

A PATH TOWARD HOME:

JOURNALS, 1907 - 1909

Cornelia Winifred Root Ginn

selected and edited by

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Oberlin, Ohio
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INTRODUCTION

My grandmother, Cornelia Winifred Root Ginn, wrote the garden journals that are here excerpted and collected. My mother, Marian Root Ginn Jones, has kept these neat handwritten volumes, which cover the years 1901 - 1916. As a child, I used to love to open the cabinet in the living room where they were buried under old slides and packets of family pictures, and to read in them the records of the creation of the gardens and the family I was growing up with. I never knew my grandmother except through pictures, anecdotes, and her writing -- along with these journals, I have seen a brief handwritten account of her life, and a typed re-telling of parts of the Bible for children. I've unfortunately forgotten most of the anecdotes, but the journals fortunately didn't go away. One day a few years ago, my daughter Anna and I borrowed them from my mother and photocopied them all. This winter I started to work with them, and this volume is the first result, covering the years 1907 - 1909. Whether there will be more or not I can't tell now.

My mother assembled some of the best family pictures and some of the genealogy in a blue-covered volume she distributed some years ago. Using that, and some other notes, I'll go over some of the facts to give background to this booklet.

Cornelia Winifred Root was born in Cleveland, Jan. 23, 1877, the last of four children. Her father, Ralph Root, was born in 1823 in Cooperstown, New York; the Root family had emigrated from Badby, a little farming village in Northamptonshire, England. (I visited that village in 1980 with my parents: we found no Root gravestones, but the vicar did know of our family, and said he understood that we left in the 1640's along with many other Puritans to escape a heavy taxation by the local squire, whose impressive Jacobean mansion could still be seen nearby). Cornelia's mother was Anna Younglove Tubbs, born Jan. 23, 1838 (that Cornelia and her mother Anna shared the same birthday is one small cause of the deep love evidenced between them in the journals). The Youngloves were another Puritan family emigrating from England in the early seventeenth century, settling in Vermont.

Ralph Root and Anna Tubbs were married in 1862 (I have a beautiful Victorian silver pie-server given to Anna Younglove Root by her mother, Cornelia Payne Tubbs, in 1882, on her twentieth anniversary; it was given to me by my mother's cousin Elizabeth Neubauer Root). They had four children -- Fred, Mary, Walter, and Cornelia. In the journals, Cornelia writes primarily of her mother and her sister. Mary was almost seven years older than Cornelia: born in 1870, she apparently lived with her parents until her marriage to Frank Abbott in 1894. Their only child, Cornelia's dear niece Margaret Root Abbott, was born March 11, 1896, the evening of the wedding of Cornelia and Mary's middle brother, Walter. It is the story of Margaret's early death that is one of the key themes of these excerpts.

Cornelia grew up in what must have been a strong family atmosphere: her journals and the brief autobiography are full of references to joint family trips, family events. She seems to have been primarily educated at home, by private tutorial. In 1886, on a family trip to California, Ralph Root, her father, contracted pneumonia, which led to tuberculosis and his death three years later, three days after Cornelia's twelfth birthday.

The family continued to travel together: the summer after Ralph's death, Anna Root took Mary, Walter, and Cornelia on an all-summer trip through Yellowstone, Alaska, and Colorado! Six years later, Cornelia, as the only remaining unmarried child, accompanied her mother and her tutor on a nine-month trip through Europe, from the North Cape (where Anna Root almost died of pneumonia) to Italy. The family continued to live in Cleveland, clearly well-off enough to afford a comfortable house, long trips, and summers at Dover Bay. Cornelia was "brought out" at a reception in the fall of 1897. After another trip to Europe without her mother, Cornelia was engaged the next fall and married on Midsummer Day (June 21), 1899. Her husband was Frank Hadley Ginn, or "Hal", who had been born in Fremont, Ohio, in 1868, and brought up in nearby Clyde, Ohio, where his father Francis Ginn was superintendent of schools. Hal Ginn was at the time of their marriage a young lawyer in Cleveland.

Cornelia's sister Mary had only the one child, Margaret: during the early years of Cornelia's marriage the two families, and Cornelia and Mary's mother, seem to have spent a great deal of time together. The brothers, Fred and Walter, had several children each during the first years of the century, and were apparently less a part of the family circle. For Cornelia, these were years of a great deal of illness, especially during the winters, which she and Hal spent in apartments in Cleveland. The illness may have contributed to her apparent inability to bear a child in the early years of her marriage; the autobiography is reticent about this, and I have not read the earlier journals carefully enough to know whether the long times of incapacitation are related to the loss of a pregnancy. In any case, the crucial background to the story I have pulled together in these pages is Cornelia's overwhelming desire to become a mother. After the birth of Francis in 1909, other children followed: my mother, Marian (b. 1910, named for Mary Root Abbott and Anna Younglove Root), Alexander (b. 1913), and Barbara (b. 1917).

