for the free suits to go in bathing. Fully 5,000 people were in the lake, so thick one could hardly move. . . . We came on to the Zoo. . . . The two Ladies, Elder Ritchie and I went to church on Sawyer Ave. and met the Saints of that Branch. . . .

Mon. 16. We all went to Marshall Fields big Retail Store, the largest in the world. . . . Jackson Park was also a beautiful place. . . . After eating our evening meal we found a Vaudeville show which was highly entertaining, then to the Illinois Central depot, where at 10:30 we left for St. Louis. Slept quite well on the cars and arrived in our city at 7:45 Tue. On the whole I was glad I had taken the trip to see one of the largest cities of the world. I was particularly interested in the Elevated system of transportation, the wonderful sign display of electric lights, the immensity of the city, and the Parks, also the wonderful skyscrapers.

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Mon. [Sept.] 6. Labor Day. With Elder Ritchie I stood on the corner of 14th & Locust for two hours watching the Labor Day Parade consisting of 10,000 people in uniforms. 71 Unions were represented. It was a wonderful affair, so immense. We went to a Vaudeville which we found was "rotten," then went home. In the evening Hill, Hawkes and I saw "The Birth of the Nation" in pictures, which was truly wonderful, showing the Civil War and its consequences.

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Mon. 20. . . . Pres. Guymon, Hawkes & I went to 16th & Market to hold street meeting. After singing three songs to the tune of which the children danced and one little 2 yr. old blended in her "lullaby with variations," I stood forth to preach to the few scattering people. The few soon scattered and I got "cold feet" and stopped. Pres. Guyman stood and preached earnestly to the deaf cobble stones and rattling cars, then Hawkes stepped forth facing the empty lonely sidewalk with the words, "If you'll all give me your attention, we will dismiss." One poor drunk fellow proffered to take one of the Books of Mormon, if we had one to spare, but when he found out they were 50 cents he pitifully turned to me with his hunger story.

But as I smelled the whiskey breath I knew what he wanted the 5 cents for, so I did not give. Our meeting was a complete failure almost.

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Sun. [Oct.] 3. Attended meetings from 10 A.M.–2 P.M. and 7:30–9:30. Felt terribly blue and as if I didn't care for anything. Elder Call and I prepared to go to the country in response to a telegram on account of sickness. (I was terribly discouraged & despondent.)

Mon. 4. At 7:32 A.M. amid a drizzling rain Elder Call and I boarded the Iron Mountain R.R. for DesArc, Mo., [in southeastern Missouri] where we arrived at noon. Henry White had sent a telegram for Elders to attend a sick man, so we started out for Henry White's place. We walked all afternoon to Brunot to a Henry White's, but it was the wrong one. We stayed at Brunot, where we paid 75 cents and Elder Call explained the Gospel. The people were prejudiced.

Tue. 5. We set out for the place of Henry White on Crane Pond. Here we found Sister Matlock living. Her son Will was in bed. He was worrying over family troubles and his visions.

Wed. 6. We cut wood, which came in handy as it became very cold. We were unsuccessful in our squirrel hunt. Cottage meeting.

Thur. 7. We almost decided to go but were begged to remain. Were going to baptize Will's wife, but when she got out in the water she backed out. I blessed the little boy of Will's. Administered to Will.

Fri. 8. After administering to Will, taking some pictures and bidding goodbye we walked 8 or 9 miles to Annapolis to catch the train. We ate apples, persimmons, pawpaws, & hazel & walnuts on our journey. Our train landed us at the Broadway station at 6. . . .

Sat. 9. Tracted with good success in A.M. and attended the St. Louis Fair P.M. Saw areoplane for the first time and it was wonderful. The aviator circled, dipped, looped the loop, etc. The fair was otherwise very poor. . . .

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Thurs. 14. Tracted till noon and met a club woman of the Anti-Mormon clubs and was invited in. Made some revisits. Attended M.I.A. and prepared for country.

