

Friedrich A Meissner Letters

Compiled by Loren P. Meissner

Preface: What have we here?

My great-grandfather, Friedrich Adolf Meißner, was born December 27, 1804 at Schönbach near Löbau in the Saxon Oberlausitz hill country east of Dresden. His grandfather, Christian Friedrich Meichsner, had been born in 1721 at Johanngeorgenstadt, a town in the “ore mountains” (*Erzgebirge*) of southeastern Saxony that had been founded by his ancestors in 1654. Christian Friedrich Meichsner left Johanngeorgenstadt and went to school in Leipzig, then at about age 19 to a school in Bautzen, and at about 23 to the University of Leipzig and on to Wittenberg. Along the way, he changed the spelling of his name to Meißner. At the age of 31 he was appointed as Lutheran minister at Schönbach, a post that he retained for almost 50 years. During his tenure the present church building was constructed or extensively remodeled. Upon his death in 1802, Christian Friedrich Meißner was succeeded as minister at Schönbach by his son Ernst, who died about 15 years later. Ernst Friedrich Meißner had three sons: Friedrich Adolph (who wrote these letters), Ernst Friedrich (who died at about 17 years of age), and Karl Friedrich (who participated in the correspondence recorded here). After their father died, the three sons (whose ages were then about 12, 10, and 8) were cared for by their mother’s brother, Karl August Seidel, who was gardener for the court of Saxony in Dresden. Friedrich learned about gardening from his uncle, and had some formal agricultural training beginning at about age 16 (see <T167> below).

At about age 19, Friedrich A. Meißner went to America for a short time but returned to Hamburg, and when he was about 22 years old (in 1826 or 1827) he married Elise von Mithofen. They had a daughter, Karoline Marie Eleanore (b. 12 Nov 1826)

On 23 Feb 1838, a son (her fourth child) was born to one Doris Sennewald, who seems to have been a close friend of F.A.M., and who was perhaps his mistress. F.A.M. may have been the father of this child, Georg Heinrich Sennewald or Meissner. At this time, Karoline was 11 years old.

In 1843, with the help of Georg Gerstenberg and others, F.A.M. built a large brick house in Kummerfeld near Hamburg, which is still standing. In September 1845 he left Hamburg for America, and soon afterward his daughter Karoline married Georg Gerstenberg.

Doris Sennewald, now widowed, accompanied F.A.M. to America along with her four children, and all of them were always called Meissner in the U.S. (but Doris was “Mrs. Sennewald” in letters to Karoline). The family lived for almost two years on a farm in New York and then moved to Cape Cod and finally to Florida, where Doris died in 1853. The three older children left, but in 1856 Georg Heinrich (known as Henry, now 18 years old) moved with F.A.M. to Wisconsin. Henry did not stay long with F.A.M. Later he lost a leg in the Civil War, returned to Wisconsin for a short time, and then moved to Iowa and eventually farther west.

In June 1858, F.A.M. married Eva Dorothea Krauss (or Krauß), a 21-year-old German girl who had come to America with her parents and her brother Georg Heinrich (later called George Henry Crouse) about 1847. F.A.M. and Eva lived on the homestead near Mount Pisgah (later Cashton), Wisconsin, for the rest of their lives, and raised four sons and one daughter. Three sons, Ernest (b. 1859), Adolph (b. 1861), and August (b. 1866) married and had large families. Dorathea (b. 1863) and Carl (b. 1864) never married. The two oldest boys moved to the West Coast before 1890; August was married in 1895 but remained in Wisconsin. F.A.M. died in 1899 and Eva in 1926. Carl died in Wisconsin in 1933, Adolph died in Oklahoma in 1939, and Ernest died in Oregon in 1940.

Daughter Dora (Dorathea) remained on the farm until her death in 1946. August (the last surviving child) sold the farm, reserving the plot where F.A.M., Eva, Carl, and Dora are buried. August and his wife Lena brought a box of papers from the farm, mostly written by FAM or his wife Eva. After August died in 1952, Lena kept the box for some time, and then discarded it. A neighbor, Mrs. Constance Stephen of Viroqua WI, salvaged the box. I obtained it from Mrs. Stephen in June 1958.

Some of the material was in diary form, but the most valuable by far consisted of several books that contain copies of letters written by FAM from about 1847 until his death in 1899. Much of the material is in German, in old-style script handwriting. I was fortunate to obtain the services of a well-qualified translator, Mrs. Martina Camphäusen of Riverside. Mrs. Camphäusen was born in Germany, and had experience in

archival work before she married an American soldier stationed there. In 1958, Mr. Camphäusen was a student at the University of California, Riverside.

Martina Camphäusen made a rough but generally accurate translation of the books of letters, and of some loose letters that were in the box as well. Her English language proficiency was quite adequate but, since I was paying her by the hour, we agreed that she should attempt only a quick translation with no attempt to polish the English text. In the following transcription, I have corrected a few of the most obvious translation errors but in the earlier parts I have made no attempt to eliminate the vestiges of German word order.

In March 1961, at the suggestion of Mrs. Stephen, I donated the box of papers to the Wisconsin State Historical Society. I also loaned the translations to the Society. The original papers, along with microfilms of the translations, as well as some other records (not donated by me) of FAM's public service in Wisconsin as Postmaster and Justice of the Peace, are now filed at the La Crosse Research Center of the University of Wisconsin.

The purpose of the present transcription is to provide better access to the letters that were written in German and translated by Mrs. Camphäusen. In addition, some excerpts from the English language letters recorded in the same books, and some loose letters received by F.A.M. that do not appear in the books, are included here for continuity.

Here numbers in brackets <T123> refer to page numbers in Martina Camphäusen's translation. In case of any question concerning the present transcription, these numbers may be used to identify the corresponding microfilmed translation pages at La Crosse Research Center. Both the translated German letters and the letters written in English can be further referred back to the original bound volumes at La Crosse Research Center. Unless labeled "[Loose letter]" all letters appear in these hand-bound books of FAM letter copies.

—Loren P. Meissner Kensington, California 1999

FAM Letter Copies, Book 1: Apr. 1843 to Sep. 1865

Contract: H. Mohr, F.A.M., etc.

<T372> [Loose document.].

17 April 1843.

Under today's date the following building contract has been decided—carefully planned—between the gardener F.A.M. and the Master Mason Heinrich Mohr.

The mason obliges himself to construct the building according to a sketch or directions of the builder, and to do all the necessary work, and to be so far ready with this matter by Johannis [midsummer] of this year (1843) that the building can be moved into. The cellar and the "Wistenkuhle" are supposed to be ready latest in two weeks after 'Date', and the surrounding walls in four weeks after the signing of this contract.

<T373> F.A. Meissner obligates himself to pay to the Mason Mohr for the work done, to pay three [M?] four {SS?}, in writing: Three Mark four [SS?] for each 1000 of red or loam stones used, for which Mr. Mohr also agrees to take over the worker's work, the preparing of the loam and chalk as well as cleaning and putting them in. Meissner has to buy all materials, and has to have them any time ready for use on the place.

Mr. Mohr can use the logs lying on the building ground for the necessary scaffolds, but only in case these won't be damaged thereby and made worthless for their original purpose.

Meissner does the construction of the basement according to Mr. Mohr's instructions, and Mr. Mohr makes him responsible for at least one year after the building is finished that the house won't have any tears or the place breaks down.

When the building is put up Meissner will pay Mr. Mohr half of the amount of the accomplished mason work, the other half is paid after all masonic works are finished on time and according to contract, including cleaning and jointing.

Michaelis of this year is the latest date when all mason works are to be finished, and the building is to be delivered. If this is not the case, the builder is entitled to have the building finished at Mr. Mohr's expense.

So done in Kummerfeld, April 17, 1843.

H. Mohr, Master Mason.

F.A. Meissner, Joachim Huijldorn, Georg Gerstenberg.

1 [M?] received on June 6 of this year. M. Mohr.

On 23 Oct. 40 [SS?] paid according to receipt.

On March 25th, 30 [SS?] received. Mohr.

According to agreement the remainder was paid by two loads of peat.

[LPM Note: This house was occupied by FAM, and later by his daughter Karoline who married Georg Gerstenberg. The house was still standing in Kummerfeld and was occupied by descendants of Karoline when Loren Meissner Jr. visited there about 1974.].

From: G.F. Meissner; To: F.A.M.

<T370> [Loose letter. FAM immigrated to America in 1845, probably after receiving this letter in Kummerfeld.].

From Uncle G.F. Meissner, Pirna, July 1, 1845.

To:Friedrich Adolph Meissner, Kummerfeld über Hamburg near Pinneberg,; Franco Hamburg.

Dear Nephew. It was known to me, that my brother Ernest Friedrich Meissner, who was minister in Schönbach, left two sons behind, also that you both are supposed to be in America, but now I heard from my niece Zimmermann in Spitzkümmersdorf, that you are married in Kummerfeld, and your brother is working as a gardener near Hamburg. As you both never let anything hear about you, I would like to know now how you both are in every regard.

From us sisters and brothers Wilhelm Friedrich is still alive and the Pilliteno Cären [Is this an official position?—LPM] in Dresden, and also the widow Hg. Unruh lives now in Schneeberg. August Friedrich Meissner went to Teplitz several years ago to a cure to the 'Bad' [hot springs or spa], and died there of Cholera. My wife died already three years ago. I am alone, and have no children. Also I am no longer young, as I started my 77th year on the last Johannis [midsummer] day, but otherwise I am as well as if I were 30 years old. The niece [Karoline Christiane] Zimmermann must be regretted. She made a bad choice in her marriage. Her husband is a lazy, slovenly guy. My brother Karl Friedrich has died in Itterschen near Hamburg. He left a son who studied theology. He is supposed to live in Hamburg. Did you hear anything from him? Now I wish from my heart that you and your brother are doing well.

I recommend myself to you and your wife (which I don't know), and remain your.

Uncle Friedrich Gotthelf Meissner, who loves you.

Pirna, July 1, 1845.

From: F.A.M.; To: Rupert Day.

[First letter in book] <Written in English.> Mr. Rupert Day, Woodwardville, Essex Co., N.Y.

West Barnstable Jan 17, 1847.

I am waiting for som letters from Germane who will be directet to Woodwardville, please tell the postmaster to send him to West Barnstable Mass wher i living now. I have a very good farm of 50 achers all level no stones, and good soil, i have a good pair oxen and four excellent cows. I planted two acres corn one acre Potatoes and seedet three acres buckwheat, there is her a first rate market every produce sells for cash, hay for 15\$ at the barn, butter 25 cts and so vegetabilien and everything. Whe living close on the road where the stage from Boston passe four times a day.

As we like the country so mutch we dont like the people as well as to Woodwardville and talken oft from you and all our friends there please tell him all our best respect. I hope you will give me a answer lat me know how it goes there is anny body commen to Mr. Müllers farm, if it is a german tell me his name and contry. Is Andrew Stivens gone?

The season is very mutch back her, i hope you and your family all well, my best respect to your father the old working man.

Agreement: Peter O. Müller and F.A.M.

<T382> [Loose document.].

12 April 1843.

The rental contract between Peter O. Müller in New York and F.A. Meissner in Woodwardsville, Essex County, N.Y. dated Nov. 5, 1845, has been terminated under the following conditions as of today:

F.A. Meissner returns the rented farm, which is in Essex [County], with the improvements, stocks, and inventory listed in Attachment A, to Peter O. Müller and agrees to make no further demands to Peter O. Müller other than those that can be deducted from the said rental contract.

Peter O. Müller receives the furniture as well as the improvements, stocks, and inventory listed in Attachment A, which F.A. Meissner had rented, and declares hereby to have received his assets of \$408.48 according to Attachment B, with interest. He receipts over the full amount and loses all demands to F.A. Meissner that could be deducted from the said rental contract.

The farm has to be vacated by F.A. Meissner by May 1, but has to be managed until this date with unselfish care for Mr. Peter O. Müller's interest.

Attachment A:

About three acres of cultivated land, in which 100 loads of dung were put in the year 1846.

An improved cow stable, which was also enclosed by a stone wall.

5,000 cubic feet of hay from which until May 1 the cattle will be fed.

4 tons of straw, more or less, some of which will be spread until May 1.

1 stack clover seeds, 50 bushels more or less.

All things there, 100 loads more or less.

Two cows; one black bull, two black ... [?]; three sheep; 18 hens & one cock; one dog and two cats.

One sled and box; one plow and two blades; one harrow; one harness; two yokes; two halters; one stirring wheel; one butt with ... [?]; one barn ladder; two flails; one stone fork; one bush ... [?]; four rakes; one basket for carrying things; five sacks.

<T383> One hay tree; two heuray [harrow?]; two hay forks; one scythe; one sickle; one grindstone; one honey wagon; two brushes; one curry comb; three curry combs for the cow; one rope; three pig bowls; one ... [?]; one iron rake; two potato rakes; four sowing boxes; one stretcher; one garden ... [?]; one axe; one hatchet; one saw; one saw stand; one ... [?]; three ropes; one iron ... [?]; one chisel; one drill; two nail drills; one hole drill; one measuring stick; one drilling bench; one ... [?]; one grindstone with two ... [?]; three boxes of iron nails; one milk pail; eight milk cans; one milking stool; one cream spoon; one ... [?]; three bill books.

One table; seven chairs; three benches; one washstand & bench; one washbowl; three meat tons [?]; four meat bowls; four ... [?]; eight bottles; one copper teakettle; two metal scales; two metal pots; one metal pan; one basket; one stovepipe five yards long; one big boiler; one water pail; four beds; two mousetraps.

Attachment B:

1845: Nov. 5: beer [?] \$150; Nov. 16: one [?] \$9; Febr. 32 [1846?] 32 tons of hay, Micks [?].

1846: Jan 16: hay straw micks [?] \$42.76; April 6: {?} \$150; April 12: Radcliff \$12.67; Dec. 30: from the same \$25.05.

1847: March 13, wood to 24,000 shingles: \$3

New York, April 12, 1847, \$408.48

F.A. Meissner; Mr. Peter O. Müller

From: Doris Sennewald; To: F.A.M.

<T371> [Loose letter. After living for "one summer and two winters" in upstate New York, FAM went to make arrangements for moving to Mass. William, the oldest son of Doris, went with him.]

From "Doris Meissner," Johanna Friedericka Doris Runtzler Sennewald, b. abt 1812? To: Mr. F.A. Meissner, care of Mr. Walter, n. 154 Wall St., New York City. Care of W. Peter Muller, Importing Merchant, William Street, N.J.

Woodwardville, April 16, 1847.

Dear sweet, good Father. In my thoughts I often give you a kiss, and more than one. If I say 100, I don't say a lie. Only the thought of embracing you soon in my arms can soothe my sorrow. So far I was unable to sleep yet any night in peace, because I cannot have you in my arms. It is a great reassurance for me to know you are all healthy and happy. My dear good Papa, the children, and I speak the whole day of you. Now you must know that I wrote every day something to you, dear sweet man. Boredom or impatience or—I don't know how to name it—force me every day to write, but maybe if I would know how you are I would not be so uncertain. You cannot imagine what is always spoken here, one says we'll go to N.Y., the other: "We are ready for Europe.."

The weather is very changeable: Tuesday, the 6th: snow, hail, and rain. Friday, the 9th: bright sunshine. Saturday, 10th: awful snowstorm, so vehement, that we always think the house breaks down. Sunday, the 11th: it froze very hard, and around noon the sun came out. I have to tell you about our domestic life: we get up at five in the morning, feed the cows, Henry brushes the calves, and I do the same with the cows. My chickens are lazy, sometimes one, two, five eggs is the most we get.

Mr. Tortsch offered me his chickens; he sold already his cows, calves, and oxen.

On the 12th: we got again snow, and had to dig our way out to get to the stables. On the 13th: hard frost. Sun around noon which thawed a little bit. <T372> On the 14th: beautiful sunshine. Around four or five o'clock in the morning Trina got a cow [heifer—LPM] calf. We cleaned out the stable, and tied it there. I nearly entirely forgot that our little pig died on the 13th in the morning. All our care was in vain. It was all well till Sunday. When I called for it, it came running at once. Monday morning its legs were stiff, and so it was unable to walk any more.

Dear sweet Papa! You maybe wonder over my mixture. When I get impatient with my work I sit down and write a few lines, in order to talk to you for a few moments.

On the 15th: hard frost, also on the 16th. This morning old Mr. Day visited us, and said he could not remember in his 73 years that there was ever snow at this time of the year as now.

My dear good Papa. I received your letter on the 16th. You write that they want to have us all. That is sure good, but I think you will know best how it is there, and whether it will be best for us, to get land or not. If you won't get any it might be as well as good. Do what you think best. Maybe we can plant potatoes.

Give William the regards of us all. The children greet and kiss you. You wrote to kiss the children from you. I did it but your Henry did not want to. I am so happy that you are well—if I could only believe it. We are—God be thanked—also all well, only the food won't taste right to me.

Well, Papa, farewell, and don't forget to love your Doris.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

<T1> To:Mr. Christian Schmidt, Lower Red Hook, Dutchess Co, and N.Y.

West Barnstable, May 27, 1847.

Dear friend. You must not be mad at me, that I did not write yet to you about our new home, or better, "working-place," (as we are here on this earth to work. One has to work his whole life in order to live, until everything is finally over. When I was still at home I made plans and plans, but now I see only the little success, that arose from them.)

We arrived here finally May 15 after a long and hard journey, and had—as you can imagine—a lot to work. We have about two acres wheat, one acre planted with potatoes, and nine acres with different kinds of lentils sowed on them.

I am very satisfied with the farm, and it is the best in the whole neighborhood. Altogether there are about 50 acres, 16 of which are meadows bordering the garden. They are divided into parts with three to five acres each. The soil is mostly loam without any stones. In the distance—from a low sand hill one can see the ships in the ocean going by, and the stage from Boston passes by our garden four times a day. I have two good oxen and four wonderful cows. The prices are excellent here; butter costs 21 to 28 cents per lb., hay \$15 per ton, and so do potatoes and vegetables. Otherwise the region is very poor and has much in common with the "Lüneburger Heide" (Lunenburg Heath). It does not even produce enough corn [grain?—LPM] for

their own need—and corn is about the only thing which is raised here. The people here are over smart, and at the same time are so stupid. When I arrived here I was overwhelmed by their advice and good tips, and now they nearly ruin my field and run out there all the time in order to see my wheat. But the greatest surprise of all is to them the fact, that my wife is working with me on the fields. The owner of our farm is the worst of all the <T2> bad people. He would bite his little finger off for money's sake, and he cheats where and whom he can, as I am told by people. He is right now in New York, and I hope he will not be around here too much.

In case you should once ever have difficulties with Mr. Radcliff (one never knows, you know!), our house is always open to you. You can take the railroad from Hudson to Boston. There you only have to cross the street and go to the 'Old Colony Railroad', and take a ticket to Sandwich. From there you can travel by the stage to our door.

Please give my regards to Mr. Radcliff, and tell him that I often thought of him when I thought of the high cost of living, and I was glad for him that he was so successful.

My wife and children send their regards also, and we all would be very happy if you could once come to us.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg.

West Barnstable, Mass, August 1st, 1847.

I have received your letter, which I longed to see with impatience, and I saw from it that you went along with the fashion and got married. May your choice be a happy one.—I had always believed that a girl like Lina Meissner with such a beautiful house and business as I left to you, would get a husband with some money. Diligence and good will are not always sufficient. Your debts would have been paid up, and you would have had a carefree life. And your father would still have the hope of ever getting some land of his own and spend there his old days instead of always having to work for <T3> strange people. As easy as it is here to acquire land, one still needs always cash for it, and without money one can do nothing. I have changed my home this spring, and moved 400 miles closer to you. I only cultivate half of my farm. It is situated very near the ocean, and from a sand hill we can watch the ships go by in the distance.

We had a very bad time this spring: one box seed cost [?], and one box potatoes \$1. I know very well that I owe Mr. Gatiens nothing, also I paid off Paul Schlüter, but I cannot remember Heinrich Schlüter any more. Through the change of my situation the amount of money I want of you has changed also. For this reason I enclose some lists, but you have to send it at any rate still this fall or else it will arrive too late. As I wrote you earlier—you have to send it to New York, from where I am going to have it picked up. At the same time you have to write me a letter, and tell me where to you sent it. In case a ship should go from Hamburg to Boston, you can send it with this one, as it would be much closer to me.

I wish you and your husband a happy life.

With greetings, Your Father.

I hope my letter may reach you while you are still well and healthy. I nearly passed away during the last hard heat wave. I have already mowed nine acres and have still to mow 11 acres of wheat, while I had to mow in Kummerfeld not even a small meadow myself.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

<T4> To:Mr. Christian Schmidt—Lower Red Hook, Dutchess Co, N.Y.

West Barnstable, Dec. 3, 1847.

You promised in your last letter to write to me again, as soon you would have received news from your mother. You must not yet have had this joy, as so far I have not heard from you again. We enjoyed hearing of the pleasure which your lover's letter caused, and we wish you from deep in our hearts that you may have the luck of embracing your lover 'in person.'

So far the work was still always urgent, so that I often thought and sometimes spoke of you, but did not get around to write to you.

Besides me and my family, a Scotsman and a Dutchman are the only friends around here. The Scotsman has a young wife and no children yet, but expecting daily a newcomer. He has been a manager in his

homeland. My boss brought him here last winter from New York, but they went along only for a month. He worked as a day laborer through summer, and now in the winter he got a very comfortable job with a rich widow, where he receives \$12-1/2 dollars per month plus food. The Dutchman with his wife and little girl works for a Finn, who picked him up from the New York poorhouse last spring. He gives him food and 100 dollars, what is enough for the first year, as they speak no word English. Next year they will be able to get at least 50 dollars more.

You better hurry up and get yourself a wife. So you can start your own business, and you don't have to slave as you do now.

We have earned this summer not more but our food. This will you not surprise too much as you know how many mouths I have to feed, and we arrived only March 15th here. Everything I sowed and planted thrived quite well, only my potatoes were nearly all spoilt. I have sowed this autumn four acres barley and one acre wheat, and I hope to have some save money next year.

<T5> I could be satisfied with my present position if it would not be for the owner of the farm. He is such a wretched fellow, a hungry wolf in sheep skin, who always sneaks around and waits for an opportunity, but so far he could not find anything wrong yet.

We are all still well, and hope to hear soon the same from you.

Best wishes to you from my wife and children. F.A.M.

From: Doris Sennewald; To: Mr. Merkel.

To Mr. Master Weaver Merkel, Foreman in the Workhouse, Braunstraße 44 in Hamburg.

West Barnstable, Mass., Jan 1848.

[from Doris Sennewald aka Mrs. F.A. Meissner].

Dear Mr. M. As we still think so often of you and your dear wife, and talk about you, we cannot believe that you have already entirely forgotten about us, and we want to ask you through this letter to let us please know all about you. Are you still well? How are Franz, Ernst, Franziska, and Heinrich, and all the others, which arrived in the meantime, doing? Is the workhouse still as it was? Is Mr. Dietrich still alive? And Mr. Schmesel and Mr. Ludwig? How are Aunt Schmidt and husband, and Margraf with his young wife and children? By the way, I would like to ask your dear wife to do me a favor, and visit my sister Lina or Betty, and tell them how they can stand it to let me go for such a long time without news from them. We have written to them a year ago, and have not received an answer yet. Is that right? I would like to know, too, how Mrs. Geisger and her little Luise are doing? We have heard a lot about high prices and a famine in the inland. Did Hamburg have to suffer under it, too? -

We are luckily all healthy and well. Henry had the bad luck to break both his legs the first summer. He had to stay in bed for seven weeks, but now he is entirely all-right again.

<T6> William did not grow very much in height, but he is very strong. He has worked already very nice this summer. Minna [Wilhelmine—LPM] has grown quite a bit, and Lons [Leonore—LPM] is still the fattest of them all.

When we arrived in America, we first went 250 miles north [from New York City—LPM] to a farm, cultivated, the land strong and the winter long. For this reason we could not find a liking to that place, and this spring we went again 400 miles to the southeast. Now we live on a small peninsula, close to the ocean, where the soil is better and the climate milder. We have rented a farm, where we all worked very hard last summer.

The children go now to school. They speak already English quite well; I also am doing pretty fine, and go along fine with it. The weather here is nearly the same as near Hamburg, only the summers are a little bit warmer. The main fruit here is corn [grain?—LPM]; wheat thrives also, barley, oats, and buckwheat. Potatoes were all spoilt last summer. Pumpkins are raised in big amounts for eating and feeding the pigs.

Best regards from all of us to you and your dear wife. Have a nice time and gratify us please soon by writing to us.

Your friends in America ...

... Although we did not make any more last year than what we needed for ourselves (we arrived here only May 15th), we hope very much to save some money this year. When we will have made enough money we want to go west and buy us a place of our own. There one can buy 80 acres of the finest and most fertile

land for 100 dollars or 350 Mk, for what one has to pay only one to two [Mk?] taxes per year. In the place we are living right now the farms are as expensive as near Hamburg, but in return the market is excellent here, and everything can be changed to money.

[Continuation on page <T8>]: Life is here so different from that in Hamburg, that first I could not get used to it. The children, however, liked it from the beginning, and the fresh country air is doing good for their health. You would have a hard time recognizing them again as they have grown so much. William and Minna 5 feet 2 inches tall, Lons 4 feet 11-1/2 inches, and Henry 4 feet 8-1/2 inches. [End of insert].

== Dear Sisters!

You will receive these few lines through Mrs. Merkel which I asked to visit you and to let me know how you are doing, as I don't have received any answer to our letter yet. Have you already forgotten your sister? Let us please know how you are doing. We have moved to another place. So please address your letter, if you write, to F.A.M., West B., Mass.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

<T7> To Mr. Christian Schmidt, Red Hook, D. Co, N.Y.

West Barnstable, Jan 14, 1848.

Dear friend. I have received your dear letter, and I want to thank you very much for your friendly wishes towards the New Year. We are all well, and live very happy in the circle of our family. I want to wish you the same happiness of contentment at home. It is therefore my deepest wish and best advice for you, that you may get married very soon. But that is not easy to say. It all depends on good luck. The smartest one sometimes is cheated most. I read from your letter that you cannot make up your mind, and I can imagine very well how you must be feeling. In your last but one letter you were so happy to have received a letter from your girl from Germany, and now? I don't know all the details about this but I can imagine that you wrote in your letter to your lover about your love and faith in her, and made her hope to become once your wife, and now? You see no possibility to carry out this plan, and look for another friendship. But please imagine now how your fiancée must be feeling. She hopes and waits with true love for her Christian, and lets all her other good chances go by, and you already [have] another girl for a long time. Girls—that is for sure—are very often thoughtless, and the proverb goes,—out of the eyes, out of their thoughts, but there are enough examples, too, that they die of a broken heart. But for what reason should I make your heart still feel worse as it does already now. For your own happiness' and peace's sake I press myself into your secrets. Please listen to my advice: I believe you must still write to your bride again, and must tell her clearly by which way she can become your wife, and what you have to offer her. She is not the first bride who follows her groom. I myself have known two very pretty girls. The one of them followed her bridegroom to Texas and the other to South America. If she does not want to come you are free and don't have to make reproaches to yourself. If you want me to, I will write for you. Somebody else can often do it better. People in love write usually only about their love, and forget that a lot more than this belongs to the human life.

<T8> Did you not receive any letter from your mother, yet? You want to know whether you could find a job here. I am convinced, that—with or without wife—you would find an opportunity. The details cannot be decided in advance.

I have no use for Radcliff's farm as I have rented here for three years.

Best regards from my wife. We look forward to hear from you.

Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

To Mr. Christian Schmidt, Red Hook.

W.B. February 4, 1848.

Dear Friend! I have received your letter of Jan 16. You probably have received mine at about the same time. We all were glad over your decision to look for a job around here. Your wish has been mine one, too, since a long time. I have already some prospects, but nothing for certain yet. As much as I have heard about salaries: \$12 per month for a whole year, or \$16 for nine summer months are normal, in the last year even 18 and \$20 were sometimes paid. Please write to me as soon as possible, whether you will be coming for sure, and for which price I shall make a contract for you. I will then have it announced in the newspaper, and I am sure to find a job for you, as the Germans have a good name around here.

I am in not as bad a situation as you as I have a family, but I still long very much for a friend. One can never trust the Yankees—they always keep you in their minds. Therefore, dear friend, put your decision into reality. My wife and my children are all very happy that you are going to be close to us. Please give me soon an answer.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T9> To Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Hamburg [Not mailed!].

March first 1848.

Dear Lina! I received your letter of April 1847 in the beginning of July and I answered it in August. You promised to send me different kinds of seeds and as these are of great value to me, I am very sad to see my expectations deceived. I have to believe that you neglected your promise or that at least you tried successfully not to answer my letter. Therefore I will not address this letter to you and I hope for an answer soon (it is too late now for the seeds!) in order to get rid of this uncomfortable business.

I have changed my home as you will have saw from my last letter and my present address is: West Barnstable, Mass. I would like to hear from my brother as well as from old friends like Johann and Mr. Ulrich etc.

When I have recovered a little and will have a better footing here, I am sure to have the opportunity to make business with you, which could be advantageous for both parts. You could sell here all the things you could not get rid of at home, like fruit trees and berry bushes are rare here. If I am receiving a satisfactory answer soon I might put up a big order for the autumn.

Best wishes to your husband and to all my friends.

Your Father Reim. [??].

From: F.A.M.; To: Johann Gottlieb Ullrich.

To Mr. Johann Gottlieb Ullrich in Ottsmarschen near Altona.

Dear Ullrich! The wish to hear from you and your family reminds me of my duty to write to you about how I am doing now and how I did in the past. First I want to ask you to forgive me for departing without saying goodbye to you and I am convinced, that you won't think bad of me when I remind you of my troublesome, even desperate situation at that time.

Our sea voyage was not too fast. It took us seven weeks. But we felt very lucky to cross the ocean with our old ship and to arrive at New York's harbor without accident, and the joy of entering the so longed for country made us quickly forget all the troubles with which such a journey is usually accompanied. N.Y. has grown a lot in the last years that it is nearly impossible to reach its end by foot. <T10> Hundreds of buses cover the main streets. Besides these, railway tracks in all directions with hourly trains are there, and on the streets are such masses of people that one who was used to move around in Hamburg still has to learn a lot here.

The stranger feels entirely lost in such a town and I claimed myself very lucky to be able to leave that town after a 14 day long stay. A salesman of N.Y. gave me the management of his farm 200 English miles towards the north. The farm consists in 1500 acres, divided into smaller parts, 200 to 300 acres of which are cleared, but the remains are still forests. I received \$300 as working capital and the net profit of the farm (after expenses for our food and the farm were deducted) was supposed to be divided between me and the owner. This seemed to me a pretty good contract, but the situation and conditions planned it different. The region was too cold, the soil too strong, and the market too far away. Woodwardville was cleared very much 20 to 30 years ago, but since that time people moved away, the huts declined, as their former inhabitants moved westward. I stayed there for one summer and two winters and I was very glad when I was could say good-bye to this place again.

I now live in a cultivated region in the state Massachusetts on a narrow peninsula, which you can find easily on the map south of Boston. Cape Cod is on account of the big fishing industry in its bay well known. In 1620 the Mayflower with the first Pilgrims (Puritans) (a religious sect) landed here. They first fled from England to Holland and then to America, and their descendants are still the only inhabitants of this region. The peninsula is so narrow that one can see from a low hill in its middle to the ocean at both sides, which are

covered by fishing vessels all year round. The row of hills are covered with oaks. The southern bank has bad sandy soil, but has some nice fishing villages; the northern bank has the farm on which I am living right now. It has pretty good loamy soil and many marsh meadows, but which are outside the embankment and which are flooded by a high flood. The hay tastes salty and is of no great value. Otherwise are all agricultural products very expensive here, as very little is raised and the region is overpopulated for the fishing's sake. If the work would be not so expensive a farmer could easily become rich. A good farm of 50 acres <T11> has a value of 2500 to \$3000 and is managed by the owner and a boy to help him. The women do nothing outside of the house; the man has even things to do like milking the cows and carrying wood and water into the house.

In springtime a lot of herrings come with the flood nearly to my door and in winter we catch in the ditches between the meadows. The main product here is corn [grain?—LPM]. I have four cows and two oxen and have to pay the half of everything I raise to the owner as lease. The milk of my cow and the vegetables I need are not included in this contract.

The state Massachusetts is one of the oldest, has generally only bad soil, and is known in the whole Union for sanctimony and has an ill repute. The moderation apostles have gone so far as to forbid brandy to be bought at any place. In the same manner wine and beer are prohibited and we have to drink water like our cattle—with the exception of clothes a farmer lives here much worse than in Germany. I heard that it is better in the West. One can buy there 40 acres of the best soil for only \$50, but one still needs about \$300 so that he can start out for himself.

Now, my dear Ullrich, please do me the favor and let me know very soon about you. Please send my regards to your sister, Madame Hasse and ask her in my name to write once to me. Please great my brother and Betty and tell them they should once write to me, too. Give them my address. I have written last summer to Kummerfeld, but I have received no answer yet. I know that Lina got married. How is business going?

Farewell and keep me as your friend in your memory.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

To Mr. Christian Schmidt, Lower Red Hook, Dutchess Co, N.Y.

March 6, 1848.

Dear friend! My expectations to hear from you after my two long letters have been always disappointed (as often as I have asked at the post-office!) and I just cannot explain your long silence. We are already worried that something of bad luck might have happened to you. I have found for you a job, which is in my opinion very good. <T12> The work is easy and the payment about \$150 per year and very secure; what the main point is. Canisius Barrat is one of the richest men of this region and the job is generally considered very good. He lives about five miles from my house in a little friendly town, Hyannis. Your job is to take care for a little garden; he does not have a farm. In such a job you can recover and find enough courage to master your life. I will be very happy to hear very soon from you that you will accept this job. I therefore look forward to your answer.

