

July 13 1864

Harpsboro July 13th 1864

Liebe Frau, Ich erlaube mir Ihnen
 eine kleine Zeitspende zu machen
 durch den Verkauf eines kleinen
 Kunstwerks, das ich selbst gezeichnet
 habe. Es ist ein Bildnis eines
 Mannes, der in der Geschichte
 eine wichtige Rolle spielt. Ich
 hoffe, dass Sie es mögen und
 es für einen guten Zweck
 verwenden werden. Ich würde
 mich sehr freuen, wenn Sie
 mir davon schreiben könnten.
 Ich habe auch einige andere
 Werke, die ich verkaufen möchte,
 falls Sie daran interessiert
 sind. Bitte lassen Sie mich
 wissen, wenn Sie etwas
 bestellen möchten. Ich werde
 mich bemühen, Ihnen das Beste
 zu liefern. Mit freundlichen
 Grüßen,
 Ihr ergebener Diener,
 [Name]

Nov 17-64

Northboro Jan 17 November 1862

Liebe Eltern! Ich sag' dir ein
 Wort um mich wissen zu lassen
 das ich von Tag zu Tag besser werde
 meine Krankheit aber zum selbigen
 sie warte mir das Schlaf von den
 Knochen in einigen oder zwei
 Wochen und ich könnte jetzt mit
 meine Knochen ein gutes Geschäft
 machen, Ich wünsch' dir einen Brief
 von mich aber wegen der Post
 zwischen mir und mich selbst nicht
 Besorgnis zu sein, gestern erhalten
 meine Besorgnis für zwei Wochen
 und wenigstens vollends Leichter ist
 noch etwas stärker und nicht so
 schnell verschwinden wie ich fürchte
 Gott verzeih' es das ich nicht
 mit der Post zwischen dir und
 dir will die Gewissen beruhigen
 kann wie die Eltern

Neufreesboro Jan 27 Nov. 64
 Liebe Frau: Ich habe vom
 15 Nov sowie von vom 19ten mit
 dem Geld sehr viel erhalten, das Geld
 wurde ich jedoch nicht einmal in
 meine Bezahlung erhalten sehr viel ich
 mich im letzten Briefe bewilligt habe
 ich hoffe ich werde dankbar zu
 geben haben wenn ich sehr so wollen
 werden eingekloppt, das Geld für den
 ich gegenseitig sehr ungenügend
 wenn es geht das gewöhnlich für den
 hoch mit seiner Armen auf die
 Platz beschaffen wie ein sehr selbst
 mit allen Regiments Infanterie
 verpflichtet werden, wie haben
 jedoch keine genug Abklärungen
 für die vielen Personen. So
 kann mich sehr ich meine Person
 nach Windsor gewünscht sehr
 dann vielleicht sehr ich mich einmal
 das Glück von Haut zu lassen
 Ich werde mich jedoch nicht zu

Handwritten text in a cursive script, oriented vertically on the page. The text is mirrored across the page, suggesting it was written on one side and then the page was turned to reveal the reverse side. The script is dense and fills most of the page.

Willmeyer's letter to the
a
for

44
20
17

Jan 17-65

Marbleboro. Jan. 17 65

Liebe Eltern

Mein Brief vom 10 Januar haben
sie erhalten sowie ein Cyologium
so würde mich zu freuen daß die
Polster von Offener zuweilen gekauft
sind, denn das Polsterleben
unter der Infanterie ist sehr be-
schwerlich. Wichtigkeit ist mir
nicht, wenn sie schreiben als daß
sie sich selbst zuweilen zuweilen
Kassette besorgen und mir ab-
sicht nehmen zu verkaufen bei
Kassette, so scheint als ob eine
Kassette an der Handlung auch
gesehen soll dann in der Infanterie
Kassette findet der Läufer zu weilen
Lieber. Ich befinde mich in einem
Lieber Brief, daß ich bald von
Mittwoch nach New York, ich
wünsche daß sie das ich mir ein
Kassette daß Namen anzuhalten?