The other important background is the location. Living in rented apartments during the winter, she gave her home-shaping energies to their summer place, "an old neglected fruit farm of fifty acres" "on the hills above Gates Mills" -- about 12 miles from Cleveland, but connected to the city by what was then an excellent interurban railroad (the "car" that she takes to the Cathedral is a trolley car on this line). There they lived all summer, usually from March or April to late October or November, and there she created her farm and her gardens, supervising a couple of gardeners. This farm, and the house which grew and grew over Cornelia and Hal's lifetimes, was known as "Moxahela"; my brothers and I grew up there as did my Griesinger cousins.

The ostensible purpose of the journals is to record the successes and failures of the gardens. There are long lists of seeds and bulbs ordered, with their cost; there are notes of what not to do next year; there are long descriptions of how the beds looked each season. They are full of hopes and disappointments, and though long sections are of no particular interest except to those who know these gardens well and are interested in their history, other parts become records of more lasting interest. In a period in which she was investing a great deal of time, money, energy, and hope in these gardens, the records of the gardens naturally reach out and include her marriage, her hopes for a child, her Christian faith and practice. The journals therefore show us not just the garden, but glimpses of the wider life of Cornelia Root Ginn.

From a modern standpoint, that life does not appear wide in scope: there are few references to contemporary events in the life of the nation or the world, few people beyond the immediate family; even her husband's burgeoning concerns with Cleveland business and manufacturing have little place here. In selecting from the journals, I have increased this tendency toward focus and intimacy. What I find important in the journals is not their recording of public life, but of the inner life of a very creative and active woman. Cornelia Root Ginn's goals and accomplishments are clearly defined by her society's expectations of women of her class of gentility: working with the poor, gardening, making a comfortable and moderately elegant home, bearing and raising a family, supporting her husband, writing in her journal. The purpose of these pages is not to assert that she transcended or broke free of those limits. It is rather to show her accomplishments as connected and creative, to show her life as I hope we see all lives, as complex and imaginative processes of growth and interconnectedness.

My comments about the excerpts, which precede each section of the journals, are intended to guide readers towards what I have seen in reading over and over the journals of these years. I hope I have not been too intrusive; in re-shaping and steering the story, I have tried to be faithful to what I saw as her own directions. Yet I am a different person -- in gender and generation above all -- though connected strongly to my grandmother; and I know above all that I never met her in person, have no direct experience of her. So I am sure I have imposed on her in some ways. I appeal to those who knew her directly to forgive my unintentional self-projections on these journals and their creator.

In writing of my grandmother in the comments, I have always referred to her with the pronoun "she." This may surprise some readers; some may feel it is impersonal. It is not intended to be either, but is the only solution I could find to the need to seem transparent -- to let the journals and their author remain the central presence -- and yet, to some degree, intimate. I could not use "Mrs. Ginn" and remain intimate; I could not say "my grandmother" and remain transparent. Yet her given names and her nicknames seemed reserved more for those who knew her in actual life than for me.

My grandmother's words are printed in italics throughout. I have kept her language I found it, only adding an occasional comma or dash, and a very few editorial insertions in brackets. The journals are very cleanly written, for the most part very easy to edit. Only in a few places are there crossings-out; I kept those where they seemed significant.

Finally, I have to say that I feel sad that my uncle, Francis Ginn, whose birth meant so much to his mother, is not alive for me to give these pages to. In fact, all the actors in this part of my grandmother's story are now dead: Anna Younglove Root (1919); Mary and Frank Abbott; Cornelia Root Ginn (1937); and Frank Hadley Ginn (1938). But there are many living who remember and care for them and for the family they were a part of; and it is to them, to my mother and father, aunts and uncles, and cousins, that I give these pages, with love.

Nicholas Root Jones
Oberlin, Ohio
December 16, 1988

1907

Opening the new lined book bound in soft red leather, she begins this record of the next three years of her life. She marks on the empty page, *My Garden -- 1907*. It is still only February, the days *bright but not very cold and not much snow*. She writes of the coming life of the garden as if it were a part of the year of the church.

All my new years of the garden come with their advent season when the first warmth comes into the sunbeams and stirs the sap in the trees and the longer days are so welcome.

On Easter, in March, she brings lilies, bought from the florist, to decorate the altar at church, then turns back to the woods for wildflowers to add. In writing of what she has done, she crosses out what she has written, corrects herself to put the resurrected Christ in her own woods.

Good Friday was a wonderful spring day, but Easter which was the 30th was colder but bright a part of the day. Easter even I help trim the church and though the lilies were wonderful I wanted something more so I went out to the woods and found some brave early spring beauties and hypaticas and I gathered them with loving hands and brought them as the earth's offering to the risen Lord. Love had brought them forth and gathered them and I think they would have been were the first things the Christ would saw when He came Easter morning.

At the end of April, the wet, cold weather breaks for one Sunday of visiting. Her niece Margaret is the young daughter of her sister Mary and husband Frank Abbott; the families come out by car from Cleveland to Gates Mills. Her husband Hal is away on business. The next day the cold comes back fiercely: the stone wall that will eventually stand at the top of the garden, is part of her long-term plans.