From: F.A.M.; To: Senas D. Basset.

<Written in English.> Mr. Senas D. Basset Esq. Hyannis.

West Barnstable March 6, 48.

Sir. Mr. John Barker Crocker informed me you wanted to hire my friend and countryman Mr. C. Schmidt now at Red-Hook Dutchess Co., N.Y. I have written to him about it today and shall communicate his answer to you as soon as possible.

respectfully, your obedient servant.

From: F.A.M.; To: Senas D. Basset.

<Written in English.> Mr. Senas D. Basset Esq. Hyannis.

West Barnstable March 18, 48.

Sir! It is not my fault that you have to wait as long for a answer, i only received a letter by the yesterdays mail of Mr. Schmidt, by who he wreite my that he agreeet to stay som time longer by his master—.

If Mr. Crocker's creditors take possession of his farm after the court held to Barnstable in the beginning of next month I shall be myself without employment and I should estimate me very happy to work for you, as I am a gardener of profession I hope I should suit you.

Respectfully your obedient servant.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

Mr. Christian Schmidt, Red Hook, D. Co, N.Y.

W.B. May 17, 1848.

Dear friend! Around the 6th of this month I wrote to you and told you that I found a job for you with a salary of approximately \$150. In my opinion this is a very fine job. I waited for your immediate answer whether you were going to accept this offer or not, but 11 days have passed already since and I have heard nothing from you, yet. As I received no answer either to my last two letters I cannot explain your silence any more and therefore I am going to address this letter to the Postmaster of R.H. with the request to let me know whether you are still alive.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mss. Martha & Abigail Crocker.

<Written in English.> To: Mss. Martha & Abigail Crocker by their attorney Mr. R.F. Crocker.

West Barnstable May 17, 1848.

Sir! I have the pleasure to hand you the account of boarding due to me by cancellation of the Knownen lease, and demand the value of, before we proceed farther.

F.A. Meissner.

[bill shows \$330.75 for board on trip and including 49 wks. six days @ \$6; less \$8 received May 10 1858].

From: F.A.M.; To: Mss. Martha & Abigail Crocker.

<Written in English.> Petition to Mss. Martha & Abigail Crocker owners of a certain farm at West Barnstable, by their tenant F.A.M.

Honorable Ladies! The petitioner who rented your farm at Great-Marshes for three years, following the first of May 1847, by an agreement dated New York April 23 1847 arrived here with his family after a long and expensfull journey May 15 1847 and was put in possession of the farm by your brother Mr. R.F. Crocker as your attorney May 27, 1847.

—Notwithstanding the sowing time was past there was not work of any description done on your farm, the fences being down the cattle run at large over the hole promise, the fields who has not received any manure in the last two years abundant with sorrel blackberry-vines and other briers.

—I began to work put as it was too late to do much for this season I worked for the following years. I understand very soon that I had to do with a cold and sour soil, I layed my fields in ridges, ploughed three and four times to make the soil mellow and to enrich him by the influence of the atmosphere, I took great care to make manure, for that purpose I fed all my hay what I could have sold to the cattle, I ditched the lower part of the orchard and carted the mud on the upper part, carted sand and clay, and clay on sand-soil, shortly, I don't worked like the common farmers in this country I used all the means of improved farming and all the help of my whole family, Ms. Meissner, two industrious boys and two girls (the later alone picket eight cart loads small stones up), we all worked steady and hard to accomplish our destiny.

One year has past, put on the very day as I was, one year ago, introduced to a wilderness, and the same farm who at this period could not support his laborer, shows a very different view and promised a tenfold increase.

If you will please to inspect your property you will find: near the house a small nice garden united with some other improvements, the fields will show you: four acres of Ry not surpassed on Cape-Cod, three acres of Oats, two acres of Corn, 1-1/2 acre with Potatoes, 3/4 acre prepared for Cabbage. The land has received 175 cartloads manure and from 30 to 40 loads more will be carted out in a few days.

Now I shall leave the farm leave all my work leave all my hope, after I expended my last cent for the support of my family and my self, at present where it is too late for a farmer, it is hard it is horrible!

—Why could i not stay to autumn if i may not stay till the expiration of my lease, it would be as well to your interest as to my own, perhaps Mr. Crocker calculates to have the harvest alone, but he will not be able to take care of the crops and you will lose more by waste as you will gain by this unfair way.

You may say we dont know anything about farming we commit the hole business to our brother, but he acts in your name, you will be, if not lawful but moral, answerable to his deeds, if you know that he is in your name to deprive a family of her earnings and dont hinder it you will be guilty your self.

But I shall never belief that you will consent to my ruin i ame told that you both very noble-minded ladies i pray to you let me remain to the first of November next let me have the harvest of my seeds the earnings of my labor. I shall I will not despair, if humanity is expired in som mens breast, she is preserved in females bosom.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Percival.

<Written in English.> Commander John Percival Dorchester Mass. [Note: Captain Percival appears in US naval history. A series of USN ships has been named for him.—LPM.].

W.B. May 28 [1848].

Sir! Only for a moment i had the honor to see you last summer by your visit at Mrs. Crockers farm, i ame a stranger in this country, but i feel confidence to you and take the liberty to pray you to further the enclosed petition to Mrs. Martha Crocker, and if it is not against your principle to support its desire. Mr. R.F. Crocker lead by som notion or by som bad consellors want to drive me of, against his one intereste, and you will act as well to his and his sisters profit if you can make understanding him his error, by this you will oblige a family who hope to you as to a father and will thank you as children.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mss. Martha & Abigail Crocker.

<Written in English.> To Mss. Martha & Abigail Crocker by theirs attorney Mr. R.F. Crocker.

Sir! I hereby give you notice that i shall not deliver up to you the thirteenth day of June next as requested by you that farm of which i ame in possession by a lease for three years following the first of May 1847, because you have not at present fulfilled the determination of the agreement to cancel this lease.—

i reserve all my rights given to me by contract under Law but i ame very willingly to settle differences by mutual agreement.

I handed to you account of boarding som time ago of which account i annex a Copie West Barnstable June 6 1848 [Here intervenes an inquiry about some seeds shipped from Germany—LPM.].

From: F.A.M.; To: Ms. Martha Crocker.

<Written in English.> Ms. Martha Crocker, Boston.

W.B. June 19 1848.

I wrote a letter of petition to you dated May 28 which I am assured was delivered to you by Mrs. Percival, but all my hope of relief from you has been in vain. I have not received an answer. Your brother acts like a devil or insane in *your name* and if you don't hasten he will succide and blame your honor and wound your heart. I wish to know if you will grant my petition to stay until the harvest is done. I ame unable to writt any more, my mind is as much agitated that i ame sick and confined to bed, so Mrs. Meissner.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

W.B. June 19 [1848].

Sir, The kind answer of my letter to you, by Mrs. Percival make me belief that you will have the goodness to direct this letter to Mrs. Martha Crocker. As you will understand my situation you will excuse the trouble made by me to you.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

W.B. July 4, 48.

Dear Sir. Your letter, i recived, was a great joy for me my wife and childern, as you was [ill] we feeled much uneasy for your health, and are very glad now to see that you got better.

Your promiss to assist me to buy a farm i accept with a warm thankful heart, and as much as i know my self you shall not be decived, and if not great misfortune should happenen you shall not runn a great risk. Neither of this farms you mentioned to me will suit me very well, the price is to high and the territory to small, i ame most sure bitwin here and auttum to find a place what i shall call a good farm for about 1000 dollars, i want a good soil and as much land to keep a team and som other stock to make manure, i ame not anxious that i shall not prosper, Barnstable is such a good place for farming as i know any where, all produce sell high and som of the soil is productif if worked well, if you help me to the first, the soil, i with my family shall furnish the last, the work, and i ame sure that i shall be able to make a living and to pay interest for the capital, perhaps the first 2-3 years will go a little hard, because every farm you can buy cheap is in a poor condition but i am not affrayed i shall go over that. I feel very happy in my mind an mak calculationen for the best conduct of my farm in hope.

I have looked at a farm who will be sold at auction for debt in course of this summer, he is situated on Hay-Pond four miles from this place and five miles from Sandwich, thereon is a small dwelling house, a good barn and about 100 acre land, including 40 acres Woodland, the soil is good as the Weeds show who grow on, and a small orchard beared last year 30 bu. apples. It is supposed that this farm will sell very cheap. Besides this farm i have som other farms in view and shall tell you about as schoon as i know particulars.

Your good information about going to sea has cured my William perfectly, he works contented by our landlord Mr. Fish for boarding and seven dollar a month, Wilhelmine is very happy by Mrs. Bunsby, Leonore is by Mr. Nathan Schmidt, so my housekeeping is small, and i got my children all close by and see him every day.

I shall follow strict your advice about speaking my views to others, this place is a great place for tales. My wife and children greet you heartily. We dont know how we shall thank you, but you will understand our feelings, accept the best wishes for you and your Mistress happiness from.

Your obedient servant.

F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

22 Aug 1848 [excerpt].

... Or should you advise me to go west? Perhaps 300 Dollars there would do as well as \$1000 here, but by this I should lose many things I have procured this summer for my household.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. Robert Wesselhöft.

<T12, cont.> To Mr. Robert Wesselhöft, Dr.—Brattleboro, Windham Co, Vermont.

W.B. August 24, 1848.

About Sep 21st 1846 I took up my courage to introduce myself to you by letter. I lived at that time still in Woodwardsville, Essex Co, N.Y. Your friendly answer was a true holiday for me and my family. One can only imagine this feeling, who has lived in this country in such a wilderness, where only unknown sounds hit his ears and his few neighbors are unfeeling, selfish people. I did not believe I could follow your advice and go west. Therefore I traveled to N.Y. in the spring of 1847 to look around for a job as a gardener. Here I got to know Betine Crocker, who rented his farm—situated in West Barnstable, Mass.—to me for three years. I picked up my family and arrived here after a long and hard journey. This place is on a narrow peninsula. <T13> One can see the ocean to both sides from a row of sand hills situated in the middle. These hills look alike to the “Lüneburger Heide.” The northern bank, however, has partly very good soil and a lot of salt meadow. People are generally more egoistic and selfish than anywhere else, at the same time sanctimonious and false.

The farm I rented is one of the best around here, although very neglected. Betine Crocker is a cheat, however, who always travels to N.Y., hires there immigrants, has them work for some time for him and cheats them for their salary with the help of the law. A letter of a German girl, who has a good name among

all the neighbors, asks: is there no way at all how to get rid of this beast? He transferred his property to his two unmarried sisters. His creditors in N.Y. brought an action against him since years, which attacks the transfer as fraud. But he succeeds always in getting free through bribery.

The corruptibility and injustice of the law courts here in this state surpass all limits, so that it is impossible for somebody without means to get his rights. If one reads besides this in the newspapers all the quarrels and accusations of the opposite candidates for the election of president, so one cannot lose the thought that the American liberty is still far from its goal.

This summer—after the farm was worked up and taken care for and we were filled with hope for a good crop, Crocker started a row with me and I thought myself lucky to escape his hands by a meager comparison [compensation?—LPM] (settlement). But at this occasion I made the acquaintance of his uncle, Capt. John Percival, U.S. Navy, Boston, and I seemed to have won more through this than to have lost otherwise. This old honest gentleman did not shy at the trouble to make a trip from Boston down here to W.B. to help me against his nephew. He writes (among other things). : “I believe in the integrity of the Germans.”—he promises me to help me buy a farm: I will make the arrangement for the payments. You will ask the question of yourself why does the Captain take so much interest in me? It is this: “You have been wronged by a relation of mine. I don’t want anything from you, Mr. Meissner, direct or indirect. If there is anything it is to show to the world I did not misplace confidence <T14> in the stranger and I must show the world I did not act or was influenced by selfish motives or self interest.” -.

But now to the main problem of this letter: my oldest daughter, a girl of 14, had had her first monthly period nine weeks ago, but only weakly, after this it did not occur any more. After this she suffered often under nose-bleeding, since eight days she feels very sick. It started with nausea, vomiting, and headaches, which passed quite well after the use of some Schuler tea. She has, however, still continually a stomach ache, sometimes weaker, sometimes harder, she looks very pale, is tired and helpless, has no appetite, and is in a bad mood. The tongue seems to be all right and obviously she has no fever. The doctors around here seem all to be only quacks. I am very worried about my daughter’s health and my wife joins me in my request to you to give us your kind advice and help. Should you prescribe something, so could I have it made in Boston, for which you maybe can recommend a drugstore to me. If I could not imagine that your affairs are very urgent at this time of the year I would like to add a second request, namely: whether you could write some grateful lines to Capt. Percival for his noble behavior. -.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

16 Oct 1848 [excerpt].

... Before you buy a place for me I wish to tell as I told you before, that I could not work a farm with success unless I could have the necessary stock or inventory.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

7 Nov 1848 [excerpt].

... I have got this morning the resolution of Henry Lawrenz that he will sell to me Beckers Neck for \$1250 payable as you proposed.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T14, cont.> To Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Hamburg, Germany Nov 7, 1848, West Barnstable, Mass., N.A.

I answered your letter, in which you informed me about your marriage on August 1st 1847 and I told you that we moved to another place. You don’t seem to have this letter of mine received, as your letter dated Nov. 28, 47, which I received only in May of this year, was still addressed to Woodwardville. You wrote me in your letter that you mailed to me a barrel with seeds, which I have not received so far and I could not either find out anything about it, although I wrote already several times to N.Y. about it. I would have written a lot earlier to you, but I was never sure where I would be the next day. Your worry about us is unnecessary, because here there is nothing—even the emperor has no power.

<T15> If you have received a receipt by Slomann after having given him the barrel with the seeds and if you can write to me, by which ship and at what time you mailed them and to whom in N.Y. they were addressed to—I still might be able to find out about them. Otherwise they are surely lost. I expect your answer with the next steamboat so that I can still use the seeds next spring or else they have lost all of their value to me. The interest you owe me is 121 [S?]. I would like to know very much, how high our bill is and I ask you to let me know about it. I would like it best if you could pay me the capital. I thought earlier to make it easier for you and accept at least part of the money in goods, but the two attempts I tried took all my interest away. But still I would like to give it another try next autumn but only if you have the will of doing it promptly and well. I look forward with desire to your next letter, in which I hope to hear the news, how you are feeling, what your little son is doing, and whether you are happy in your new state. I was ailing nearly all summer long, but now I feel better, since the weather is cooler.

Address your letter to W.B., Mass., North America and write underneath “by Bremen steamer.” So much for now.

Regards to your husband and to all good friends.

Your father.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

12 Nov 1848 [excerpt].

... I confess that the price for Beckers Neck is pretty high but this place has a great many facilities for improvements as it was clearly understood between us before, and I thought as it was your early home it would be some satisfaction to you, to see it flourishing again, and by this I would be enabled to give you some reward for your kindness bestowed upon me.

From: Capt. John Percival; To: Mr. Marsten.

<Written in English.> [Memorandum for Mr. Meissner to take to Mr. Marsten:].

... If Mr. Meissner can be let off from the bargain with H. Lawrence and freed from prosecution for any damages for fifty dollars, I will send a check to your order for the same ... take the deeds of the Whitman place in Meissner's name if you see no objections. I see none, his being an alien will not affect the right of my money.... Percival.

From: F.A.M.; To: Secretary of the German Company in N.Y.

<T15, cont.> To the Secretary of the German Company in N.Y.

W.B. Jan 8, 1849.

Dear Sir! Mr. Whitman, the writer of that letter [enclosed?—LPM], my neighbor, is a wealthy and respected farmer with wife and four children, who has showed himself towards me very pleasing and unselfish (a virtue which is rare with the Yankees). For this reason I would be very happy if his wish (described followingly!) could be fulfilled. I think it to be a very good opportunity for a fellow countryman just recently arrived here to get to know the language and customs of this country. The salary—to be sure—is not to high, but in boarding here washing and mending is included and Mr. Whitman is willing to raise the salary according to the work next year. The Germans are very highly respected here, and I dare to ask you to consider this when you select a subject for this job. The route of the journey is as follows: To Fall River by steamboat, there from to Middleboro by train, from there by Cape Cod Branch R.R. to Sandwich and from there by stage to West Barnstable.

<T16> My house is close to the road, only six miles distance from the next village, where it is best for the young man to get off and it will be a pleasure to me to introduce him to Mr. Whitman.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

Mr. Christian Schmidt, Lower Red Hook, N.Y.

W.B. Jan 8, 1849.

Dear friend! You have neither filled your promise and visited us last fall nor have you let us know a single word about you. You can make us no greater joy than to make up for both of these things.

We have had a lot of trouble last autumn and after that I was always ailing but everything got better again and we are all well again and have started the new year with merry hopes and plans. Through the support of a wealthy friend I now have my own farm and I am very happy about it. If this letter will reach you well and healthy, what we all hope for, so please come as soon as possible and visit us.

Best regards from my wife and children. Your friend.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

26 Jan 1849 [excerpt].

... People thinks the Whitman farm it too good for me and too cheap for you, and by some influence Mr. Whitman has backed out. I shall immediately take possession of Beckers Neck, and I shall have there less envy and more honor.

From: F.A.M.; To: Secretary of the German company in N.Y.

<T16, cont.> To the Secretary of the German company in N.Y.

West Barnstable, Jan 29, 1849.

Dear Sir! Around the 8th of this month my friend and neighbor Jonas Whitman wrote to you and informed you about his wish to employ a young German, age 17 or older and to give him for this year, that is from the time of his start till next January, a salary of \$50 and boarding; and besides that to give him \$5 traveling expenses. I accompanied this letter with a postscript saying that I know the Whitman family very well and that I believed this job to be very acceptable. I should be very surprised, that—if you received my letter—you should not have found a fitting subject for this job, as I know from own experience how lonely and helpless an immigrant feels—unaccustomed to the conditions here—and how he is longing for a desirable and secure place. Mr. Whitman asks at any rate for a speedy answer that he knows what to do. In case the ticket should cause difficulties there are ways to move these out of the way or in case you want more details, you can have all you want.—Respectfully.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

To Mr. Christian Schmidt, Red Hook.

W.B. February 4, 1849.

Dear friend! We have received your letter dated Jan 21 and have read it with great joy. It has been very cold here, too <T17> but I think not as cold as at your place. I was at Boston, when it was coldest, but I found it no trouble traveling, as the R.C. are heated.

Our farm does not have more than 27 acres, partly marshes, and is situated close to the big road, which is of greater value still to me as I think of raising mostly vegetables. It has a nice house; however, no barn. It costs \$1250.00. I wish you would decide to settle down around here. I would not go back to the wilderness at any price. I can show to you a very inexpensive farm, which I would rather have taken than my own one—if I would have had free choice. It has besides 100 acre land with house and barn enough wood for your own need and could be probably bought for \$500. This farm is ideal for sheep raising, which needs only little work and is very profitable around here. Sheep can be easily sold for \$2.00 apiece and the sheep here have usually two lambs. If you would have enough money to buy the inventory, the cost price could be paid in payments. There is still another precious farm in the same condition as mine with the best soil for sale for \$1800.00. I wish you would visit us and I am sure you will like it here. We paid \$3.33 per person from Albany to Boston, and from Boston the Cape Cod Branch R.R. gets you to Sandwich for \$1.50. From Sandwich to West Barnstable are only six miles, which I go usually by foot, or by stage for 50 cents. From N.Y. you go by steamer to Fall River, from there by R.R.C. to S. (namely first by C. to Boston till Middleboro, from there by Cape Cod C. to Sandwich. This last route should be a little cheaper.).

My children have grown a lot in the last years. They all look forward to your visit. Has Mr. Radcliff married a rich wife? Do you know some news about Woodwardville? But you are supposed to tell us all this when you will visit us.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

6 Feb 1849 [excerpt].

... I feel much sorry, as your writing shows you are still unwell, to trouble you with business, and if I was not driven to by necessity I should not do so;

— my cow is dried up ... you was willing to assist me with \$150 more in getting under way, if you would please to send me about \$50.

From: F.A.M.; To: Christian Schmidt.

<T17, cont.> To Mr. Christian Schmidt, Red Hook.

W.B. March 25, 1849.

Dear Friend! I answered your letter dated Jan. 21 on February 4, but so far our hopes are unfilled to see you at our house. Besides that we did not hear anything more from you. In case you have to give up the hope to visit us, I will pay back my small debt to you (which I planned to give to you when you came), as soon as I am sure that you receive my letters safely.

Best regards from us all.

From: F.A.M.; To: City Law-Court of Pirna.

<T18> [I.T. ?] To the City Law-Court of Pirna in the Kingdom of Saxony, Germany.

W.B. Mass. North-America.

I have been informed by my daughter's letter, dated Kummerfeld February 12, 1849, that my Uncle Friedr. Gotthelf Meissner in Pirna passed away, further on that a respectable Court of Law in Pirna visited the heirs and that on account of the Pirnaberger Authorities a curator was put up. For what use this unnecessary procedure was done I cannot understand, as the best and shortest way in my opinion is to inform us by letter.

My father was Ernst Friedrich Meissner, minister in Schönbach and a brother of the late Fr. G. Meissner [actually, a half-brother—LPM]. I have another brother Karl Friedrich, who, according to his letter (dated April 2, 1848) is still alive at present time and feeling well and is staying with Mr. de Ray in Ütersen near Altona as gardener.

I take the liberty of asking your Honor very politely to put up an honest man, to whom I can give my authority, and I leave it to your judgement to find such a suitable one whom I safely can trust with my share of the inheritance and who will not waste it by unnecessary payments and unimportant things.

In case a certificate as it is used here should not be sufficient and something special should be mentioned on it, I ask your Honor to have the goodness of letting me know about it.

I would like also to bring to your attention the case for the interests of my brother and my cousin Karoline Zimmermann, formerly Moser. Grant me the permission to assure you my deepest respect.

Obediently ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich Meissner.

Karl Friedrich Meissner, in Ütersen near Altona.

Dear Karl! I have received your letter of April 2nd 48, which you sent with Ulr. de Ray's letter and I was very happy to read that you are well. I have received a letter from Lina [daughter Karoline—LPM] some days ago, where she informed me (among other things) that our Uncle Friedr. Gotthelf Meissner in Pirna passed away and that the Court of Law visited the heirs. I thought if this would be the case you would have written this at least to me. Please let me know more about this, but please soon, whether you gave authority to someone, and to whom, and how much the inheritance might be. Are you still fine? How are Wilhelm and Marie? Please greet them and Betty from me.

<T19> Please ask Betty to ask Ullrich whether he has received my letter for Lina. I have moved again and fought so far against many troubles and was always ailing. But my future looks better now and with it my health, too.

Farewell and write soon to your.

Brother.

From: F.A.M.; To: Johann Gottlieb Ullrich.

Mr. Johann Gottlieb Ullrich in Ottsmarschen near Altona.

Dear Ullrich! Did you receive my letter through Lina? Please answer me soon and let me know more, how everything is going in Kummerfeld, whether the smart people put now so much money back as I was supposed to do. As I heard, Mr. Parker is living on a farm now and you with him.

Best wishes your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

20 May 1849 [excerpt].

I still have pasture for one more cow which I wish to buy and probably will cost \$30, so if it was possible I should like to have \$50.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

30 May 1849 [excerpt].

I wish you would please to send me some money as I hardly know to get long any further without.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

10 Jun 1849 [excerpt].

I received your generous presents ... I am in want of a grindstone ... My radishes sell well in Sandwich. Henry has carried up 20 bushels to date and sold already for \$200.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich.

<T19, cont.> Power of Attorney to Certificate for Mr. Karl Friedrich in Pirna.

W.B. Sept 4, 1849.

To all concerned:I, Friedrich Adolph Meissner, born in Schönbach in the Oberlausitz, later land owner in Kummerfeld in the Pirnaberg territory in Holstein, now living in West Barnstable in the County of Barnstable, State of Massachusetts, North America, hereby choose and give authority to the advocate Mr. Karl Friedrich in Pirna in the Kingdom of Saxony: to be my true and complete and legal manager in order to take care for my share of the inheritance of my late uncle, the merchant Friedrich Gotthelf Meissner, in my name and for me and for my profit alone.

And for this purpose (see above!) I hereby give full power to my mentioned manager to collect my inheritance, to sell land of my inheritance, to collect the cost price, to pay off mortgages, to make comparisons, to accept money out of the inheritance, to give receipts for accomplished work and to all other chores, which seem to be necessary and useful to my mentioned manager in order to do his duty as my manager—as complete and fully as I would have done all this myself, if I would be personally present. And I confess myself responsible to all deeds done according to this contract.

As a corroboration of this contract I have written all this by my own hand and signed and sealed.

Sept 4, 1849.

From: F.A.M.; To: City Judge Hering.

<T20> Mr. City Judge Hering in Pirna.

W.B. Sept 12, 1849.

I have received your pleasant letter of June 14, 1849 and have chosen among the two from you to me recommended gentlemen Karl Friedrich as my manager, as he is already the candidate for my brother's affairs and I hope to simplify this affair by doing so. I want to say my deepest thankfulness to you for your kindly given information.

With respect ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich.

Mr. Advocate Karl Friedrich in Pirna.

W.B. Sept 12 1849.

You have been recommended to me by Mr. City Judge Hering as my manager and as you have already my brother's authority in this affair, and so I gladly put into your hands the care of my interests also, as this affair can be simplified by doing so. I hope the enclosed certificate may be sufficient. I had to translate it from English according to a pattern used here and I am not sure to have always used the right expressions, but it is done validly according to the laws here. I am convinced that you will accept the business trusted to you and will take best care for my interests.

I beseech you to give me an account of my inheritance in your expected letter and how big or small my legal share would be and also how soon I could expect some—partly—money from it.

I would like to know very much who among my relatives is still alive and is also included in the inheritance.

I ask you please for a speedy reply of my questions.

Very sincerely yours ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Christine Zimmermann.

To Karoline Christine Zimmermann in Spitzkümmersdorf near Aderwitz [?] in the Kingdom of Saxony.

W.B. Sept 12 1849.

Dear Karoline! Once ago I have already written to you from this far-away country, but have not received an answer yet.

The last thing I heard from you was a letter which was sent to me about three years ago from Kummerfeld and in which you wrote that your husband froze his feet.

I have received the news about the death of our Uncle Friedrich Gotthelf Meissner and I hope and wish that the improvement <T21> of your conditions (caused by your share of the inheritance) might not come too late and you may still enjoy it with excellent health.

I am now four years in America and I have had—to be sure—some troubles during this time, but at least not for food and I am feeling quite well. I hope—if you are still alive and well—that you will answer my letter and let me know some more details about the inheritance, who your manager is and so on, how much we might expect out of it and whether you received already something.

We suffer this summer around here very much under dryness and you have to suffer still worse evils as I can see from the newspapers. I have a nice farm, a pretty house and garden, horses and cows and nothing would cause me more joy than to be able to see [you?] still once around me.

Send my regards to your husband and children and gratify me soon by your letter.

Your loving cousin, F.A. Meissner.

In W.B.—Mass., N.A.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich:

Post Script to Mr. Karl Friedrich:

In order to remove any doubt about my identity I enclose my passport issued by the royal Government in Pinneberg, and if this should not be sufficient, please write to Mr. Judge Advocate Kirchhof in America, who possesses a lot of valid bills of mine and where you can easily get a sample of my handwriting for comparison. But I believe this will not be necessary.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

30 Oct 1849 [excerpt].

I have a fine stock of cattels as any farmer in Great Marshes ... but I have no Stable to shelter him for the rough winter ... I dont know where else to call for a barn and I hope by your help I shall have one ... for \$200.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

12 Nov 1849 [excerpt].

I didn't know that you were sick ... I shall try to provide some temporary shelter ... with about \$25 to buy boards.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

30 Dec 1849 [excerpt].

My harvest on this place I value ... at \$40.50 ... the land will in due time produce crops worth \$300 ... the first two years I shall have a hard bargain to make a living, but I shall not lose courage.

From: F.A.M.; To: Publisher of New York Democrat.

<T21, cont.> To the Publisher of the New Yorker Democrat Newspaper, printed in the German language at N.Y. City W.B. Jan 14 1850.

Dear Sir! In case there should still exist a German newspaper with name (mentioned above!) and this letter should reach the hands of the publisher, I would ask you to have a specimen copy sent to me in order to enable me to find out about the price and the right address and to make my decision afterwards. In expectation to have my request granted,.

I remain, respectfully ...

From: William Meissner; To: F.A.M. and Doris Meissner.

<T374> From William Meissner (Sennewald) [Loose letter.].

Dorchester, Jan 21, 1850.

Dear Father and Mother! I have arrived in Dorchester.

[Page 374 continued below:see Sept 15 1850.].

From: William Meissner; To: F.A.M. and Doris Meissner.

<T373> From William Meissner (Sennewald) [Loose letter.].

Address:Mr. F.A. Meissner, West Barnstable.

Dorchester, Jan 22, 1850.

Dear Father and Mother! I came Monday evening to Capt. Percival's house and found him in a good mood. The first thing he said was that he wrote already a letter to me and invited me to his house, because the ship has to be unloaded still and will start to be loaded again on the 22.

On the next morning he wanted to go with me to the ship owners which we wanted to see and who live in Boston. When we arrived there they were introduced to me. Then I was asked whether I was healthy and how old I was. [Born 24 Feb 1832; almost 18—LPM.] Then we talked for a while and then they asked me whether I wanted to see the ship and I said yes. Then Capt. Percival went with me to the ship. There we also met the ship's captain who seems to be a nice man judging by his looks.

Capt. Percival asked me whether I was naturalized. I said no. Then he said he wanted to go with me and have my name put on record. He also wanted to know whether Father is already a citizen. I said he will probably be one next spring. Now I would like to know whether Father wrote my name also down, if not, I cannot become a citizen without being naturalized myself.

I would like very much—if Father and Mother would be so kind—to send me my stuff in a bag, but not the straw sack. I will write again before I take off.

Please write soon again. I hope everything is going well as always until I will come back. My regards to all of you. Your loving son, William Meissner.

To Father and Mother.

[Note on outside:] Direct the bag with William's clothes to the care of Mr. W. Noyes, Hanson Square Depot, Dorchester.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

18 Feb 1850 [excerpt].

I am glad that you are disposed to help me to a barn and I am willing to give you a mortgage thereon.

[There follow some lengthy explanations that he wants to postpone the interest payments (about \$400) for four years and is getting worried about losing all his labor if payment is demanded too soon—he hopes he can pay all the interest and begin on the principal in a few years, but meanwhile is converting hay to manure instead of selling it, and is otherwise looking to the future improvement of the farm rather than the immediate prospects.]

From: F.A.M.; To: Theodor des Arts.

<T22> Mr. Theodor des Arts, 78 Water St., N.Y.

W.B. February 1850.

Your Honor! In a German newspaper I have read your name listed as Consul of Hamburg. Although I am a born Saxon, my stay of 20 years in the very close neighborhood of Hamburg has made this city to a second home of mine and therefore I take the liberty to ask you whether you could take care for my letters to Germany for a small compensation. I will probably trouble you not more than twice a year (or three times!), but I would like you—every time I send letters for Germany to you—to tell me by a few lines that you have received my letters. It is so uncomfortable if one waits 1/2 year and longer for an answer and then even has to hear that the letters did not arrive at all. The post offices in this country are so unsafe, that only a short time ago a valuable letter of mine got lost between here and Boston. Besides I like to know if maybe I should receive around autumn a box with seeds, plants, (among other things) from Hamburg, whether I would be allowed to address it to you. In case you can't or won't fulfill my requests, I would be very grateful if you could recommend somebody else, who will.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Zimmermann.

To Karoline Zimmermann in Spitzkümmersdorf by Aderwitz in the Kingdom of Saxony W.B. [no date].

Dear Karoline! I am now already four years in America and have during this time already twice written to you, but have so far received no answer. I am healthy and have had during this time various types of trouble, but so far I have not suffered yet want of anything.

As I heard our uncle in Pirna has died and we are among the heirs. Did you already receive anything and how much do you suppose we can expect from it? I would like very much to hear more details from you about this. Who is your attorney of power?

But please before all, tell me how you were during this time when I did not hear from you. How many children do you have? Girls or boys? How old are they? What do they learn? I have learned about so many things lately that I lost all these details from my memory. I cannot make this letter entirely free and you will have to make yours free again to Bremen. But I hope this will not keep you from answering me very soon.

<T23> Is anybody of the relatives still alive? Send my wishes to your husband and children. I would be very happy if I could see you—and I live in the conviction that your love and friendship for me follows me even to this far-away country. Should somebody have troubled himself so much and have written something bad about me, please don't be misled by that and continue believing in the friendship of your ...

Address your letter to: Mr. F.A. Meissner, W.B., Mass., N.A.—Franco Bremen.

From: F.A.M.; To: City Judge Hering.

Mr. City Judge Hering in Pirna in Saxony.

W.B. May 6, 1850.

Your Honor! I received your dear letter, dated June 14, 1849. Following it I made a certificate for Mr. Adv. K. Friedrich and mailed it around the middle of Sept., last year. I enclosed in the letter my passport which I had received in Pinneberg before my departure as well as a letter for Mr. K.F. and one for my cousin Karoline Zimmermann and some lines to your honor, which contained my thanks for the information you gave me so readily. I had addressed this all to Mr. Karl Friedrich. But as I have received to this day no sign yet about the arrival of my certificate nor an answer from my cousin, I have to believe that the whole parcel is lost. I therefore wrote another certificate and addressed this time the letter to Mr. Judge Dir. Hermann Schneck. I enclose the certificate in your letter with the request to give it to Mr. Judge Dir. And I hope and wish that I might be luckier this time.

In case my first certificate should still have arrived—against my suspicion—the success of it should make me believe, that my interests are not in the best hands and I put it up to your discretion whether you want to keep back the second certificate—in such a case. You have to this or the other my full agreement.