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Marbleboro March
1865

Lieber Herr,
 Gestern empfing
 ich ein wertvolles Brief
 von ihm, wie von ihm
 ich habe gesehrt, dass man wissen sollte
 ich bräuhete die von ihm über
 nicht indem ich sollte das was
 Brief wurde mich zu kommen. Ich
 habe alle in einem Brief von John
 Schmitt so will mich über
 Kisten in 6 Wochen. Das was man
 Landstand unterwirft so wird ich mich
 nicht zu wissen noch zu haben denn
 man haben die die letzten 6 Monate
 keine begünstigung bekommen, ich habe
 noch etwas mehr, sollten man nicht
 mich nicht sollte jetzt ohne begünstigung
 haben so bräuhete ich deshalb
 so wünscht mich sehr herzlich
 Jakob Duff.

1865-1865



The U. S. CHRISTIAN COMMISSION
sends this sheet as a messenger between the soldier
and his home. Let it hasten to those who wait for
tidings.

Murfreesboro den 8 ten Juni 1865
 Liebe Eltern! Mein Brief vom 15ten
 Mai habe ich erhalten und wie ich
 versprochen schon lange beantwortet
 haben wenn ich nicht zu krank ge-
 wesen wären, da ich jetzt wieder
 bin sehr gesund bin so will ich
 euch für die vielen Zeilen die mir zu
 schreiben die ich dankbar von der
 Krankheil des Johannes meist in die
 Zeit ein wenig lange bis ich wieder
 von euch hören wie es mit ihm steht
 Ich hoffe ich bald ein Brief von euch
 erhalten werde. Ich werde wenn ich
 wieder völlig gesund bin auch die
 Briefe von Johannes, Esmerald und die
 Johannes und Christian für euch beant-
 werten, der Eliza kommt ich sperre
 auf ich würde gerne wissen wenn
 ich in dem Brief erhalten werde
 wie es für die Eltern was sehr lieblich

Murfreesboro, May 29, 1864

Dear Parents,

Again I take up my pen to write you a few lines, since I will send 10 dollars again, which you may use if you need them, if not, keep them in the house until you've received 40 dollars, then lend them out. I will send the other 20 dollars in the next two letters which will follow soon. The reason I won't send it all at once is that if one letter gets lost, all the money won't be lost.

Write to let me know where Johannes Schmied and Georg Senn are, and if any men from Ashford signed on with the 100 day soldiers. I'm wondering where the many soldiers are coming from who zoom by here on the train. The cars are sometimes full, with many others riding on top. Recently a trap was set for them by the rebels (guerrillas) thirty miles from here, but before the train got there, an old horse stepped on the charge and was blown up. The tracks were blasted several rods into the air, and when the train arrived in the middle of the night it ran off the track.

The Tischhausers asked me to write to them often, but since I have enough room here to write them a few lines, I'd like to tell them: I received your letter and was happy to read it, and I'd like to hear more from you. I have no news, so I know nothing to write. Christian would have enjoyed being at our last target practice, although we didn't hit the target. These guns make a lot of noise and I was sent two miles out to keep the people out of the range of the guns.

I greet you all,

Jakob Vetsch

Murfreesboro, July 13, 1864

Dear Parents,

I take up my pen to write you a few lines. Last Monday we received our pay, so I'll be sending you several 5 dollar bills which I will send in separate letters. I'm still healthy, as are most of my buddies, since we have all the blackberries we can eat. They're bigger here than at home. Now I'd like to ask you to please write more next time, for the reading of letters and newspapers is what helps the soldier pass the time. Lately I've been receiving the American Messenger, from where I do not know. Please don't put your letters in the Apologist anymore, it's supposed to be the law again. Send the letters separately.

I won't be sending a picture yet, since the artist can't take them now because of the heat which has everyone stuck in their sweat. Tell me in your next letter where Johannes Schmied is, I read in an English newspaper that the 2nd Wisconsin returned home, and found John Smith among the names, but I don't know if it's our neighbor or not. If he's home I'd like to make a friendly request that he might write me a few lines. I'd also like to hear from Agatha and her husband.