Margaret and Arthur Claflin, Mary, Frank, Mother, Fred, Ralph, and Margaret (all the rest of the family tried to come but Walter's and Gardner's machines broke down) came out for luncheon. The day was lovely, the first really warm one. A lot of tiny chicks came out of

their shells that day. Everyone was so interested and lovely. If Hal had been home it would have been perfect.

The daffodils are coming out about the pool and though one can see the "two foot rule" [too regular a planting?] they are lovely.

All the roses about the pool and the trees and iris are alive and look very well.

The poor garlands! all gone! the garden looks naked and ashamed. All the vines were so frosted R. [Rudolph, the gardner] thought best to cut them all down to the ground. I think I shall have to have my little stone wall now!

The weather, slowly warming, brings out the white blossoms of the shad tree at the foot of the lawn below the house. It is the same tree that will blossom on the same day two years later, the birthday of her first child.

May the 12th. We have had a few warm days but many cold wet ones and growing things have had a hard time. The morning of the tenth the ground was white with snow! We have had several frosts but they have not done much damage and the peach, pear and cherry blossoms are all right. There does not seem to be any apple blossoms at all this year. That will indeed be a loss. The berries look good and the gooseberry and currants are fine.

The fine old shad tree has been in bloom for a week. It's a joy to see it up among the dark hemlocks.

The arbutus has been out since the last week in April for the new plants that we found near the house came into bloom long before the others because it is where the sun can get to it so well. Those tiny new plants had lots of blossoms of the large deep pink kind! Today Hal found more plants below the gnomes' house down the bank. How fortunate we are! and we do thank Thee for it with each sweet blossom we pick. . . .

Yesterday (11th) the dear blue birds came back. I heard their sweet voices and they seemed to be as glad to be back! and looks about to see if all was the same. It was an exciting day. Looking over the old house to see what repairs were needed -- and then a battle for life and love was fought. Another Mr. Bluebird came down about them and tried to steal away the bride but the chosen lover was brave and strong and he fought well and drove the thieving knight away, while Lady Bluebird watched them giving a few pecks herself.

There is a pair of robins which has built their nest in the crook of the chimney under the girls' window. He does not like the bluebird family and is horrid to them. . . .

19th Horrid Mr. Robin has driven my bluebirds away! I don't love him now! I have not seen a blue feather since I came home!

A month later, the summer has settled in, the hardy yellow roses have weathered the cold wet days. But the bee-hive suffers. She accepts the beauty of the garden and of the weather, and mourns for the dying bees. There are many things, in the larger world and in what must have been her own life, which she never mentions; but what she cares for herself, what she tends with her own hands and mind -- bees, flowers, garden, house, family -- these touch her imagination. She sits still and her senses reach out to her world. She writes, and her memory reaches out to her joy and holds it in the book, against unknown fate.

June 20th -- Almost a week of hot weather, the first we have had! The pink peonies are out.

I seem always to have trouble with my first swarm of bees in the little glass hive. This year about the first of June Mr. Steel brought me such a nice lot of gentle strong bees and we put them carefully in their place. Then came cold rainy days, they could not get out and after their honey was gone I fed them the fruit syrup I used to give them last year. They soon became sick with dysentery and hung in sticky masses and could not work. I finally took them outdoors, took the frame from the hive and cleaned it as best I could. I could not help them much and it was so dreadful to see them that the next day I carried them under the hedge and let those well enough escape and find some other home if they could for they would all die in that polluted hive. When the weather does settle down to summer, I will take the hive down and get some more for I do so love to watch the tiny wise creatures.

The yellow roses too are lovely! They are good and strong and do not freeze. I will plant more of them in the spring.

June 30th -- Charming days we have been having and how good they are! This afternoon (Sunday) the hills have been so soft under the loveliest of blue ether veils. I have gazed and gazed to keep the picture long in my mind. I sat on the grass and to me came the breath of the box and wood thrush's song, the soft summer breezes and the vision of the hills. Can Heaven hold anything more blissful!

*What a joy it is to be alive! Truly alive, with eyes that can see
and ears that hear!*

Two weeks later, the garden is full of color. It supplies the only fireworks for their fourth of July. On a beautiful morning, she sits in the summer house. Though she is actually on the edge of the garden, looking toward the center, she writes as if she herself is its center. Working, painting, recording the garden in the book, are important; seeing it, being in it are holy and indispensable joys, part of what she sees as her great privilege.

July 12th We had a perfectly quiet fourth. Hal was not well so we had no company and not even a torpedo or a single cracker, our only celebration was a bunch of red, white, and blue flowers.

Lillian Bayliss is painting a tiny ivory picture of my garden with the summer house and the larkspur against the wall.

I have really been doing some work in the garden this morning. It's a most glorious morning after yesterday's storms. The air is so delicious and cool and great white clouds sail splendidly across the blue and my garden is all blue and white too. The larkspur is lovely though a bit blown down. The blue iris is not quite gone -- then there is flax and bachelor buttons and Miss Lingard [a phlox] is the tallest whitest lady that ever was. The white petunias are out and best of all are my wedding lilies, those almost holy flowers to me! There are some white hollyhocks in bloom too.