Fri. 15. With Elder Lewis R. Critchfield I went to Union Station and rode Iron Mountain R.R. to Annapolis, Mo., where we got off and walked to the home of Sister Matlock near Minimum, Mo. We found Will better and cutting wood. (See Fri. 8.) Talked, sang and spent the evening pleasantly.

Sat. 16. Made out reports, cut some wood, studied, wrote, then after supper the family and some neighbors went to the creek (Crane Pond) where I had the priveledge of baptizing Sinthan Ingram Matlock (wife of Wm. Matlock), her daughter Nannie May Matlock and

George Reason Bell Matlock. . . . I confirmed Sr. Sinthan Matlock and Elder Critchfield confirmed Geo. and May. We administered the Sacrament to the family and we explained to them their duties in regard to tithing, Word of Wisdom, prayer, etc. I went to bed in wet clothes, as I had only one suit of underwear.

Sun. 17. Morning broke with a steady light rainfall. Everything is so pleasant in the narrow little valley. Since last week's frost the leaves of the trees have turned to variegated colors. From the crane pond creek of clear cold rippling water rises rather abruptly a hill on either side completely covered with foliage. A little to one side of the narrow valley in the midst of a small field of shocked corn stands a little wooden structure of three small rooms. A few rough boards have been crudely nailed together to turn off the weather. In the larger room is a sackcloth carpet, but the rest of the house is bare. The ceiling is of rough lumber, but the walls are partly papered with Chicago and St. Louis daily papers and it is so convenient that one can read the papers while in bed or at the table. With the exception of the bedsteads, the furniture is homemade and the table is so high that one might think the people eating were playing "peek-a-boo." Upon entering the door, (but stoop for it is low), you will see a little old woman of perhaps 60 years bended over the stove, cooking the corn bread, biscuits and meat. You will find this Sister Chrisey Lutitia Matlock an interesting person. Uneducated but well versed in the bible and having a strong testimony of the gospel and often preaching it to others. She will tell you she has been a "Mormon" 30 years. Some of her experiences, dreams & visions will call for a smile. See the man in his thirties, lounging on the bed. That is Will, the sick man, the husband of the large tall woman and father of those two little 9 & 7 year old girls and the bright eyed chubby 16 month old Clarence, who amuses you with his jabbering and actions. George is the tall slender boy with the curl in his hair and the twinkle in his eye. Welcome? Yes, indeed, they will make you at home, give you the best in the house to eat and will all seven crowd in one room to give you the best bed. Ha! ha! the chicken? surely you shall feed on them for breakfast every morning. Every member of the family will tell you dream after dream, vision after vision, until if you are not careful you will become a dreamer and visionary, also. Surely their clothes are patched till it is hard to find the original. But for all that, they are a kindhearted [people] and will treat you fine.

We held Sunday School in the morning, Elder C. taking the two little girls and I the 3 older people. It rained most of the day so no one came to our public meeting at night but the family, all of whom I preached to sleep. (Ha! ha!)

Mon. 18. After having a talk with Will and his wife we bade goodbye to the family and made our way on foot toward Brunot. On

our way we visited a rural school and it seemed to me like they were "back numbers." Thru' Brunot S. 4 or 5 miles we found Sister Farmer's home near Patterson. (Waded a creek.) Here we stayed and spent the night and we found Bro. Farmer, cold or getting so.

Tue. 19. A six or seven mile walk put us in DesArc, Mo., where we caught the train [back north toward St. Louis] to Mineral Point, Washington Co. Here we boarded a little shakey mixed train for Potosi, the County Seat. In the only passenger car was only 10 seats. 15 min. for 3 miles. North and West we traveled and stopped about 3 mi. from Potosi with a Baptist family. While we talked gospel the family (father, mother and sons) smoked constantly.

Wed. 20. After a breakfast of bread and molasses we began our walk at 7:30. A big swinging walk we kept up and mile after mile passed. We went about 10 miles without seeing a home or person, without water or food, only grapes we found in a tree. When I became tired till I thot I could go no farther, then I sang or repeated scripture. Tired, oh so tired and dusty, we finally finished our 30 mile walk and came to Lohmans', where we visited overnight with Sister Lohman and family.