The 38th is supposed to have put up a good fight in the last battle. Write and tell me what it looks like at home with the fruit, it's supposed to have rained in several places in Wisconsin. A few lines from Johannes and Ulrich would make me happy, also a few words from Jakob Vetsch.

Greetings to all my friends who inquire about me.

Greetings to you all,

Jakob Vetsch

Ashford, July 16th, 1964

Dear Son,

We received your letter from the 2nd of this month along with the picture intact on the 9th. The men on the picture must have gotten the scent of the enemy, for they appear to be trying hard to give him a fitting welcome. I was very glad to hear that you are healthy and well once again after you went through an attack. As far as the weather is concerned we've seen considerable improvement, especially since we've had some fruitful rains, the fruit seems to have recuperated pretty well, those who live near the water will have a pretty good harvest, but those who have drier land like us will get little, although our harvest should be better than we had thought. We wrote to the Kupferschmieds to inquire if we should again, with following conditions, come to assist them with the harvest or not, and they sent a reply that we should come. I'll receive 10, Johannes 12 and Ulrich 8 Schillings per day, Andreas Licher will go with us, too. Our son-in-law Weber died in a camp hospital after not quite two months of his second tour of duty, and lies buried there. For tomorrow we were invited to attend a memorial service for him in Empire, but we received orders today not to come, the Webers reconsidered and now want to have Heinrich shipped back from the South to be buried in Empire. We'll be notified when the burial is to take place.

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Last Monday Messerschmid's Schlegel was buried, after he'd been ill for 9 months. In conclusion we send you our friendliest greetings, and commend you to God and His mercy and remain your loving parents and siblings.

Your father, Caspar Vetsch

The one farthest in the back of the picture we recognized as you. Johannes wants to know what your job is with the cannons. I'll also include the address of John Schmidt.

Murfreesboro, August 7, 1864

Dear Parents,

I received your letter of July 28, however, the Apologists haven't arrived yet, newspapers take longer. I'm glad to hear that you received my letters with the money, I'm also happy that the fruit looks better than I had anticipated, my health is still excellent, we lie like cats under a warm stove here, except when the urge to rob hits us, then we sneak by the posted guards into the countryside to steal corn and apples from the traitorous unionists, who have sworn loyalty to the cause of the Union, but who support the rebels in every way. It would make me happy to be able to have a look into Wisconsin right now, especially of Foxlake, for I haven't forgotten the enjoyable time I spent there with my buddies last year. As concerns the war, I don't have anything new to report. So far our army has always been victorious, however it is looking darker in the North now, where the traitors are trying to topple the government. I hope they'll get their just rewards. Please tell me in your next letters how the Wasserschmieds in Fond du Lac are doing, and how Agatha is getting along since her husband died. I'd like to have a picture of her. I want to close in hopes that this letter finds you as healthy as it leaves me. Greet all those for me who ask about me.

Greetings from your son,

Jakob Vetsch

Since I didn't bring Kaspar and Burkhard any candy from Fond du Lac for their pennies I will return their money in this letter along with a cannon.

Murfreesboro, Nov. 17, 1864

Dear Parents,

I take up the pen to let you know that I am improving from day to day. My illness was a feverish one, it robbed the meat off my bones in less than two weeks and I could do a good business with my bones right now. I had hoped for a letter from you, but in vain, the mail between me and you appears to be a snailmail. Yesterday we received pay for two months as well as 40 dollars bounty pay. I'll send some to you, but not spaced as closely together as before, because the postal service between here and Louisville is very unsafe right now, the rebels are swarming around like bees.

I'm wondering what you think of the movements of General Sherman, we can't imagine what he has in mind. The weather has changed here, we're getting much rain, but it isn't cold. You have snow as I've heard, so I wouldn't want to trade places with you. What do you think of the rebellion? It's our opinion that it will be quelled within 6 months, if not, we declare our government not worth a cent, for it has the means to put down the rebellion - our battle-ready troops are in the field...

