

1901 letter, Christina Gesellchen Smolt, found and sent by Mary Nielsen, South Dakota

May 11, 2002

Diane,

I hope you are having a good weekend...

I looked at some of the old letters again the other night. Most of them are coming from Germany, but I did find two from Idaho.

These letters were sent to Michael and his wife Anna in Valley City. Their son Frank-his daughter Agnes, had these letters. Agnes and her daughter Ann Marie had a priest in Valley City translate the letters from German to English in the early 1980's.

The two letters from Idaho are written by two ladies-Christina Gesellchen Smolt and Pauline Gesellchen Michels. I believe you were looking for information on, on the website Ancestry.com on Pauline Michels?

I will re-type the letters below:

Genesee, Idaho
January 3, 1901

Dear Cousin Michael & Anna,

I, the youngest daughter, Christina, of Peter Gesellchen, want to fulfill my father's wish to write to you. Sad to say, he is very sick now and has been all through the fall. He is so weak that you have to lead him from the chair to the lounge & to the bed. I regret to inform you that the doctor said he couldn't live through winter. He can't eat a thing & his stomach no longer digests anything. I do not know what else is wrong with him except old age, but he still has a good mind. He wants me to write to all his relatives. He would like to have you write to him just once more. I think he is homesick for you. He says repeatedly everyday how glad he was to die, but it is so hard to give up a father. He was almost 10 years with me. My little boy would think it terrible to give up his grandpa.

The oldest daughter of my sister Anna has been with me 2 years already, but went home in August to her mother. She will come back tomorrow and stay with me for the winter. Sister Anna only lives a half mile from us. She, too, comes to see father every week.

On New Years we had our first snow and now the farmers can use their sleighs. Yesterday my brother-in-law was here with his sleigh pulled by 4 horses because the roadbed for sleighs is not very good yet.

The oldest son of my sister Ann, Theodore, got married on November 26 in Helena, Montana. He got himself a very beautiful and good wife. She is German & Catholic which is the main thing, but German comes first. He is a cigar maker and the job pays well at \$4.00 a day. He has worked for my husband 2 years and has learned the business from my husband.

Anna's second oldest wants to get married too in the spring. Their family is also becoming smaller all the time. Her baby is going to be 11 years old in January.

My sister Mary, too, has a family of 9 children. The first 4 ones are boys as they should be. They are all healthy and now I will close my writing. Cordial greetings from

Christina (*Gesellchen*) Smolt
(*sister of Mary Lorang*)

We wish you also a Happy New Year!