Thur. 21. Early we started for Strausers', where we arrived an hour later and a warm welcome awaited us. The family treated us royally. Spent the day visiting the family and the evening in a Sacrament meeting, after which we looked at pictures and talked of bygone days. Happy dreams.

Fri. 22. Early 'twas when our adieus were bade and we were riding bumpety bump on a load of 14 R.R. ties with Bro. Strauser. Across the hilly country, the Meremec River to Stanton, where after a lunch of sausage and crackers we said goodbye to Bro. Strauser, took our grip and the 3 gal. can of Molasses Strausers had given us and boarded the "Frisco" for St. Louis. A cool pleasant ride thru' the Meremec valley where the Aug. floods had done so much damage and we were soon in the city and up to the rooms.

Sat. 23. . . . One year ago today I registered at the office as an Elder of the Central States Mission. A year of pleasures and sorrows, hardships and joys. 2 months in the country, 2 mo. in Hannibal and 8 in St. Louis.

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[Spencer received assignment to do country tracting in an area eighty miles northwest of St. Louis.]

Mon. [Nov.] 8. Left Perry 8 A.M. and walked most of the way (Waded the Salt River) to Florida. . . . With our book in one hand and grip in the other we walked 10 mi. to Paris, took the train and came to Moberly. There was much ado here. The eve before election

on prohibition and hundreds were assembled to hear the street speeches for and against. (Went wet.)

Tue. 9. The "wet" and "dry" bands kept the music in the cold windy air. We studied till noon, took the train [west] to Salisbury and went S. E. in the country. The third asking brot us in for the night with a nice young couple. We were well kept.

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Fri. 12. . . . We tracted to tell the people of our meeting at night. About noon met Mr. Dixon who seems to be a "dry land 'Mormon.'" No dinner as we were in colored district. On to the Missouri, in the water of which we bathed our tired feet. Arriving back to the schoolhouse at 4 P.M. we spent the time cleaning up. At 7 P.M. a crowd of about 40 or 50 greeted us and we explained some features of Mormonism to them. Very appreciative were they, then three almost quarreled over who should take us home. Sat up till 10:30 explaining.

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Sat. 20. From Tipton to Versailles on the Mo. Pac., then E. on the R. I. to Meta, then S. on foot at the rate of about 4 mi. per hour to Burns store, where we caught a ride several miles. It was late when we found the home of Mr. J. D. Moss—a friend I met last Dec.—here we stayed over night.

Sun. 21. Enjoyed a splendid visit with Mr. Moss and family. After dinner and after singing for them we went to the home of Louis Krone and were received by him and his wife with open arms. They seemed very glad to see us and made us welcome. We held a splendid meeting in the Prosperity schoolhouse with a good attendance. Met many of my last year's friends—Dolph Coplan, Charlie Pearson, and others and four invitations were given us to stay all night. It was 1 A.M. when we got to bed after singing and talking. Stayed with Louis Krone.

Mon. 22. Rode to Tavern with Louis Krone to sell some turkeys which we had caught. Spent the day inside talking and quilting. Talked till late on the gospel.

Tue. 23. After breakfast we bade goodbye to Mr. & Mrs. Krone and daughters Eliza and Sallie, we left for Dixon. Our grips weighed about 25 lbs. and we walked to Dixon 16 miles in 4 hours & 45 minutes. We were very tired and glad to sit on the cushions of the Frisco R.R. to St. James. We enjoyed a lunch put up by our very dear friends the Krones. . . .

Wed. 24. . . . The Frisco R.R. put us in Sullivan 3 P.M. and by 7 P.M. we had arrived at Strausers' at Pea Ridge, where we found Elder Call, his wife, St. Perry and Davis, besides the family. A Pleasant evening.

Thur. 25. "Thanksgiving Day." How happy were we to be with Missionaries and Saints to eat such a splendid Thanksgiving dinner. Spent the day pleasantly playing games and visiting. Rained.