I will close in hopes that this letter finds you healthy. Greetings to you all, as well as to our neighbor Senn.

Jakob Vetsch

Murfreesboro, Nov. 27, 1864

Dear Parents,

I received your letter of Nov. 15, as well as the one of Nov. 19th with the money. However, I don't need the money anymore, since I received my pay as I told you in my last letter. I hope you received that letter since I enclosed 10 dollars. Sending money is very unsafe right now, because there is a rumor going around that Hood and his army are marching toward this place. As a result we've been reinforced with several regiments of infantry, but we have hardly enough gunners to man the many cannons. I'm pleased that you're considering heading for Minnesota, because maybe I'll be lucky enough someday to see that state myself. However, I advise you not to go too far north, we have a regiment of Indian hunters here, namely the 8th Minnesota, and one of them said that he would much rather be in the South than in his own state chasing Indians.

I want to close in hopes that this letter finds you healthy. Say 'Hello' to all my friends in Ashford, as well as Agatha if you have the opportunity.

I greet you all,

J. V.

Murfreesboro, Dec. 30, 1864

Dear Parents, --

I received your letter of Dec. 9th. You said in it that you had sent me one earlier, that one I did not receive and the cause of that is probably old man Hood. The self same also insulted us for a while by destroying our breadline. It's been restored, though, and we now receive our hardtack again, after we had to make do with quarter rations of Welsh cornmeal for 15 days. Anyone with money didn't need to suffer hunger pangs, however. Hood sent in Forest with his forces to find out our strength. He came along with his staff one forenoon and placed himself in front of our eyes about a mile from here and watched us through his field glasses. His fortifications didn't last long, though, the apples which we sent his way weren't to his liking. Soon after, he sent his outposts toward the fort, but these were beaten back by our cavalry. Then he sent his cavalry against ours, we in turn sent over several pills which had their desired effect. The next day our infantry marched out and attacked Forest's forces, stormed their battlements and took two of their cannons. You will have read of the other battles in Tennessee in the Apologist, I'd like to read it, too.

As far as the money is concerned, you can use it to buy land, but be careful what you buy, I, for one, don't want any land in Wisconsin, because it's already cold enough here. Several times already I've almost frozen to death on the watch. We don't have any snow yet.

The people are getting tired of war just at a time when they should be hurrying to the aid of the government in order to give the ever-weakening rebellion the final blow. Granted, it's no small thing to leave one's beloved home in order to expose oneself to the dangers of war, for although he's not always in the midst of battle, the soldier is nevertheless always in danger of losing his life, namely to the illnesses which are endemic to the sunny South. I got my illness from constant exposure to dampness, for our old tent leaked like a sieve. We built a house with our own money, which only amounted to 35 cents each, though, plus our labor, so you can just imagine how big it is, we five are the owners until we get our marching orders.

We'll soon get paid again, if the paymaster doesn't get killed on his way here. Write to let me know how much wheat you received, if you didn't get enough for a year, you should buy a store for the winter as soon as I send money, for one never knows how much it will cost during the winter. When you next write I would like to hear about Kasper Biker as well as Andreas, also how the Tischhausers in Fondulac are doing.

Say 'Hello' to everyone who asks about me.

Greetings from your son,

Jakob

Murfreesboro, Jan. 17, 1965

Dear Parents,

I received your letter of Jan. 10th, as well as the Apologists. I was happy to hear that the soldiers from Ashford have returned, because the life of an infantry soldier is very hard. I don't know of any news to tell you, except that the trains are transporting troops to Nashville, reportedly to reinforce Sherman at Savannah. It seems as though the war is really going strong along the coast because the enemy is finding too many Yankees in the Cumberland Army. You mentioned in your last letter that you'll soon be leaving Wisconsin, and I would like you to send me the address of the new place in the last letter you plan to send from Ashford. I'd like to remind Agatha of the picture she promised to send. If I weren't so lazy I would write to her. I'd like to know if Agatha is planning to go with you. The 8th Battery will probably stay here until next spring, because our officers appear as dumb as oxen when it comes time for inspection and they really aren't able to make any decisions. If the draft hits Johannes, tell him to sit on a horse.

