



One never knows what the next year will bring, but we can always hope for the best.

Our family never celebrated New Year's Day. It was a day off from school and often it was butchering day on our farm. It was not even a day when we had to have pork and sauerkraut as we do now.

I reread some of my diaries and often we helped our father to chase his steers to the Conestoga River to get water when the cistern was empty. Other times we helped to strip tobacco on another farm that we owned.

In the evenings we visited relatives that lived nearby. Most all of our relatives lived nearby. Today they are really scattered over the country.

When I worked in Lancaster, New Year's Day was a day to stay home and bake for my mother and really clean my bedroom. Depending on the weather, I sometimes would go fishing in our meadow.

Some years started out badly as one year my sister was deathly ill and died. On a better year, I was tending my first baby, a three-

week-old little girl. As our family grew we had children at home on January first to help their father at the barn. Our girls loved to bake and in my diary one year I wrote that, "Nancy used 20 cups of flour today." But, we had plenty of people to eat the baked goods.

This year when my sisters were at our home over the Christmas season, I gave them packs of letters that they wrote to me 30 or 40 years ago. Later I got phone calls saying that they stayed up late to read them. It was as though they had kept a diary too.

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