I am sitting in the summer house now and as I look down the borders I can hardly write for the joy of watching the flowers swaying in the strong breeze and the butterflies and humming birds that are having such a good time. Way down in the border is a great mass of yellow up against the white phlox and it is so fine. It is the coreopsis I see and a bit of the yellow columbine and I wish I could see from here but I know it's there beyond the phlox is a glorious bed of croceum lilies that are wonderful against the wall!

Late in July, she takes a vacation with her mother: she rests, takes care of herself. She cannot work well in the garden, and does not like to have to rely on Rudolph, who has previously this summer cut off the heads of the iris around the pool. The key to the beautiful garden is love.

The last part of the month I went up the lakes with Mother in the "Northwest." It was a lovely restful trip and we had such a good visit together.

Our vegetable garden is fine and I am gaining in weight right along. I drink milk every day and eat so many vegetables.

The gooseberries and currants and raspberries are very plentiful and we have had many good tarts.

August 8th -- In July all is splendid! and I feel proud of my garden, but in August, I am humble and would rather not have many visitors. There are most awful bare places, great big ones too!

The other day I went to see the Henry Sherwin place and seven of us had a picnic luncheon in the grove. . . . Bell has the care of the flower garden and it is most charming and so wonderfully kept, there were no bare places there. The color scheme was so good beginning at one end of the border with purples then lavendars, pinks, reds, yellows, blues and white. And this is the order all through the year. The garden is on a terrace among old apple trees and it must be a dream when they are in bloom. From the garden one sees way off over lovely rolling farm lands for many miles. It is a glorious garden and I came home to mine quite unhappy, not that I loved it less but I felt I had showed my love too little and that was why it looked so badly.

I dislike to have Hal speak of something that does not look right, but I do wrong, I must look at the bad places myself and go about to remedy them. I have been thinking and planning for Fall work and I am feeling so well now I am really doing some work now myself. If I could only do more with my own hands I don't think things would look as they do. To tell the truth I am rather afraid of Rudolph and I know the flowers are and Rudolph does not seem able to find a second man who understands English and so I must leave the directions to Rudolph too. I don't like that but I can't help it. They really do give my garden a good deal of time but it's not done with a loving hand and that always shows.

In the rich harvest of grapes, she finds joy for herself and for her husband, who is making wine from them.

October 13th. The vineyard is at its height of glory now. The vines hang heavy with great bunches and each grape is big, filled full of the nectar of summer. They are so glorious! I am glad Christ loved the vines so much. He talked about them so often in a way to show how much they meant to Him.

Hal loves them better than anything on the place. And in every glass of wine he sees the vineyard and the color and fragrance is

the essence of the sunshine of the summer days on the hillsides of France. And it strengthens and refreshes him in the way Christ meant when he chose the wine as the symbol of His life that would strengthen and refresh our spirits.

As the weather turns colder, she has need of her Christian strength and consolation in the face of the critical illness of eleven-year old Margaret Abbott.

Oct. 27th. The last three weeks have been full of terrible anxiety for precious Margaret has been critically ill. She is not yet out of danger but I feel sure God in His mercy will spare her to us. I have not done anything at home but have spent all my time with Mother and Mary.

Since about the fifteenth we have had glorious weather, clear fine air and brilliant sunshine. The colors have been lovely but not very brilliant. We have had several very hard frosts that have killed my sweet garden just as the cosmos was in its prime and the chrysanthemums just coming out! It was too bad!

A few pansies are still in bloom and the violets about the pool, but that is all except one or two brave little blossoms here and there that look up with rather a sad little smile as I pass.

The old chestnut tree has done beautifully, we really have picked up quite a lot more [chestnuts] than we have ever found. It's fun in the mornings to watch the squirrels. They are so busy these days.

The frosts have killed all the Catawba grapes, they were not quite ripe and were such nice bunches. We thought we should keep some until Christmas.

She prepares to leave the summer and the country house for the winter house in the city; with the worry about Margaret and the disruption of the home she feels most a part of, she struggles to hold the memory and knowledge of joy. In her symbolism, the organic leaves and petals of her summer garden become the leaves of a book in which they are preserved, pressed, represented in words, recorded as in the garden book she is writing. Yet the book that holds the spirit of the summer is not just the literal book, as the wine that holds the beauty of the grapes is more than the actual wine: it is her own spirit, woven in with the spirit of God and of the world.

Nov. 3rd. Again we say good bye to the dear beloved home. Another summer has come and gone. Will still another come? It does not matter, we have had this one, it's ours forever, no one can take it away and it's been full of sunshine and starlight and color and joy. It's had its storms but the lightning did not touch us. The gardens, the orchards, the fields and the woods have brought forth their gifts for us. We have been well all summer and nothing has marred our happiness.

We are thankful Oh God, for all Thy mercies.