Finally I want to thank you again deeply for the kindness you showed to me and I hope you fulfill my request mentioned above.

From: F.A.M.; To: Judge Hermann Schneck.

To the judge of the Court Mr. Hermann Schneck, Pirna.

W.B. May 6, 1850.

Your Honor! By making you through the enclosed certificate to my attorney of power, I flatter myself not only with the hope that you will accept the job I asked you for, but also that you will soon inform me about the arrival of my letter and to give me at the same time a short survey of the inheritance, how big or small my share would be, <T24> and when I could look forward to receive at least part of the money. Besides that I would like to know who of my relatives are still alive and are heirs also.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Altona, near Pinneberg. [Not mailed!].

W.B. May 4, 1850.

Dear Lina! I have received your letter of Feb. 12, 1849 and I would have answered you a long time ago if I would not have been so vexed at your behavior while my uncle passed away. These days some of your earlier letters fell into my hands and the feelings showed in them caused me to write this letter. I hope that it will reach you and your husband and little family in good health and if you will continue as you started you will still come to wealth.

I was very happy to read in the papers that this summer steamboats will go from Hamburg. I wish that you would send the wanted things for autumn. It will be still early enough for the steamboat, if you mail it the beginning of November. If you want to send it by a sailing boat, it should be mailed already in the beginning of September. Please take care that every box or barrel is marked in clear letters as follows: Mr. F.A. Meissner, W.B.; Care of Mr. Ferdinand Karck, N.Y.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Meissner.

Mr. K.F. Meissner in Ütersen near Altona.

W.B. May 6, 1850.

Dear Karl! I have received your letter of April 2, 1848 and was very happy not only to hear from you but also that at the present time all of you are well and so far everything is going fine.

Accidentally I have heard that our uncle in Pirna has died and we all are probably among his heirs. I just cannot understand that you did not let me know about that. I wrote for that reason already last year to you, but received no answer. I believe they have made in Kummerfeld the plan to cheat me for my inheritance. Please let me know whether you received already something, how much we have to expect, who your attorney of power is and whether you are satisfied with him.

Give my regards to Ullrich and tell him that I have written already several times to him but did not receive any answer. I ask him to write to me how business is going in Kummerfeld. Send my regards to Betty, Wilhelm, Mana, and Aunt and write soon to your brother.

F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T25> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg, N.Y.

W.B., May 7, 1850.

Your honor! I received your friendly lines with the kind permission to be able to send my letters to Germany through your hands. Accordingly, I take the liberty to send you all the letters with the request to mail them at the first and best opportunity. I want you to make the letter to Aderwitz free to Hamburg or Bremen. I am most interested in the letter to Pirna, as it contains a certificate and I have sent one already last summer which did not arrive. Finally I want to thank once again for your unselfish offer only to charge me for the postage. It feels so well in this country of selfishness and egoism and avarice to find somebody with a German character and ideals and to see these written in German language.

It will be comfortable to know that you will mail the letters, when you have opportunity, too.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. W. Wesselhöft.

Mr. W. Wesselhöft, Dr.—No. 18 Bedford St., Boston .

W.B. April 28, 1850.

Dear Doctor! If you look back in your journal Oct. 12, 1848, you will find my daughter Wilhelmine marked down. [Now in 1850, she is almost 16 years old—LPM.] Her (sickness) trouble was that her period was not going right and she complained always about stomach ache. We made then the water cure after the prescription of your brother and you gave her a little white powder against the stomach ache. After the use of this powder the aches were entirely gone and all the troubles got better. As the water cure seemed too fussy during the cold weather we interrupted it. The patient felt better all winter long, and in springtime of 1849, I believe it was April, the period started again all by itself. The patient had it two or three times very hard and felt at that time unusually well and full of strength, but with the beginning of the warm weather the period got weaker and weaker and stayed off entirely at the end. The patient became again weak and complained again much about stomach and headache. Like in autumn of 1849, we asked for the advice of Dr. Leonhard in Sandwich. He gave the patient first a clear, sourish liquid, which, however, deepened the headache so badly that we had to stop with it. After that she got a mixture which contained partly turpentine. This caused a strong period but the patient was very sick; after four weeks the period came again but then constipation followed and the patient became very sick and moody. (Dr. L. prescribed pills against it.) The next period followed in four weeks, after that the patient felt a great pain <T26> in her left side which kept on for three weeks. Dr. L. prescribed pills and said the patient is scrofulous and it would be useless to give any more medicine. The next period was only very weak and the dirt in it—taken into hand—looked gray instead of red. The following and the last period 14 days ago were a little bit stronger, but looked still a little bit gray -.

The patient seems to be unable to drink water. This might be caused by the water itself as we live here in a flat marshy region. The patient has to sustain fully of milk as it causes vomiting. I believe now to have told you all about the state of the patient and we look full hope towards your answer ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. W. Wesselhöft.

Mr. W. Wesselhöft, M.D. in Boston.

W.B. May 12, 1850.

Dear Sir! Wilhelmine took all the powders you sent her according to your prescriptions. Yesterday she took the last of it, but so far we can see no improvement in her feeling. The patient gets about two or three times a day a rising heat in her face, one or the other ear turns fire red and becomes burningly hot. At that time the headache is worst, although she never gets entirely rid of it. When it is very bad and I put my hand on her head I can hear her blood beating in her head, at the same time her feet and hands are cold and freezing shudders run through her. During these attacks the patient is usually very weak, but in the times between she is quite gay.

May 17, 1850.

As it was just about the time when the patient was supposed to have her period, I put off mailing the letter in order to wait whether there would be a change in her feelings by the period. But the period has stayed off already several days and the patient felt very miserable and weak during these days. The headache is very bad, but the raising heat seems to be less. The patient complains about continuing stomach pressure and a pain above the stomach, but below her breasts. Hands and feet are always cold, at worst during the heat wave in her head. Arms and legs are weak and without strength, little appetite; the patient was constipated for the last days and we gave her therefore an enema Tuesday evening, <T27> Wednesday morning and evening, which she all kept and Thursday morning we gave her a soap pill; a bowel movement followed. The patient sleeps little and then only restlessly at night. During the day she is mostly in a state—half awake and half asleep. Now I don't know anything else to add but the question, when you will send medicine and whether we should stop giving it in case the period should come in the meantime or after the use of the medicine.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. W. Wesselhöft.

Mr. W. Wesselhöft, M.D., Boston.

W.B. July 4, 1850.

Dear Sir! We have used all of the medicine according to prescription. The patient has the menstruation regularly but very weak and was generally better, but sometimes still very sick with head and stomach ache. The warm baths prescribed for her and which we gave her from time to time seem to trouble her—she was always nearly lifeless in them—but altogether she feels better and has more strength. The heat in her head leaves her sometimes for a day, another day it appears even two or three times. She still has a continuing headache and stomach pressure. People who have seen her while she had the heat in her head believe she has a tendency for tuberculosis, but I console myself with the fact that she has no cough. We look forward to your advice.

From: F.A.M.; To: Judge Hermann Schneck.

To the Judge Dir. Hermann Schneck in Pirna Your Honor:

In March of this year I sent a certificate, in which I nominated you as my attorney of power in the inheritance of my late uncle, the former Friedrich Gottself Meissner in Pirna, to the Judge Dir. Hering in Pirna. I asked him to give it to you. But as I have received no answer from you nor from Mr. Hering I must fear that it did not arrive. I ask you therefore urgently to answer me at once after the arrival of my letter and to let me know whether you received my certificate, whether you would like to accept my offer in this affair, how the state of this affair is right now and which steps I have to redo to further my interests.

From: F.A.M.; To: Pirna City Law Court.

<T28> To the City Court of Law in Pirna.

W.B. Aug 12, 1850.

To Judge Dir. Hering in Pirna:

Your Honor! Your pleasant letter of June 18, 1849 reached me well and around Sept. 4 1849 I made a certificate for Mr. Advocate C. Friedrich and mailed it. But as I received no answer and was afraid that it got lost I made in March 1850 another one and that time for Judge Dir. H. Schneck. I addressed it to your Honor

with the request to give it to Mr. Schneck, but as I received no answer to this letter yet I don't know how to explain it, and take therefore the liberty to address these lines again to your Honor with the urgent request for news about the certificate and the present state of the inheritance. I preferably would like to know how much my share would be. With the same letter I sent a question to Judge D.H. S. and I look with desire forward to an answer to my letters.

Your devoted ... F.A. Meissner.

Care of Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg, N.Y.

Postscript: The signer of these lines refuses before your court to accept any steps undertaken from anybody but me and by my attorney of power in the affairs of my late uncle, Fr. G.M. in Pirna.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. de Ray.

Mr. de Ray, Ütersen near Altona .

W.B. Aug. 12, 1850.

Your Honor! The last news I heard from my brother K.F. Meissner, was a letter, which your nephew brought with himself to N.Y. I have written since this time already several times to him and requested urgent answers but in vain -. As he worked with you as a gardener and enjoyed your sympathy, you will please excuse my liberty to write to you and ask you to let me know his present address or in case he is still working at your place—please give him the enclosed letter and tell him to answer me at once.

Respectfully Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Administration of the Pinneberg Territory.

[I.T. ?] To the Administration of the Pinneberg Territory, Pinneberg in Holstein [Not mailed!].

W.B. Aug 12, 1850.

Your Honor! The signer, not personally known to your Honor, was a former land owner in Kummerfeld, where he has still his home rights (is still citizen) and where his daughter has now his belongings—a fortune of 1000 Cour. Mark. As I have reason to believe that my present stay is kept secret by my family and from an unknown reason, I take the liberty to tell it to you with the request to supervise my interests, fastened to my fortune, which my daughter has right now to my very probably soon to-be return.

F.A.M.

W.B., Mass., N.A.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T29> To Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg in N.Y.

W.B. Aug 12, 1850.

Your Honor! I request again your kindness and want you to mail the enclosed letter with the earliest mail. I ask you to put the postage on them. I have received no answer yet to all my letters you were so kind to mail in March as little as to all my earlier ones. I don't know any more how to explain it. I enclose \$2, which I believe to be enough for postage.

My best thanks for your kindness.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

To Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg in N.Y.

W.B. Sept 5, 1850.

Your Honor! On Aug 13 of this year I mailed a letter to you containing three letters for Germany and a two dollar bill, but as I have received no answer yet I am afraid they got lost. In this case I would like to write again and have it mailed with the next steamboat and therefore I sent these lines.

From: F.A.M.; To: "Water Cure."

<Written in English.> To "The Water Cure."

Sep 17, 1850 [Concerning Wilhelmine's chronic illness.].

From: Karl Meissner; To: F.A.M.

<T374> From Brother Karl Meissner [Loose letter.].

By the ship Gutenberg.

Address: Mr. Friedrich Adolf Meissner in West Barnstable, Massachusetts, North America.

Ütersen, Sep. 15, 1850.

Dear Adolf. I surely received your three letters, but would have liked to save you the postage as I don't know anything to write which could be of use to you.

Your first letter—despite the fact that it cost 21/—was welcome because it said you are still alive and quite well. There was a P.S. for Mr. Ullrich in it and so I had the letter sent to him by Marie, but received no answer from anywhere.

You inquire about an inheritance in Pirna. All I know about it is this: A long time ago a letter was read to me in the courthouse of Altona, saying that Mr. Friedrich Gotthelf Meissner had died in Pirna and that I had a share in the inheritance as son of his half-brother, the late minister Mr. Ernst Friedrich Meissner in Schönbach. I therefore had to make a certificate to an advocate in Pirna. For this purpose Mr. Karl August Friedrich in Pirna was proposed to me, whom already you and all the other relatives made to their attorney of power. There was no cause for me to write therefore to you, as I was told that you had already a certificate made, too. The advocate Held in Altona asked 10 [S?] for the certificate but wanted to give me credit until I would get my share, but so far he received no answer yet from Pirna. After having received your 2nd letter which also cost 21/ I wrote personally a letter to Mr. Karl Aug. Friedrich in Pirna, which I mailed personally at the post office in Altona on June 11, A.D., but received no answer either. Now I got your 3rd letter about this matter from a man, but I can give you more information as I know myself.

When I was still in Dresden, Uncle Traugott [see <T29>—LPM] told me once explicitly that I cannot count of an inheritance from any of the relatives. Therefore I don't believe that I will ever get <T375> anything and it would be better if you would waste no more postage on this matter. In case I should hear something of importance to you, I won't fail to write it to you. -.

Otherwise I surely would like to know how you are doing. Betty, Aunt and Marie live in Altona, Wilhelm [Karl's son—LPM] is with a gardener, Mr. Petersen, in Elbe. I am with Mr. de Roy. I have not been in Kummerfeld for a long time. I hope and wish you are healthy and stay that way and that you may live many years even without the inheritance.

Your brother, Karl Friedrich Meissner .

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T29, cont.> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg, N.Y. [Loose letter.].

W.B. Sept 17, 1850.

Your Honor! On Aug 13 of this year I mailed a letter containing three letters for Germany and a \$2 bill for postage to you. As I received no answer to this letter and feared it got lost I took liberty to address a letter to you around Sept 5, in which I asked you about it. As I received to this letter no answer either I see myself forced to write to you again and ask for your kind reply.

From: Karl Meissner; To: F.A.M.

From Brother Karl Meissner [Loose letter.].

Address: To Mr. Friedrich Adolf Meissner in West Barnstable, Mass., North America.

Ütersen, Oct. 19, 1850.

Dear Adolf, After having mailed by the ship Gutenberg on Oct. 1 A.D. a letter to you which contained nothing of importance, only the announcement that I had received your letters but was unable to give any

information about the inheritance in Pirna, I received on Oct. 5, a letter from the advocate Friedrich in Pirna, of which I send you a copy:

To the gardener, Mr. Karl Friedrich Meissner in Ütersen.

According to your honored order, I took care for your rights in the inheritance, which your uncle, the merchant Fried. G. Meissner left behind. The whole inheritance consists in about 8000 [Thalers?] and is divided into two parts. One part belongs to the full blooded race and the other to the half-blooded sisters and brothers of the deceased. The first part is double the size of the 2nd one. From the latter side six people exist, namely the heirs of six half-blooded brothers and sisters; You, then you compete with two brothers, one of them, Fr. A. Meissner, is in America and the other, E.F. Meissner, is supposed to be dead. [Ernst Friedrich Meissner, b. 1807, d. about 1824 aged about 17 and apparently without offspring—LPM.] I was so far unable to prove the latter's death and therefore it is still a question whether this part of the inheritance is divided into two or three shares. The house here in this town, which belongs to the inheritance, has been sold lately and 5350 [Thalers?] were paid for it. One therefore can expect that soon the inheritance will be distributed. The cash money certainly was already divided last year, but is not paid yet as the death certificate of your brother is still missing. In case I am unable to get one till the next time when the other parts of the inheritance are divided I will demand that the share belonging to E.F. Meissner and his descendants is kept while you and your brother in America will get their parts. I will take care that it will be sent to you right away. E.F. Meissner, born 1807, is supposed to have died in Dresden. But as all my investigations led to no result I hereby ask you whether you are willing to tell me when E.F. M. died, in which part of town it was, where he once lived, whether he maybe died somewhere else and whether you therefore can give me a death certificate.

Respectfully I sign, yours, Friedrich, Advocate.

== Pirna, Oct. 1, 1850.

According to my calculation we both have to expect 1/54 of 8000 [M?] Saxon currency. This would be about 370 [M?] and after deducting all expenses 300 [M?] about should be left. As I cannot give a distinct information about Ernst I left the letter unanswered. If you know something about it then do it yourself.

It is all the same here. Nothing changed. I would be glad once to hear again how you are doing.

Your brother, Karl Friedrich Meissner.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

10 Nov 1850 [excerpt].

... my harvest turns out very scanty ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich.

<T29, cont.> To Mr. Karl Friedrich, Advocate in Pirna.

W.B. Nov 12, 1850.

I have received your letter—dated Oct. 1st 1850—on Nov. 6. I cannot understand how you as a business man could put off so long an answer to my letters and caused to me so many unnecessary expenses and troubles. I sure cannot call this done in my interest?

Concerning the death of my brother Ernst Friedrich I can tell you this: He died in the year 1824 or 25 in the little Field Castle near Dresden. He was employed at that time in Court Printing Press and learned how to become a compositor. Our uncle [mother's brother—LPM], the Court Gardener Karl August Seidel, was our guardian. He or the gardener Treugott Jakob Seidel can affirm his death. Also can this be proven through the documents of the Guardian Administration Office in Dresden.

<T30> (Our cousin Mrs. Büchel in Dresden surely remembers this, too. Norbert Meissner knows about it at any rate. We have, however, very little communication with our other relatives.).

I am not interested in having money sent to me only partly. I hope that my information enables you to bring this affair clear and please let me know how much I am to receive from you, in order to write a check for you, as it seems to me to be very unsafe to collect money in cash.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Judge Hering.

To Mr. Hering, Judge Dir. in Pirna.

W.B. Nov 12 1850.

Your Honor! I have received your kind answer on Nov 6 and I cannot omit to see my deepest thanks to you. Also my attorney of power, Mr. Friedrich the advocate, has given answer to me—only and alone caused by your and Mr. Schneck's visit to him, as he writes himself. The information I gave Mr. Friedrich about the death of my brother will enable him to prove it validly and to clear the situation. As your Honor recommended Mr. Friedrich to me I am convinced that my little inheritance will go to safe hands. I want to thank you once again for your lines.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg in N.Y.

W.B. Nov 12 1850.

Through your kindness I have received a letter from Pirna on Nov. 6 of this month. I have to receive from there a little inheritance of nearly 200 [Thalers?] and want to ask for your advice whether it would be better for me to have it sent to me in cash—in money or silver—or whether it would not be better to make a bill of exchange of it and whether it is possible to do so through your negotiation. I mean it to do it by this way: I write a money-order saying that my attorney of power is to pay the amount to you or your orders and you pay it to me then here in N.Y. (Please excuse my inexperience in things of commercial matter.) Please be so kind as to mail the enclosed letter with the next Bremen steamer. It is not necessary to put postage on it.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Hamburg.

W.B. Nov 12, 1850.

Dear Lina! I am sure you are very well or else I should think you ever remembered your father and would ask once how he is feeling. -

I would like you to send me for next spring the following items. If you can mail these things in the beginning of March by a <T31> sailing ship or in the beginning of April by a steamboat, I am sure they will arrive here still on time.

[Order list...].

I expect that you will answer this letter after arrival, that I will know whether I can count on it. Give my regards to your husband and your children.

Your father ...

[P.S.] Please write the following address on all boxes or barrels, which you will send to me: Mr. F.A. Meissner, Care of Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of H., N.Y. Besides that write "Garden Seeds" on the barrel with seeds, and on the others write "Trees," "Shrubs," or "Plants" according to what they contain.

Please enclose with the seeds some price—"Courants" [current prices?—LPM], a Booth's Tree Nursery Catalog and one about carnation seeds from the place where Bielenberg and the other gardeners of Altona received their wonderful carnations from in the last years. I sure would like to have some.

I am most interested in the things I underlined, especially pear seeds, carnations, and Stocks seeds. As you have to buy these I will compensate you for your expenses during the next summer if you need it badly, but I believe that you must be rich already as you surely save everything which I might have wasted.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

16 Dec 1850 [excerpt].

... The barn has cost \$1299.90 I am very much obliged to you for your kind offer to make your house my home in case I should come to Boston and I only wish I could furnish my house in such a style that I could offer the same hospitality to you. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

19 Jan 1851 [excerpt].

... I am very sorry that you feel so much troubled about getting William a place, but I hope you will remember that it was your own kindly offering we accepted.... I have put in the farm 201 loads manure and the harvest calculated at a fair price amounts to \$126.80, a sum about triple as last year but still a very discouraging result ... my earnings of the past year have not sustained our wants, I have only procured what was necessary on food and some coarse clothing and there is still a debt of about \$25 to pay for. I rejoice in having a good barn and shall use every effort to make up the deficiency of the last year; how far I shall be successful I do not know. I wish you would assist me with about 500# Guano, that is as much as it wants for manuring an acre of land, but I don't intent to increase my liabilities with if you could not do it for your satisfaction to see me getting a living on a farm where nobody else could I shall not want it, because I dont know if I could ever pay for.

From: Doris Meissner; To: P.H. Kierulff.

<T31, cont.> From "Doris Meissner" [Johanna Friedericka Doris Runtzler Sennewald].

To:[brother-in-law] Mr. P.H. Kierulff, Carpenter, Bükenbreitengang, Platz No. 22, Hut No. 3, Hamburg.
January 1851—W.B., Mass., N.A.

Dear Sister! After having mailed our last letter in January 1848 to you, we received your and Mr. Merkel's letter—dated Dec. 1847, we also received your letters from August 1848.

We are still living in W.B., where we sent our last letters from and as our situation is still much the same, only we all become some years older and so we put off always writing to you.

July 25 of last year we received a letter from Wilhelm [her brother, F.W. Runtzler: see <T40>—LPM], in which he wrote that he arrived safely in N.Y. and that all of you were well and healthy when he left. We answered him at once but never heard from him again. If you know what became out of him and where he is now, let us please know about it and his address.

[Her children:—LPM] Wilhelmine was ailing a lot during the last years but is better in this winter. Leonore is working since last autumn and weighs 146 lb. William weighs 180 lb. and wants to go to sea in spring. Henry goes to school and we all are well and healthy. We suffer no want of anything, but we could not save anything either. Before one knows the language and the <T32> situation here it is very hard and I am afraid Wilhelm will have a rough time at first, but this will go over.

We cannot advise Kierulff to come over here. At least as a cabinet-maker he will have no future. The furniture here is very, very cheap and are all made square. In case little Lina should be still unmarried and has the wish to come over here, she can have a much better life here and with little ease and little work in a week she can make \$1 that is three F eight S [maybe: F = franken, S = shilling—M. Camphäusen]. She can come to us and we will accept her kindly and find a job for her. When she arrives at N.Y. she only has to go to the Consul of Hamburg, who knows us and who can tell her how to find us best, but she needs Meissner's address.

Give our regards please to sister Karoline, brother Heinrich, your husband and children, and please let us know about you soon again. Give your letter to Norbert Slomann instead to the post office and address it to F.A.M., W.B., Mass. N.A.

From: F.A.M.; To: F.C. Merkel.

To Mr. F.C. Merkel, Weavermaster in Hamburg, Brauerstraße No. 44.

W.B. Jan 1851.

Dear friend! After having mailed our last letter in Jan. 1848 to you we received your letter of Dec. 1847 and also your letter—dated Aug 1848, which we read with great pleasure. You surely did not believe at that time that the agitations in Holstein would last so long.

We are still in W.B. from where we wrote last. We have—to be sure—enough to live but cannot save anything yet. Doris is still sometimes homesick for her friends in Hamburg and cannot get used entirely yet to the life here. The children however are quite happy. William will go to sea this spring; Wilhelmine was sick during the last years but is better now, she becomes tall and strong. Leonore is working since last autumn and is very “chic,” she weighs 146 lb. Henry also grew big and strong.

The social life here is miserable; one does not find some good friends together sitting over a glass of punch. The so-called Temperance Societies are so powerful that nobody is allowed to drink in public brandy, wine, or beer, as this is looked upon as a shame, but they drink henceforth more and more secretly. Sanctimony is here a big virtue. In public life many things—to be sure—are better than in Germany, but they are still incomplete. The plurality always makes the laws, the crowd however is not always the smartest or the honest ones; they only look for their own good or the advantage of others (when they get paid for it). The proverb: “Grease <T33> swims on top” is here as valid as anywhere else. We have here now similar agitations as in Germany on account of the slavery, which still exists in the Southern states and which the Northern states want to get rid of, but I don’t believe in an outbreak.

It will be a great joy to us to hear from you and your wife and children. We hope all of you are well and healthy and we ask you to greet all friends from us. We greet all of you very much.

In case you think of sending once some of your children over here, send them before they are entirely grown up, so that they can go still to school for one or two years. They learn then the language better and get better used to the life here.

I wish you could [see—LPM] what guy William grew up to be, and all the others speak English very well, too. That is just what keeps the most Germans from being successful—namely not knowing how to speak English. Besides this it is easier here at any rate than in Germany to become something here.

If you write us, please send your letter to Robert Slomann instead through the post office and address it as above to.

Your friend ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

2 Feb 1851 [excerpt].

... Now as spring is at the door it would be a waste of time to cart clay ... if you intend to spend some \$15, as it seems by your letter, to help me get along I think it would be to the best advantage to spend it on Guano ... but you may do as you feel disposed to.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

19 Mar 1851 [excerpt].

... yesterday we had some high tides ... a large hole is broken in the dam, all my swamp was under water as well as a great deal of the tillage land round the edges of the marsh. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T33, cont.> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H. in N.Y.

W.B., Mass., March 24, 1851.

Your Honor! According to a letter of my attorney of power in Pirna I am supposed to receive so far—after all expenses were deducted—money in the amount of 153 [Th?] 19 [NGC?] three [R?]. I therefore use your kind permission and ask you to send this little sum to me. For that reason I enclose a money order. I hope you inform me when you have received the money. Maybe I come personally to N.Y. to receive the money from you.

I would like to mail the letter to Mr. Friedrich at the same time as the money order. I would like to ask you to send the other letters which are only friendship letters with a Hamburg ship in order to save the higher postage—all without postage.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich.

Mr. Karl Friedrich, Advocate in Pirna in Saxony.

W.B. Mass, March 24, 1851.

153 [Th?] 19 [NGC?] three [R?].

Please pay to Mr. Ferdinand Karck or to his orders, in Saxon currency, one hundred and fifty-three Thalers 19 [NGC?] three [R?].

F.A. Meissner.

<T34> To Mr. Karl Friedrich, Advocate in Pirna.

Following your letter of February 21, 1851 I have written with the date of today a money order for Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H. in N.Y. and I request from you to pay my assets (153 [Th?] 19 [NGC?] three [R?]) after being shown the money order.

If you could send to me by Oct. 13 of this year the amount of 100 [Th?] for my left-over assets in the value of 127 [Th?] 11 [?] and the interest due, I would be willing to give it to you or sell it for this amount. But it must be understood that I have no more expenses and red tape, besides that I don't want to have anything to do with a third party. I therefore want you to send me a cheque you made in your own name for this amount which is payable Oct. first of this year—with one word—that you will guarantee that 100 Thalers will be paid to me for Oct. 13 of this year without any extra expenses. If you cannot arrange this affair that way I want you to introduce me to my debtor and to arrange it that way that I can to receive by money order yearly the amount due to me. For that reason it is necessary for me to know the time of the payments.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl F. Meissner.

To K.F. Meissner in Ütersen near Altona.

W.B. March 24, 1851.

Dear Brother! I have received your letters from Sept. 15 and Oct. 19, 1850 and I was happy to hear that you are still alive and well. I have in the meantime received already a couple of letters from my attorney of power in Pirna. According to the last one, which I received yesterday, part of my inheritance is paid out and the remainder is supposed to be paid in 10 yearly payments—what a red tape! I am still well and doing fine so far. Please let me know from time to time how you are doing.

With friendship, Your brother.

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival Dorchester Mass.

17 Apr 1851 [excerpt].

... The "water cure" is helping Leonore and we will soon start it on Wilhelmine—we have delayed as she has been improving. Leonore was sick when she went to work for a neighbor but when she came home got well after five weeks of the treatment. ...

In my last I wrote you about some high water but we had it still higher ... about 1/4 acre of my best garden ground which I had manured very high and planted with early vegetables are washed away.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T34, cont.> To Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H., N.Y.

W.B. April 28, 1851.

Your Honor! On March 25 of this year I mailed a letter through you which contained a money order to my attorney of power in Pirna in the value of 153 [Th?] 19 [NGC?] three [R?] which I asked you to collect for

me. At the same time I enclosed a letter for Mr. K. Friedrich, Advocate in Pirna, and several letters for Hamburg, in order to have them mailed. I am interested to know whether <T35> you received this letter of mine, especially the money order. I would have dared already earlier to ask you about it, if I would not have believed, that you maybe wanted to wait the departure of the last Bremen steamer. As I have received no answer so far from you I can honestly say I am worried about it.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

To Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H., N.Y.

W.B. May 27, 1851.

I have received your Honor's letter telling me that my seeds and plants have safely arrived from Hamburg. The cheapest way to send the goods here would be by sailing ship to one of the southern ports of Cape Cod—Hyannis or Cotuit port. But as it is already so late in the year and possibly no sailing ship is going this route, the best way would be probably by steamboat and railroad by the Fall River route, namely first by steamboat to Fall River, then by railroad to Middleboro and from there on by Cape Cod Branch Railroad to Sandwich. In case you should send the goods this route, it would be better to mark them Sandwich instead of W.B.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand Karck.

W.B. June 16, 1851.

I have received your kind letter of June 5 as well as the trees etc. from Hamburg. Unfortunately the trees were so carelessly packed that they all dried out. I say for your prompt and nice transport my deepest thanks. I would have enclosed your expenses if I would not have been sure that the money from Pirna will arrive at you in a short time. I sent a letter to my attorney of power (you were so kind to mail it!) saying that I would sell for a round sum of 100 Thalers my remaining assets which were supposed to be paid to me in payments during a period of 10 years. He agreed in this deal and therefore I send another money order for 100 Thalers and ask you to collect it for me. If you will kindly send the enclosed lines back to me after having received my letter, it will prove to me the true arrival of my letter and will save you the trouble of writing to me.

W.B. Mass. June 16, 1851.

100 [Thalers].

Please pay to Mr. Ferdinand Karck or to his orders in Saxon currency, One hundred Thalers.

F.A. Meissner.

To Mr. Karl Friedrich, Advocate in Pirna.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Friedrich.

<T36> Mr. Karl Friedrich, Advocate in Pirna.

W.B. June 16, 1851.

I have received your letter of May 2, 1851 and following it I made a money order for the amount of 100 Thalers, which I still have to get for Mr. Ferdinand Karck. I request that you kindly send the money and I want to thank you for fulfilling my wish concerning my remaining assets.

I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Capt. John Percival.

<Written in English.> Capt. John Percival USN Dorchester.

W.B. Jul 6 1851.

Dear Sir, Your generous offer to release me from my obligations to you, viz.: a note of \$1500.00 and a note of \$230.00 with interest, by paying you no order before the first day of April next One Thousand Dollars, I accept with the greatest gratitude, I will pay you the money as required, and am your—.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T36, cont.> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H. in N.Y.

W.B. July 8, 1851.

I have received your letter of June 18 with the good news that my money order was paid and I ask you to write out a cheque for me in the amount due, that is \$95.00, which I can easily sell here to one of the grocers which do their shopping in N.Y., or—if you prefer and believe that there is no risk of loss to have it sent by mail.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld.

W.B. Aug 7, 1851.

I have received your letters from Jan first and March 30 as well as the trees, shrubs, plants, and seeds.

The trees and shrubs were all dried out and would not have had much value anyhow as they were not packed well at all and were bound only together like a bundle of bushes. The shrubs seemed to have been put so wet into the barrels that they all but a few were spoilt. It is sure a miracle that the seeds are still mostly OK, as you did not even pack them either in a little box by themselves.

I have read with great joy the assurances of your love in your letter of Jan. 1 and I would be still more convinced about them if your deeds would agree with your words. How come that you took so little consideration for my wishes concerning the trees and shrubs?—How come that you did not announce me the death of my uncle in Pirna right away? -.

As I have left my former home again and don't know yet the end of my wandering, address please your letters as follows: Mr. F.A.M., Care of Mr. F. Karck, C. of H., N.Y.—in case you feel still moved once to write again to your father -.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T37> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H. in N.Y.

W.B. Aug. 7, 1851.

I have received your Certificate of Deposit at the Mechanic Bank in N.Y. for the amount of \$95 and I thank you very much for it. I ask you to mail the enclosed letters with a Hamburger ship or the next German ship and to put postage on them.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Rufus Day.

<Written in English.> Mr. Rufus Day.

29 Aug 1851 [excerpt].

... do you still own that white mare ... when is the next court in your county, as I have been thinking about to get naturalized then. [See <T74>: "1854, May 23, F.A. Meissner became a citizen.] William my oldest boy has gone to sea on a trading voyage to Central America.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.F. Wurdeman.

<Written in English.> G.F. Wurdeman, Aiken, S. Carolina.

12 Sep 1851 [excerpt].

... have read some remarks in the Boston Almanac ... would like to inquire about Enterprise, Florida ...
[I am] now naturalized.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T37, cont.> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, C. of H. in N.Y.

W.B. Oct 13, 1851.

I received your letter of Aug. 26 with the enclosed deposit paper of the Mechanic Bank for \$70 and I thank you for the prompt and kind execution of this affair and I would like to ask your help and advice in another affair, if I can be sure not to bother you too much.

I surely want to emigrate to Florida but I cannot get away from here earlier than in November. Do you think there is still an opportunity to go to Jacksonville, Florida by ship? My family has five members and we have pretty much luggage and it would probably be too expensive for me to go by steamboat there over Charleston and Savannah. Would it be impossible for you to let me know the cost (in round figures) of the one or other route from N.Y. and whether it would be dangerous to do so at this time of the year?

Besides this I would like to get naturalized before going to Florida. It is impossible here as I don't live here yet for five years [in Mass.—LPM] but in N.Y. I could find witnesses who can affirm that I am already five years here [in N.Y.—LPM]. I therefore would like to know whether there is a meeting of the court in this or the next months which will accept a petition for naturalization.

Letters from Florida:

Most letters from Florida that are written in English are business letters – in particular, there are many letters about the purchase of Guano.

From: F.A.M.; To: F.C. Merkel.

[<T37>, cont.] Mr. F.C. Merkel, Weavermaster, Brauerstraße No. 44 in Hamburg.

W.B. Jan [18]52.