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Mon. 29. . . . The rest went back to Strausers'. Elder Miller and I went home with Mr. & Sister Russel and helped carry the infant the 4 miles. And what a home!! One little rough log hut about 12 x 12 ft. in which were two beds, a table, two stoves, sewing machine, wood, flour, etc., and when the three broken chairs were placed around the stove there was hardly breathing room. We sat and talked till 12 o'clock, then went to bed. A small hole in the ceiling gave entrance to a tiny attic to which the children one by one climbed. No ladder was there, so they bared their feet and went up squirrel fashion. The small children were lifted up thru' the hole. Mother and seven children lay stretched out on the floor of that attic and four of us on the two beds below. We remained in bed while the man went to the store for the flour. (Tue. 30.) We had to dress in bed, for the woman and eight children were standing around. Our faces & hands we washed in a saucepan and dried on a flour sack. Biscuits, bacon & Molasses was the bill of fare. The children standing to the second table hastily pushed down the doughy bread & 'lasses, and got ready for school. The little ones had their hair tied with carpet rags and their shoes with twine string. One of them had on two pairs of stockings so that possibly where the one missed the other hit. Without stockings little 5 year old Dorothy pulled her porousknit underwear down into her shoes. My sympathy was aroused in behalf of this family of 13 (one child dead), all depending on a father who had nothing but a few acres rented.

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Fri. [Dec.] 3. Walked [toward St. Louis] from St. Clair thru' Union to Washington, arriving at 7 P.M. 20 mi. Many empty autos and wagons passed us up. One man stopped his auto and asked us how much we'd give him to let us ride. Upon learning how we were traveling and what we were doing he passed on. Had a hard time finding a place to stay. Visited the large Catholic Church in session. Heard the sermon, saw the rites & ceremonies, after the service many remained to go into the little secret chambers to confess their sins. The singing and much of the service was carried on in Latin. They all (hundreds of them) bowed the knee and mumbled their prayers.

Sat. 4. Crossed the Mo. river on the ferry and walked 8 mi. to Augusta. Rode the M.K. & T. R.R. to Weldon Springs, where we got off and walked hard to O'Fallon, arriving late. Had to pay 50 cents each for our bed and no fire. We had asked for entertainment some six times until they ran us into town [in other words, the missionaries

ran out of possibilities for a free bed before they arrived at the town]. A strong Catholic town and we were treated shabbily.

. . .

Wed. 8. At 8 o'clock (A.M.) I put on some of Millard's (Wm.) clothes and we went to the creek. After breaking the thin sheet of ice I waded down into the water and baptized Mr. Millard Andrew Barebo. The water was very cold and my body was numb when I got out. We hastened to the house, clothed ourselves, then held a service in which Elder Miller confirmed the convert, then we administered the sacrament to our Brother. He went to work and we bade goodbye to him, Dan, Mrs. Barebo and children and walked thru' O'Fallon, St. Peters to St. Charles, a distance of 17 miles, then taking the street car we were soon in the city of St. Louis, meeting the Elders. . . .

Thur. 9. Went tracting with Elder Tidwell till noon. We came in and learned of the postponement of Conference, so after Mutual I asked permission to go in the country again.

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1916

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Sat. [Jan.] 8. . . . Went to class, then at 10 A.M. Pres. B. met all the Missionaries in Priesthood meeting in which he gave splendid instructions and appointed me to be Conference President of this, the Missouri Conference, and all the missionaries voted to sustain me. I feel terribly weak, small, young, and inexperienced, but having been called by proper authority, I cannot but accept and do the best I can. Heaven help me!! . . .

[As conference president, Spencer's responsibilities changed. He tracted, but he also directed others' efforts, visited the sick, handled mail and reports, kept in contact with elders doing country tracting or working in small towns, looked after church property, and so on.]

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Tue. 18. Besides regular tracting I walked about 50 blocks making revisits. I talked gospel with Sr. Favre and also made my daily trips to the hospitals.