There has been nothing especially to mark the summer but oh I hope I have so taken in its beauty, its peace and happiness that I have woven these things into my life itself. I may then forget the summer, its days and nights and its petty doings, the earthly things may go if the spirit of it all is become a part of me. And so I can open the leaves of the summer like a book to read and enjoy when I have a few minutes to rest in the busy city winter where I mean to work and give all I can. When I think how much I receive and how little I give! I am terribly ashamed.

In the very next entry, she ends the year and closes the book in desolation, losing the child she has cared most for. She struggles to see all in the light of the spirit.

Nov. 5th. A terrible storm was very near even as I wrote the last page and the lightning has struck our very hearts!

Our precious Margaret we felt was better and this Tuesday morning we were moving to town when Mother called me to come at once for she was much worse and was in convulsions, the awful thing dreaded from the beginning. The darling was saved all pain, she did not regain consciousness and her brave little spirit was at last released and God's angels took her -- Margaret -- Margaret -- where are you? We laid her precious beautiful body in the grave, the most perfect flower of all the sweet blossoms about her.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life" and our hearts were quiet while we listened. We must not ask why. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

We bow at His feet and beg for comfort for oh! our hearts are broken but we say too, Thank Thee dear Lord for the joy we have had these eleven years, for every minute of her life and that we did hold her so close to us. And for the sure faith that all is well for her now.

Some day perhaps we shall understand why she had to leave us and then these years of loneliness and sorrow will seem very short compared to the forever of joy and peace all together again. God give Mary and Frank strength to live through the intervening years!

1908

In March she returns to the book to summarize the winter in Cleveland, at the town house. Her memories of Margaret are shared with the young girl's friends and with children who did not know her; Margaret's life and death are parallels with the birth of Jesus and with Christian patience, sacrifice, and generosity.

I have been wonderfully well all winter; . . . it has been good to be busy for my heart has been so sad.

I could not bear Christmas without Margaret's tree so I bought a beautiful one and asked Margaret's little friends to trim it in love for her and then we invited to our tree the children who go to the tuberculosis dispensary for treatment, very very poor little ones. About a hundred and fifty came and I felt Margaret's presence very plainly there. Her friends were so happy to do it and I wanted them to feel because they had known her and loved her they must take their part in going on with her work. We told those who came about our little girl and about the Christ child and they loved the tree and I did feel that Margaret was happy too and had done much to help them herself there by her Christmas tree. She shall always give it to them.

In April, now living in the country, she plans to use her flowers -- now just starting to bloom -- for the altar of the new Episcopal Cathedral in Cleveland.

This spring I have taken charge with Sister Sarah of the Altar work at the Cathedral and it kept me very busy all the month. I love the work and I am so happy to work in that wonderfully beautiful building. I shall have to go in a good deal all summer but I don't mind. I'll carry in a lot of my own flowers for the altars.

Four times in May and early June she writes of the flowers and their part in the ceremonies of her life -- Margaret's funeral, Ascension Day at the Cathedral, Memorial Day at the cemetery where her father and Margaret are buried, and finally Whitsunday, the feast of the Holy Spirit.

The lilies of the valley came out about the 15th and were as fine as last year. I shall never see them but I shall see them about precious Margaret. . . .

The dear blue birds were here early but the horrid sparrows have driven them away. I do hope they will come back. The robins have built a lovely nest in the old hemlock very near the guest room window so we can look right down into it and watch the funny babies. . . .

May 28th Ascension Day. I carried my arms full of glorious German iris in to the Cathedral and filled the vases on the great Altar. I was so happy to take them from my garden and never to me any way has the Altar seemed so gloriously beautiful! I think the Master was pleased for they were so beautiful and He so loved the beautiful flowers of earth and I was so happy to give them, the first of my own I have taken except the fruit blossoms I put at the foot of the cross one day.

May 29th Today I took two arms full of flowers for the graves. Ah! to think of having to put them there for Margaret! It does not seem possible.

I carried pansies, white pinks, peonies, hardy helitrope, sweet rocket and iris. Mother brought lots from her garden and we covered the graves with loving hands so thankful that we knew they, our loved ones, were not there only it is a place sacred to their memory. . . .

June 7th Whitsunday. I woke up at five this morning and I looked out on the garden and decided it was too beautiful to go to sleep again so I got up and ran down to the pool for a swim. I have never had quite such an early one and it was most delicious for no one but Topsy [her dog] and the birds were there so I could go in as I wanted to.

When I had dressed I had a glass of milk, bread and butter, and strawberries for my breakfast. Then I picked from the garden an armfull of peonies -- "Whitsun roses" -- white ones and red ones, and I took the 6:45 car and went in to the cathedral and was just in time for the early service. It was glorious and I prayed so much for Mary, that the Blessed Spirit might comfort her. After service I arranged my flowers and they were splendid over the great Altar, the red ones just matched the Altar hangings. I took the nine o'clock car home.