Dear friend! If you and Mr. Kierulff have received my letters from Jan. 1851, you will know that at that time we all were well with the exception of Wilhelmine (who is better right now, too), so that we all started the new year in good health, what we wish all of you, too.

We are about to leave for the South and think of traveling in a few days. We have never heard again of brother Wilhelm, who wrote to us 1-1/2 year ago that he had safely arrived in N.Y. Please give my regards to sister Karoline and write and tell them to know Wilhelm's address in case they have it. Please, give my regards to your wife and children and to all friends, Doris, Mine, Lore, & Henry. William is at sea since nine months, according to the last news from him fine and well. If you write to me (please do!), please write to:

F.A.M., care of F. B, Consul of H., N.Y. City.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T38> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg, N.Y.

Enterprise, Orange Co. [Florida], February 16, 1852.

You will have saw from the few lines, which I wrote to you in a hurry about 10 days ago from Jacksonville, that we safely arrived here, and that we had received no news yet about the arrival of our things. We expect the steamboat with the mail of this week for tomorrow, and in case our things or some news from you should arrive I will put it at the end of the letter.

Here very good land for \$1.25 per acre can still be bought, but the region is nearly not cultivated at all. The few farmers living here get their income by raising fruits and cattle. An ox costs \$10, a cow with calf \$8, but everything else is sinfully expensive, is brought here from N.Y. over Savannah. Therefore I would like to ask you to send me the goods listed below with the next sailing ship, and to address them to me, care of Mr. Finnigan in Jacksonville. For that reason I include a money order to H. for \$35. If you write to me I would like to know how much live oak moss is worth in N.Y. as well as Florida Tutoaks [?]. I can send some of both things to the market in autumn. I hope we will enjoy your sympathy in the future, too ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Charles J. Schönheit.

Mr. Charles J. Schönheit, Jacksonville, Florida.

Enterprise, March 2, 1852.

Dear Fellow-countryman! I have received your friendly letter and my belongings, and I would have answered right away by the returning steamboat, if I would not have been absent at that time. I thank you best for transport of my luggage, and include \$1 for the expenses you had.

I send to you at the same time by steamboat some trees, shrubs, and plants (my Georginen [?], and potatoes got frozen) as well as a package with 100 grains of vegetable seeds in 10 different kinds and 110 grains of flower seeds in 12 kinds. The trees and shrubs are for you as well as much of the seeds as you can use. The remaining seeds I would like you to sell, I take back what is left, and 1/3 of the money I give to you for the sale. If you could send me two water pails and 12 lb. Of green coffee by writing on the bill for the seeds with the next boat, I would be very pleased. I leave it up to you to make a price for the seeds. The seeds are fresh and raised by myself. - .

I could not so far find a place to buy that I liked, and therefore rented something for the time being. When I will be living <T39> on my own land and be lived in a little more, it would be my greatest joy if you would visit us.

For the continuance of your friendship asks your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. F. Karck, C. of H., N.Y.

Enterprise, March 23, 1852.

I mailed you a letter containing a money-order for \$40.00 and the request to send me provisions for it on Feb. 16. As I have received no answer yet I take the liberty to ask whether you received my letter and cheque. My luggage arrived safely and well.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Charles J. Schönheit.

Mr. Charles J. Schönheit, Jacksonville.

Enterprise, March 23, 1852.

Dear friend! I would like you very much to send me by the next boat two perfect mosquito nets, not too short and narrow for twin beds for \$1.00 per piece, and I will send you the money right away. I can buy them here for the same price but we believe you to have better ones. We would prefer green.

From: F.A.M.; To: Winterhoff Piper & Karck.

To Mr. Winterhoff Piper & Karck, N.Y.

Enterprise, April 27, 1852.

I received your letter of March 12 on March 30, and the goods arrived April 6, however all my writing seemed to have missed its purpose - to buy things cheaper - because the flour - to be sure - seems to be very good so far we checked it, but the coffee for 12-1/2 cents per lb. is very bad, not only the look of it, but also the taste. In the meantime, I bought coffee as good as the one from N.Y. for eight cents per lb. <T40> here in Jacksonville. N... [?] are listed for six cts. Per lb., while I bought these for 4-1/2 cts. per lb. in Barnstable. I did not order scythe at all, and the grindstone, listed with 100 lb. and 2-1/2 cts. each weighs only 86 lbs. It probably lost six lb. by drying out. I think of sending to you a load of corn [grain—LPM] during the summer. Till then, as I don't like to include money in a letter, I remain your debtor.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Morris Keil.

Mr. Morris Keil, Jacksonville.

May 4, 1852.

I am sorry that I bothered you with the berries, but I still have to learn first what people eat here and what not. In the New England states, where we lived so far, they sold very well. I wrote to Mr. Schönheit to make up a price, 6-1/4 cts. is the usual price, but if you think it to be good you can sell them for 5.

From Wilhelm Meissner [son of Karl Friedrich Meissner].

<Loose letter—Translated by M.C.>.

Mr. Fried. Adolph Meissner, West Barnstable, Mass., America. New York. .

Missent and For. from W. Barnstable. Enterprise, Orange County, Florida.

Altona, May 11 1852.

Dear Uncle, You will be happy to hear some news from Holstein and also from Altona. First I have to tell you the sad news of our dear mother's death. She died after spitting blood for several weeks on Jan. 15. Father, Marie, and the old aunt are quite well. Only I alone have to stay 14 days in bed on account of my knee, which I hurt badly, but now I nearly recovered entirely with the aid of a doctor. We heard from Kummerfeld that Lina is quite sick since her last childbirth, but is feeling better now. Uncle Ullrich and his family are all healthy and well. Eloise and Lene are both engaged. The first wants to get married this summer, the other wants to wait still a few years.

Now I want to tell you, how I came all along – because Father writes always only so little. – In the autumn of 1847, Hans and I left the aunt. Hans went to work on a farm and I went to my mother, therefore I worked till spring in Dresden as a china-painter, because my desire to go to sea was destroyed by the fact that I first was to learn a profession. Then I became Mr. Petersen's apprentice as a gardener and worked in the Consul Mr. Lrand's garden. I stayed there for three years. Now I work with the gardener Wolbe in Altona and with impatience I await the time when I will cross the ocean.

Dear Uncle, I would like you to tell me, how things look where you are, as I intend to go to America still this summer. If you have a job for me, please write what the most necessary tools are there and what grows there. Maybe I can bring a few seeds along. Please write me about your cattle and how is it with hunting? Best Uncle, I look forward to your answer with great desire. We hope you and your family are well.

Best regards from all families Holstein, especially from Father, Marie and me.

Your impatient nephew, Wilhelm.

From: F.A.M.; To: Morris Keil.

<T40, cont.> Mr. Morris Keil, Jacksonville.

May 18, 1852.

I want to thank you very much for your information about the place of Col Hollow. I cannot say yet anything in detail about it but maybe later I would ask you for your kind negotiation.

From: F.A.M.; To: F.W. Runtzler.

Mr. F.W. Runtzler, Care of Mr. C. Bartels, No. 42 Spruce St., N.Y.

June 15, 1852.

Dear Brother-in-Law! As we did not hear anything from you again after your first letter, which we received in Barnstable, we believed that our answer did not reach you any more, and suspected you went to the West. Now we heard from Hamburg, to where we wrote for that reason, that you are still in N.Y. and doing well. We heard also that Mr. Merkel included a letter for us in your letter. We traveled in Jan. through N.Y., and I and Doris and the children would have all been happy to see you.

We left Barnstable, and went to Florida. The climate on this peninsula is warm but moderated by ocean winds. We have here since middle of May ripe watermelons, one can sow and reap through the whole year, my pears planted in March are ripe, as well as the potatoes which I think of sowing for the 2nd time and then once again in October. The most profitable product here seems to be oranges. My neighbor who lives here since six years has planted during this time about 40 trees, from which he sold fruits last summer for \$400. It is easy to find wild orange trees in the woods. Good land can be bought for \$1.25 per acre. [Insert from <T41>] Besides that cane sugar, pineapples, rice, and many other fruits are raised here. [End of insert.].

We all would be very happy to hear from you again. Best wishes to you, your wife, and children. .

Your ...

<T41> In case the "Homestead Bill" which is right now in the Senate should become a law, every family can from now on get 160 acres of Government land free.

From: Doris Meissner and F.A.M.; To: J.H. Runtzler.

Mr. J.H. Runtzler in Drönnewitz in Mecklenburg.

June 15, 1852, Enterprise, Florida.

Dear Brother! Your letter which we received by last mail made us all very happy, and I could nearly be mad with Jette that she kept it away from us for so long. It is nearly a year since you wrote that letter, and you surely waited in vain for our answer for a long time. We read with much regret about your eye diseases. I have been quite well during all that time. However, Lore and Mina have the cold fever ["chills and fever" = malaria? - LPM] since eight days. William is at sea since more than a year, and at the same time as your letter arrived did we receive the first letters from. He is well, and doing fine.

Meissner will inform you about the wanted subjects as land etc. We would all be very happy if you would decide to come over here, and still more if you would settle in our neighborhood. At any rate we hope that you won't behave as unbrotherly as Wilhelm who lets us know nothing about him. We traveled through N.Y. in January. How much would we have liked to visit him if we would have only known where he was.

Now my dear brother - farewell, and write please soon to us.

Best regards to you, your wife, and children from.

Your sister Doris.

== [from FAM to J.H. Runtzler:].

To my unknown friend! I try to answer your questions as well as I can.

All uncultivated land is divided into "townships," six miles long and six miles wide; every township is again divided into 36 sections, one mile long and one mile wide; every section into four quarter-sections, 1/2 mile long and 1/2 mile wide or 160 acres. Every quarter section is again divided into quarters each of which contains 40 acres. These 40 acre lots are the smallest quantity of land which can be bought from the Government, and cost \$50 or \$1.25 per acre. (\$1 is three fr. eight sl. In Hamburg currency.) Much land is bought by speculators which resell it for \$5 to \$10 per acre. They made now a law in Congress which passed the House, and now goes to the Senate, and it is called the "Homestead Bill." According to it, every family father receives 160 acres land free from now on.

The prices of cultivated land are not easy to define: \$20, \$50, and \$100 per acre, but generally cultivated land should be called exhausted land. The American sows and plants as long as the land will produce something, and then <T42> he tries to sell his farm to a stupid guy, and looks around for a fresh piece of land, which is still full of strength. It is not very often used to lease land, but often it is cultivated only by half [Reference to share-cropping? - LPM].

In Barnstable where we lived so far I bought 25 acres of bad and exhausted land (very sandy!), a good horse, and a good barn for \$2000; I paid no interest the first three years. During this time I improved the soil so much that I could not only pay \$120 interest but also could make a living. I raised vegetables, and had a very good market. I sold a cabbage which can be bought for two cents in N.Y. for eight cents there, and everything else in about the same proportion.

But the longer I lived there and the more the German stupidity passed, the more I realized that I had to work only for the rich man, who had loaned me the money to buy the farm, and then I thought how to become independent. One cannot receive any more Government land for \$1.25 per acre in the Northern coastal regions, and in order to get it I either had to go to the South or to the West. The true immigrants go to the West (there is the best land!), but the products are very cheap, and cannot be brought to the market on same places. Besides these regions are very unhealthy. I therefore decided to go South, and that is to Florida, and I believe that my expectations were not deceived here. We made the trip from Barnstable to Enterprise (a distance of more than 1000 Engl. Miles) in the middle of winter in the month of January by train and steamboat in 14 days, some days of which we even stopped on the route.

If you take the map of America into your hand you will find where Florida hangs together with the continent, Jacksonville, which is Florida's main sea harbor. It is on the mouth of the St. Johns River, and consisted a couple years ago in only some huts, and was entirely unknown. You every week "packet ships" go between Jacksonville and N.Y., and steamboats between J., Savannah, and Charleston, so that it is connected to all big coast cities by steam shipping.

The St. Johns River is a beautiful big river, bigger than the Elbe, on which every week a steamboat drives 150 miles up to Lake Monroe. But in less than two years there will be a steamboat going daily this way. Lake Monroe is a beautiful lake, four to six miles long and wide. Here is Enterprise, where we are living now. I have selected a wonderful piece of land, close to the river, and six miles below the lake. The steamboat stops always here (where we want to settle down) in order to load wood.

<T43> One can still find here very good land for \$1.25 per acre, but the best places are in big demand. The climate here is one of the best of the world, it is warm but moderated by sea winds. In the forests grow oaks, maples, cypresses, palm trees, magnolias, oranges, and many other evergreen bushes and trees. Oranges, figs, rice, corn [grain? - LPM], cotton-wool, pineapples, and all possible kinds of vegetables are raised here.

The corn I planted beginning of May is now ripe as well as the potatoes, which I will plant again now and a 3rd time in October. Since middle of May we have ripe watermelons. My neighbor told me that he took off 40 melons from one plant during the year. Another neighbor, who lives here now six years, has planted about 40 orange trees, and sold last summer fruits for \$400, and believes to make this year as much, too.

Wine will be one of the main products in a few years - it thrives excellently here. If you want to come over with your family, and want to settle down here, you must take off from Hamburg in autumn, but not later than the beginning of September in order to arrive here during the winter time. If you will write to me in advance you will find a letter waiting in N.Y. from me. If not all of you just come here to us. All of you are very welcome. We are going to build a log house with palm leaves as roof in eight days, and then you live as a free man among free people.

Please, give my regards to your family, and I hope to meet you soon in person. I remain your ...

From Doris Meissner; To: P.H. Kierulff.

To: Mr. P.H. Kierulff, Carpenter, Bükenbreitengang, Platz No. 22, Hut No. 3, Hamburg.

Dear sister and brother-in-law! We have received your letter, and learned from it that all of you are well and healthy. We went 1000 miles to the South, and live now in Florida. Oranges, figs, cane sugar, rice, cotton, and many other fruits are raised here, and there is nearly no winter at all; one can sow and reap the whole year through. The summer heat is not higher than where we lived before but longer. Already in the middle of May we had ripe watermelons. They have besides much deer here, that we several times overate of it.

Henry, Lore, and Mina have since eight days the cold fever but are better now. We have also received letters from William. He is well, and thinks of coming home in October. We did not hear anything yet from brother Wilhelm. I ask you to mail right away the enclosed letter to brother Heinrich but you first have to put down the full address.

We give our best regards to all of you, and to sister Karoline and Merckels.

Your sister...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Leonhardt.

<T44> To Mr. Leonhardt, Judge and Advocate in Pinneberg.

Enterprise, Fla. June 22, 1852.

Your Honor! In case that you are still alive and feeling well, I take the liberty to ask you whether you would not like to buy my property in Kummerfeld, which belonged first to me and now to my daughter - in which case I ask you to let me know how much you are willing to pay. If you don't feel like accepting the offer, I would like to know whether you would take over the notice and collection of it. In one or the other case please include in your answer a scheme (sample) of the papers I have to fill out for this purpose.

You saw from the address above that I live now in Florida, the most southern state of the U.S. of N.A. We raise here wine, oranges, figs, cane sugar, corn [grain? - LPM], rice, cotton, arrowroot [?], yams, and all kinds of vegetables. The climate is one of the nicest of the world, although warm, it is moderated by sea

winds. The region is visited a lot in winter by people with chest diseases from the northern states. Deer is so numerous here that some people who don't like to work live nearly exclusively from deer meat.

Expecting your kind answer, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Winterhoff Piper & Karck.

Mr. Winterhoff Piper & Karck, N.Y.

The extraordinarily wet, unhealthy summer did not only throw me and my family down for the whole summer – the more as we still had to fight with the unaccustomed warm climate, – but also the youth of every house and every family is sick. This kept me from my plan,—the business with the moss –. I therefore include your assets of \$10 in cash. I ask you to inform me about the receipt of the money and to let me know whether I still have to pay some postage charge.

Would it not be possible to sell sour oranges instead of lemons? They are big and beautiful and full of juice.

== Certificate for Ferdinand Karck in N.Y.:

To all concerned:I, F.A.M. in Jacksonville in the County Duval in the State of Florida in the U.S. of N.A., former land owner in Kammersfeld in the territory Pinneberg, have chosen, put into power and have made by the present witness, that Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg in N.Y. is my true and legal attorney of power in order to give notice, take off, and to give after being given like money, a valid receipt for me and in my name and for my profit, "One Thousand Courant Mark" / Courant M 1000 / with interest, which my daughter Karoline Gerstenberg, formerly Meissner, owes me and which are as <T45> a mortgage on the property in Kummerfeld in the territory Pinneberg, which formerly belonged to me and now to Mrs. Gerstenberg.

I give and be responsible to my attorney of power mentioned above all power and right to do and execute all and every deed, act, and thing whatever it might be, which is necessary in this affair as much as I would do or like to do if I personally would be present. I state myself responsible to everything that my mentioned attorney of power or his representative do or have done legally.

As affirmation of the contents above, I have personally signed and sealed it. Jan 10, 1853.

Signed and sealed in presence of ... F.A.M.

From: Doris Meissner; To: William Meissner (Sennewald).

Jacksonville, Jan. 14, 1853 (Florida).

Dear William! We received your letter of Nov. 1, 1852 some days before the 20th, at what time you intended to go again to sea. A letter from us would not have reached you any more in time, therefore we did not answer you. We wrote, however, at once to Mrs. Fuller, as you had sent us her address, that you would hear it from her in case you should be still there, whether some letter arrived for you or not. We received your letter to Leonore and your questions to the Postmaster of Enterprise, today.

We left Enterprise, which is 250 miles upward the St. Johns River close to the five to six miles long and wide Lake Monroe, and where the oranges grow wild in the forests, again, as the region is still too uncultivated and therefore not healthy. The children had all the cold fever since the beginning of June and only a short time ago it left and I and Father had to lie in bed all summer, but are better now.

We live now close to Jacksonville, at the mouth of the St. Johns River. Jacksonville is the main harbor of Florida, where nearly daily ships from N.Y. and sometimes from Boston arrive, which pick up wood for building ships. Cabbage costs here 12-1/2 to 37 cts. per piece and a bundle onions \$2. We own 100 acres of land, 3/4 of which has pine wood and 1/4 has oaks. We live in a log house and don't have to labor any more for Capt. Percival. The pines grow very high here and wood for ships is sent from here to N.Y. – 60 feet long –. We felled a pine tree cut into pieces, which was 57 feet long and had a diameter of 3-1/4 feet at the lower end and one of 2-1/2 feet at the upper end.

We accept with great joy the proposal you wrote about in Leonore's <T46> letter, to leave Father and to come to you. But as we spent all of our money for the trip, the long sickness, and to buy the land, we ask you to send us as soon as possible traveling money. The passage from here to N.Y. costs only \$12 per person on a sailing ship. This would be \$48 for four persons as we cannot leave Henry behind. It will cost at least the same from N.Y. to Barnstable or Boston, where we want to go, so that we are unable to take the trip with less than \$125.00. You will take care for a nice apartment for us and will pay 1/2 year's rent in advance, that the

landlord cannot throw us out into the street while you are still away. You must not forget the firewood either. We try to make our bread and salt by sewing.

We wish you good health and hope you will write soon again and send the money for the trip.

Your loving mother, D.M. [It didn't happen. She died in July of dysentery, and William ?? (later) – LPM].

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand Karck in N.Y.

Jacksonville, Jan. 14, 1853.

I include a certificate in your name with the request to give it to a member of your house in Hamburg in order to give notice and collect a little sum in the Pinneberg Territory. There are two paying terms in Pinneberg if I am right. One lasts 14 days during Whitsuntide and the other is called the Martini Money Day. Money which was given notice first on the 1st money day is due on the 2nd. On the second money day – so I believe – nobody can be forced to pay money. All what it be necessary for your representative in Hamburg to do would be – after having received your certificate – to go to Pinneberg (one can travel the distance Altona – Pinneberg in 15 minutes) and to give notice there in the administration office and to write some lines about it to Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld. She will surely make a date with your representative and will make up a day during the Martini money days, on which he still has to go another time to Pinneberg's office in order to receive the money and to erase the debt. In case no payment is made, the money has to be got by court. I would recommend for that Mr. Burmester, Advocate in Pinneberg.

I hope that you will fulfill my request and that you will accept the certificate I made for you.

I would be very pleased if you would get through with this business in a hurry, so that my daughter has ample time to get the money or has things arranged with me.

From: F.A.M.; To: Winterhoff Piper & Karck.

<T47> To Mr. Winterhoff Piper & Karck, N.Y.

Jacksonville, Jan 14, 1853.

On Nov. 9, I wrote a letter to the gentlemen A.B. Allen & Co., 189 – 191 Water Street in N.Y., in which I included \$18 and I asked them to send me by the next ship to Jacksonville guano, seeds etc. A friend of mine who went to Charleston mailed it personally there. As proof that the gentlemen A.B. Allen & Co. have received this letter, I have a newspaper which they sent me since that time. As I received no goods nor an answer to my letter till Dec. 14, I wrote in the last few days a letter to these gentlemen and mailed it in Jacksonville, where I am living now. Four weeks have passed already again and I have received no guano nor seeds nor an answer. This puts me in a big scrape as winter here in Florida is the time to sow and plant and half of it passed already without purpose for me. .

I have left Enterprise again, which region is believed to be very unhealthy, and bought 100 acres land near J., a small part of which is good soil, which is very rare here. I thought of raising vegetables and am waiting now already four weeks for the guano so that I can sow and plant. Now you can imagine my impatience. I ask you therefore urgently to ask at once after my letter's arrival at A.B. Allen & Co. whether they received my money and letter and if so, to insist on a mailing of the goods at once. I am sure you are so kind as to let me know by return mail about the state of things and to free me from my uncertainty.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Merkel.

Mr. Merkel, Weavermaster, Brauerstraße No. 44 in Hamburg.

Jacksonville, Jan. 14, 1853.

Dear Friend! I told you in my last letter that we wanted to go to the South. (We received your reply last summer.) We did this, too, and left Barnstable in the beginning of Jan. 1852, where at that time was the hardest winter, and arrived about 14 days later in Florida, the most southern state of the U.S. We went then 250 miles up the St. Johns River until we came to a beautiful lake. Few people are living there and we thought of settling here. In the forests the orange trees were full of ripe fruits; palm trees put their heads 70 or 80 feet into the sky. The rivers are full of turtles and crocodiles. The winter is as mild as May in Hamburg,

and the summer not hotter than Barnstable, 1500 miles farther to the north. We stayed for nearly a year, but accidentally they had a very wet summer, so the cold fever broke out and we and all people living here suffered a lot; <T48> Partly, too, because the region is believed to be very unhealthy, and partly in order to be closer to the market, we decided to go downstream again and we live now in J., that is, very close to it, where we bought 100 acres of land.

J. is at the mouth of the St. Johns river and is the main harbor of Florida. It is a fast growing town. Steam and sailing ships come and go, to and from the big cities along the Atlantic coast. If you could come here and open up a cotton spinning mill and weaving mill, as similar as those wool spinning and weaving mills in Üterfen, you would become rich. Cane sugar, rice, and cotton are raised here in Florida; the farmers bring excellent cotton to J. to market. From here it is shipped to the bigger cities like Savannah and Charlotte, or to N.Y., and from there it goes to England or Germany and comes back as cotton [cloth]. –.

Meat, wheat, and wood is cheap; vegetables are very expensive. A piece [head? – LPM] of cabbage costs here six to 18,3 in Hamburg currency. A bundle of onions costs seven [S?], potatoes cost three [F?] and 8./3 to seven [?] and so on.

We received last summer a letter from Kierulff and J.H. Runtzler from Mecklenburg and we answered at once. I wrote especially a long letter to Mr. Runtzler, who seems interested in coming over here and wanted so much information. We received, however, no answer yet. We also wrote at once to Wilhelm Runtzler in N.Y. as soon as we received his address, but he did not answer either.

We ask you to greet Kierulff & family, sister Karoline, and all the other friends, especially your wife and children, and hope that this letter may reach you in good health. Your friend

You would gratify us very much if you would send this letter to Mr. J.H. Runtzler in Mecklenburg (whose exact address you can learn through Mr. Kierulff) to have him read it and to ask him, whether he received my letter or not. Our address is now J.F. as you can see above.

From: F.A.M.; To: C.M. Jackson, M.D.

Mr. C.M. Jackson, M.D., German Medicine Store, No. 120 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Jacksonville, June 9, 53.

As we have to pay here for everything two and three times the amount, I request you to send me, for the enclosed \$, Quinine by mail and please, mark how many grains. I use now your bitter thing and hope it might do me good.

Respectfully,.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. F.W. Thomas.

<T49> Mr. F.W. Thomas, Philadelphia.

Jacksonville, Florida, Sept. 25, 1853.

I have read in the N.Y. City newspaper, that [you] are going to publish all of Zrchakker's short stories and works. I would like you to send me a test sample.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Publisher of N.Y. German Democrat.

To the Publisher of the N.Y. German Democrat.

Sept. 25.

Dear Sir! About two months ago I lost my wife [d. 17 Aug 1853], who died of dysentery. I am therefore in need of a housemaid. Should I find a fitting one by your negotiation, I am willing to pay you \$5.

I am near to 50 years old and live with my son, a good boy of 16 years [almost! (George Henry, b. Feb 1838)], near Jacksonville (Florida) on a farm of 100 acres, which is my property. I raise vegetables, which we bring to the market in Jacksonville. I have two grown-up daughters, but they are too much of a lady to live in the country. A decent woman or girl, preferably one from Germany, who is not too thin and weakly, who knows how to knit, sew, and cook, would find a nice place here. I cannot give too big a salary, but I might promise a comfortable marriage.

We live here in an eternal spring; while you in the North have the winter before your door, we sow and plant here, now for winter and in January for the spring. In the middle of summer we rest.

I would like it if you would send me some issues of your paper as well as some lines as answer.

I shall have to mention that weekly packet boats and other ships go from N.Y. to Jacksonville. The passage is \$8 to \$10 and the trip lasts only often four to five days, sometimes longer.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Isaac Swart.

<Written in English.> Mr. Isaac Swart, Jacksonville.

Long Branch, Florida, Oct 12, 1853:

[A plea for Mr. Swart to urge Wilhelmina to come back to F.A.M., and going into great detail about her health and her "Christian duty" to her parents, and how good a life she would have if she came back.].

From: F.A.M.; To: W. Schlüter.

<T49, cont.> Mr. W. Schlüter, Office of the N.Y. Democrat.

Oct 17, 53.

I received your two letters from the first and third as well as two samples of your weekly paper. I enclose a letter from J.G. Myers (signed by him), who lives in J. very close to the Stone shipyard and is known to most ship captains which pass by and to whom the person you send can go. My wagon is usually every day in town, too. I don't doubt that the girl will have difficulty finding a passage without this security. Daily ships from N.Y. arrive as you can see from the enclosed slip.

I must ask you that you take as much care as possible not to send down here an immoral person. I promise to treat her well and pay her a good salary.

I will order your weekly paper starting on New Year, and will take care to send you the money for it in time. A friend of mine gets the N.Y. States Paper, but I don't like it very much as it is much for the slavery.

From: F.A.M.; To : Karl F. Meissner.

<T50> Mr. K.F. Meissner, Ütersen near Altona.

Oct 17, 1853.

Dear Brother! What are you doing? Are you still alive? I was during the last two years nearly always sick and often nearly dying. Only since about two to three weeks my strength returned, so that I can attend to my business. This puts me far behind, but I did not suffer want of anything yet.

Mrs. Sennewald is dead today nearly two months. After a short, eight days long sickness, she passed away – seemingly without pain – in the arms of her children. She was a true friend and nurse to me and until her sickness was well and healthy. Henry is with me and the two girls work in households.

I am living since two years in Florida, where there is eternal spring. There is a winter here – some trees and bushes lose their leaves, but many others start blooming at the same time. The orange, the palm tree, the magnolia, the laurel (grows wild here!), yellow blossoming and sweet smelling jasmine, and so many evergreen, beautiful blossoming bushes are here in such a beauty, as I never saw before and not to be forgotten – evergreen oak trees and pine trees with one foot long needles. The grass is hard and bad, but beautiful flowers grow in the meadows.

I own 100 acres of land – all in one piece, four miles away from J., the main harbor of Florida, situated at the mouth of the St. Johns River. I started raising vegetables, which bring an unheard of price, for instance a piece [head of cabbage?] costs 12 to 25 cts., a sack of potatoes \$2 and so on.

I have enough land but I need more hands to work. I have heard through Wilhelm who wrote me once, that your wife died. Please, answer me as soon as my letter arrives and let me know not only what you are doing but also how everything is in Kummerfeld. You could do me a favor and go there and greet Lina for me and tell her to send me one of her boys or rather come herself with husband and children, if they don't come along too well at home. Wishing that my letter will reach you in good health, I remain

From: F.A.M.; To: J.C. Merkel.

Mr. J.C. Merkel, Weaver Master, Brauerstraße No. 44, Hamburg.

Jacksonville, Fla., Oct 24, 1853.

Dear friend! By doing so I fulfill my sad duty and announce you the death of our dear mother. She died of dysentery after being only eight days sick, seemingly without any pain, on August 17 of this year. I have never seen so far a human being going so tenderly to sleep, not even the slightest move betrayed her death. She was a faithful friend and nurse to me and a loving and caring mother to her children. She was during the last time unusually well and healthy, so that we were very surprised <T51> by her sudden death. After having buried our mother, I, Henry, and Wilhelmine got the same disease and had to lie in bed for four weeks, but now we are again well.

William is at sea. He had visited us shortly before his mother's death. We received news that he was shipwrecked but he and the other crew members saved themselves to a small island. However, he is weakened so much by a long sickness that he believes he won't be able to return to sea.

Please, be so kind and send this letter to Kierulff and to the other relatives. I have been put so far behind in my business by my sickness and the hard loss of our mother which I miss everywhere, that I have little spare time to write a letter to everyone. Best greetings to you from your friend

From: F.A.M.; To: W. Schlüter.

Mr. W. Schlüter, Office of the N.Y. Democrat.

Jacksonville, Nov. 20, 1853.

Last week I was again surprised by one of your weekly papers. I was very glad about as I was very interested in the story which it contained. Since I sent you a money order for the passage of a house-keeper I did not hear anything more from her.

Florida is a wonderful country – the soil – to be sure – is not as good as in the West, but in return we don't know cholera and the yellow fever. They Germans now begin immigrating here, too. Nature puts on her winter decorations. While some trees lose their leaves, the magnolia, the orange, and many other evergreen trees and bushes and plants are displaying their beautiful green leaves.

Hoping soon to hear from you, I remain

After having written these lines to you, the following plan came to me: I namely have so much beautiful land, only not enough hands to do all the work. I therefore would like to get a participant. There are many German gardeners near N.Y., the rent of land is high and the price of vegetables low, but here it is just the other way around, a bundle of onions costs \$2, one bundle potatoes \$2, one head of cabbage 18 cts., and so on.

Would you please, therefore, be so kind as to put the following ad in one of your papers which is suited best for this purpose and to send me a bill for it.

“A German gardener and owner of a farm close to J. in Fl. Looks for a companion for raising vegetables (what is extraordinarily advantageous here, for instance one head of cabbage for 18 cts.). A man with family with about 100 Taler is preferred. Please write to F.A.M., Jacksonville, Fl.

“My farm is situated four miles distant of J. at the St. Johns River and has a healthy, comfortable situation. My partner must be able and like to work, which obliges himself to the wanted management <T52> of the farm. From the profit the interests of the value of the farm, which I will put down as only \$800 are put away as well as all expenses necessary for the management of the business, as food, buy of fertilizer, seeds, and increase of property. The leftover money will be divided equally.

“The inventory, wagons, plough, and other working tools as well as oxen, cows, and pigs, will be taxed [evaluated? – LPM] before the start of my companion, and by paying half of their value he will be accepted as co-owner. After the contract is put out of date these things will be taxed [evaluated?] again, given back to me and I will pay half of their value to the leaving partner, or we might decide on another way to settle this business.”.

From: F.A.M.; To: Emma Thompson.

<Written in English.> To Mrs. Emma Thompson, Philadelphia.

Nov 1853 [Asking her to come as housekeeper].

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T52, cont.> To Karoline Meissner, married Gerstenberg, in Kummerfeld near Hamburg.

Jan. 1854.

Dear Lina! It is already a long time since I heard from you and your desire to know how your father is doing does not seem to be very big. I often thought of you and would have written already earlier if my pride would not have detained me from it. I believed it to be the duty of a good child to take care for his father, but we don't want to talk about it any more.

Two years ago, we emigrated from Barnstable to Florida, where I hoped to find cheap land and a comfortable climate. I did not find my expectations deceived, but I made the mistake and went too far inland into a nearly entirely uncultivated and repulsive region. Here I (soon after my arrival) got sick and after having had all different kinds of fevers for a full year and stumbled around looking like a show, I decided to leave this place again and go back to Jacksonville (250 miles). Here it took me still another half year to get rid of the cold fever (which I got last), and finally my strength returned. Once I suffered under an infection of my bowels and I owe it to be still alive to Henry, who was sick least. He pulled me out of bed, put me into a sort of basin, and poured continually cold water over me and that on and on day and night. At least all hours I had to go into the water and this for many days, and he was sick himself. .

In the middle of last summer when we all got a little better, Mrs. Sennewald got dysentery and died within eight days and we could hardly bury her, when I, Henry, and Minna got the same disease, only Leonore stayed well. Since about two months we are all well enough to look after our business.

Mine and Lore serve in households in Jacksonville, and Henry is with me. William went to sea, was shipwrecked, and saved himself to a small island, where he was brought in a bad state to a inhabited island and probably died there, <T53> as we did not hear from him any more.

My house is in the middle of the farm, partly planted with beautiful pine and oak trees. I have here 100 acres of land. The region is generally considered to be very healthy, and the climate is very comfortable. In winter we have only slight night frost and in summer the heat is scarcely as high as in N.Y. or Boston.