Say 'Hello' to John Schmidt for me and tell him that I'd like a picture of him. I greet you all.

Jakob Vetsch

Murfreesboro, March 21, 1865

Dear Parents,

Yesterday I received the third letter you've sent to me from Minnesota. The first one I answered, the second one I didn't because I was hoping the first one would be forwarded to you. Last week I had a letter from John Schmidt, he wants to travel to Nebraska in six weeks. As far as your land dealings are concerned, I don't know what to tell you nor how to help you, for we haven't received any pay for the last six months. I still have a little money but if we go without pay for another half year I will need it.

Sincere greetings to you all,

Jakob Vetsch

Murfreesboro, May 5, 1865

Dear Parents,

I received your letter of April 24th. I was happy to hear that you're all well, my health is pretty good, but time goes by very slowly for us soldiers now that the war is almost over. We were greatly saddened by the news of the assassination of the President, only two days earlier the great cannons declared the surrender of General Lee and his army. At first we didn't want to believe the news of Abraham's death, but the thunder of a cannon at dawn and the flag flying at halfmast soon convinced us of the gruesome truth.

Yesterday I received a letter from Johannes Ender, he is well but doesn't like the life of a soldier nearly as well as the life of a farmer. He's hoping that we soldiers will soon be able to return home. I think the outlook is pretty good for him. Our general tells us that we'll soon have to leave this place, we don't know where we're going next, many think it will be home, others think it might be Texas. Time will tell. I want to close for now.

With sincere greetings,

Jakob Vetsch

Murfreesboro, June 8, 1965

Dear Parents,

I received your letter of May 15th, and would have answered it long ago if I hadn't been too sick. Since I'm almost back on my feet now, I will try to write a few lines to you. The news of Johannes' illness makes the time seem quite long to me before I hear from you again to find out how he's doing. I hope that I'll soon be receiving another letter from you. When I'm back in good health I will also answer the letters from Johannes Schmidt and Johannes and Christian Enders. You can write Agatha that I'm able to crawl around again when this letter arrives. Enders' sons are probably back home by now, I read in a newspaper that all the one-year soldiers were about to be mustered out. There's no danger of that happening to us yet, though, for our battery has the title Veteran's Battery. You can see by that that you needn't expect to see me any time soon. It could be the case though that we might be home either in the fall or next spring. I only wish that the paymaster would make an appearance. The government owes me ten months' pay come July 1st. I want to close for now.

Sincere greetings to you all,

Jakob Vetsch

Greet the Enders for me and all those who inquire about me.

Murfreesboro, June 12, 1865

Dear Parents,

I received your letter from the 3rd and was glad to hear that Johannes has recuperated from his illness. Today I returned to my battery from the field hospital. I'm not strong yet, but believe I can handle my assigned duties. We'll soon have better times since the blackberries will soon be ripe. It's uncommonly warm and dry here. If we don't leave here later this year I will be coming home on leave in the winter after we get paid, for I would love to feast on potatoes once again.

I don't know any news so I will close.

Yours sincerely,

Jakob Vetsch

Camp Washburn, August 10, 1865

Dear Parents,

I take up the pen to write you a few lines as promised in my last letter. You might wonder what we are doing here in Milwaukee. I'd like to say nothing but to argue and fight with our captain, for he doesn't want to release us from service although he received orders long ago to discharge us. Several in the battery are so furious with him that they will kill him as soon as he shows himself in the street. For that reason I can't tell you what's going to become of us. We have better food here than in the state of Tennessee, because we only need half of the bread rations we receive, the other half we trade for potatoes. As for me, I have to tell you that I'm not completely well, but I hope to be able to crawl around until we're discharged.

I'll close in hopes that you'll soon send me a reply.

Greetings to you, J. V.

Address your letters to Camp Washburn, Milwaukee, Wis.