As the garden comes to its height in June, she watches, contemplates and develops the symbolism of the flowers. The familiar types -- lilies (on her ninth wedding anniversary), the white phlox named *Miss Lingard* -- are received with warmth; the unfamiliar with some distance, for the moment.

Miss Lingard has been out for a week. Not quite so tall perhaps but so snowy white she has been so lovely at night. It has been hard to go in to bed.

The wedding lilies were all in bloom for my wedding day! Hal and I cut some together that morning and felt we were being married again as we stood before them. . . .

The Japanese Iris has been in its prime for a week, lovely queer flowers that some way are still foreign. I don't think of speaking to them as I do to the others. They do understand my loving touch and admiration but they have not learned English yet. They seem contented and happy though.

In September, after a happy but brief trip to Quebec and Montreal (cut short by her husband's ill-health, she comes back to a garden wasted by heat and drought. Amidst descriptions of the Northern lights and their new car, she notes that she is pregnant. For now, it is recorded not as a state of being or a defined fact, but distantly evoked -- visions of that beautiful road.

Sept. 12th. We had some cool days last week but this week has been very hot and still no rain. Never before have I waked and not been glad to see the sun.

The air is thick this morning with smoke from the great forest fires out West. So thick that I cannot see the valley at all! Poor people and trees, what suffering and fear there must be!

Last night came a most wonderful aurora. It spread over all the northern sky and wonderful bright rays shot up to the zenith; for a while it covered half the sky from east to west and the lights were lavender and pink and green and golden. It was the best we have seen for many years. Earlier in the summer I think in June we saw a great band of light across the whole sky from northwest to southeast like a flashlight ray. When we were in Quebec we saw a fine display of it.

We are feasting on grapes and we do so enjoy sending great baskets to all our friends.

I am beginning to see again visions of that beautiful road!

Hal has bought an automobile and I am so pleased; it's an Oldsmobile runabout of high power and it will do him so much good out in the fresh air and it will surely take his mind from his business cares, and too we are looking forward to many trips through the country; with a little trunk strapped on behind we can go off and have a perfect time.

That entry is followed immediately by the next, two months later: the visions have proven real, and she spends the fall in bed.

November 13th. I wrote that last page one morning and that 16th I went to bed and there I have been ever since until about two weeks ago. Miss Metzger took beautiful care of me and carried me safely over the bad part of my journey. Now I am quite well again and able to go on. Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to Thy word!

The leaves after all turned wonderfully and earlier than usual but they did not last on the trees long because of the dryness. As soon as I could have two pillows I was by my windows and watching my blessed hills.

My heart has been so full of quiet content and peace and I have had so much beauty and love about me I am sure my little one will be sweet!

If only I could tell Margaret and now I am afraid dear Mary can't be really happy for me. I can't talk to her much about it I know and it does hurt so not to!

She spends the winter once again in town, this time resting at home. In February, she resumes the garden book.

The time seems long, yes, but the days are precious ones. I feel like Mother Earth, as if a brooding quiet and peace were over me, silently giving myself to the new life which will come forth when the "Fullness of time has come." I am so glad it will come when Mother Earth is giving birth to her children too and all nature will rejoice together.

In April, she moves home from the apartment in town. She works to prepare a room for the baby; as she watches and tries protect a family of bluebirds, she realizes that she is doing the same for her family.

We came home this year the first day of April. . . . The blue birds came back the 5th. Sweet darlings, I never was more glad to welcome them.

The first week the weather was very warm and mild but Thursday 8th came a storm of snow and wind; Good Friday and Saturday were dreadful as to weather but Easter morning 11th it was clear and lovely.

Hal stayed in Easter Even and went to the six o'clock service in the Cathedral. I wished so much I was with him. I surely was in spirit. . . .

April 17th. At last my pink nest is ready for the wee bird, and a sweeter, lovelier room there never was seen!

Margaret's cradle is too beautiful and precious for words to describe. I know she is happy to have me have it and I know she will love and care for my little one. It all seems too wonderful and dreamlike to be true and I sit and look and wonder if it can be true!

I am so happy I have stopped counting the days till the twenty-second! I don't care when the day comes as long as at last all is well and my little bird is in the nest safe and sound.

Easter Monday Dean DuMoulin came out and Mary and I had the Easter service of Holy Communion in my own "upper room." It was very solemn and sacred and I truly felt the very presence of the Risen Lord and His smile and blessing not only for my baby and me but for the home too.

April 17th. I have talked the garden over with R. and told him how I want the new things planted for he will have to tend to it all the year.

April 19th. The first spray of Arbutus Hal brought me this morning. How often have I thought, Oh! when the Arbutus blooms!

Though expected on the 22nd of April, the baby does not yet arrive. She picks up the garden book again on the 27th, waiting, watching, and surprised by the burst of energy she feels.

April 27th. These days of waiting are very good for me. In a way they are harder than any I have ever spent. I have always hated to wait for anything and this is awful for there is nothing to do but wait! But if I cannot have patience 'tis a pity indeed! "I die daily" and it's good training. Each day I do the things for the day alone. I, who have always loved to shut my eyes and not see something that should be, I am making myself see it now and what's more do it then and there! I shall be a better housekeeper for these weeks and be more patient too.