I have written to Karl in autumn, but did not receive any answer yet. A letter from you where you honestly tell about your situation and conditions will please me very much (but no lies, please!). Once I heard the news that you are not happy with your husband and that he treats you badly and so on. I will hope that your conditions improved. If you answer, please include a "Daguerreotype" picture; without glass and frame it sure will be easy to put it into a letter. Take your youngest child in your arms when you have your picture taken.

Write also in which year and on which date you were born. Did you give my name to any of your children? Do the apple trees bear fruit which I planted? In a sowing mill, 1/4 hour from my house away, a German works among others. He is the son of a cow and pig herder in the region of Brunswick. His father gave him – when he was already 25 years old – a beating which he did not deserve. He ran off, worked a couple of years near Bremen for 25 Taler per year. He receives now 20 dollars and food per month and he has saved already \$300 in a few years. Nobody will easily recognize a pig herder in him.

Henry usually drives a load of wood to town daily. This takes half a day and he receives a dollar for it. (All the money we had was used up by our sickness and even put us into debts.) The remaining time we use to improve our place and take care for a vegetable garden. Raising vegetables is here very profitable. One acre planted with cabbage and priced with only 12-1/2 cts (often it costs 18 and 25 cents) would product cabbage in the value \$1000. It is easy to write it down on paper, but first fertilizer has to be made and the land has to be fenced in and the cabbage takes time to grow, too. If we only stay healthy we will make up for the lost time, but I must confess I nearly lost all my lust for life. My courage is broken. I don't see for what purpose I am living and laboring, only in order to die? – .

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T54> Jacksonville, Feb. 1854.

Dear Lina! I wrote last autumn to Karl, but as I received no answer I suspected that my letter got lost. Last month I wrote a letter to you and let this one follow, too, so that at least one of them will reach you. I told you in my last letter that we emigrated from Barnstable to Florida, that I nearly was always sick here, that Mrs. Sennewald, who was always a true friend and nurse to me, died, and that I am living now alone

with Henry on a farm near Jacksonville. This time I want to tell you more about my place and the region here.

If you take the map into your hand you will see that Fl. is the most southern state of the U.S. and consists of a long peninsula. The climate is like in Italy, neither cold nor hot and is considered to be very healthy. On the East Coast, where the peninsula starts, the St. Johns River flows into the ocean and here is Jacksonville, the main harbor of this river, which is here as wide as is the Elbe below Hamburg. My property, 100 acres in one piece, three to four times the size of the Ado, is close to the river, seven miles below Jacksonville, four miles by the land way. Steam and sailing ships which come from and go to sea, pass continually. All land not cultivated yet is used as a kind of pasture for all, whereto everybody sends his marked cows, oxen, horses, donkeys, and pigs, where they run around wild and by which the farmer loses all the manure. I have about 25 acres fenced in as a pasture and we lead our cattle every night to the dung-yard. We feed our pigs always in the stable. We also fenced in this winter a piece twice as big as your garden with boards, so that the wild rabbits could not come in and eat all of the young vegetables and plants.

When I think back of Kummerfeld and the bad and long way to my heath and how often I wished at that time to have all my land in one piece, I have to confess that I have now everything what I ever hoped for and wished. Part of my land is full of beautiful oak trees and part of it pine trees. A piece of marsh land close to the river does not give good hay but so much litter as I can use.

There are no singing birds at all in the North of America, and I often thought sadly of your nightingales, but here in the South is a bird which has the voices of all the other birds together and is called a mockingbird and whom I nearly prefer to the nightingale. When we work in the woods or in the country, one of them sits nearly in every bush and sings to us. They sing all summer long and are silent only a short time in winter. Besides the mockingbird there are many beautiful flowers which grow wild.

But you will think, one cannot live alone from birds and flowers; and so I have to tell you, too, that from nothing comes nothing, but I can grow so much on half an acre as you on the soil of Kummerfeld and one can hardly find anywhere else a better <T55> market than here. Milk is sold for six [SS?] per quart and cabbage for nine to 12 [S?] per head. I would be very happy here if I would have somebody who would take part in my joys and sorrows. Henry is a good boy and the best help when I am sick, but he is no child any longer. We celebrated yesterday his 16th birthday and he can easily get the idea to look around in the world. Then I am all alone. I wish you could come with your husband and children over here.

Write me – honestly – how things are – and send me a Daguerreotype picture of you (I asked you for it already in my last letter!), without glass and frame you can easily enclose it in a letter. Farewell and write soon to

Your loving father.

From: Karoline Gerstenberg; To: F.A.M.

Kummerfeld, April 5, 1854.

Dear Father, I received your dear letter and picked it up myself from the post office. I was very happy about it, but I regret that you are all so sick. If you will have the fever again, have Henry put a rusty axe or iron over your bed for five days. That helped me once; maybe it will help you also. When the doctor came on the 5th day, the fever was gone and did not return.

I surely wanted to write sooner but I had no courage to trust my thoughts to the paper. Coming May 25, three years ago, my oldest died, my Georg Adolf died of an infection in his head. He was sick for three weeks, but there was no help. Where God does not help, all human help is lost. Three doctors were unable to do a thing. The headache increased day by day. He complained day and night; "Don't you want to get better, you old stupid head!" was always his exclamation. But the last week he lay unconscious, mouth and eyes closed. The morning before, he had opened his beautiful brown eyes and looked at all of us as if he wanted to say farewell. Then he closed them and never opened them again on this God's earth. After six days the Savior, the Angel of Peace came – death. This was very hard for us. But some time afterwards when I was going to write you about it you sent me a letter which took away all my courage to write. A little nut tree is growing on his grave. The trees I planted won't grow right.

All my other children – heaven be thanked! – are well and that is already a great happiness even if I don't have much otherwise. I don't ask too much from life anyway and it still can get better and only if it is easier to bear. Around here many children are sick and died, two or three in a house, all of scarlet fever. Hans Hurula's children (he was our former worker) all died but here behind the Odo the disease has not

been yet. Heinrich is 5, Wilhelm three years old, and the youngest, a girl called Maria Louise, is nine months old.

The apple trees behind the ditch had much fruit last summer. It was a pleasure to see them; even the old tree was full. You could have had a few loads full; we did not have so much in many years. The fruits were cheap but wheat was expensive.

Uncle Karl was here with his letter. He wanted to write soon again, but the letter maybe did not come over. Marie lives with her father, since the old Aunt Magelsen is dead. They are both happy and contented. Uncle Karl seems to recover. Wilhelm was last summer with us, but he has nowhere peace and rest – travel is in his blood. All his thinking is directed toward the same thing. He wrote many a letter to you, but I don't know whether he mailed them and whether you received them. He went to sea as a sailor and hopes his lucky star will lead him to you, if he is not there yet or had an accident. Last summer Ullrichs lived with Ehlers in Ruicel. Lene became engaged there to a Mr. Rosenbusch from Pinneberg. She visited me often, eight days ago the wedding was in the "Golden Angel" (hotel!) in Hamburg, where Uncle Ullrich now lives. He wants to remarry.

Pinneberg gets bigger every day. One new house after another is built, many factories, new stores and so on. Two new pretty houses stand there where once the old barn at the Geheimrat's was. [Geheimrat = Privy Councilor – LPM.] In one of the stores lives the old Geheimrat's servant. Here one can buy American dung (guano). It is supposed to be very strong. Aunt Lotte tried last year buckwheat and had a nice crop. Her Gustav is in San Francisco. He is doing well, never writes of being sick. Guano costs 10 [SF?] 100 lb., but it only needs to be spread very thinly and harrowed together with the wheat. We want to give it a try also this year.

Our business is moderate; there is little more to do with the seeds. There are everywhere seed stores and salesmen go from door to door. But it is better with trees and bushes. They have to make up for the interest and taxes. We also have to buy now nearly all our groceries and everything is so expensive, but we hope the next crop will be better. We had a nice spring. Snow is gone since March and last year we had still so much snow in April.

Dear Father and Henry: This noon (Easter!) I also received your second letter with the beautiful flower which Henry probably picked for me. We also talked already about that Henry is 16 years old, but still a delicate youth. Our Lord may keep him healthy and give him strength to assist you. I also will wish that Wilhelm Meissner [son of F.A.M. brother Karl] may soon come to your aid. He is a robust guy and has a good heart. But where might he be? I believe he went along to Spain. <T380> He does not have the money to come straight to you and his father, who has still money from the inheritance, won't give him any.

It is not possible for me to send you my picture right away and to satisfy your impatience I will first send you a letter. It is also a metal plate and I will see how to make it possible to fulfill your request, because it is still too cold in the mornings and evenings to travel to the city with a small child, and without her the joy would be missing which shines out of her beautiful blue eyes. I also would like to have a picture of you two. Don't be now mad with me. I will surely send it soon to you. Have some indulgence with your Lina, because – believe me – I have many a sorrow, but I married against my mother's will. She herself made the first proposal, but you know how changeable she is, even if she wants only the best for me.

The advocate Kirchhoff does not live any more in Ütersen. He has got a job somewhere in the country. Mr. [Mrs.?] Mideen Egersendt will soon marry her servant J. Teede and will also soon have a baby. Her husband died four years ago and her oldest son died of pneumonia in the same hour as my Georg. Her second son, Hans Heinrich, will become a farmer and Mr. T. has to leave with her young husband. [?? Son will take over the farm, so she has to find another place to live? – LPM] Mrs. Wilke is a rich widow. Her husband died of smallpox.

Dear Father, take a good housekeeper or a wife, and console yourself hereby. There won't be anything of us coming over. My children are small and my husband so proper – if you don't have the joy, you don't have the sorrow either. I don't have any interest in the strange world, the long trip, and the treacherous elements. Give my regards to dear Henry.

I was 27 years old on Nov 12.

Your loving daughter Karoline Marie Eleonore.

End: April 26.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. O'Donnell.

A letter to Mr. O'Donnell, Coroner of the 19th Ward, N.Y., G. Limburg, N.Y., May 3 [1854].

From: F.A.M.; To: John B. & G. Hahn.

Mr. John B. & G. Hahn, No. 15 Avenue A, N.Y. 2.

J. May 29 [1854].

Caused by your circular which I received with the 'Democrat,' I want to ask you whether you can get a housekeeper for me. I live an hour's way distant from J. on a own farm at the bank of the St. J. River and raise vegetables. My wife died nearly a year ago. My oldest daughter is about to get married; my other children are all grown up and have all left their father's house with the exception of a boy of 16 years, who works with me on the farm. You therefore can see for yourselves that my household is only small (black workers have their own home), so that a girl of 14 years could manage it. It is often hard to find a new place for immigrants, who don't understand and speak the English language yet, and one of them I would prefer most. I rather take at all a country girl, as girls from the city hardly ever get used to such a life.

I want a decent, moral girl, who knows how to knit, sew, and cook a little. I will give her \$50 per year and she will have enough time to make her own clothes; she does not need so many in the country here anyway than in the city.

In my consideration this is a good offer; besides that I am going to pay her passage and include some lines. If this should not be sufficient, I am going to send you the money; you must however take the time and find a passage for her. I would have enclosed the money right away if I could not have been afraid that the girl – after you paid her the money – would reconsider it and not come and my money would have been wasted. Ships from and to N.Y. arrive and take off daily, but as many arrive only with ballast, they won't be listed all in the newspapers. The usual <T56> passage costs \$10 to \$12. You must take the trouble to find a passage and to help her with her departure. I include \$2 for your possible expenses and will not miss to pay your bill for all the troubles you will have.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: W. Schlüter.

Mr. William Schlüter, Office of the N.Y. Democrat, N.Y.

Jackson, May 24, 1854.

I beseech you to put the enclosed \$2 on my account for the 'Democrat.' In the beginning of the year your paper arrived regularly, but since a long time two or three issues come all together. No. 9 came with No. 14. This takes away all the value they have for me. I am convinced that you are not at fault, but the post office. A letter for which I waited with great desire took four weeks from Boston to down here. Everybody would rather pay more postage and have his things mailed to him properly.

Respectfully

The story which you edited now, I read already some time ago in an English paper.

From: F.A.M.; to: Mr. A. Keilholz.

Mr. A. Keilholz in Quedlinburg.

May 29, 1854.

This is a try in order to find out whether it is possible to have seeds sent to me by you. Our best time for sowing is Sept. and only very fresh seeds grow in the warm climate here. This would make it necessary to mail the seeds already in the middle of August, at that time your crop might not be ripe yet. I enclose \$2 in cash and I ask you to send me 1/4 lb. of big, round, Asiatic lettuce [seed]. I don't mind if you include some tulip [bulbs ?] and carnation seeds, and I will pay gladly the double price if I receive the two first mentioned goods very fresh.

In case one young boy (gardener!) among your friends would like to try his luck in America, he should be glad to find a home with me, when he arrives here. Ships from N.Y. arrive daily here; the passage is \$8 to \$10. Florida has a wonderful climate – neither hot nor cold. Oranges and a big number of evergreen beautiful and nice smelling bushes and flowers grow wild here and ornament the forests.

Send the seeds to the following address:

Mr. F.A. Meissner, J., Fl., U.S. of N.A.

In order to have them shipped on to the Agent of Adams & Co., North American Express in Bremen.

From: F.A.M.; To: John B. Hahn.

<T57> Mr. John B. Hahn, Office of the N.Y. Democrat, (German paper), No 75 & 77 Chatham St., N.Y. J., Florida, June 19, 1854.

I received your letter of June 6, a little bit late as Henry forgot to ask for mail at the post office. I am very happy that you could fulfill my request so promptly. I enclose \$15.00; \$10 to \$12 is the normal price for a cabin on the ships which pass here. I beseech you to send along for the three or four necessary dollars about 16 lb. of fresh cocoa beans and two to four lbs. of good black tea. I bought the first mentioned goods for about 1/. And the last for 50 cts. per lb. You have to take care that the beans are not moldy [?]. It should be easy for you to find a passage. The captains have often their wives with them and I would prefer at any rate a Yankee captain to an Irishman. You will be so kind as to inform me as soon as know yourself when and by what ship your subject will take off. It would be best if she gets off the ship at the St. Johns Steam Sawmill (the owners are Daniels and Sanderson). In the house close to the bank lives Mr. Gardiner with his family. Mrs. Gardener surely has the way to my house shown to the girl by one of her children. But she cannot leave her suitcases so long remain there on the beach or maybe if she prefers to go first to J., she best asks for the shoemaker Petting, who works in a hut on the place where there was a fire, close to the wharves. Hoping that the selected girl will be fitting to my wishes at least to some extent, we want to make her stay as comfortable as possible.

From: F.A.M.; To: John B. Hahn.

Mr. John B. Hahn, Office of the N.Y. Democrat, (German paper), No 75 & 77 Chatam St., N.Y.

Jacksonville, July 13, 1853.

To the latter..

In response to your letter of the 6th of last month, in which you told me you had found a housekeeper in the person of one of your wife's relatives, I sent you on the 19th of the same month the wanted traveling expenses with \$15, but did not hear till today whether you received my letter with the money or not.

The Democrat has again neglected its weekly appearance since No. 19. Mr. Gutman, who owns with Mr. Mode a 'dry goods store,' wants to order it and asks you to send the paper under the address of Mr. Joseph Mode, J. Fl. I tried to find some subscribers, but the general excuse is that the German papers arrive so irregularly that it would not pay off the trouble to order them. Hoping to hear more from you.

I remain

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Gieffen.

Mr. Gieffen, No. 77, [Bowery?], N.Y.

J., Fl., July 24, 1854.

I read an ad in the Democrat of the month of March, that you have German seeds for sale. As our time for sowing is much earlier I could make no use of your offer in the spring. Next month, <T58> however, we start here again to work in our winter garden, and as you probably have left some of your seeds, I ask you to send me a list of the prices and to cross out the kinds you don't have any more available. Do you have or can you get N.Y. Shallot onions and at what price?

From: F.A.M.; To: John B. Hahn.

Mr. John B. Hahn, N.Y.

J. Fl. July 27, 1854.

I received your letter of the 16th on the 24th, but was unable to learn from it whether you received my letter of June 19 with the enclosed money or not. You say you could not find a fitting passage yet. I regret it very much. Only a few days ago a schooner went to N.Y., which had a very nice cabin and took a family of

12 persons for \$100 along (mostly ladies). There is no steamboat going directly from N.Y. to Jacksonville, but steamers from Charleston and Savannah arrive two and three times a week here, which pass the ships from N.Y. on their way. Besides, I think a German country girl would not feel at home in a cabin of these big sea steamers among the American ladies with their black maids. I would have liked to learn the name, the age, and the former home of my future housekeeper. But maybe you want to surprise me. If it will be a nice one I don't mind. Please send my regards to your wife and the relative whom I soon shall be able to meet.

Your

From: F.A.M.; To: John B. & G. Hahn.

Messrs. John B. & G. Hahn, No 15 Ave A, N.Y.

Jacksonville, Sept 7, 1854.

I would like to know whether you forgot my request fully. If you are unable to execute it I ask you to send back the money I gave you. During this time many beautiful and big ships arrived here, but none of them brought the Miss along and I have received no letter either since the last one from July 16. While other places suffer under cholera, yellow fever, and others, we enjoy here the best health. We had – to be sure – a very warm summer, but I did not hear of a single case, where somebody died of sunstroke.

My best regards to all

From: F.A.M.; To: The Rev. Dr. Rose.

Revrd. Dr. Rose, Pastor of St. Matthews Church, Newark, N.J.

Oct. 1, 1854.

Your Honor! I received yesterday your letter of Sept. 13. The cause of this delay is probably the unreliability of the regular post business <T59> as the yellow fever is now in Savannah. According to your letter, Mrs. Limburg seems to be willing to accept the offer I made her some time ago and she still is welcome to me with her two children, if she thinks that she can be happy in the country and has the good will to take over the duties and common work of a housewife.

Concerning the traveling expenses, I have to say: Having received no answer to my letter from the coroner, I wrote to a certain John B. & G. Hahn in N.Y. (which offered themselves to do all sorts of things by newspaper) and told them to find a German girl for me as my housekeeper. Shortly afterward John B. Hahn, who works also as bookkeeper in the Office of the N.Y. Democrat, answered that he found already a girl fitting as my housekeeper. She is a relative of his wife, arrived from Germany only a short time ago, and if I would send the traveling expenses for her, he as well as Mr. Schlüter (the publisher of the Democrat) would guarantee that the girl would travel to me as soon as she received the money. On June 19 I sent him \$15; I had sent him already \$2 some time ago and asked him – as the normal passage costs only \$10 – to send some little things along for the remaining \$5. Some time later I received a letter from J.B. Hahn saying he could not yet find a suitable passage. All my questions I wrote stayed unanswered. Considering that which happened, I would like you to make an attempt to get the money back from Mr. Hahn. I therefore include some lines to Hahn. I want you to use it for Mrs. Limburg's traveling expenses. In case Mr. Hahn should be a cheat and refuse to give the money back, I should think Mrs. Limburg's relatives can give her the travel money. It will hardly cost as much as the cost of living for one month in N.Y. The sooner she comes the better it is. Also it is now (in autumn) the best time to go south. Nearly daily ships go from N.Y. to J. which bring goods and take wood home. These make the trip often in four to five days. The usual passage is \$10; children pay half and small children go free, but it might be possible as everything rose in price, that the passage got more expensive, too. The route by Savannah or Charleston by steamboat is closed now due to the yellow fever; we have here neither cholera nor yellow fever and enjoy generally a very good health.

I must be afraid to tire you out by my long letter. My best regards to Mrs. Limburg and her children. Please accept the assurance of my respect.

Devotedly, your

From: F.A.M.; To: John B. & G. Hahn.

<T60> Mr. John B. & G. Hahn, No. 15, Avenue A, N.Y.

As you did not fulfil your plan to send a housekeeper to me and all my letters to you stayed unanswered, I request that you pay the money which I sent you as traveling expenses to Dr. Rose in Newark

From: F.A.M.; To: The Rev. Dr. Rose.

[P.S.] I remembered to mention, as the mail delivery is so slow and unreliable here: In case Mrs. Limburg is able to arrive here before she receives another letter from me, she can get off the ship at the St. Johns sawmill, which is about four miles below J. and can ask for Mrs. Gardiner, the wife of the inspector, who lives close to the bank, for my address and have it shown to her by one of her children. Or – if she wants to go to J., she should ask for the shoemaker Petting, whose working-hut is near the wharves.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Oct 8, 1854 [Inquiry about my letter of May.].

From: F.A.M.; To: The Rev. Dr. Rose.

Revr. Dr. Rose, Pastor of St. Matthews Church, Newark, N.J.

Nov. 8, 1854.

Five weeks passed already since I answered your letter on account of Mrs. Limburg, but I did not hear anything from you or her. I must be nearly afraid that your health got worse and keeps you from writing, but I should believe there would be still somebody else who can write a few lines to me. I included a money order for \$15 in my letter which I asked you to collect and use for the traveling expenses for Mrs. Limburg. In case you made no use of it, I ask you to send the paper back. If I don't receive an answer within 14 days, I have to believe that Mrs. Limburg does not want to come and I won't feel myself bound any more to my promise.

From: F.A.M.; To: The Rev. Dr. Rose.

Revr. Dr. Rose, Pastor of St. Matthios Church, Newark, N.J.

Dec. 20, 1854.

Your Honor!

I have received your letter with the enclosed note. I liked it also that Mrs. Limburg did not come according to your mentioned conditions and circumstances. Maybe she would not have fitted in here, either. I was more interested to find a friend than a housekeeper. I find people for my work here, too, but the German tongue touches the heart, therefore I tried to get a fellow countrywoman. I enjoyed it to have met you at this occasion.

My grandfather was minister of the church in Schönbach in Saxony and held still a sermon on his 81st birthday. My father followed him in the same profession, but died young. Replying your good wishes for Christmas and the New Year, I remain

From: F.A.M.; To: M. Schlüter.

<T61> Mr. M. Schlüter, public notary, No. 75 & 77 Chatham Street, N.Y.

Jacks., Dec. 25, 1854.

In spring I received with the 'Democrat' an announcement of Mr. John B. & G. Hahn, in which these gentlemen offered themselves for commission deals. As you accompanied this announcement in your paper with your recommendation, I feel myself entitled to ask you for information about these men. I asked these men to find a housekeeper for me by a letter, in which I enclosed \$2. I mailed the same day \$2 for your 'Democrat.' Shortly afterward I received a letter written on business paper of the 'Democrat,' in which Mr. J.B. Hahn indicated in your name to have received the \$2 and told me in a postscript, as he is bookkeeper of the 'Democrat,' he uses the occasion to tell me that he found already a girl for me. She is a relative of his wife and so on. If I would send money for her traveling expenses she would come at once. "We," I quote, "as well as Schlüter will guarantee you that the girl *at once* after your answer will depart; concerning the money you will be safe," unquote. June 19 I mailed a letter with \$19 to Mr. Hahn. I sealed the money in presence of the postmaster. The promised housekeeper, however, did not arrive till the present day, so little as the money has been sent back to me. I therefore want to ask you whether the gentlemen Hahn are cheats, which I would believe at once if he would not be working in your office. Therefore I am willing to believe that it is caused by a negligence inexcusable for a business man. It is also strange that I received no answer to two letters, in which I also enclosed \$2 and which I asked Mr. Hahn to mail for me.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Hamburg.

Dec 27, 1854.

Dear Lina! Also my last hope to hear from you at least for my birthday has been deceived. I received your letter, which you wrote on Easter, in May and answered it at once. I waited till October for answer – in vain. Then I wrote again to you and asked you fervently to answer me, but my expectations were not filled. If you would have had an accident, I should believe your husband would have informed me about it. I know that all your time is taken up by the care of your husband and children, but I still believe that you could spare 1/2 hour for your father. I cannot explain your long silence other but my letters to you have been burned.

<T62> Henry and I are still living together in peace in Florida. William is at sea, Wilhelmine in California, Eleonore works in a household –.

We have had an unusually hot and dry summer and also an early and cold winter. Already in the middle of Nov. the potatoes, beans, and Georgians [?] froze, but since a few days the weather is again warm and comfortable. Caused by the bad crops and the Turko-Russian war, flour and wheat is very expensive, but we have good and cheap meat. We buy usually (since we had the cold weather) every 14 days 1/4 oxen meat [a beef quarter? – LPM], what weighs only 80 to 100 lbs., the lb. for three cts. Now and then we also shoot a wild pig, so that we live nearly entirely on meat. Henry sometimes says, “If they would only know in Kummerfeld how beautiful inexpensive meat we have!”.

When we go up in the morning around six o'clock (the sun rises now at seven and sets at 5), one of us fixes breakfast, usually tea with beefsteak, cereal with syrup, while the other takes care of the oxen, cows, and pigs. After breakfast we both start working. At noon we rarely take the time to fix us something. In the afternoon one of us drives usually a load of wood to town, and when he comes home, the other has cooked a nice supper, coffee with roast or meat, sweet potatoes, rice, and so on. After supper we read the paper, mend our socks, or visit a neighbor. We usually put down our dirty bowls and plates so long, till all the clean ones are used of. Then we spend one evening doing dishes. Henry washes and I dry them. Nobody surpasses us in this region in baking white bread. The neighbors often say that they want to send their wives to us in order to learn how to make bread.

We both are well and fine, but all summer and autumn long we raised nearly nothing on account of the weather. We hope now for spring. This morning a young sow had six merry piglets (a birthday present), five sows and a boar. They will be all raised for breeding. These little pigs could have again six pigs next fall and so on and on. If only things don't happen to me like the girl with the milk-pot [in a fairy tale]. Some days ago we bought a wild bull, whom we teach now to pull and he is doing pretty good. Two years ago I bought two. After having them caught and tied with ropes we put the yoke on. They both went really wild, they bit, hit, tore, and raged. Next morning they had broken their necks. One hit me on my foot. I had to lie down lame for four weeks and had terrible pains.

But that's enough for now. We wish that all of you celebrated Christmas as healthy and well as we, but a little bit merrier and that you may step into the New Year in the same way. We thank our Lord for His grace that He let us travel till here and ask Him to give you and us His protection farther on.

Your loving father!

What did ever become from Wilhelm Meissner [son of brother Karl]?

From: F.A.M.; To: Postmaster of Pinneberg.

<T63> To the Postmaster of Pinneberg.

Dec 27, 1854.

As my two letters (I wrote one in June and the other in October) to my daughter stayed unanswered, I take the liberty to ask you to give the enclosed letter and all the following letters from now on to my daughter personally. Please let me know through my daughter whether you can remember the two letters mentioned above going through your hands. Hoping you won't mind my request I sign

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. Weber.

To Mrs. Weber from Gotha in Saxony, Care of Henry Bick, No. 139 & 141, Liberty Street, N.Y.

Dec. 30, 54.

I read in the paper that you intend to visit your husband. I certainly don't know you at all – your profession, your conditions, etc. . . ., but I want to make you an offer: In case you should be unable to find your husband or you want to take a job as a housekeeper until you have found him, my house is open to you. My wife died two years ago and only my youngest son, a 16 year old boy, is still with me. I have a farm of my own close to town and raise vegetables for the market. I was moved to make you this offer by the wish to have a fellow countrywoman around me and maybe to do her a favor. I cannot pay you very much but you will find a friendly reception. If you would like to come, please do so right away. We have no winter here, only weather like in autumn. Nearly daily ships go from N.Y. to J. The passage is \$10 to \$12, which I will pay you back. In J. you best ask for the boat maker Petting, a German who lives close to the wharves. He will gladly show you the way to me. Best wishes to you from.

Your unknown friend . . .

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Postscript to Lina's letter:

Jan 7, 1855.

When I was carrying the letter above to the post office, I received your letter of Nov. 15. My poor Lina, how hard an ordeal you had to go through in the last years. How patiently you carry your burden, how you try to excuse Gerstenberg. One day he will be sorry to have forfeited his happiness in such a way. What else does he want? He has a young, pretty wife and healthy children, the greatest happiness there is in this world, and what does he do? Always fights with my poor Lina.

<T64> Don't lose your courage, dear Lina. Look upon me as your friend. But you have to write more often to me, at least every quarter year a letter, do you hear? Maybe times will get better. Believe me, I have a hard life too. When we returned again from Enterprise to Jacksonville I owed \$40. Now we recover again a little. If only Henry's mother would be still alive, my dear, faithful friend, the thrifty housewife, but she sleeps under the green lawn in the little flower garden before my door. As long as one owns a precious thing one does not realize its value. Henry is now my only consolation. I have changed a lot, too. I am not only shaken by the long sickness, but also changed to the better. Only very rarely a cuss word comes out of my mouth any more.

My poor brother is now entirely alone, too. Did Marie die of consumption, too? It seems to me that I am not supposed to receive much of happiness on this earth. The best years of my life are over. If I would have started 30 years ago there where I am now, I maybe would have had success. Maybe Henry will be more successful. He is industrious and thrifty. If he stays that way and will find once a good life, he might become happy.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. R.A. Witthaus.

Mr. R.A. Witthaus, President of the German Co. in N.Y.

Jan 8, 1855.

Dear Sir! I saw your address from a German newspaper, which mentions everywhere your efforts to soothe the accident, when the ship "New Era" broke apart. I know from experience how hard it is for a newcomer to find place to go to, and as I need a housekeeper, maybe you can find a fellow countrywoman for me. As your company – if I understand right – is a sort of reception place, and so I am doing her as well as me a favor.

I own a farm (100 acres) in J. My good wife died two years ago and only my youngest son, a lively 16 year old boy, is still at home and works with me on the farm. We raise vegetables for the market. The region is healthy (we never had cholera or yellow fever here!) and the climate is nice. My peas are in blossoms. Several young Germans work around here, who all would like to raise a family, but they need wives. The work in my house is light. I would like best an orphaned girl, 12 to 18 years old, which I would like to accept as my daughter.

<T65> Ships from N.Y. arrive nearly daily here. The passage is \$10 to \$12 and takes about four to five days. I will gladly pay the passage and a good salary. If you should be able to find a woman or girl, who would want to come here, please be so kind as to let me know about it.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. Caroline Weber.

Mrs. Caroline Weber, No. 396, 12th Street, N.Y.

Feb. 19, 1855.

When I read your summons some time ago in the papers, I thought you had just arrived from Germany and how unhappy you must be feeling in this big, strange city, if you were unable to find your husband. I therefore wrote to you and offered you a job in my home. You lived at that time still in the 'Hambacher Castle.' I don't know whether you received my letter. Now I read in the papers that you did not find your husband yet. Maybe he is already dead for a long time. Last summer many Germans passed away everywhere. You live now with your two children in No. 396, 12th Street. I hope my letter will reach you at this address.

In case you are unable to find your husband, I will renew my former offer. Come to me with your children (I am born Saxon, too), we will receive you friendly. You can take over my household (My good wife died two years ago). If you have no money for the trip, I will send it to you. Write me a few lines, even if you have located your husband, about what I would be very happy. I enclose an envelope with my address. All you have to do is to enclose your letter. Best regards to you from your unknown friend

From: F.A.M.; To: Consul of Saxony in N.Y.

To the Consul of Saxony in N.Y.

Feb. 19, 1855.

As I don't know your name, I write these few lines to you under the address above. I would like to ask you – if your other business and affairs allow to do so – to do some small business in N.Y. for me. I own here a farm, where I raise vegetables and need something from there now and then. Expecting your kind reply, I sign

F.A.M. from the Kingdom of Saxony.

From: F.A.M.; To: J.B. Hahn.

Mr. J.B. Hahn, No. 123, Bowery [?], N.Y.

Feb. 25, 1855.

According to your letter of Feb. 7, you seem to feel hurt by my letter to Mr. W. Schlüter, but as I had not the pleasure to know you personally, I could only judge by the circumstances. However, I will be pleased to change my ideas about you at any time. After having written several letters – which all were unanswered – and waited besides that for another half year without hearing from <T66> you I wrote to Mr. Schlüter. I will have it undiscussed whether this betrays so big a folly as you seem to indicate. A short time ago I received an answer to one of my letters, which you were so kind to mail for me to Germany and I inform you now about it for your justification. Adams & Co. have an agent in J. I am sorry that your relative could not make up her mind earlier to go and so I missed the pleasure of meeting you more intimately.

Respectfully

She would not have felt as lonely as you were afraid of, as there are here several married and unmarried young Germans and I like to see friends at my house. My neighbors, farmers of here, have grown-up daughters.

From: F.A.M.; To: William Schlüter.

Mr. William Schlüter, N.Y.

March 12, 1855.

I received your bill by last mail. In case Mr. Hahn did not mail the money yet back to me, as he promised in his letter after his return to do so at once, I would like you to keep back the \$2.50 I owe you and have Mr. Hahn send the remaining amount to me.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand Karck, N.Y.

April 16, 1855.

Since receiving your last letter, nearly a full year passed. Hard sickness and death in my family hindered me at that time to answer you. Later on I received a letter from my daughter which moved me to leave this affair in peace.

As I am still in your debt I would like you very much to collect a little debt in N.Y. for me. Some time ago, a certain John B Hahn offered himself in an ad in the N.Y. Democrat to take care for commission deals. I ordered him to find a German girl or housekeeper for me. He answered at once that he had found a fitting person, a relative of his wife; if I would send the traveling expenses he would guarantee that she would come at once, after having received the money. I sent \$15 to him. I had sent him \$2 already some time ago. After having waited for a full half year and neither a housekeeper nor answer to my letters arrived, I wrote to Mr. W. Schlüter, publisher of the Democrat, for whom Mr. Hahn worked at that time as bookkeeper. I received then a letter from Mr. Hahn, in which he promises to send the money back at once. In case Mr. Hahn should refuse to pay you, I ask you to keep the letter in the meantime for me, which I enclose. Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: J.B. Hahn.

<T67> Mr. J.B. Hahn, No. 18, Bowery, N.Y.