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Wed. 26. Went tracting early at 9 and stayed till 5. From 1 to 5 it was hard to drag my tired body up the steps, but I determined to stand it. When I got home I found a call to go to the City Hospital, where I went and found a young man sick with the typhoid fever asking for Mormon Elders. He was once a reorganite. We talked to him a while.

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Thur. [Feb.] 3. Held no class, but we all went to the Coliseum to see and hear Pres. Woodrow Wilson of the U.S.A. At 8:30 we were in the street with the crowd to await the opening of the doors at 9. Rapidly the crowd pushed in till we were crowded like "sardines in a can." The St. L. U. boys came in numbers and pushed & squeezed and rocked till the immense crowd were rocking to & fro. Tighter and tighter we were squeezed until it was really dangerous. As the big doors opened at 9 A.M. the crowd pushed madly on from all sides, wedging in tighter as we neared the door. Thousands pushing madly on, thinking not of life or anything. Boosted from our feet we went, whether or no, and as we neared the door and the wedge became tighter and girls & women began crying, screaming, and moaning. I was finally squeezed thru' to the door and we rushed to a good seat on the 1st Balcony, where we awaited till 10:30 amid the whistling & yelling of an anxious public. The band and 1500 voices kept the music ringing in the air. When 12,000 people had become quiet, the Pres. of the U.S. was escorted in while the thousands of people stood and sang the "Star Spangled Banner" and waved 12,000 flags. (which was the most wonderful & beautiful sight and the loudest noise of yells & whistles that I have ever heard). He was introduced and talked interestingly and most impressively upon the "Preparedness for War." A splendid speech. He was much applauded. His new wife was also in attendance.

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Thur. 24. Felt miserable. We practiced our quartet, then after a nap I got ready and went to the funeral chapel where the services were to be held over remains of Mrs. Loflin. The services were placed in my charge by Leslie Loflin. The Rev. Dr. Bitting of 2nd Baptist Church came and said to me, "Leslie says you would like to speak a few minutes." "Yes," I said, "the services are in my charge and we shall be glad to have you speak briefly." Altho' he was one of the most educated and influential Pastors in the city or even in the state or West, I gave him to understand that we were holding the services. Sr. Rose, Smith, Elder Critchfield & I sang quartets. I talked upon the Resurrection, then after Mr. Ravold sang a solo I called on Rev. Bitting to speak. Thru'out his talk he slurred and crossed me, but gave no scripture to prove any assertions. Said when he died he was going in an instant to his Maker. At the grave we sang another quartet, I dedicated the grave. Mr. Ravold sang a solo and I offered a final prayer. Mr. Ed Meyer, a cousin of deceased, was almost dumbfounded to learn we did not accept money for our services.

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Tue. [Mar.] 28. My 21st Birthday!!! My duty as Con. Pres. put me to tracting all morning, in which I was blessed with some success.

In P.M. I accepted an invitation to dinner in honor of my birthday at Sr. Hall's. An elaborate spread. Here I spent the P.M. in conversation. Sr. Hall gave me a beautiful shirt and Helen some handkerchiefs, which I truly appreciated. I learned also that Sr. Hall, Titlow and others had planned a surprise on me and intended to give me an umbrella with my name engraven on it. Plans were all made but as some Elders were dissatisfied it was given up. "We all have birthdays, too, and no mention is made of it," they said, so it was dropped. Not for any loss of present or party, but it cut deeply to know their feelings concerning me. I felt such a strange cold feeling come over the work for the previous week, felt a cold estrangement between myself & Elders over I did not know what. Where some of them previously were rather chummy they now seemed to avoid me. I knew not why. It hurt me very much.

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Sat. [Apr.] 29. With Elder Sparks I left St. Louis and we were met at the train in Hannibal by the Elders Neibaur & Miller at 11:40 and we all went to Aunt's for dinner. She seemed to be very glad to see me. We visited most of the day and preached on the street at night. An old drunk came out and threw his arms around me to sing with us. Elder Neibaur took him back to the sidewalk. After the meeting Aunt (Mrs. R. A. Bradshaw) and we four Elders went to a show at the "Star."