The sparrows are bothering my blue birds again! Hal must get out his gun, I cannot have them driven away this year!

The weather is perfect for early spring, not too warm and showers and sunshine well mixed.

A few days ago Cleveland had a terrible storm which did great damage everywhere. We had some but not a tree was hurt. Over in the woods very near us a great many were blown down and we escaped wonderfully and I am most thankful!

We have had rhubarb from the garden and Swiss chard from the hot beds. Chard is an early green and really very sweet and good.

The Arbutus is blossoming beautifully. I have sent a box to Mother Ginn and given a good deal away. I feel as if every piece should be enjoyed.

The daffodils about the pool are lovely but I wish the water was there.

I wonder if my baby will come the same day as the Queen's! she is waiting longer than I! It took ten months to finish Solomon up (see discourse III in Wisdom). We must have patience.

April 30th. The tiny Princess of Holland has come, now perhaps the stork will have some time for me. But I did want an April baby!

In the last journal entry, she writes of the pool below the house, in the woods, which she has worried about during the last years, trying to get it to hold water. Looking at daffodils, she thinks of Wordsworth's poem, "I wandered lonely as a cloud."

Down by the pool this afternoon, the daffodils in the long grass were indeed a "jocund company." "I gazed and gazed," sitting on a great stone by the pool across the yellow blossoms and the tender green of the grass and first tiny leaves of the birch trees to the hills where sudden gleams of sunshine from between the heavy clouds flew over the trees bringing out so vividly first here then there the wonderful colors of buds and baby leaves, such soft mauves and pinks and the green that is never seen except at this time! It was good to have eyes that could see.

On July 14th, after more than two months without an entry, she returns to write, as always, of the spring flowers. Now the flowers are not beyond her, in the neat beds of the garden, but in the womb, in the cradle, and in the bed where she herself lies for weeks in silence after the birth. She sees herself as being at the end of a long dark journey.

On the morning of Wednesday the fifth of May, Francis came into the world, the sweetest most perfect blossom in my eyes and heart that ever the world held before. That glorious morning the shad tree burst into bloom high up like a banner unfurled to tell the garden and the birds to rejoice and how the dear birds sang and the garden too, and blossoms came forth everywhere, blossom lovelier in color and of much sweeter perfume than I have ever had before.

I had dreamed of it all so long I felt still in a dream and I lay for days in the darkened room but really in the heart of a rose, an enchanted place that glowed with joy and peace.

I could not think nor pray but God knew well I was lifting all my joy to Him.

I have traveled all the long road now, even the dark way where I had to go alone yet my lover's spirit was there with me. It was pretty dark and rough and I fainted but when I woke I was past the valley and I lay in the sunshine and in my arms was my treasure I had come to find!

She recalls the flowers that she finds around her in the darkened room, brought by visitors. Do her friends leave the flowers with their nice letters so full of joy in our happiness? Maybe they come into the room itself, like Mary, who seemed happier than I have seen her for so long and I do hope my baby will help her. He was put right into her arms first and she does seem to love him very much. However the flowers come, they are all around her, all noted on a piece of paper eleven days after the birth and now written again in the garden book.

Two vases of pink roses and pale lavender spanish iris, a great drooping bowl of retroflexa tulips, a bunch of white tulips, a spray of cherry blossoms and pink pirus japonica in the white chinese vase by the Bambino and a spray of bleeding heart. A basket of pansies, the low half circle of wild violets and English primroses, a silver vase of poeticus, baby's breath and snowdrops, some red primroses, and a bunch of dogwood and one of apple blossoms and a spray of white lilac by my bed!

Late in the summer, the auratum lilies are fairly good, and she picks them and the gladioli as they drive to town to the Cathedral for baptism. Among family and servants, the blossom that is the baby is given on the altar as are the blossoms of the garden.

Aug. 9th I brought some gladiolus and auratum lilies from the garden and Nancy put them in the vases and by the font, then they went up on the altars, the lilies to be the sweet incense of my joy.

It seemed the moment for which I had lived. The joy for which I had prayed, to give to the Master the son of our perfect love! To be His faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end.

She does not write again until November; in this month of warm, wonderful days, she looks at the late, intensely colored flowers in her bowls and vases, and remembers Margaret, dying two years earlier at this time. She tells of the storms that strike with December, and sees them always as threatening her

treasures -- home, garden, book, baby. She gardens, watches, writes, prays, orders her life.

How negligent I have been with my book and the garden itself too! Alice takes care of Baby but some way my hands are very full, I am busy each day. Is it with unnecessary things? They don't seem so at the time but at the end I am only tired and I can't see where the day has gone! And I am so dreadfully tired all the time. I have weaned Baby now so I hope I can build up my strength again and be good for some thing.