J. Florida, April 12, 1855.

I ask you to pay the fifteen dollars I sent you to Mr. Ferdinand Karck or to his order.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Continuation of Lina's letter: April 14 [1855].

I have not received the things from N.Y. yet, but I want to finish the letter up, that I can mail it as soon as they will have arrived.

The winter has now passed. The pasture is full of grass. After having lost a cow and an ox, the bad luck seems to take a rest for right now. We have wonderful lettuce (5 cts. per head), radishes (5 cts. per bundle), peas (\$1 per 'spint' [pint?]), asparagus, carrots (2 cts. per piece), and cabbage (12 cts. per head).

I have only a few left from the trees and plants you sent to me to Barnstable. A fire red honeysuckle blossoms for four weeks already so bright, as I never saw before. The only vine I still have made a 16 foot long shoot last summer. Henry has a peach tree, which is only one year old and blossomed already.

May 3: I close the letter as I don't want you to wait so long. May our Lord help, that your next letter does not announce another misfortune. If you can answer me at once, I would like you to send me one lot Asiatic lettuce, two lot big round Magdeburg cabbage, 1/2 lot early black-red cabbage, one lot medium sized hard German or Lübsdor and one lot pointed Windelsteiner. Put the seeds into small capsules into a letter and give or mail it to Robert Slomann in Hamburg and ask him to put it into the mail sack of the earliest ship going to N.Y. Stick the enclosed stamps on the envelope, one for each 'lot.' ['Lot' was a German weight - M. Camphäusen. ... About one oz, more or less—LPM.] If I should make use of the seeds, it is necessary for me to get them in August. Last date is the beginning of September.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand Karck, N.Y.

May 28, 1855.

On April 16 of this year I sent you a few lines and included a money order for \$15 for Mr. Hahn, which I asked you to collect for me. Having received no answer yet, I would like to ask you whether Mr. Hahn has

paid the money to you and I would to ask you to send it to me by mail (after having deducted the amount I owe you).

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Fr. Meissner.

<T68> Mr. Fr. Meissner, 169 Front Street, N.Y., Box 3028 [Maybe a box intended for F.A.M. was sent to him?].

J., May 28, 1855.

I received your kind letter. The gentlemen W.F. & Co. informed me about it some time ago and offered themselves to take care for this affair for me, but I did not hear any more about it. The small box with the Daguerreotypes has been sent to me by Adams Express. Only the shovels are kept back now, which have a particular shape, as the same in the region of Holstein, where they are used to dig out the roots of the trees (Here they are used to dig up the small palm trees) and I hope they will be of good service to me.

As I have no friends in Germany I could turn to, I take liberty to ask you to remind Mr. Schmidt of them occasionally. I am a farmer, own a farm near J., was born in Schönbach in the Oberlausitz, where my father and grandfather were ministers. I have not found my name in America anywhere, with the exception that I read yours a few times in the German letter list. It would be a pleasure for me to extend our acquaintance.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand Karck, Consul of Hamburg in N.Y.

July 3, 1855.

In spite of all the search, it is impossible for me to find your letter in which you billed me for your expenses. I remember, however, very well that I read it, when I wrote my last letter to you and that your expenses amounted to \$4 and a few cents, so that they should be paid by \$5.00. I want to thank you for your kindness you bestowed upon me at any time and if wind and weather allow it (as the fisher is used to say, from which the farmer is as much dependent as they,) I will try to fill your table next Christmas with the favorite dish of Hamburg – young May peas. Asking for your further sympathy, I sign

If I would not be afraid to appear immodest, I would like to make again use of your kindness. I namely received in February of this year three shovels from Hamburg with the 'Copernicus' [ship?] and as I did not want to trouble you with this trifle I addressed them to Mr. Jos. Grive, who was the agent for the 'Jacksonville Packets [boats? – LPM],' at the time I ordered the shovels. When the shovels arrived, the 'Packets' had gone out of business. Mr. Jos. Grive transferred the care of things to Mr. U.T. Schmidt. You can learn the details from the enclosed letter which I ask you to either send it to Mr. S., or – if it's not too much trouble for <T69> you, to tell him at the same time that you want to meet his demands for me.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferd. Karck, N.Y.

Sep. 3, 1855.

I answered your letter of June 18 on July 5, and included some lines to Mr. W.F. Schmidt & Co. As I have had a reply neither from you nor from Mr. Schmidt, I take the liberty to ask you whether you received my letter.

Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Rev. Mr. Frier.

<Written in English.> Revd. Mr. Frier, Clyattville, Lowndes County, Georgia.

10 Oct 1855 [excerpt].

Dear Sir, You remember, I hope, the German who you was pleased to pay a visit ... I wish you would please to introduce me to your wife and daughter Sarah Ann with who I have not the pleasure to be acquainted. Miss Dowling tells me that you have plenty wool and Mrs. Frier, your daughters Miss Sarah

and Mary know how to spin and knit the same. The winter is approaching and the stockings for sale in town are not worth buying, so I take the liberty to ask you if not Miss Sarah or Mary will take the trouble to knit for myself and my son Henry some good stockings ... I enclose Four Dollars. [Sent apparently but delayed in mail – probably received finally].

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T69, cont.> Mr. F. Karck, N.Y.

Jacks., Oct 22, 1855.

On Sept 22, I took liberty to remind you of my letter of July 5. I did not hear from you nor from Mr. W.F. Schmidt, to whom I enclosed some lines in your letter, since that time.

Mr. Schmidt & Co. offered themselves to take out a little package, containing three spades or shovels for me from the Custom House, and I asked you to compensate Mr. S. for his expenses which he had while doing so. As I found your two lost letters concerning the certificate I sent to you again, I can tell you exactly the expenses you billed me for:

Expense for the notary, \$1.50; Consul \$2.00; Postage, \$0.60; Other postage, \$0.40; [Total:] \$4.50.

Hoping soon to hear from you again, I sign

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg.

Oct. 22, 1855.

Dear Lina! As I have heard from somebody that you expected your delivery in May, and as your letter made me wait too long, I was worried already very much about you. I was therefore the more surprised to see that everything went fine and I hope that your children will have come safely past the whooping cough. I have had this autumn again two ugly fever attacks. The last one keeps me still in my room. Henry suffered too, but not as bad.

I finally received your picture. Freight and expenses amounted to 20 [F?] in your currency. I have not received yet the spades from N.Y., although I wrote already about 20 letters on their account.

I received your last letter in the middle of Sept., and as a long lasting heat wave and drought had ruined all my cabbage, your seeds came like from Heaven. German and Magdeburg cabbage <T70> did well, the lettuce did not come [up] at all and the other kinds only very weakly. I am curious how big the Cretan cabbage is going to be. Your picture is a great joy for me, but I would not have recognized you on the first look. However, the longer I look at it now, the more familiar it seems to me. One can read from your son's face how surprised he is about it all. I would like to send you our pictures, but there is no photographer here and beside—I want to recover first a little.

You did not get me right about the stamps. I concluded that you would make letter and seeds into a small package and to put on a stamp for every 'lot.' The letter alone would have needed only one stamp. I received it however without further expenses.

So James Booth died. You did never mention anything about Heidenes either as little as you mention your husband. If your son would not prove the contrary, I should believe you won't have one any more. What is the name of your oldest son? I can find his name in no letter. [Heinrich, b. abt. 1849? – LPM].

You don't seem to want to make use from my offer to look upon me as your friend. You don't mention anything about your family life. Is the place still in your husband's name and how are you able to make a living and pay the interest? Already 10 years have passed since I left Hamburg and we never talked about business. Does my money still stand there where it stood, did you take on a greater mortgage, or did you pay part of it off, do I lose some of my rights if I demand no interest? I would like to know very much about this and I ask you to get the information for me, if you yourself don't know about it.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Daniels.

<Written in English.> Mr. Daniels, St. Johns Mill near Jacksonville.

25 Oct 1855 [excerpt].

... I will sell you my farm for \$500 – viz., \$400 I owe on a mortgage, \$14 interest, [\$86 otherwise:] my little part for my improvements.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T70, cont.> Mr. Ferdinand Karck, N.Y.

Jacks., Nov. 19, 1855.

I have received your letter of Nov. eight and I am very obliged to you for the trouble you had to learn something about my package. Concerning the alleged expenses of Mr. Schmidt, I cannot understand very well in what they should consist. If Adams & Co. accepted the package, they have to pay also the freight and Custom House taxes and as Mr. Schmidt, after having made the offer to take care for the things, left me entirely in uncertainty about it all, I feel myself at no rate obliged to him. Would you please [be] so kind as to send me my assets of \$10 in S. Carolina money by mail, and credit the cents for the postage expenses you had a short time ago.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T71> Continuation of Lina's letter, November [1855].

I just heard from N.Y. that the shovels got lost in the Custom house. – I have planted already 1000 plants from the cabbage seeds you sent me and I have at least still the same amount.

The enclosed printed piece of paper is from a medicine which has often helped me. You should be able to get the prescription for it from Dr. Jessen. Hufland was a famous German doctor, and probably Mr. Jessen has his writings and the prescription in them. You would do me a great favor by doing so, but the names of the single ingredients have to be written down *clearly* and the quantity has to be shown not by the usual Dr. signs but by distinct words.

Although I don't have much to spare, as my continuing sickness has put me far behind, I cannot miss the pleasure to make you a small joy for Christmas – for every one of you – and for me, too, namely the thought how happy your children will be. Farewell, your Father

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

Mr. Ferdinand. Karck, N.Y.

Jacks., Dec., 1855.

Today I have the pleasure to send you a small box of May peas by steamer Carolina to Charleston, care of steamboat agent, and I ask you to have them called for in the steamboat office in N.Y. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I remain

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

To the above.

Jan 10, 1856.

I want to inform you by these lines that I have received your letters with the \$10 enclosed. I want to thank you deeply for your kindness, and wishing you a Happy New Year, I sign.

From: F.A.M.

<Written in English.>.

July 27, 1856 [First letter from Mt. Pisgah, Wis. – having trouble getting mail.].

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

[<T71>, cont.].

Mount Pisgah, Monroe County, Wisconsin.

Aug 3, 1856.

Dear Lina! I have received your letter of January and was very happy about it. You have passed silently over my questions about the place and the money. I can very well imagine the cause of it, but trusted you with a little bit more honesty.

We [FAM and William—LPM] have moved again, as you will have learnt from the address. The southern climate had such an unnerving effect upon my spirit and body, that I hardly had the strength any more for my decision to move again. After having tried out the North, the East, and the South, we traveled to the 'Promised Land,' the West of America. The trip by steamers and trains took us four weeks. It is today exactly two weeks, that we arrived here. We built us during this time a cabin and made about 4000 lbs. of hay.

<T72> A small valley on the roots of a mountain, which is the origin of a beautiful creek, is our present home. We have beautiful oak trees, wonderful meadows, and the best soil you can imagine. Corn, wheat, barley, and oats thrive all well, (not to forget the beautiful water, which clear as crystal and cold as ice bubbles out of the mountain). On top of the mountains is a wonderful pasture for thousands of sheep.

The region was inhabited by red Indians still only a few years ago. Daily emigrants, coming from the old States, pass our door; first comes a big wagon, pulled by four oxen, covered by a sheet, with the most necessary household articles and the children. The man pushes the wagon and behind him the other family members follow with the cows, pigs, and sheep.

As we had to sell everything and the trip was very expensive, we look forward to hard times. We still have to have broken this autumn six to eight acres of land (it costs \$4 per acre), we have to build a house and to split three to 4000 oaken boards, as all the planted land has to be fenced in [diagram], and we have to live off an empty pocket until the next crop. But we don't lose our courage for that reason.

As I am living now again in a moderated [cooler] climate, I would like to have again some seeds from you, but they have to be fresh and you have to mail them still before the Elbe is freezing. I have no money right away but I will take care to pay you next autumn. Pack the seeds in a box or into a barrel and mark it F.A.M. and send it to Ferd. Karck in N.Y. Write a few lines to F.K., include the loading receipt, and ask him to send the barrel to me. Write me after my letter arrives whether I can expect your seeds with certainty and mention what you maybe are unable to send.

Give my regards to your husband and children.

Your ...

I want to have from the things listed below only these you have the opportunity to collect the seeds yourself. I am especially interested in the things I underlined.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Meissner.

[1856].

Dear [nephew] Wilhelm. I learned from one of Lina's letters, that you arrived again at home and that with a stiff leg.—In case you should be still interested to come to this country, you can here easily acquire a small farm of your own by being industrious and thrifty. As you have been already at sea, you could easily come with a ship to N.Y. and you could not only pay your passage, but make some money besides. It would be best if you would bring a wife along. You can stay <T73> with me for the time being. The trip from N.Y. to here will cost about \$30 per person. If you want to come over, I will write more details. Give your father the best regards from your uncle.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline and Georg Gerstenberg.

Mount Pisgah, Monroe County, Wisconsin.

[1856].

Dear Lina! I hope you received my letter of the beginning of August, in which I sent you an order for seeds. I just thought in the meantime that it would not raise the expenses much to have me sent a box with shrubs and trees at the same time. The following things are about all I want to have ...

Dear Gerstenberg. I have asked Lina to send me some seeds and others and I wanted to ask you to help her selecting and packing them. The seeds have to be packed probably alone for themselves into a box or barrel, the Georgines and shrubs into a second one between dry moss and you can put the potatoes loosely on top in order to fill up the barrel. I can sort them out again afterwards.

Besides these I would like you to pack another box, about four feet long and three feet high and wide, with fruit trees and bushes. Please cut hard into the roots and cut off the wood from all kinds of things with roots, like roses and bushes, with the exception of one or two inches. Dry the moss and press it as hard as possible. You can modify my list according to the space in the box and your supply. It would be good if you would dig holes into the box, as the things get easily hot on the ship.

Mark the boxes F.A.M., 1, 2, and 3, and send them to Mr. F. Karck in N.Y. Write some lines to him, whereby you tell him the contents of the boxes (on account of the Customs!), namely: No. 1 = one box white seeds, No. 2 a box with plants, No. 3 a box with shrubs. If the freight is not too expensive by steamboat, I would like you to do so. The postage from N.Y. to here costs four cents (that is more than 2 ¢) per lb. You will therefore understand that all unnecessary weight has to be avoided.

I would like to write more but our work is so urgent, that we have no time, we are just building our house, I have already dug out the cellar. I hope that you and all your dear ones will receive this letter in good health. We are living now in a beautiful, healthy region, and have the best soil. I wish I could send you about 10 acres of it. Farewell, and fulfill the request of your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Messrs. Comstock, Terre, & Co.

<Written in English.> Messrs. Comstock & Terre & Co. Wethersfield, Conn.

23 Feb 1857 [excerpt].

... The Indian wigwams remain still in the woods but the inhabitants are nearly all gone. ... I send you a list of seeds ... You will oblige me if you spare me some paper for bags because I want to sell some of them seeds to my neighbors; and them Dutch hoes I can't get here, so I wish you would get me a couple without handle so that you can put them in the box with the seeds. ... [Send] c/o Henry Meissner, American House.

From: F.A.M.; To: Miss Sallie Stafford.

<Written in English.> Miss Sallie Stafford, Wallingford, Vermont.

Mar 8, 1857.

Dear Miss. My newspaper tells me that you are to become a mother without having a husband, or a father for your child; now if you are what I fancy you to be, if you have a zest for country life, think you could love and would like to marry a man of 50—you may become both. At home your misfortune will always be a stain on your fair character but here you may go for a widow and nobody would know.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Meissner.

<Written in English.> Henry M.—Muscodia Wis.

27 Mar 1857 [excerpt].

... I wish you would come home [by] the First of May.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Meissner.

<Written in English.> Henry M.—Muscodia Wis.

6 Apr 1857 [excerpt].

... If you dont come home all our work we have done already on the farm would be lost and I should have to go and hire me out myself ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Karck.

<T74> April 6, 1857.

Mr. Ferd. Karck, C. of H. in N.Y.

Dear Sir! I just received a letter from my daughter, dated Hamburg, March 3, whereby she announces that she mailed a cargo of shrubs and plants for me under your address. I therefore would like to ask you to send this cargo at once after arrival to Mr. N. Hintgen, La Crosse, Wisconsin, where I will have to pick it up. I leave it up to you whether you want to send it by freight line or by express. I am interested that the cargo

is not too long on the way and then again, that the costs are not too high. You will be so kind, I hope, to pay the freight from Hamburg, which probably is little. I would send you the money hereby, if I would not be so short momentarily.

I moved out of Florida last autumn, because the warm climate did not agree with my health. Since I moved here I naturally had to live out of my pocket. Groceries are here partly higher in price here than in N.Y. Bread is 15–20 cts., butter 30 cents.—The cause for this is that the region was evacuated by red Indians only a few years ago and so many new settlers arrive.

In case you have opportunity to give advice about the choice of a region to one of our countrymen, you can confidently send him here. I have tried the North, the East, and the South, and would have gone to the West much earlier if I would not have read and heard so much about the fevers there. This is true for the great 'Prairies,' too, where there is no wood and water. Therefore nearly all of my neighbors left all the other regions. We have wonderful springs, which never freezes in winter and in summer is cold as ice. We have enough wood for fire and fencing and very good soil. The yield is 20 to 40 bushels wheat per acre, 50 to 75 bushels corn, and the same with barley, and two to 300 bushels potatoes. But these things will have little interest for you.

Assuring you my deepest respect I remain your devoted ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Meissner.

<Written in English.> Henry M.—Muscoda Wis.

17 Apr 1857 [excerpt].

... I am glad that the seeds have arrived ... it would be as well for you to come ... and carry the box for your trunk ... everybody is asking for you and wants to know when you are coming home. I expect you positive not later than the first of May ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. J.B. Elston.

<Written in English.> Mr. J.B. Elston, Wis[consin?] H[ouse?], Muscoda, Wis.

17 Apr 1857 [excerpt].

Dear Sir. I want my son Henry Meißner who is to work for you to be home as soon as possible at latest the First of May, I cant get along this spring without his help ...

[Several pages cut away].

From: F.A.M.; To: Sallie Stafford.

<Written in English.> Sallie Stafford, Wallingford, Vermont. [Not sent? (see last paragraph)].

Aug 16, 1857 .

My dear friend: Only a few days ago I wrote to you and again I have the pen in my hand for the same purpose—don't you think I am foolish. I have a great mind to burn your first two letters but I shall have to preserve them to cool me off when I am getting too warm.

As it is the only way I know of to make you acquainted with myself, I will write my own biography for you, if you will have patience enough to read a very long letter.

I was born on the 27th day of December 1804, in the village of Schönbach (Handsome Brook) in the Kingdom of Saxony. Saxony is called the garden of Germany and celebrated not only for the beauty and scenery of the country but for works of art and science, and handsome women.

The young mechanic when he starts on his first journey sings: [German words, followed by English translation:] "I will travel to Saxony where pretty girls grow like apples on the tree." One of our most popular writers (Burgess) sang the praise of the Saxon girls. The answer to his poem by a Sweden girl is a much frequented country air. It runs thus: [German words, followed by English translation:] "I am a Sweden girl and not so well educated as the Saxon girls who read the parts [drama?] and play the piano and whose manners are said to be as sweet as honey.."

Now I must tell you before I resume my narrative: In Europe there are three distinct classes of society, the Lower, the Middle, and the Higher. The first mentioned comprises Workmen, Peasants, and Mechanics.

In my native state this class can all read and write. The second class is composed of Lawyers, Preachers, Doctors, Merchants, and of the farmers and all learned and well educated men. The higher class is formed of the Nobility up to the King. Money gives little or no rank but distinguished men of the second class are freely admitted in the circles of the upper class.

My grandfather [Christian Friedrich Meissner, 1721–1802] was Pastor on the Church (Lutheran) of the village. My father [Ernest Friedrich Meissner, 1764–1817] followed his father in office in the same Parish but died when I was about 10 years old [actually 12 y 5 m—LPM]; two years later my mother [Juliane Eleanor Seidel, abt. 1768–abt 1820; see <T206>] died also. I was placed in the care of an uncle who was Gardener to the King of Saxony. Dresden is the capital of the state and the residence of the King. We lived in a beautiful garden in the suburbs of this city. Large glass houses was filled with rare exotic plants. [Pilnitz?—LPM] From here I went to school and have seen and tasted many of the luxuries of higher life. I had the privilege of visiting the opera, the theater, and masked balls. I remember well that I often forgot the play on stage resting my eyes on one of the Princesses whose beauty fascinated me.

After I had got through with my schooling another uncle of mine who had made his fortune as a Merchant wanted me to follow his vocation, but after two years trial I could not stand it longer—his office was like a prison for me. I urged so long on my Guardian till he placed me in an Institution where farming was taught as a science. When I was about 19 years old [1823?] I went to America but finding in the Western wilds that knowledge availed nothing, and having before my departure from Hamburg fallen in love, I got homesick and went back. I stopped in Hamburg and after waiting a while till I was of age, I married [on 2 Feb 1827 to Elise Henriette Sophie Fredericke VON MITHOFEN, b 12 Mar 1806—see <T206>.—actually FAM was 22 years old. Karoline was already born Nov 1826—LPM].

My means was only small—I went to gardening and soon attracted the attention of Mr. Booth & Co., seed growers and merchants (see supplement no. 1). I was placed as head gardener in their large establishment. After a few years I established myself (see supplement no. 2). I bought a small farm, planted a nursery, and raised garden seeds. I toiled hard and succeeded well. I planted a large orchard, I built a new house 72 feet long and 52 feet wide (80,000 bricks was used so) [This is the house in Kummerfeld that is probably still standing—LPM] and may have now reaped the fruit of my labors and dwelled in comfort, but owing to some dissatisfaction, the idea took hold of me to start for America again. My first born daughter Karoline married a young man [m. Georg Gerstenberg 1 Aug 1847] who was gardener with me. I put her in possession of my property.

I left with my wife [some mystery here—LPM] and four children William, Wilhelmina, Leonore, and Henry, and arrived the second time at New York (Oct 20 1845). In New York I got acquainted with a gentleman who owned a large farm and tracts of land in Essex County N.Y. There I went with my family but finding after 1-1/2 years experience that the soil was too poor and the winter too long I resolved to leave again. But many a pleasant evening I recollect at Woodwardville. Mr. Radcliff, a gentleman from New York, and his sister, who owned a saw mill and large tracts of land here, was our neighbor; a Vermont family (Mr. Este, his wife, three full-grown daughters and some sons) kept house for him; this with my own family made a pretty nice company—either we spent the evenings there or all came to my house and you may believe it was sometimes very lively.

Trying to please my wife, who didn't like the wilderness, and finding an opportunity I went to Cape Cod Massachusetts; for a year and a half I worked a farm on shares then I accepted the offer of a wealthy man to buy me a farm. The farm consisted of only 25 acres of land with a new dwelling house and cost me, when I had built a new barn, 2000 dollars. I raised vegetables for market and made out pretty well but finding that I was toiling only for the rich man who took my earnings as interest for his money I wanted to go where land was cheap although rich. I wanted to find that America where I had dreamed of. My wife was opposed to a new country but at last I prevailed. The question presented itself now where to go to. I would have chosen the West, but I had read so much about the unhealthy climate and the prevalent fevers that I didn't like to risk the lives of myself and family for all the wonders and risks of that far famed country.

I had heard and read several times of the mild and healthy climate of Florida, and reasoning that in a country where a farmer has to provide for no winter his business must be an easy one I resolved to go there.

Cape Cod is all together peopled by seafaring men—in summer all the boys go on a fishing voyage and in winter they stay home and attend school. (My children went also to school—they all speak plain English—no one suspects them to be Germans.) No wonder that my oldest son William, frequenting such company, wanted to go to sea also. The gentleman who bought the farm for me, an old sea captain who had risen in the times of war from a poor boy to a rich man, favored his intention and promised to help him in a few years to the place of a captain, so I was forced to give my consent and he went, before we left, on a voyage

around Cape Horn; he follows the sea still but has since regretted very deeply and written many a letter to keep his younger brother back.

In January 1852, we left for Jacksonville, Florida and arrived there. We went 250 miles up the St. Johns River to a settlement called Enterprise, and arrived all in good health and spirits. This place, consisting of a hotel beautifully located on Lake Monroe and about 20 settlers scattered in the woods, is very much frequented in the winter time by invalids from the northern states—a steamboat runs every week between there and Jacksonville. We took possession of an empty log house not far from the hotel, and as my wife and daughters were the only white women in the neighborhood (only one other settler had a wife and she died while we stayed there) our cabin was at all times visited by the hotel people. I remember very well a fleshy gentleman and his lady from Vermont, but I don't recollect his name, who had a great fancy for our company.

As the summer approached the guests from the hotel left, the landlord shut up the house and left also. People told us we would soon get the fever and cautioned us to move off from the lake to the pine woods, but our residence with the view over the clear water of the lake was so pleasant, our health so good, that we did not heed their good advice. I had planted several acres of land with corn and vegetables. In the evenings a great fire of pine knots was lit; the neighbors assembled, stories were told, the girls would sing, till after midnight when the air got cooler we all went to seek rest.

This happy time lasted till about the first of June [1852] when my misfortune commenced. One by one was taken down with the fever. In a while we got so far reduced that we could not get our self a drink of water. (One farmer who lived alone in the woods had got down by the fever, seeing in four weeks not a living soul, and had to crawl all the time on his hands and legs to a spring to get a drink of water.) We ate quinine by the pound; moved to another location but there was no help—sometimes we would get clear of the fever for eight or 14 days but it always returned. After living about a year in this way I went down to Jacksonville and bought a farm four miles below the town on the St Johns River; the tide water and the fresh sea breeze made it a healthy location. I moved my family there and soon all got better except myself who was troubled by the fever a half year longer.

I planted my farm with vegetables for the Jacksonville market and we were getting something underway again when about midsummer 1853, my wife was taken down with dysentery and died after a short sickness. I have lost father and mother but never has anything affected me so much as the loss of my dearest friend my wife. My grief, perhaps owing to the weak state of my health, was most uncontrollable. Standing with my children around the death bed of their mother I told them, "Pretty soon I shall be all alone—Henry will go to sea and you (my daughters) will get married and follow your husbands." Then Wilhelmine, who I had always loved best, flung to my neck bursted in tears, hugging and kissing me, exclaiming, "Father if they all leave you I shall never leave you—I will stay with you."—and she was the first to leave me. I buried the body in the midst of my flower garden before my window—I could not make up my mind to have her carried to a distant graveyard. Evergreen shrubs and never ceasing flowers mark the sacred spot.

In a few days after, Myself, Wilhelmine and Henry were taken down by the same complaint, which in the Southern climate is contagious and generally fatal. My place was four miles from the city and as there was a great deal of sickness prevailing the doctor could not well attend to us so four or so of my friends hired a house in town and moved us there. We were very sick; the doctor visited us twice every day, young ladies watched the nights and gave us medicine and cooling syringes—in my fever dreams they seemed to me like angels. Leonore kept well all the time and stayed with us. In about four weeks Henry got enough better to go to the farm but Wilhelmine was not strong enough and stayed with Leonore in town.

In the next house to us in town lived a Mrs. Ryan, with family. Her oldest daughter was married to a printer who edited a paper but had left and gone as a volunteer against the Indians. Not finding his death by the enemy he took his life himself, owing to jealousy. There was another married daughter in the house who had left her husband, three or four younger children, and a boy of about 19 years. Mr. Ryan was in California. After we had left town this family got intimate with my daughter and induced Wilhelmine to come and live with them. Leonore disliking the people went to live with Mrs. Swart, a very honorable lady, Mr. Swart being important [?] of the town.

Wilhelmine [b July 1834] fell in love with young Ryan and as I was opposed to their union because he was a mean boy and of very unsteady habits she left with the Ryan family for California [1854]. From there she urged Leonore to join her and prevailed at last. Leonore left with a Mrs. Trace who went to join her husband in California and wanted a traveling companion and who paid her expenses. I had no objection for Leonore to go because we never could agree. Wilhelmine was a very handsome girl, well educated and of pleasant manners but of a very sensitive mind. In her fever sickness she often spoke whole hours in a trance, her eyes shut—she would recite a poem from our great poets or sing a hymn with the greatest correctness, feeling, and expression. She would not speak but seemed to understand when we spoke to her:

when mother asked her, shall I wash you? she would shake her head, shall Father wash you? she would make a consenting sign. Then I took a bowl with cold water and bathed her commencing on the top of the head; when I came as far as to her breast she would open her eyes and wake from her dream. Now blame me if you can that I didn't keep her back; reasoning was of no use and force would perhaps have killed her or destroyed her reason. She was 18 [20?] years old and has chosen her lot.

I sold my farm for a mere trifle, and went for a time with Henry to a plantation [Sammis?] making gardens. (Some time when I have nothing else to write I will give you a description of a Southern plantation, if you have not got tired of reading my scribbling.) In June last year [1856] we left for the West. From Massachusetts I took two tons of furniture and household goods besides all kinds of farming utensils to Florida. When we left for here I sold nearly all but not enough—our package proved still too cumbersome.

We went by steamboat over Charleston to New York, thence by railroad over Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Chicago to Prairie du Chien [WI]. Here I left Henry for a while and took a scramble through the country to look for land. I fixed on the spot where I am now, preempted [chose for Homestead] 160 acres, and went for Henry and my package. We arrived here July 19, 1856, unhitched our wagon below the shade of a big oak tree near the first spring of the little La Crosse river, made a fire, and cooked our first meal in our new chosen home.

Next we built a shanty, made some hay for winter use, and commenced building a house. After this, with the aid of some neighbors, was finished, purchased a stove for 30 dollars and some household goods and stores. My means was nearly exhausted. My journey from Florida to Wisconsin cost me alone 200 dollars. The winter set in, and the snow being so deep preventing all farming work, Henry resolved to hire out. He is a steady, likely [likable] boy 19 years old. Everybody liked him, the girls not excepted. In Florida he would never join a dancing party but here he got very lively. There was not a week that the young folks did not have a dance. He got a good situation in a village on the railroad 60 miles from here. He left me about the first of January [1857] and I went to board in Mr. Russell's family. Partly I stayed with Mr. Hazen our postmaster, whose office I take over in his absence.

As spring came on I wrote Henry to come home but he wished to stay, without giving any reason. (The neighbors think he has got a sweetheart there.) I may [might] have written again or I may [might] have compelled him to come home but I felt too proud for the one and I would not do the other.

Now if you know how I have loved this boy your heart would tell you how his desertion has grieved me, but love asks no pay. I loved him—my love paid of itself.

I don't wish to be dependent on my children. Since I came here I have gained health and strength. I feel at least 10 years younger. I have not been so well before since I came to America. Next December I shall be 53 years old; some people think me 40. I live in pleasant relation to my neighbors. Sometimes I feel quite happy and think it is better not to have the cares of a family. Sometimes I wish for a friend, a heart that could understand me, that I might call my own.———.

I have hired land of my neighbors; my crops are very promising. I shall raise more than Mr. Russell, who has a large family to support. I have built me a new home, I may raise me a new family—.

Dear Sallie, these lines were written for you and not for the eye of a stranger. I have told you what I think to be the truth. It has given me pleasure to let all the past travel once more through my memory. Judge mild [do not judge harshly], I know very little about you. You have not given me an explanation of your first letter; I shall not ask one. It is my one aim always to believe the best of everyone till I am forced to the contrary. Why should I not believe the best of you, whose friendship I am seeking. I believe you are good; all I ask is don't convince me otherwise.

After reading this long letter I feel rather reluctant to send the same off. I shall wait for another letter from you; I think you have hardly given me a right to believe that you take enough interest in your new found friend to justify my confidence.

Yours truly,

From: F.A.M.; To: Sallie Stafford.

<Written in English.> Sallie Stafford, Wallingford, Vermont.

30 Aug 1857 [excerpt].

... all your objection you have made and all you are going to make can be overcome if we unite our effort. If your health is feeble, I never liked strong stout women ... the first part of your last letter says no, the second part creates hope again ...

[Pages cut ... after cut page, obviously to Sally:].

From: F.A.M.; To: Sallie Stafford.

<Written in English.> Sallie Stafford, Wallingford, Vermont.

Dec 1857 [excerpt].

... light of a guardian, I have never known a woman who could raise a man.... I am now convinced you love B., and I cannot see any wrong in it—if he is unworthy of your affection that is not your fault. If I knew him I would do all in my power to make him repent and lead him back to his duty ... good by dear friend.

[More pages cut.].

List of Dates:

[<T74>, cont.] 1804, Dec. 27, Friedrich Adolph Meissner, born in Schönbach in the Oberlausitz in the Kingdom of Saxony.

1805, Dec. 2, Johanna Friederike Doris Runtzler born near Hamburg.

1834, July 20, Wilhelmine born.

1836, June 18, Leonore born.

1838, February 23, Henry born.

1832, February 24, William born.

<T75>.

1845, Sept. 1, Departed from Hamburg.

1845, Oct. 20, Arrived in New York.

1845, Nov. 14, arrived in Woodwardsville, Essex County, N.Y.

1847, May 15, arrived in West Barnstable [Massachusetts].

1852, January 24, arrived in Enterprise, Florida.

1853, August 17, Mother [J.F. Doris Runtzler] died.

1854, May 23, F.A.M. became a citizen.

1854, May 27, Wilhelmine departed for California.

1826, Nov. 12, Karoline Marie Eleonore born.

1855, End of May, Leonore departed for California.

1855, August 24, to Sammis.

1856, January 1, [Should be 1857—LPM] Henry left my house.

1856, June 19, Left Jacksonville for Wisconsin.

1856, July 19, Arrived in Big Spring in Monroe County, Wisconsin.

From: F.A.M.; To: Effie Krauss.

<Written in English.> Effie Krauss.

May 31, 1858.

Dear Effie, let me call you Dear, if I am not dear to you, you have already become so to me. When I did see you the first time I thought you was a pretty good looking girl, since I have got better acquainted with you I do believe you are a true hearted and noble-minded woman. But I am not going to write a love letter, I wish to commit some reasonings and arguments to your consideration.