Sun. 30. We took advantage and slept late. At 10 A.M. Sunday School was held at Sr. Gordon's, but there was an unusually small turnout owing to a feeling between some of the Saints. They are almost at sword's point with one another. All too ready to talk. Differences amounting almost to hatred existing among them. A bad spirit prevailed.

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[Back to St. Louis]

Wed. [May] 17. Feel terrible, blue, discouraged, gloomy, despondent. Visited & tracted investigators who had recently turned against us. This increased discouragement. Visited Sr. Hall an hour. On the street I had to step out on the sidewalk so that Elder Critchfield wouldn't have to talk to emptyness. An amusing incident happened to one of the Elders, Sparks. While resting in the park at noon he fell asleep on a bench. Two large detectives awakened him from his slumbers and as they saw his book sacks under his coat they mistook them for pistol holsters and one stood guard with one hand on gun while the other searched the Elder. On his hip they found a Book of Mormon and on both sides in sacks other literature. They laughingly said, "Well, you are well loaded," as they sat on either side of him

in response to his invitation to them to sit down and he would tell them about the Mormons. Elder Critchfield came up and they had a good talk.

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Sun. 21. In Priesthood meeting I made as strong a plea as possible for the Elders to refrain from lightmindedness and so much frivolity, which I had noticed of late.

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Sun. [June] 4. Awoke early in preparation for Conference. All the Elders from the country were in. We met at 9 A.M. and waited for Pres. Bennion. At 10 A.M. He came bringing with him Apostle James E. Talmage. Dr. Talmage recognized me and gave me a hearty handshake and said his son Paul sent Best Wishes to me. Several times during the day he talked with me as man to man, now giving suggestions, now complimenting me on the work, etc., which confidence I truly appreciated, for in my estimation Dr. Talmage is one of the greatest of men, for with all his great intellect, his knowledge, etc., he yet is as humble as can be. . . .

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Sun. 11. Arose about 10 min. to 9, but was to Priesthood meeting on time at 9. I could not afford to be late, as I was teaching the missionaries punctuality. . . .

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Tue. 13. After tracting till noon Elder Wadsworth and I went to the Maryland Hotel, where we found the Utah Delegates to the [Democratic National] Convention. . . . They treated us fine and we had a splendid talk with them. Bro. [James] Clyde [of Heber, Utah] took the three Missionary Sisters & us Elders to an high class dinner.

Wed. 14. Eleven of us betook ourselves to the Hotel for Headquarters of Utah Delegates. Spent most of the morning in pleasant conversation with many of the "Mormons" from Utah. We visited Brevort & Planters Hotels and found Arizona people in the former who treated me fine and Idahoans in the latter, some of which were of our belief. The Utah delegates obtained tickets for the missionaries and at 12 N. we were admitted to the Coliseum to the National Democratic Convention. Some 10,000 people or more were present from all over the U.S. The keynote speech by Glynn of New York was truly a wonderful oration. I also saw William Jennings Bryan, who was present. We came home in a rain. . . .

Thur. 15. . . . After mutual we missionaries hurried to the Coliseum to the Convention to see Pres. Wilson nominated, but found that the building had been packed with people who had bogus tickets.

We were among the thousands of Guests, Delegates and Visitors who remained outside. We could not gain admittance tho' we had tickets. We waited till Pres. Wilson was nominated, when Sr. Knight, Sr. Clyde & Sr. Jones came out and the former took us all to the ice cream parlor and treated us. Arrived home 12 o'clock.