The garden has been lovely but I have not kept any notes. Now it is in its afterglow, the leaves on the pear trees are soft yellow and the ground is strewn with the leaves. It all looks so soft and warm and I say good night to my plants and they smile up to me with a sleepy contented look as the Baby does and I am glad they are safe from the storms.

Some are still trying to give me blossoms, how full of color these last flowers are! I have a big bowl of blue blue bachelor buttons and a vase of snapdragons and a fine bowl of yellow and white chrysanthemums and some cosmos and a tiny silver pitcher of violets from the hot beds besides a few wee rose buds.

These are sad days, for it's just two years since we have seen Margaret. God bless her, she is with us still but how we long to see her, and touch her, and hear her voice!

Sunday Dec. 5th was our last Fall day, so warm and soft we were all out all day long. Tuesday it rained all day, Wednesday morning we got up to find Winter about us, the thermometer 8° and an awful icy wind. Poor garden, I am afraid it suffered and poor babies I am sure they did!

Mrs. Chisholm's beautiful dear home burned down last night with all the treasures of love and memory it held! How terrible is fire! God save us such a disaster as that!

In December before we went to town Mr. Semon came out and took Francis' pictures in my lap sitting in the living room and in the nursery. They came out splendidly and I am so happy to have such good ones of him besides being such really lovely pictures.

AFTERWORD

With the taking of a picture, the journal ends its account of three years. But at the end of the book, after many blank pages, are three entries, one from the beginning of the period, one undated, and one from the very end. In the first, she and her husband find a simple quiet summer evening in the garden becoming something more startling and more profound. The dark path towards home, its obstacles, is made an allegory of some deeper process, unnamed but strongly evoked.

July 8th. We sat in the garden watching the sunset light fade from the sky and the clouds blow away and the stars come out. It was warm, and no dew on the grass.

Tinker Bell and her friends were all out and we caught her once in our hands.

Was ever a path so dark and yet so glorious! Our eyes were blinded by the darkness that we might see nought but the glory revealed to us. We were one with the great throbbing heart of creation.

We found our way up through the path again, stumbling over the roots and stones; our hands stretched out to shield us from the sharp brambles, often losing the path.

But we could see the stars now and then. We finally came to the end and the vision of our home opened out to us. In the calm peaceful light of Heaven it stood with a bright light in its window for us.

Ah God! may we never, never forget that sight!

And if the fear of death ever brings unhappiness, let us I pray Thee remember that vision, and when we come to the end of the dark path of life -- how bright our way has been so far -- may we enter that other Home together with the same joyous hearts as full of love and peace.

The path so dark and yet so glorious, so revealing of the glory of the throbbing heart of creation, perilous and thrilling -- this path entered in

love leads finally to the vision of domestic happiness, the light in the house. It is the course of love as she sees it, from sexual love through birth to the creation of a home; it is the course of love as she records it in the book we are reading. It is also the course of God's love in the world. In the next pages she reflects on her reading about love in one of her books, seeing it as an active force in the relationships around which she builds her journalized life -- parents, husband, children yet to come, God.

Thank God, I do not know this love [the love discussed in the book]! My love is still the "child's love." Except that a child knows not what it is he feels. It's blind faith and natural to him as his breath.

That is indeed beautiful but my heart is alive to feel and realize and know what love is. My love is not a "burning passion, that leaves only ashes." No, no, my love is the wellspring of all upbuilding life, from it springs joyously every good desire or plan I have, and in it lie the courage and strength needed. My love is like the morning without cloud, clear shining after rain.

My love is peace and contentment.

My love for Mother is the care of the most precious jewel I know. I have almost a mother's love for her. An adoration for the gift of life she gave me and her tears and pain.

Father's love cannot die, it grows stronger each year. He stands to me for protection against all evil and his death has taken away all fear of death.

My Lover is the one for whom I live. Each day the bond is closer and sweeter. We have each our own work, our individual self yet I think God always sees us as one being.

The love for my children! I wonder what it would be! I think I know and yet it does not seem as if I could until I knew the pain first. Perhaps this pain of unsatisfied longing brings me really the true Mother love. I cannot think of anything greater than this which fills my heart constantly. If I never know anything more, I praise God for though it is an ever constant sorrow, it makes me understand many things.

My love of God -- that is beyond words. It is joy and peace in believing, and perfect trust. He is the dear Master that I love and do not fear, who walks and talks with me. He is the Redeemer who gives me a touch of His Divinity. He is the Saviour from all death. He is the Giver of all beauty and life. He is the God I humbly worship.

Years later, having finished the entries for 1909, she turns to these entries at the back and re-reads them. Now her child is with her as she writes the end of the account of the journey towards his birth. Seeing this, she looks ahead to another journey in faith. The journal ends on the fulfillment of promises and the eventual sure knowledge of what is now seen dimly through symbols -- and yet the final word is *perhaps*.

Three years ago I wrote the last pages, and now Francis is in my arms and [is] a wee one close to my heart! Yes, I knew in part but like all knowledge of spiritual things the end is never reached. That to me is one of the surest proofs of better times to come when we shall know and understand even the love of God perhaps.