Suppose that your sentiments are favorable to the wish I have expressed to you, circumstances would prevent a consummation of the same probably late in the fall. [In fact they were married 3 June, three days after the he wrote this letter.—LPM].

Now I wish you to consider that the summer is the time where the farmer has to lay stores up for the winter. With your assistance in my household I could earn nearly double than what I can alone. I don't care so much for myself, I shall always have enough. I say this because I would like to provide you a comfortable home. There is another thing to be considered, if you stay where you are now and allow me to come and see you I am afraid I may fall so much in love to you that my visits may become to frequent and I may neglect my work all together.

It seems nearly impossible for me to stay all summer alone, and would I not make a big fool of myself if I was going to spend my time in courting and when I was to grasp the prize, see it perhaps snatch away by some more favored candidate.

The only way I can see to serve our (?) [sic] interest is if your family would consent to come and live with me, your Brother [Henry Krauss, later Crouse] thinks of going away soon, you will be all alone in the woods, my house will give you better comfort and your Father could raise more Potatoes here than there. You would have a better chance to find out my faults and if you think them not so big and consented to be my sweet dear Effie, my dear beloved wife I would like to have your Parents settled near by.

There is some good Government land still here or I will Henry let have one half of my preemption. If you think my offer acceptable let Father and Henry come down as soon as better and we will take it over and if you think my happiness worth of any consideration I shall expect you in their company.

Allow me to call myself your Friend.

Marriage Contract [proposed?].

<Written in English>.

Articles of Agreement made the 00 day of Month, AD one thousand eight hundred and fifty eight between F.A.M. of the one part and E.C. of the other part.

The said F.A.M. and E.C. have agreed and by these presents do agree to become husband and wife together and copartners in all real estate or personal property owned by either party at present, or acquired thereafter, and do hereby promise to be governed by the following articles.

1. Each of said parties shall give his personal attention and devote his time wholly to the mutual interest and shall use his best skill judgement and discretion in promoting the profits and well fare of their household.

2. Neither of said parties shall assume any pecuniary liability either in his own or in the name of both for the accommodation of any other person nor sell any real estate without the written consent of the other party.

3. In case of death of one of the parties the remaining party shall be the sole owner of the whole real and personal property and no relation of either party shall have a claim on the same. In case of Death of both parties the property shall go to the children if any originated of this marriage and no children acquired by either party either before or thereafter their marriage shall have a claim on their mutual property.

[There is no evidence that any such contract was actually agreed and signed by both F.A.M. and E.C.].

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

[<T75>, cont.] Mount Pisgah, Monroe Co., Wisc.

Nov 20, 1858.

Dear Lina! Only a few days ago I received your letter of March. You will find the cause of this by reading my letter.

Last year (1857) was a very good year (as I told you in one of my last letters), everything grew in abundance. Last spring the bushel barley and the bushel potatoes cost 125 cents, in autumn 25 cents.

The last winter was very mild. It rained nearly all the time, which made me so bored and melancholic, that I nearly could not stand it any more, when I sat alone in my house in the evenings. The rain splashed on my windows and no living soul was near me. I felt tired of my life and wanted to die. Finally I decided to get married again, but I found no opportunity till spring came, when a German family from Ohio emigrated to this place. They seemed to be decent people, were however very poor. Their only daughter, a girl of 21 years, became my wife after a short acquaintance [married 3 Jun 1858—LPM] and I have to confess I had more luck than brain in my choice.

But the spring was as wet as the winter. After taking care for my fields and garden I got sick. Since July 1, I am lying in bed since eight weeks on my back. I could not eat anything during <T76> this time. I was nothing more but skin and bone. Nobody believed in my recovery. After this time it got a little bit better but it still took me 14 days, until I could do a few steps around the room. If my wife would not have nursed and treated me so full of love during this time I am sure I would not be alive any more.

In July I received a note from the Express Company in La Crosse (28 miles from here) telling me that a package had arrived for me and only a few days ago I was able to have it picked up. As wet as winter and spring, the summer was also. Wheat and potatoes are entirely ruined, besides there is no money among the people, there is no trade. We did not gather in at all, because everything was choked in weeds. It therefore was very good that I did not receive your seeds earlier. I can now sow it next spring. You will understand that I am unable to send you any money under these circumstances.

We live from corn and some pork. I was lucky to slaughter a pig this autumn. Coffee, tea, sugar, etc. are entirely erased from the list of necessary things. I had to pay 100 cts. for the package, which I had to borrow. I am still to receive some money for the seeds I sold in spring, but nobody has money to pay.

If you look at the map you will see that Wisconsin is in the northwest of A. and you can realize that we don't raise rice and coffee. Our products are corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye, buckwheat, beans, potatoes, onions, cabbage, turnips, apples, cucumbers, pumpkins, and so on. There are no bearing fruit trees here yet, but a pretty good kind of plums grows wild.

I am very happy about the fruit seeds and other seeds you sent me and I am curious to see how big cabbage I can raise. If you won't be impatient I would like to ask you to collect again some seeds for me next summer. I am especially interested in strawberry seeds, also in Steirländer strawberries, Plattfriesische and Dutch potatoes (seeds, not bulbs), as well as in all sorts of plants and shrubs. This will cause you no expenses, only some troubles. If I want something else besides this and will have the money for it I am going to write you again in summer. You have to send it at any rate in autumn. It will be too late in spring.

My health is again well and you can read from the preceding letter that I did not lose my <T77> courage yet and am full of plans for the future. Only I miss the youthful strength.

I hope this letter will reach you in good health. We send our regards and I remain your loving father ...

== To Heinrich Gerstenberg [son of Karoline, b. 1849?]:

I was very glad about your little letter and I would be still happier if you would come over here. But you don't have to wait until you are grown up. It is there harder to get used to the type of living, work, and language here. If you are industrious and properly, you can earn yourself a nice farm as by Kuhlmann's or Mr. Yehlers, but you have to build the houses yourself.

Give my regards to your brothers and write me in your next letter when each of you was born.

Your Grandfather ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Sallie Stafford.

<Written in English.> Sallie Stafford, South Wallingford, Vermont.

4 Dec 1858 [excerpt].

Dear friend, ... I was married the third of June last to a woman of German birth and American education who came here from Ohio with their parents a short time previous. My somewhat hasty choice has proved quit a happy one, my wife is twenty one years old, she has a very good heart, is pretty good looking, and speaks well English.

I am very desirios not to lose the likeness of my daughter with her little boy which I have send to you and I shall ask the favor (I think it is the last) of you to send the same back to me.

If this letter should meet no answer, I shall have to write to your Postmaster to obtain som information.

Yours truly.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

[<T77>, cont.] March 15, 1859.

Dear Lina! Last Nov. I wrote you a letter and I hope you received it. But as I received no answer I want to repeat the most important things.

Last summer was here very wet, unfruitful, and unhealthy. I was very sick and weak for two months, that I was unable to do a thing. I recovered only late in autumn, but I am very well now. You know from my former letters that Henry left me and I wrote in my last letter that I could not stand life alone any longer and that I got married again. If you won't become impatient I will include a list of seeds I want you to send me this summer ...

Several of the seeds above you sent me already last summer, but I don't know yet what will come up. Please write to me when you receive this letter, as I would like to know how you are doing. Give my regards to Karl and let me know how he is doing and whether he is still working for Le Roy [de Ray?—LPM] as a gardener.

If you are interested I am going to tell you more about our life here. As you know, I am living in the state Wisconsin, in the county of Monroe and in the town[ship] of Portland. Monroe County is 30 miles long and wide, the town[ship] of Portland is 12 miles long and six miles wide. Every town has the following officials, which are elected new every year: three supervisors, one of them is Chairman, another is Clerk, and the 3rd is Treasurer; a Superintendent for the schools, and two assessors, one sealer and seven assessors [? tax collector? -LPM] and four Justices of the Peace. <T78> Every autumn the land and property of the inhabitants is estimated by the assessors, the clerk makes a tax-list accordingly, and the Treasurer has to collect the taxes until the end of January. The value of our town was this last year \$43,859 and the taxes amounted to \$1568, of which \$178 went to the state, \$248 to the county, \$179 to the town, \$866 for schools, and about \$100 for roads. Everyone elected to office has to swear and has to put up a bond. All town officials receive for every day spent in office \$1.50. I am clerk and my amount will be about \$40. Next April new officials are going to be elected again, that is always a very lively time for our town. There are several parties and every party tries to get its friends elected. Every white man who is 21 years old and has lived in this state for a year is allowed to vote, whether he is poor or rich. All the town officials, the Governor and the other State officials, the County officials, and Judges throughout the country are voted at one time, elected on a certain day in autumn. Every four years a President of the U.S. is elected.

From: F.A.M.; To: Edward Kullmann.

To Mr. Edward Kullmann, Publisher of the Madison Newspaper, Madison, Wisc.

Mt. Pisgah, Monroe Co., Wisc., Nov. 10, [1859].

Dear Sir! I read in your paper an appeal to philanthropes for a certain widow Erndle. You state yourself ready to accept contributions for her. You maybe can do more for her and secure a decent living for her, if you want to take up the small trouble and do the negotiations.

I have a neighbor, his name is Friedrich Schultz, about 35 years old, the owner of 80 acres of land, house, oxen, cows, and pigs, has no debts, is a decent, industrious man and widower. He is willing to take Mrs. Erndle with her children as a housekeeper, assumed that she has interest in this job, and he will probably marry her, when he gets to know her more intimately. Would you please inform Mrs. Erndle and send her answer to me and let me know more details about her situation. If she agrees I am going to have Schultz give me a written assurance. Mrs. Erndle is supposed to come by train till Sparta, where he will pick her up with his wagon.

You must not be surprised about this <T79> proposal and think there is something wrong somewhere. The man has a good name, a nice appearance and a friendly character and enough to eat. German women are rare here, however, and he does not want an English one.

Expecting a kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Robert Henning.

Mr. Robert Hennig, St. Louis, Mo.

Mt. Pisgah, M.C., Wisc., Nov. 14, 1859.

Dear Sir! My daughter wrote from Kummerfeld near Hamburg that my wife Elise, former Mithöfen is coheiress to the inheritance of your cousin Hans Wilhelm Detlev Wiedersprecher, who died in Hermann Mo.

I learnt besides that, from my daughter's letter, that you tried to collect the mentioned inheritance behind my back—but without success, as it—consisting of property—is not allowed to go abroad, but an heir, who was at the time of death of the testator in the U.S., can collect it.

Now I would like to hear from you, whether there is such a law, and how I can claim the inheritance as the husband of the heiress. I am living in this country since 1845 and am citizen of the U.S. Of what does the inheritance consist, and in whose hands is it now? What papers might I need to prove my claims?—If you will give me a satisfactory answer I won't fail to negotiate with you more closely.

From: F.A.M.; To: C.F. Adae, Esq.

C.F. Adae, Esq., Cincinnati, O.

M.P. M.C. W. Nov. 14, 1859.

My wife Elise, formerly Mithöfen from Vurel in Oldenburg, who is presently living in Kummerfeld in Holstein, writes me that her cousin Hans Wilhelm Detlev Wiedersprecher, also from Oldenburg, had died some years ago in Hermann, Missouri and that he left a fortune of about \$16,000 for which she is coheiress (my wife's father, mother, and sisters and brothers are all dead). She has tried in vain to receive the inheritance. Now the U.S. Consul of Hamburg has told her, that the inheritance cannot go abroad as it consists of real estate; however, can be collected by an heir who was in the U.S. at the time of the testator's death.

I found your address as Consul of Oldenburg in a German paper. <T80> I therefore take the liberty (as both the testator and the heiress are from Oldenburg—I am a born Saxon!) to ask you: whether there is such a law in the U.S. or in Missouri and how I as the husband of the heiress and citizen of here, can claim the inheritance, as I was living here already during the time of the testator's death. Asking a kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Hamburg.

Nov 15, 1859.

After having waited for a long time without result I received your letter a few days ago. Did you not receive my letter from last spring? I asked you to answer me. I can get over it that the bastard brood Heinrich and his sisters and brother left me, but it hurts me very much that my only daughter neglects me so much. If it would not be for this silly inheritance I maybe would not have heard from you for a long time.

I wish you would not have disturbed my peace by your inheritance affair. A lot of worries, troubles, and expenses are for sure, but the success as uncertain as hitting the jackpot. Until I have heard more details about the inheritance I want to tell you about my present life. You always think we here in America sit full with money and without worries, but we have to earn our living with our labor also.

Just imagine you move with everything into your darkest heath, presumed no land there is cultivated yet. There you can build yourself first a cabin. Then you go to the forest close by and fell trees for a log house. Before you even have finished it, it starts to snow. Next year you rent some land for potatoes too, root the bushes and shrubs besides in the heath, and have about an acre ploughed. The next spring, after you have taken care for the neighbor field, [imagine that] Gerstenberg gets sick and is lying half dead in bed for eight weeks. You are busy enough to take care for your sick husband. When he is finally better he is so weak that he is unable to work through the whole autumn. During this time, the pigs have dug up your potatoes and winter is before your doors again. Fortunately the forest is not far away, <T81> so you have no want of firewood. A new spring comes (1859) and with it new hope and lust for life. If you can imagine all this you know my beginning in Wisc.

Now I want to tell you about this last summer. April was nice and warm, but May was so wet cold, that the time for seeds and plants was put off until the end of this month. I planted the acre of land which I had cultivated near my house, with potatoes and garden vegetables, and borrowed a piece of land from my neighbor besides. I took everything what I could scrape together and bought a cow for \$20, which was supposed to calve in a few weeks. It looked for the young grass near the creek, got stuck by her feet on a soft spot, fell head over heels into the water, and drowned.

May 21: Beans, cucumber, and other tender vegetables froze so that I had to start sowing again.

May 28: We had a strong hail shower, which killed everything the frost had left.

June 4: We had a hard night frost. Cucumbers, beans, pumpkins, potatoes, and corn froze; the two last ones sprouted again from the root. The leaves and young sprouts from the oaks and other wild trees were black.

June 16: Mild hoar frost, which did no harm to me.

July 26 & 27: Frost in the night, but with little harm.

Aug. 1: After a very long drought rain came; the potatoes and vegetables which nearly all were dried up grew again fresh and strong.

Sept. 2: Hard frost at night. Corn, potatoes, and many other things which were in the best growth, were entirely ruined.

When you read the above things you must not believe that the region here is so cold. This was a very unusual year. Wheat, barley, rye, and oats grew excellently.

I am very well and have again bought a nice cow for \$23 and two calves for \$9 this autumn. Times are still very bad; money is nearly not existing at all. There is only trade and exchange of things. I am sometimes surprised about myself how I survived. I always had enough <T82> to live till now. If I would have understood how to manage with so little I would be nearly rich. But what is money good for? One cannot eat it and cannot take it along in one's grave either.

The seeds you sent me last summer have all arrived well. As you have had a little daughter again I have to believe you still have a husband. I nearly doubted it as you never wrote about him. I am glad that you are all well.

You ask me to take over your inheritance affair, without informing me more about the details. I have written to Robert Hennig. He answered me shortly that he had heard of a Widow Meissner and that he would only [supply] more details if I would send him \$10.

If you want me to take over this affair I will do it, and will pay you half of everything I will be able to get—after the expenses are deducted, naturally.

In order to enable me to act successfully I have to know:

1. How is your mother related to Detlev Wiedersprecher?
2. Who are the co-heirs?
3. Has your mother given a certificate to Robert Hennig or somebody else, and what papers did she send to him?

Then you have to mail me the following papers:

No. 1 is a copy of the inheritance and certificate. Your mother has to sign and seal there where I marked it by pencil, in the same way you and Gerstenberg have to sign as witnesses also. Then your mother has to go to a public notary and he has to put down about the following things and has to sign his name and put down his seal. You must not forget either to put the date in.

No. 2 is a marriage certificate. As the name in the parish book is incorrect you have to get two witnesses who are signing the paper and a notary has to make an oath, maybe Ullrich and Brühmann.

No. 3 is a revocation of a certificate made earlier.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. W. Voigt.

<T83> Mr. W. Voigt, Capital Brewery, Madison, Wis.

Dec. 18, 1859.

I have received your letter of the 13 of this month. After having talked again with Schultz, I can reply that he has the doubt to make expenses and troubles to himself by a trip to Madison. If the widow Erndle could have come here, as I suggested, she would not only have found a nice place for the winter, but also a marriage could have been arranged—without doubt. I am sorry that the circumstances did not allow the execution of my plan, as I would have liked to have found a support for the widow and a housekeeper for my neighbor ...

From: F.A.M.; To: E.C. Angelrodt.

Mr. E.C. Angelrodt in St. Louis, Mo., Duke and Consul of Oldenburg.

Dec. 18, 1859.

About four weeks ago I wrote a letter to Mr. C.F. Adae in Cincinnati, whose address I found in a newspaper. He replied that he sent my letter to you for answering. As I have not heard anything yet from you I take the liberty to put my affair before you again.

My wife Elise (from whom incidentally I have heard nothing for years) born as Mithofen in Vanel in the Oldenburg, writes to me from Kummerfeld in Holstein, that her cousin Hans Wilhelm Detlev Wiedersprecher, also from Oldenburg, died in Hermann, Mo. some years ago and that he left a big fortune to which she is co-heiress. As it seems, she tried without success to ask for that inheritance, and therefore addresses me. The U.S. Consul in Hamburg is said to have told her that the inheritance—as it consists of property—is not allowed to go abroad, but can be collected by an heir who was in the U.S. at the time of the testator's death. Caused by these words, I take the liberty to ask you some questions and, as both the heiress and the testator are from Oldenburg, I don't doubt that you will be so kind as to answer me.

1. Is there a law in the U.S. or in Missouri, which does not permit 'real estate' to be collected by an heir living abroad?

<T84> 2. Which claims can I make and prove as the husband of the heiress, as I was here in this country at the time of the testator's death.

3. What do I have to do to prove my claims?

4. Do you know more details about this inheritance?

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Jacob Rubin.

Mr. Jacob Rubin, Whitewater, Wis. Jan. 10, 1860.

I heart from your cousin and our both friend John Wenhen, that you intended to make yourself a house in the country. If you still have the plan, I would like to inform you of an good opportunity how to acquire a beautiful piece of land very inexpensive.

I have a farm of 160 acres, which has the following situation [sketch map showing parcels 1, 2, 3, 4, and creek]. As you can see the road and creek goes through the middle of this land, which would make two beautiful farms. 80 acres are enough for each of us and I could give therefore half of it, that is No. 1 & 2. That is without doubt the better half. As I live on No. 4, I have to take No. 3 & 4. No. 1 is beautiful, plain plowing country and No. 2 is the best wood lot in a circle of six miles, where there would be no more piece of wood if I would not have guarded it since three years and for which already many are lurking.

There have been some sales made lately, land without wood and water for five Taler per acre. I will sell you these both 40 acres for \$150. My preemption is valid till the beginning of March. If you are unable to scrape all the money together and pay me only \$50, we can keep the land another year for you, if you give John the order. You better keep in mind, you will receive wood and beautiful, clear water, which never freezes in winter and is cold as ice in summer, good pastures, beautiful plowing land, and you can build your house directly at the Sheck [?] river road. You cannot find a piece of land with all these advantages around here.

I am sorry that you don't know me closer, [so] that you will know I am no cheat. But you easily can convince yourself if you ask Krähenbühl.

Expecting a reply soon, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Land Office Commissioner.

<Written in English.> Commissioner of the General Land Office, Washington, D.C.

Jan 1860 [excerpt].

... People save their own timber and skim some Government [land] entirely, thereby making it worthless. ... You will perhaps say this is none of my business, the reason is I wish to protect some Govt. land adjoining my farm till I can enter the same.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.J. Slater.

<T85> W.J. Slater, Esq., Hermann, Mo.

Jan 30, 1860.

I read your address in the Hermann paper and I want to know whether you know some details about the inheritance of Hans Wilhelm Detlev Wiedersprecher who died several years ago and whether you can be my attorney in my claims as heir to this inheritance or whether you are already engaged in this affair by another party. Looking forward to a speedy reply I sign ...

== [Addendum to same letter? (compare Nov 14, 1859)].

My wife writes me from Holstein: "My cousin Hans W. Detlev Wiedersprecher died a few years ago in Hermann, in the state of Missouri, and he left a fortune of about \$16,000 behind, of which I am a coheir. Now the money, as it comes from real estate—cannot be sent to Denmark [?!]. Now the American Consul in Hamburg told me that an heir who was in America at the time of his death can claim all of the inheritance.

From: F.A.M.

<Written in English.> [Other letters concerning claims for uncle's inheritance in Missouri.].

From: F.A.M.; To: Newspaper in Hermann, Mo.

To the Publisher of the Paper in Hermann, Mo.

M.P. M.C. W. Oct 9, 1860.

Dear Sir! Some years ago a certain Detlev Wiedersprecher died in Hermann and left an important inheritance behind, which was claimed by his heirs in Germany (as I heard a short time ago!), but there is still a lawsuit about it going on. You would do me a big favor if you would let me know whether there is still time to prove a claim to said inheritance and could you tell me somebody there who would take over this affair. My wife is first cousin to said Wiedersprecher and I was at the time of his death in America. Expecting your kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg etc.

To daughter Karoline Gerstenberg, brother Karl Meissner, grandson Heinrich Gerstenberg, and son-in-law Georg Gerstenberg (in or near Kummerfeld).

M.P. M.C. W. Oct 9, 1860.

Dear Lina! I received your letter from spring and read it with great joy. I hope that the Hugter (?—M.C.) which you had while writing the letter, did not turn into a bad disease.

As you will be most interested in the inheritance affair I will tell you first all about it I know. After much red tape I learned that Robert Hennig died which slowed the affair down—I hope to the best of our interest. I have received my and your grandparents' marriage certificate, but in order to have power to act I need the certificate that I sent for you to sign.

We had an excellent summer. My health is well. I am feeling stronger than when I left Kummerfeld. I have together with only an old man mowed and dried 20,000 lb. of hay, and in Kummerfeld I could not even mow my meadows. My cattle is doing excellently, and I wish you and your husband and children would be here. What a nice farm we would establish! Not a single one of the <T86> primroses did come up; the carnations and other things did fine. If you have collected this summer shrubs and plants seeds for me please send it like your last letter with a Hamburg packet boat and have it mailed in N.Y. If you can, please include the following seeds ...

Send it as soon as possible. I hope that this letter may reach you as well as it leaves me. Your Father ...

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Dear brother Karl! If you are still alive so let me please know how you are doing. I am well and doing fine. Enclose a letter for me in Lina's letter, please.

Your brother ...

==

Dear Heinrich! I have received your little letter, which you wrote to me more than a year ago, and I read it with great joy. I have also answered it, but my letter got lost as your mother told me. As you surely have learned how to write even better in the meantime, I would be glad to receive again a letter from you in which you tell me all about you, your brothers and sister, your garden, and so on. [Heinrich, b. abt. 1849, was about 11 years old at this time.—LPM.].

My best regards from your loving ...

==

Dear Gerstenberg! As I would also like very much to hear about you, I am going to tell you something about here: It is stated that this year about 300 millions bushel wheat were raised in Wisconsin (1 bushel weighs 60 lb.), in whole America about 180 millions bushel.—[Compare the following with F.A.M. letter to Karoline March 15, 1859—LPM.] Wisconsin is divided into Counties and these again into Town[ship]s. The town[ship] I am living in is called Portland and is six miles long and six miles wide. Every square mile is called a "Sect[ion]." Every sect[ion] is again divided into four parts and every quarter again in four parts or 40 acres. This is smallest quantity of land one can buy from the Government and that for \$50. Every town has a Supervisor and two assistant Supervisors, a Town Clerk, a Treasurer; an Assessor, four Justices of the Peace and four Constables, and a Town Superintendent [of schools?]. Every year in April these officials are elected anew. Every inhabitant of 21 years of age has the right to vote. The names of the candidates you want to vote for are all printed or written on a paper and this paper is thrown into a certain box. After all have voted the papers are taken out and <T87> read aloud. Who has the most votes is elected. I have been now elected already for the 2nd time as Town Clerk, in 1858 and 1860. All officials receive for every day they spend in the town's business \$1.50. The taxes are paid once every year. They consist of State, County, Town, and School Tax. The fortune of everybody is estimated by the Assessors, according to which the Town Clerk makes out the tax list and gives it over to the Treasurer with the order to collect the tax. The estimated value of our town in 1858 was \$22,297 and the taxes were \$880 or nearly four cts. per dollar.

Every four years a new President of the U.S. is elected. The last election was Nov. 6. All the country was in a tremendous excitement. There are here three big political parties, the Democrats, the Republicans, and the Natives; the first party is for slavery, the second against it, and the third one does not want the immigrated citizens to have the same rights as the natives. All Catholics vote for the first party, all enlightened immigrants vote for the second one, and only the jealous natives vote for the third one. The Republicans won and Abraham Lincoln is our newly elected President.

Another time I will write more.

Your friend ...

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Postscript to Lina.

Nov. 26, 1860.

I have still put off to mail your letter, as I would have liked to tell you more details about the inheritance. Some days ago I received a letter from Hermann, which said, the inheritance is already since Wiedersprecher's death, who died 1849 of the Cholera, in a law suit and I think the heirs from here and from Germany fight so long for it until there will be nothing of the inheritance. Among the mentioned heirs are the brothers Onken, who are living presently on the Gasconade and who are pretty wealthy.—Judging by all this I would advice you not to have too big hopes. I have none at all. If I would not do it for your sake I would not trouble myself at all.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Jacob Graf.

<T88> To Mr. Jacob Graf, Publisher of the Paper in Hermann, Missouri.

Feb. 20, 1861.

Dear Sir! I received your kind reply to my questions last autumn. You find enclosed here the copy of a letter which I wrote soon afterward to Mr. Adv[ocate] Gale, but received no answer.

I want to ask for your negotiation in this matter and I will pay you 5% from everything which I should receive from this inheritance. I expect for this in return that you inform me now and then (under the hand! [privately?—LPM]) about the state of this matter and that you help me by your good advice. For that purpose I left the enclosed copy without address and I beseech you to send it to an advocate you may chose, who is willing to put some power [effort?] behind this matter.

I received yesterday a letter from my wife telling me that the brothers Onken are no heirs, because their mother is still alive. She says farther on that she learned that real estate—according to a law presently valid in Missouri—cannot be inherited by somebody abroad and that I am the only legal heir as the Onkens came to America after Wiedersprecher's death.

In case the present political excitement should be in the way of my interests, I would not mind to change my home to your region, as it is too cold for me here anyhow, because only a few years ago I moved from Florida to this place. My business is gardening, I preferably raise seeds. How would this suit for Hermann? As I suspect you are the owner of a garden and if not yourself, somebody of your family loves flowers, I enclose some seeds.

Expecting your kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Jacob Graf.

To Mr. Jacob Graf, Editor of the Paper in Hermann, Missouri.

April 8, 1861.

Dear Sir! I take the liberty to ask you whether you received my letter which I wrote to you in February. As I have received no answer, I am afraid it got lost. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Editor, Milwaukee Atlas.

<T89> To the Milwaukee Atlas. To the Editor.

[April, 1861].

Dear Sir! My business is gardening. I raise especially garden and flower seeds. I have a good selection of sunflowers and I will sell you 25 beautiful kinds for one dollar. The most of this kinds are listed with 10 cts. per paper in Emery's, Chicago, seeds catalog. Yes, I will send you two assortments postage free [in return] for one year subscription of the 'Atlas.' As soon as I receive one sample of the 'Atlas,' I am going to send you the seeds.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Bernhard Donschoke.

To Mr. Bernhard Donschoke, Milwaukee.

May 15, 1861.

Dear Sir! As soon as I received the Atlas from April 17, I mailed an assortment of flower seeds to you, but have received no other paper yet since this time. I don't know whether the seeds did not arrive or what might be the cause.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Aug 18, 1861.

Dear Lina! I received your letter of January of this year and wrote several letters on account of the inheritance to Hermann, but received no answer, as in the meantime war broke out and Missouri is one of the Southern States, where there is now a real turmoil. The last paper tells right now about a big battle which was just fought. The Free States of the North arm themselves tremendously. Before winter comes, probably 500,000 volunteers will bear arms and it is to be expected that the South cannot resist such superiority.

If I could go personally to Missouri after the war, it would be maybe possible to arrange something. One cannot do much by writing here. But traveling is expensive. I have now a nice start which I am not going to forsake for an uncertain hope. I have now two cows, two oxen, and two calves, geese and chickens, a beautiful garden, and I cultivate every year some more land. I wrote you some time ago that the start here would be as hard as in your heath, where you would have to build a house and so on. The difference however is that—when it is broken up in summer—wheat can be sowed on it in autumn or spring, which usually <T90> gives a good yield and so it goes on for 10 years and improves itself nearly from year to year—without the least bit of fertilizer. We eat here nothing but wheat bread. It is—to be sure—a very hard job to establish a new farm, especially for a single man, but one does not have so many worries about food

as in Germany. You and your big family could do no better but to come over here. Yes, you even *owe* it to your children and as I have already a nice start and know about life here, it would not be half so hard for you than for somebody who arrives here entirely as a stranger. If you yourself cannot make up your mind send me at least one of your boys over, but where to get the traveling expenses? To beg for it, or what would be more decent—to work as cabin-boy.

Since your letter of January I have not heard anything again. If this letter will reach you in time that you will be able to answer me still this autumn please include in your letter some seeds for me. This will cause no big expenses for you. From the carnation and Stocks seeds I received two years ago I have now a beautiful place of it full in blossoms. I also would like to have some primrose and violet seeds, for the others I don't want to cause so much expense for you. If you cannot send your letter by a ship, please send it by a Hamburg or Bremen steamboat, it will be too expensive by the Prussian mail.

Best regards to all of you from your loving father.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Feb.. 8, 1862.

Dear Lina! After having waited for a long time in vain and being just about to write one again to you I received your letter of Dec. 11. I don't need to tell you that I was very glad about it, especially as it left all of you in good health. As your husband sends his regards I have to believe that he is still alive, although he did not answer my letter. As I see, your family has increased again by a daughter. Give little Emma a kiss from her grandfather, one also to Line and one to Karl. I am going to write to Wilhelm and Heinrich.

I cannot understand that you are so afraid of the long trip, as so many thousands of people come over here. My next neighbors <T91> are Germans, people from the lowest classes, who arrive here with nothing, and every one of them has now already a beautiful farm.

The war is not finished yet; it nearly started yet. The Government has now an army of 700,000 men under arms—all volunteers, a great lot of whom are Germans. The common private receives \$13 per month and food and clothing. Wheat here in the West costs 50 cts. per bushel (= 60 lb.), pork is \$2.50 per 100 lb., butter eight cts. per lb.

The seeds you sent to me is very welcome to me! Parsley and celery are entirely unknown here, but I have the right soil for it—if I would only have more hands to work. From whom did you buy the flower seeds? They seem to be inexpensive; I only hope they are good. The Stocks I received last [year] from you were pretty good. The trade with seeds is done here in an entirely different way as with you. Every little package costs five cts. More or less seed is put into it—according to the seed, whether it costs more or less.

I sure would like to have a catalogue from the seed merchant where you bought my seeds, also an Erfurt flower catalog, even if it is not the newest one. You must not include these catalogs in my letter, but put them into an envelope that is open at both ends.

I sure wish also that I could spend once a Christmas Eve with you. But wishing is good for nothing and I am already too old to become soft. I am still as healthy as ever, live pretty happy and gay, and 'earn my bread by the sweat of my brow.'

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Dear Wilhelm! You write to me that you will come to me when you are out of school. If I remember right, there you have to go to school till your 17th year. That is too long. [He is now about 11.—LPM] You should come over that you could go to school here. In the same way the time would be lost if you would learn first a profession. What you learn at home in a day you will learn here in an hour. But how to come here, I don't know. You said I should save some money for the trip. I am an old man and have to do all my work alone, you know. I am driving now my hay home from the marsh. When I have loaded a cart full, I climb on a small ladder that I take along, and put it in order. Then I throw more up, then climb up again to <T92> put it in order and so on, till the last wagon is loaded. And it's the same with unloading. You have to train yourself to write in 'Latin letters,' which will help you a lot here. Our school starts here in the morning at nine o'clock and lasts till three in the afternoon. In the morning the children have 1/2 hour for play, one hour at noon, and in the afternoon again 1/2 hour, so that they sit four hours in school per day.

Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

==

Dear Heinrich! You wrote me that you had had a bad year for fruit. We had a beautiful summer, but the wheat was not as good as last year's. When the wheat is mowed and bound, it is put up in big heaps in the fields. In autumn it is threshed by a machine that is pulled by 10 horses, and about 12 men have to help besides. These men thresh in one day 300 to 400 bushel. Not every farmer has a machine, but the machine is on a wagon and is driven to us from field to field. In the front the sheaves are put in, and in the back the threshed straw comes, and from the side appears the pure wheat. I'll write more another time.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.

<Written in English.> [Feb. to Apr. 1862: Trying to adopt a girl from Madison Wisc. reform school, but evidently nothing materialized.]

From: F.A.M.; To: Bernhard Domschecke.

<T92, cont.> Mr. Bernhard Domschecke, Publisher of the Atlas, Milwaukee.

April 6, 1862.

Dear Sir! Last spring I wrote to you that I would like to get the weekly 'Atlas,' if I could pay it in flower seeds. You tell me in your reply from April 22 that you agree in this deal and I sent you at once a package with flower seeds by mail carrier. It was a dollar worth, addressed to you in order to have them mailed in Sparta. As the Atlas did not come any more after one or two issues, I wrote to you again in May and inquired about the cause of this all. I sent this letter by stage driver, but received no answer. I renew now my offer and I am going to send you—postage free—100 papers of flower seed in the value of \$3.00 in about 20 different kinds as prepayment for the Atlas; you find a sample enclosed. Expecting a kind reply I sign ...