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Mon. [July] 17. Up early, packed grips and Sr. Rose, Dye, & I started for the country. It was almost unbearably hot, even on the Frisco train we could hardly get our breath. Leaving St. Louis 7:40, we arrived at Sullivan about 11. Bessie Strauser met us at the station. After getting us some large straw hats we began our ten mile ride for home. The heat was intense. The clouds gathered. Just as we started thru' the Meremec River the rain began coming hard. I drove the mules but they hated to face the furious storm. Srs. Rose, Dye and little Helen sat in the 2nd seat with an umbrella, but Bessie & I sat in the front and faced the rain. Even the umbrella was useless, for the rain came so hard it beat right thru. Hail the size of bird eggs pelted us on the bare heads, hands, etc. We became cold and shivered and our teeth chattered. The creeks were rising fast, so our motive was to get over them while we could. The rain came down in torrents so that we could not see far ahead, but I pushed the mules when we had good road. Tho' it was more or less serious and some danger attached to it, yet we kept up our incessant laughter and kept smiling. Finally we arrived at Strausers' like drowned mice. Everything in the wagon was drenched, hats, grips, literature, groceries, etc. We obtained dry clothing and felt better. We picked berries and spent a pleasant day and felt like we wouldn't have missed our today's experience for anything. Went to bed 8:30 and after a good night's rest arose Tue. 18 at 8:30. Spent the day pleasantly joking, teasing the girls, picking wild blackberries, quarreling, singing, eating and snoozing. Sang the evening away.

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Mon. [Aug.] 14. It rained off and on all day, nearly 5 in. in 24 hours, nearly 10 in. since Fri. morning. The Elders all stayed in, tho' it was not too wet to work. I was thoroughly disgusted, but said nothing. . . .

Tue. 15. . . . Came in to cook at 4 and at supper proposed a plan of having a quiet study period. I have come to the conclusion that the Conference is running down. I am losing enthusiasm. I also realize that I have not many months in the field now and must get the work better in hand or it surely will not be much honor to me. . . .

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Thur. 17. Awoke feeling very drowsy, but got up and helped to cook breakfast. Spent the morning wrapping bundles for the country Elders. Tracted some and helped get supper, then started the Elders out evening tracting. Some of them almost balked, but they went out and had some success. Attended M.I.A. and took part in lesson. Very hot.

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Thur. 31. Wrote to Elders and in the P.M. we all went to the new church and washed windows, etc. M.I.A.

Fri. Sept. 1. . . . A Hurry call came on the phone and when we answered it at Odgaards', expecting to find someone very sick, we were amazed when they told us that a certain man was slandering the Mormons in Denmark and wanted us to stop it. I told them that was an everyday occurrence here. . . .

Sat. Sept. 2. Early (dispensing with class) we went to the church and put down the carpet. I had the Piano & organ moved. Finished cleaning up and put in electric lights. Returned home tired in the extreme, but with a degree of satisfaction. 12 after when I retired.

Sun. 3. Arose early and went to the church and held Priesthood Meeting at 9:15 and I was thereby the first to preside over a meeting in the new church on Maple and Clarendon. I tried to encourage the Missionaries to greater diligence. The S. S. Officers & Teachers meeting convened, then S. S., and as usual I led the singing. To S. S. we had a large attendance and some strangers. At 12:15 Pres. Martin called us to Testimony meeting and everyone expressed gratitude for the Church's gift of the beautiful church. Some strangers were present and a reporter from the Republic. The Evening service was the Conjoint M.I.A. I led the singing. A double mixed quartet under my direction sang two splendid pieces. A male quartet also. I played for Sister Nettie Rose's solo. I had the privilege of delivering the first public discourse or gospel sermon in the St. Louis Church. For 1 hour & 5 minutes I preached and felt fine. The Apostasy and Restoration of the Gospel was my subject. Several visitors. I also had the privilege of blessing the first child in the new church. Justina Louise Welty. 80 people were present and everything was splendid. No hitch or trouble. And thus passed the first day of the St. Louis Branch in their new church on Maple and Clarendon Avenues.

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Sun. 17. Met Pres. Bennion at Church and attended Conference meetings all day. Felt badly when he rather chided me over a thing or two, which I tho't I was not to blame for. I went down to the station with him.

