

outdoors this summer helping in the garden and doing fixing up chores.

That was good for him and us — with Mom being highly pregnant and having a baby makes her unwieldy and not always accessible — so the garden was fairly well kept and produced well. Katriena helped with lots of the preserving, becoming very adapt. Katriena is a delight to have as helper because when she works she sings. She can sing Handel's Messiah off by heart and all sorts of songs. It keeps her happy and usually ready to smile. The younger children helped in smaller ways, making everything work smoothly.



Katriena and Roelf Kars

Before Marnix was born a lot of cleaning up and rearranging took place in the house. 15-year-old Roelf Kars (now 16) received a private corner of the house where he sleeps (deeply) and does his homework and violin lesson. He has a new teacher and is as excited as ever. He also continues to work on a dairy farm for two days a week but has a desire to be a traveller for his father — selling books. He is still a Dodge fan. It's the only vehicle which will “go on and on and on” and which can drive through “everything” (mud and snow) without getting stuck. His old Dodge still runs, but is standing in the middle of the neighbour's field in a foot of snow — the tires have a habit of depleting their air and then . . . well, then this Dodge sits still with its load of firewood way out there :-). Roelf Kars had a sad event this fall. His pretty cow friend gave birth to a beautiful little heifer calf (very exciting because she had thus far only delivered bull calves) but after a number of weeks her old body gave up and she died. It was very sad. No more hearing Roelf Kars whistle the moment he steps out the door, seeing Rolinka (the cow) prick up her ears, lift her head, and immediately lumber over to the pasture gate. We hope the calf, Rieneke, will become like her mom. Roelf Kars was supposed to get his licence on December 1st (his sixteenth birthday) but the examiner decided not to come that day, so it got bumped up a week. Then the examiner quit her job so the test got bumped up another week. Patience! Yet, Roelf Kars is working hard at his schoolwork, goes to Young People's Study Group, and enjoys having a good time.

The other three boys share a bedroom and are becoming little men. It won't take long and Hinne will join his oldest three siblings in towering over his mother. He enjoys catechism, music lessons, and . . . where is Hinne? Reading, reading, reading! Ah well, he chops wood, gets his schoolwork done, helps here, helps there, and is learning as many languages as he can stuff into his head. While Hinne was visiting a friend, a gentleman noticed his toe was bleeding quite a bit so he gave him a bandaid. That evening Hinne pulled off his sock to show me but sheepishly exclaimed, “Oh, I put the bandaid on the wrong toe!” Full of imagination he quietly and steadily goes about his business. He started bee keeping this spring and provided us with



Hinne as bandit being caught



Michael and Lodewyk
through the snow.

The other three big girls are learning and changing as well. Paulina is still a serious, dedicated, dependent daughter with quiet visions and dreams. She is doing well in her music but can't quite get the last few lessons of her math done — she stuffed so much schoolwork into too little time I think she's saturated. But, she is still desiring to get it done — done is done. Besides helping her father and mother, learning to cook, teaching her little siblings science, she is also giving piano lessons. Her days are filled to the brim.

Juliana and Maria are doing well with school work, housekeeping, and Juliana with her viola lessons. The



Maria

four string players are playing together now — wonderful (Paulina, violin; Roelf Kars, violin; Juliana, viola; Hinne, cello). Juliana has risen to the profession of author. But as she was writing, writing, writing, Hinne got the flavour and went into competition with her. now they are competing to see who can write the longest book.

Maria is doing well at school and with household chores. She likes to go to the shop and help Daddy, but best of all likes to sit in Mommy's rocker with Marnix.

And then there is dear two-year-old Hannah. Still so cute. She loves to play with Lodewyk, who is always so generous with her, or by herself. A few



Paulina and Hinne



Juliana

days ago she was once again playing church with her blanket and doll. Of course the baby gets baptized but she also had Hinne's butterfly net which she delightfully improvised into a collection bag. We sneakily watch her and can't get enough of it.

Life is busy and full. But how thankful we are for all the good gifts the Lord God has given us. Wishing you all a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

From (in Hannah's words):

Daddy (Roelof), Mommy (Theresa), Mea-na (Paulina, 17), Kars (Roelf Kars, 16), Tina (Katriena, 14), Hinne (12), Jella (Juliana, 10), Be-ah (Maria, 8), Michael (6), LodeWYK (5), Hannah (2), Marnix (5 months)