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Tue. [Oct.] 17. Business in town. I received a splendid letter from Pres. Bennion (See Sept. 17) expressing appreciation for my work. He said, "I have been exceedingly pleased with the way you have conducted your Conference. It has been highly satisfactory and I am sure the Lord is pleased with your splendid service. I think you have had a wonderful experience for a young man. I will really be sorry to see the time come for your release, but I realize that time comes to all. —Now I hope you will lead and not be led, only in the right. You have the elements of leadership in your character, so execute promptly and chastize if necessary, always, however, let the impressions of the Holy Spirit guide." These words of appreciation made me feel so very much better when I realized that my humble efforts had been appreciated.

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Sun. [Nov.] 5. In the M.I.A. program I accompanied two solos, led a choir number & a quartet, sang in a duet and did all the preaching on the subject "Israel."

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Sun. 26. . . . Had a brief interview with Pres. Bennion and a short walk and he told me I might come to Independence in two weeks to go home. Elder Brimhall was to be my successor. I was overjoyed. . . .

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Wed. 29. With tear filled eyes I bade goodbye to most of the Elders who were going in the country. Elder Stolworthy and I left for Argyle, Mo., and being directed, we set out for the home of Louis Krone and after a distance of about 8 miles finally were gladly received by Mr. & Mrs. Krone and the two daughters. We had a good supper and spent the evening in conversation and music.

Thur. 30. Thanksgiving Day. Had a splendid chicken dinner, after which Mr. Krone took Elder Stolworthy & me to visit Mr. Jim Moss. We found persimmon trees and helped ourselves. Spent evening in singing and conversing.

Fri. Dec. 1. Up at 5 A.M. and hastily eating breakfast, started hiking toward Dixon, 16 mi. south. Mr. Krone accompanied us 2 or 3 miles and poor fellow!! broke down as he bade me goodbye, never to meet again. Fearing we would miss the train, we walked very fast and were almost exhausted when we finally arrived at Dixon. It was hard to leave Elder Stolworthy as the Frisco pulled out. I got off at Sullivan and briefly visited old Sr. Prather, who was very feeble. Dear old soul! Started to walk to Strausers' and after a 2 mile hike Elder Anderson met me with a riding pony. . . .

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Sun. 3. . . . It was an effort to leave Elder N[eibaur] at Sullivan when the train pulled in. He told me how much he and the other Elders really had appreciated me & my work. The "Frisco" put me in St. Louis at 7:10 and I hurried to church. Being late I took a back seat, but was called upon to talk. . . .

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Sat. 9. Arrived in Kansas City and went to Independence on the car, where I was gladly received. . . .

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Tue. 12. Pres. Bennion said many good things to me. Putting his arm about me he said I had done remarkably well, was proud of me and disliked to lose me. I felt like my tears, prayers, etc., had not all been in vain. I left at 5 from K. C. depot and with Elder Dalton started homeward. . . .

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Fri. 15. . . . Andrew S[mith, a cousin]. met me at the Pres. office and I made my report. Went in Private office and talked to Pres. Smith, Lund & Penrose and they told me to keep up my missionary work. Pres. Smith remarked how poor [in other words, thin] I was. . . .

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Sat. 30. . . . Got to Thatcher at 5 P.M. and a large crowd met me. I spoke few minutes in M.I.A. Went to New Year's Eve social at Ray Killian's.

1917

Jan. 1. The new year came in as about 30 of us young people were seated around the table, well filled, at the home of Ray Killian. We did justice to the splendid menu and went home in the wee hours of the day. I awoke about 10:30 A.M. by the sound of music and I was barely dressed when the Thatcher Band came to my window and played several pieces. Father gave them \$5.00 to help them out. We rode in the car till dinner and Nettie, Dave [foster sister and her husband] & Alice, Geo. [sister and husband] were here to eat New Year's dinner with us. I went to the big dance at night. Lawrence, my dear chum, met me on the stage and we embraced. It was so good to see dear boy again. I had a good time at the dance and came home tired and leg weary. Lawrence stayed all night with me.

Tue. 2. Rode in the auto with father. Went to see Bp. Tyler and family and more especially Ella, spent joyous evening.

Wed. 3. Dug ditch, helped kill a large hog.

Thur. 4. Chopped wood and dug ditch.

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