If you can sell flower seeds for me at any way (the retail price is five cts. per paper!), I can send you more for this price.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T93> Apr. 9, 1862.

Dear Lina! You probably received my letter that I wrote to you in February. First of March I sowed the Stocks and celery seeds that you sent me in a box, at the same time with some Stocks seeds that I collected myself, and with some that I received from two years ago. The last one came up first, and then the middle one, and this one I received only a short time ago was the last to come up. This makes me believe that he is a little bit old. From whom did you get it? As I wrote already in my last letter, please send me two Hamburg, a new Quedlinburg, and a new Erfurt catalogue, but I would like to have them soon, as I wanted to have seeds sent to me in autumn. Have your children collect seeds for me this summer. According to a new law, seeds can be mailed inexpensively by mail as well as printed matters.—

The war advances pretty well. The rebels were beaten on all places and are entirely expelled from Missouri, so that I have the hope that something could be done for the inheritance if I could go myself. If you can make it possible to send Wilhelm over here, I could get away for eight days, as he could take care of my cattle during this time and could be helpful to me in still other ways, that I would be quicker done with my seed crop and hay making. Children below 12 years go for half the fare. When I came over here last time, there was a boy—about 11 years old—on the ship also, who had no friends or relatives with himself on the ship, and went to his uncle in America. Children usually have the best deal, as the sailors have a great preference for them. Your mother has collected so much money when we had burnt down. [Contributions from friends in Kummerfeld? -LPM] Should she be unable to collect when she tells the people that the boy wants to go to his grandfather in America? If you want or can send Wilhelm, so send him *soon*. Maybe you find on the ship a family that goes to Wisc. The money for the trip as far as New York has to be paid in Hamburg, and you have to give the remaining money to the Captain in order not to have it stolen on the ship. In N.Y. the Captain or the German Co. will take care for his remaining trip. In a letter you send by mail, you have to give me the news by what ship and Captain he departed. Then <T94> you have to give Wilhelm my address and tell him that—in case something should happen to him between here and N.Y.—he has to write to me and to let me know where he can be found. He does not need to take more clothes than a knapsack full, that he will be able to carry himself if necessary. Do your most possible; I will do mine.

Your father ...

From: E.D. Meissner; To: Henry and Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Letter from Eva Dorothea Meissner to Sister Jane and Brother Henry (Krauss or Crouse).

[About Jun 1862; excerpt].

... We are glad to hear that ... you have such a pretty baby [daughter Phoneta—LPM] ... that Henry [is teaching school] We have heard you been talken of going to Colorado. Meißner would like to go to Californien or Oregon.

Affectioned Sister E.D. Meissner.

From: E.D. Meissner and F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Maiden Rock, Pierce Co., Wis.

26 Jul 1862 [excerpt].

... The assurance of your returned love has been very gratifying to me and Meißner. He has always felt sorry that he and my only brother could not better agree.

To Jane: The kisses sent by little Phoneta I have distributed... My love to you, Henry, and little Phoneta....

[From F.A.M.:] I would like to live near a See Coast. The Atlantic has long been settled so I shall have to look to the Pacific. ... (Oregon) ... But how to get there? That is the great question ...

From: E.D. Meissner; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.>.

[About Aug 1862 excerpt].

... My letter was also a few days delayed in mailing by Mr. Russell showing Meißner the door and verbitting him to entre his house ... [Russell was postmaster (at his home?) and had been sued by Meißner and got \$4 plus costs for damage by Russell's hogs running loose.].

... I would be very glad if you and Jane was going to live in our neighborhood, provided we could live as friends, but you know Meißner can not bear to be asked so many questions, he cannot bear to have his letters and papers by you searched through, he cannot bear to be always corrected like a little schoolboy, and I can neither bear to have my man run down by you. It is true you are my brother, but when a woman marries she gives up Father, Mother, and Brother for her man. But if she loves her man, there is no reason why she could not also love Father, Mother, and Brother. We are willing to forget all the past and allso on our part to gard ourself for the future. If you will do the same, then come and let us live in peace.

From: E.D. Meissner; To: Father and Mother Krauss.

<T94, continued>.

Dec. 1862.

Dear Father and Mother! As we owe you still something, we send a little meat for Christmas, also some tallow so that the Christ Child may not find you in the darkness, and we wish you a very happy Christmas.

We want to give you also a good advice which comes from an honest heart, but you despise always the good advice of your children and obey strange people who—being selfish—mislead you. Your house is here still on its old place, also your hay is still in the marsh. You don't have received money yet. The change can still be undone. Come back as soon as possible—you will save a lot of troubles and labor. May Our Lord enlighten your blinded sense and lead you to the best. Your sincere daughter wishes this.

Your [Eva] Dorothea Meissner.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.W. Wolfe.

<Written in English.> To G.W. Wolfe, Esq., Viroqua, Wisc.

Dec 1862? [excerpt].

... It appears that my son G.H. Meißner and others of comp. F (3rd Wisc. Reg.) were sent to Front Royal without returning ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Carver.

<Written in English.> To Mr. Carver, English Prairie, Iowa.

Dec 1862? [excerpt].

... Let us know if you have heard lately of G. Henry Meissner ...

From: F.A.M.; To: E.B. French.

<Written in English.> To E.B. French, Second Auditor, Washington, D.C.

20 Dec 1862 [excerpt].

... I suppose your Hon. have the means to ascertain if my son is death, and if so I begg your advice what I have to do to receive his back pay and bounty.

Very respectfully, Your obedient servant.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T94, cont.> March 1, 1863.

Dear Lina! Since I have received your last letter of Dec. 11, 1861, I have written twice to you, in February and in April. In my first letter I also wrote to Heinrich and Wilhelm, but I waited in vain so far for an answer. I cannot explain your long silence. Have you entirely forgotten your father?

I am still well and fine, and wish and hope that you and your family have the same luck. If not in my last letters but then at least from the newspaper you have heard that we are in a big revolution war. Heinrich went as volunteer and has been prisoner for four months, but now exchanged and back with his regiment. I cannot do anything about the inheritance if I cannot go personally to Missouri, for what reason I wrote you in my last letters, you should send Wilhelm over to me, that he could take care for my cattle during my absence.

In case your children collected last summer some bush seeds, or especially primrose and violet seeds, and you mail it right away after you have received this letter, it will still arrive on time. You have to put the seeds into a small package—without <T95> a letter, and you have to give it to the Hamburg post office. The package has to be addressed like a letter and 'seeds' has to be written on it by Hamburg steamer, and it will cost you only one cent postage per 'lot.' In the same way a letter if you mail it also by the Hamburg Post and write 'Hamburg Steamer' on it, will cost only 10 cents—if mailed in Pinneberg it will cost 25 cents. I addressed my last letters to Pinneberg, but I will send this one again to Hamburg, which will save 15 cents.

I am going slowly but surely forward with my farm. We have now a law that every family father, immigrants too, can purchase 160 acres of land for \$10, if he is going to live on it and cultivate it himself. The land is tax free for five years.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.W. Coleman.

W.W. Coleman, 210 East Water Street, Milwaukee, Wis.

March 20, 1863.

Dear Sir! In a letter dated April 12, 1862 you offer to send me the Herald for 1/2 year and to take for \$1 flower seeds in return as payment. I mailed the flower seeds at once to you, but as I did not receive the Herald I suspect that it had the same misfortune as the 'Atlas.' Yesterday, however, I received through our deputy in Madison the 77th edition of the Herald. This causes me to remind me of your promise. You can also print the following ad in the Herald, if you think you will be able to receive enough orders for seeds to pay the cost.

Flower Seeds: Every collector can have sent by mail—postage free—inexpensive and good seeds of nice summer flowers for the following prices: six kinds for 25 cts., 12 kinds for 50 cts., 18 kinds for 75 cts., 24 kinds for \$1.00. Everyone who sends in his order with the money is asked to write his address clearly.

Mount Pisgah, Monroe County, Wis., F.A.M., Flower and Seed Gardener. Offers also accepted in the office of the Herald.

From: Traugott Fühler; To: F.A.M.

Hermann, Missouri, Aug. 2, 1863.

Dear friend. I am glad to hear from your last letter that all of you are well and nice. I wish I could say the same for us, but the region is here so unhealthy. We have to fight hard with fevers. I therefore decided to leave this place and to move into your neighborhood, as they are a lot of small farms are for sale around you according to your letter. I want to ask you to manage [arrange?] a small farm for us, that it <T96> won't be necessary for me to camp in an inn or under the free sky when I will arrive. Both would be impossible for the bad health of my family.

If you can find 40 or 80 acres of land with a house—not too small, wherein I can sit dry, good spring water, enough firewood, at least for five or six years, and some land already broken up, and not farther from Sparta than I could travel to and from in one day, for \$150 to \$200, you might purchase it, so I can be sure that I can start right away when I arrive. I depend entirely on your old, tested friendship. I will pay the price of the farm when I have moved.

Give my regards to your dear wife and children from your faithful friend, Traugott Fühler.

From: Traugott Fühler; To: F.A.M.

Hermann, Mo., Sept. 25, 63.

Dear friend! I have received your letter and was very happy about the bargain you made. The farm is cheap and if there is a pretty good house, good spring water, the pure gift of the Lord, and enough firewood as you write, I am entirely satisfied. I will sell out as soon as possible and prepare myself for the trip, but in case I would be unable to arrive at the fixed time I will send you the money and you may take over the farm for me. We are now all quite well. Best regards to you and your family from your true friend, Traugott Fühler.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Oster.

Mount Pisgah, Wisc. Oct 31, 1863.

Mailed Saturday, the 31st in the morning at the post office.

Friend Oster! Already a long time ago I wanted to go to Sparta, but I am not yet ready with my autumn work. I would like to know whether you bought already cabbage. Caused by the dry summer and early frost, I did not get too many heads and can sell them all here, the best for six and the smaller ones for five cents. If this is not too expensive for you, I can bring you still 25 entirely good heads at six cents, and as many small ones for four cts. as you want. Please be so kind as to let me know about it by the next Tuesday mail.

If John Kränbühl should ask, you can tell me about it in your letter.

Best wishes to you and your dear wife from your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meißner.

<Written in English> George H. Meißner, Co. F, 3rd Reg. Wis. Vol., 12th Army Corps.

Nov. 13, 1863.

Dear Henry: Your letter of Nov. 5 was received by today's mail and has given me great pleasure. When your letters to me stopped, it was about at the time when the Pikes Peak fever raged. I concluded you had like others caught the same and perished.

Sometime last fall on a Sunday morning a man drove by with a team of Horses, he stopped to read my sign, then he told me that he know a yung man by the name of Henry Meißner etc. and I found out by him that you had enlisted in the service and that at last accounts you was missing. The same day I got a news paper in my hands who stated that G.H. Meissner with several others had been send to Front royal and had since not been heard form. Later I wrote to Mr. Carver and as he had died his daughter Martha answered

my letter and told me that you had been a prisoner of warr but had comen back to your regiment. In reply to an other letter which I addressed to Miss Carver, she send me your letter of Sept 20.

I am living still in my little warm log house and have remembered often ... that it was you who helped me build the same, and have woundered what in the world would have estranged you so much. That I was married again I have written to you before. Ernest four years old, Adolph 2-1/2 year old and little sweet Dorothea eight months old, ar playing around and up the table, disturbing my writing.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.W. Coleman.

<T97> W.W. Coleman, Editor of the Herald, Milwaukee, Wisc.

Mount Pisgah, M.C., Dec. 5, 63.

I would like you very much to collect the small enclosed bill for me, that Mr. Domschke should not mind at all as you know him and he is a friend of yours. I want you to use this amount as a prepayment for the Herald. I would also like to know whether I could send you flower seeds of a couple dollars' value in spring for the same purpose. Respectfully ...

[BILL:] Bernhard Domschke to F.A. Meissner. April 1861, Flower seed. Please pay to W.W. Coleman and oblige—\$1.00—F.A. Meissner.

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> 12 Dec 1863 [excerpt].

... I ame anxious to hear of you ...

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> 27 Dec 1863 [excerpt].

... glad to hear of the continuance of your good luck. Your likeness was a welcome Christmas gift; I had imagined you was looking a good deal older. ... I should like to live somewhere where I could raise Peaches, Grapes, and Apples, but moving is getting for me somewhat out of the question: I am today 59 years old. ... I hope you will come and see us. ... Your Father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. W. Anger.

<T97, cont.> To: Mr. W. Anger, Milwaukee, Wisc.

Feb. 10 [1864].

Dear Sir! I read from your ad in the paper that you have glasses for sale, which you recommend as good. The glasses I use right now don't seem any more to be sufficient. I would like to have a stronger one, but if you want to send them by mail—how do you know what glasses do fit for me? Are you able to determine it if I send you one glass of my present glasses? What is the price for a good pair of glasses? A silver frame is too expensive, I don't like brass either, about German silver or horn, with a cheap case, and how much will be the postage?

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> 2 Mar 1864 [excerpt].

... By your letter [I see] you intended of getting married when you was out here, but you never told me who is the girl

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> 26 Jul 1864 [excerpt].

... Since ... April 1 I have not heard of you ...

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> 4 Sep 1864 [excerpt].

... Your letter of Aug 3 ... how ease you may have been killed instead of your comrade. ... If the next election don't give us a more energetic and smarter President than Old Abe is, I think the country will go to ruin.

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> 27 Sep 1864 [excerpt].

... We all feel very sorry about your bad luck, but still it is better to loose a leg than a head, your wound may be the means of saving your life. ... It has hurt our feelings very much when you was home on furlough that you put up by the Russells, and besides som talk you had there. A man who is ashamed of his father and his nativ country shows little character

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Helms.

<T97, cont.> To: Mr. Helms, Seed Merchant on the Kleigberg in Hamburg.

Sept 27 [1864].

Dear Friend! Please do me the favor and send me the following items as soon as you receive my letter: one seed genuine Berlin bulb celery and two lot parsley root. Pack the seed in possibly thin but strong paper. Glue the capsules together and enclose these into the enclosing envelope and deliver it sealed to the Hamburg post office for transport.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Coleman.

W.W. Coleman, Milwaukee.

M.P., Oct. 26, 1864.

Dear Sir! Your last receipt with remarks does not entirely agree with my bill. You have forgotten the money order for \$1.00 for Mr. Domschke, but in order to add my little bit for the existence of the 'Herald' I include this dollar, through which I am behind in your bill, and you can write it to me in my favor later on, when you get it from Domschke. I also include a second dollar with the request <T98> to write it in my favor as long as it will reach.

I want to have in my family a little girl of German descent, best an orphan of 8, 10, or 12 years, from which my wife can raise herself a helper, which we can send to school and which we can instruct in such arts as sewing, knitting, cooking, etc. Could you maybe help me or tell me to whom I could turn in this matter? Maybe to the Minister of a German parish, or to the superintendent of a poorhouse or an orphanage.

Expecting a kind reply soon, I enclose a stamp. ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: George H. Meissner.

<Written in English> Mt. Pisgah, Monroe County, Wisconsin, November 10, 1864.

George Henry Meissner.

Your letter of Oct. 17 is in front of me. I ame very glad that you have unmasked your self and shown your true face. I rather have an open enemy than a false friend. What a miserabel hipocrit must he be who comes to my house, calls me father, shakes hand as if he never would part again, and has all the time a grudge in his heart against me.

The statements you make in your letter are so far from the truth, that I can only excuse the same by thinking you have written in fever. The letter whereof you speak [see 27 Sep 1864, above? -LPM] I cannot remember, yes I am positiv I have never written, and what you say about scanty clothing I think your memory has lost you all together. Do you not remember that when we came through New York on our way to Wisconsin that I equipped you and me all alike complete? Have you all together forgotten that when you left for Muscoda I lend you also my new Overcoat, which you promised to send back on your arrival, but you did never send, and I the old man had to get long without, and never complained about.

About your many friends you have, I will only say if they are like Mr. Russell, (who would like to couple his painted girl, who had already more Beaus than she counts years to you) I shall not envy you, if they are true friends I pity them their love will be paid as you have paid myn.

If you had a true memory it would tell you that you since you was a year old [1839] slept in my arm, that I carried you with me to field to work and every where, that it was only because I could not part with you that I took your mother with me to America [1845, when GHM was seven years old].

I ame not telling you this because I ask any pay for my love, nor to beg you to come back to my affection, only I wish to show you what a black heart you have, how deficient you are of all better feeling. As you have shown your true Character now I hope you will also resume your true Name [Sennewald?] and dont disgrace mine any further.

I wish you all the happiness you can enjoy.

[See Appendix 1: Descendants of George Henry Meissner located in Oregon and Texas, 1989. See also <T201> (1882) and <T308>; also in English: 1896.]

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Autweiler.

<T98, cont.> Mr. Autweiler, German Tavern of the Depot [Sparta, WI].

M.P. M.C. Wis. Nov 22, 1864.

Friend Autweiler! We have two barrels full of sauerkraut, one about 1-1/2 times as big as the other. My wife wants to keep the smaller one for us. She thinks it is enough for us. I would like to know, whether the big barrel might be too much for you too; the price is \$10 per barrel or 1-1/2 barrel is \$15.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Coleman.

W.W. Coleman, Milwaukee, Wis.

M.P., Nov. 23 [1864].

I received your receipt for \$1 with the Herald from Nov. 19, but I sent you \$2 and I want you to rectify your mistake.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Autweiler.

Mr. Autweiler, Union House, Sparta, WI.

M.P. Dec 13, 1864.

Friend Autweiler! I am sorry for being unable to fulfill your request. As I wrote you already earlier—we have decided to keep the smaller barrel for our own use and it is now nearly half empty. If you don't want the bigger barrel for \$15, I can easily sell it here. It costs me at least \$3 to drive to Sparta, \$1 for my night's stay, 50 cts. for drinks, \$1.50 for the barrel—that's \$6—what is there left for my kraut? As I promised it to you I will bring it to you still before Christmas, if you let me know.

My regards to your wife from your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. A. Wolff.

Mrs. A. Wolff, No. 226 East Water Street, Milwaukee.

Jan 3, 1865.

Mr. W.W. Coleman, Editor of the Herald, writes me that you are superintendent of an orphanage and I might turn to you in my wish to take a girl of eight to 10 years into my family and to raise her. I have four children with my 2nd wife; the oldest ones are all boys. The oldest will be six years next summer. As you see, my wife has little prospects of getting help. Therefore we would like a girl a little bit older, who could help her soon. We would take this girl into our family, feed and clothe <T99> her, send her to school, nurse her when she is sick, teach her all necessary and useful domestic works—with one word—treat her as one of our own children. I even will obligate myself, if she stays with us until she is 18 years old or gets married earlier with her own consent, to give her as dowry a bed, a cow, and decent clothes.

The region is excellently healthy. We have the nicest spring water, fresh butter, and milk throughout the whole year, and as my profession is gardening and seed raising, we have the best vegetables. Many travelers passing by have assured me they saw no garden more beautiful than mine in the whole state.

My children are all well raised and very healthy, and you surely will do a favor to every child, if you help him to change a big city for such a wonderful region.

If you could send us a girl who mentally and physically is not crippled and has a good heart, we will be very grateful to you. I also include a certificate from our town official about my character, and I am willing to give still more information about me if you require it.

Expecting a kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. Ann Wolff.

Mrs. Ann Wolff, Post Box 519, Milwaukee.

Feb. 4 [1865].

I received your kind reply to my letter.

Concerning my religious qualifications, I have to reply that I was born, raised, and confirmed in the Christian Lutheran Church (both my father and grandfather were till their death ministers of the church in Schönbach in the Kingdom of Saxony) and I confess myself to it and will probably, until my death comes, stay with it. I am however not so gifted to believe that it is the only true church (we believe all in one God!). I don't think it bad to attend the services of other Christian religious groups. We have usually here every two weeks an English sermon. Also a German Catholic and a German Methodist parish are here in the vicinity. I like—however—the service of the latter one least—I don't believe that our Lord is so deaf that such a crying and yelling should be necessary. I even believe still less that he would like it.

We would have liked it to get a child already sooner, but I believe with you that a German girl would be fitting best for us. It would not be for the language, because I am used to speak English with my wife and children. We are mostly interested in the fact that the child is healthy in body and soul and has no outspoken malicious, stupid, or wild character; and therefore we want to ask you, dear Mrs. Wolff, to take consideration of these <T100> things. To which class did the father of the little girl belong, what does he live from? How about the Polish girl? If you or the representative of the orphanage would rather like to define the girl's outfit in money [?] I am entirely satisfied too.

My wife sends her greetings. Sincerely ...

From: F.A.M.; To: G. Derringer.

G. Derringer, Sparta, M.C. Wis.

Feb. 21, 1865.

Would you please be so kind and inform your brother-in-law, who works in your shop, about the following lines:

Dear Sir! My cow has not calved yet, but will do so in a few days. If you can, please come here the following Sunday. If you like my cow (I don't doubt it!), you would do best to take it away before she calves. It will better get used to you and if you let the calf drink for eight days you will have already a wonderful meal.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Matthes.

Mr. Matthes, No. 589 Green Bay Road, Milwaukee.

[11 Mar, 1865].

I read in my last Herald that you took the children of the late soldier Fritz Moll and you included an appeal to philanthropes to have them help you [with] the burden you took thereby upon yourself.

In case there is among these poor, parentless children a girl from eight to 10 years, I and my wife would not mind to accept her in our family and to raise her with my children.

Expecting a kind reply, I would like to ask you from which German country Fritz Moll and his wife did belong, and whether the children are healthy and not crippled. Address your answer to F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.W. Coleman.

W.W. Coleman, Milwaukee.

M.P. M.C. Wis, March 11, 1865.

Enclosed you will find \$1 for the Herald. No. 176 of the Herald and 116 of the Sunday paper got lost in the mail. If you still have a copy, especially of the Sunday paper, which would like to have complete, I would accept it with gratitude.

After I received your letter, I wrote at once to Mrs. Wolff. I got an answer, too, but cannot get a girl until July. Now I read in the last Herald of the death of Fritz Moll's wife etc. Would you be so kind as to deliver the enclosed letter. I did not <T101> know whether he would like to get my letter by mail, as little, as whether Mr. Matthews can answer it.

In friendship ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. Ann Wolff.

Mrs. Ann Wolff, Post Box 519, Milwaukee.

June 28, 1865.

I answered your letter of Jan 18 on Febr. 4, and as now the time nearly has come, in which—as you said—we can get a girl. Besides—there has to be made a contract before, and so I want to remind you of your promise and please, let me know, what else I have to do.

Devotedly ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. Ann Wolff.

Mrs. Ann Wolff, Post Box 519, Milwaukee.

July 22, 1865.

Dear Lady! As I did not receive any answer to the following letter, I am afraid it got lost and I therefore take the liberty to write you a copy of it.

==

June 28, 1865.

I answered your kind reply from Jan 18 on February [4], and as the time nearly has come when we were to get a girl—as you said, and as a contract has to be made still before, and so on....

From: F.A.M.; To: ?

<Written in English> 19 Sep 1865 [excerpt].

... [John Krähenbühl] is the leader of a religious society in the valley where lives [over the hill to the north]. My father-in-law was intending to live with me and work for me [but] Krähenbühl induced him to move to his valley; here converted first my mother-in-law, then they tried to convert my wife and me. The power Krähenbühl had obtained over to old man Krauss he used to make him work harder than a slave, wherefore he paid him half in money and half in prayers. ... [Krähenbühl cheated Krauss] ... this grieved the old man so much ... that he left the valley and the town.

END OF BOOK 1 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 2: Nov. 1865 to Jan. 1870

From: F.A.M.; To: Moschkowitz & Siegling.

<T102> Moschkowitz & Siegling in Erfurt.

Nov 26, 1865.

I ask you to send me for the enclosed \$5 bill: I lot best filled [double?] English Stocks; one lot best filled half English Stocks. As well so many of the seeds listed below, as you can send for the remaining amount. I want to receive the seeds as soon as possible. Send them by mail and write 'Seeds' onto the package, but don't include a letter.

... [seeds] ...

I expect that you send me good seeds and the right kinds. I also would like to have your newest catalog and I might give out a bigger order next year, if you could tell me, how I could have it sent in an inexpensive way. In this country here seeds can be sent by mail for eight cts. per lb. For what price and by which way will you be able to send them—as inexpensive as possible—to N.Y.?

Expecting a reply soon, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Bernhard Domschke.

Bernhard Domschke, Milwaukee.

Dec. 1, 1865.

Please be so kind and pay the amount of the included small bill to Mr. Coleman, and ask him to take it as prepayment for the Herald.

If you or Mr. Coleman should want a hundred good celery bulbs for \$5.00 as prepayment for the Herald, let me know about it, before there is a hard frost. I will deliver them—packed into a box—free to the station in Sparta, and would like to know whether you want these to be sent by express or by train. If you want more, you can have them for \$4.50.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> to G.H. Crouse.

Dec. 12, 1865 ...

From: F.A.M.; To: ?

<Written in English.>.

19 May 1866 [excerpt].

... In the time I have lived here, I have been elected four times Town Clerk and twice Justice of the Peace, and I have only a few weeks ago received without any application of mine [?? hard to believe—LPM] the appointment of U.S. Postmaster at Mount Pisgah. [He held this post for about 1-1/2 years.—LPM].

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Peppin Co., Wis.

24 Nov 1866.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Mapel Springs, Dunn Co., Wis.

14 Dec 1866.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Mapel Springs, Dunn Co., Wis.

9 Jan 1867 [excerpt].

... Phoneta, Vernalia, Adventus [?] ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Runyan.

<T102, cont.> Jan 16, 1867.

Friend Runyan. You will be surprised that I did not pick up yet my bulls. You will remember the last time I spoke to you, when you were in Sparta. I came home the following night during a snowstorm and was sick for a week. Then my wife got sick and all the children; now we are better again. But as I have no wagon and the sleds stayed away for so long I was unable to get any more hay and straw. The winter has passed already halfway and as a Christian you will keep the bulls for the other half, too. <T103> If you know somebody who is willing to pay me \$80 for the red steer, sell it. As soon as we will have good tracks for sledding and it is not too cold I will visit you, as I promised my wife.

My regards to your wife. Your friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Minister at Schönbach.

To the Minister of the Parish in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Oberlausitz, Kingdom of Saxony [between Jan and Apr 1867]

Your Honor! A little bit longer than 62 years ago the writer of this letter was born in the house where you are probably living right now (if it did not have to make room for a new one!) About 40 years ago I have visited the land of my youth last, but it seems that with growing age the memory of it becomes fresher and clearer.

My memory reflects the trout dike as if I saw it only a few days ago. The pride [der Stoltz?—could be der Stall = shed? -LPM] over the milk cellar, where we had our playroom, the water trough from which I pulled my brother out by his hair, the big pasture near the dike, the barn, the fruit trees on the hill—everything stands fresh before my imagination. As the wish to hear once from there gets stronger and stronger, and as I don't know whether somebody of my relatives and friends is still alive, I take the liberty to write to you.

Above the meadow near the dike the minister's helper lived, who had a deaf son and a couple twin sisters, whose Godmother my mother was. Behind the barn Fielder lived whose daughter Christel was my daily playmate. In Spreinberg lived the minister Jähnicher, whose son Volkmar—as old as I—who established himself in Neusalz as soap maker. I am sure that his sisters Marie and Julie can still remember me. They were my playmates. In the lower Neudorf [new village] lived the linen weaver Jähne, whose son Traugott went to University and probably has become a great man.

In Odernitz lived my Uncle Moser [husband of Wilhelmine Meißner sister or half-sister of FAM's father], from whose only daughter Karoline Christiane, married Zimmermann, I just found a letter, in which she writes me that she was in Schönbach and has visited the church, Mother Schuricht, and the minister's house. She lived at that time (1844) in New Spitz Leutersdorf. In case my cousin should be still alive—as I wish and hope—I would like to ask you, sir, to send her many nice greetings from me, and to tell her that I would be very happy to hear from her again. Also I would like to ask you to give my <T104> regards to all the other friends who still remember me.

Now I want to tell you and my friends something about me. I live as farmer in the state of Wisconsin and enjoy an excellent health. I am Justice of Peace in the town[ship] Portland and Postmaster of Mount Pisgah. We have the best soil for wheat, good spring water, and enough wood, but the region is a little bit rough and hilly. There no poor people living in the country, but no rich ones either. Several of my German neighbors who maybe came into this country 10 years ago and hardly know how to make a living for a short time, own now a beautiful farm and on the road to wealth. Meat and bread are here in abundance, but there is little money. Uncultivated land costs \$5 per acre. One finds hardly here Government land any more. It is a very hard labor to cultivate the soil, and therefore Germans, coming from the lowest classes, which are used to hard work, make the best progress, while the educated classes often hardly make a living.

As I have to think to tire your patience out, I will finish my long letter by giving you my best regards and assuring you that I will be very happy to receive an answer from you.

From: F.A.M.; To: Theodore Wendel.

Theodore Ch. Wendel, 518 Washington Str., Boston, Mass.

April 3, 1867.

Last year I had me sent seeds from Moschkowitz and Schaline, which were however not very good. The early Erfurt red cabbage was a bastard between red and white, so one could hardly tell to which kind it should belong; and in order to get to know Mr. F.W. Wendel's seeds better, I ask you to fill the included list. I took the names from the Erfurt catalog. If you don't have one or the other kind, I would ask you not to substitute another one, as I want to get to know the kinds. I include \$2 for you. If it should not be enough I

am going to send you the difference as soon as the seeds arrive. But as it is already late, I count on you that the seeds will be sent right away.

With my friendly greetings ...

[List of the seeds: ...].

From: F.A.M.; To: K.A. Seidel.

<T105> Mr. K.A. Seidel, Court Gardener, Dresden.

February 5, 1868.

Dearest Uncle! [brother of F.A.M.'s mother]. I heard from Minister Jeering in Schönbach, that you are not only still alive—a vigorous old man—but that you still remember me. Mr. Jeering informed me that you have retired and that both of your sons are in Australia, also that Aunt Erhardt {Lore?} lives near N.Y. I was, however, unable to learn from his letter whether my much respected Aunt, your wife, is still alive. As you want to learn more about me and as I can look upon you as my second father, I owe you a sort of account of my past life.

You know that I lived in Kummerfeld, where I found a pretty nice farm, and where I had a good living with my wife and my only daughter. My wife, who was 12 years older than I, was terribly jealous, and worked herself always up in a rage, passing all limits and decency. [Remember that he was hanging out with Doris Sennewald for at least seven years before he left Germany—LPM] My poor little daughter, standing in between, suffered terribly. In order to escape a greater misfortune, and with the use of my last strength, I decided to leave everything and to emigrate to America. With the permission of my wife I left all my possessions to my daughter, who took over the obligation to care for her mother. I took only the bare amount of the trip with me.

Here in America, I first lived in the state of N.Y., then in Massachusetts, went then to Florida, where my second wife died and I nearly passed away too, caused by the fever. I left Florida in order to get my health back. I was only more a frail shadow. I went to Wisconsin and settled down where I am presently still living. After my health had improved a lot and life alone had seemed nearly unbearable for me, I got married for a third time four years after the death of my second wife.

I now own 120 acres of land—without debts—with house and necessities; have cows, oxen, sheep, pigs; and raise vegetables and seeds, and sell seeds, which makes a good living for me and my family.

I enjoy an excellent health, my wife also. We have five cheerful strong children: Ernest, Adolph, Doris, Carl, and August are all our wealth, and I can say honestly that I am living contented and happy and still feel strong enough to raise my children to useful members of the human society.

It is a long time since I heard from my brother Karl who lived in Ütersen near Hamburg. His wife and daughter were dead, one son was still alive. If you, dear <T106> Uncle, should find time to answer me, I would be very happy. Please send me Aunt Erhardt's address. Knowing that a sister of my mother is in America, I sure would like to write to her.

Please accept the assurance of my deepest respect, from your grateful nephew ...

[LPM Note: In these letters to Germany, FAM refers to Doris Runtzler Sennewald as his second wife. I have no evidence that he ever married her. In letters to his daughter Karoline, who presumably knew all about their relationship before they left Germany in 1845, he never called her his wife—always 'Mrs. Sennewald.'].]

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Helms.

Mr. Helms, Seed Merchant in Hamburg.

Sept 18, 1867.

Dear Friend! Send me please, at once after my letter has arrived, your seed catalog, even if you are unable to determine the prices for next year exactly.

With friendly greetings, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Oscar Knopf.

Mr. Oscar Knopf, Ferina Fried. & Willh. Wendel, Erfurt, Prussia.

Jan 1, 1868.

Dear Sir! Last spring I had you send me your catalog from Boston and afterwards I ordered—as a try—an assortment of cabbage seeds and some kinds of flower seeds. From the cabbage seeds, the early white and early red ones were degenerated, and the late red one was old seed that did not come up, and the Ulmer sour cabbage was false. The others were nice, but all mixed up, medium sized and tall. The full Chinese carnations were single. I will therefore write directly to you hoping to receive better seeds.

I am raising vegetables and flowers, and sell seeds. I need for both businesses both good seeds and the right kinds. If you want to fill my enclosed order, you can send it to your agent in Boston, to whom I will send the money as soon as he informs me that the seeds have arrived. Or, if the new postal-contract is already valid and seeds can be sent for a lower postage, you can send them directly to me by mail and I will send the money to you. At any rate, I want to have the seeds still before the 1st of March. If you will send me this autumn your sell list on time, I will be able to use seeds for my sell.

I sign: F.A.M.

Please send the listed seeds to: F.A.M., M.P., M.C., Wis., U.S. of N.A.

[List of seeds ...].

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Adolf Jähring.

<T107> Mr. Wilhelm Adolf Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Saxon Oberlausitz.

[Mar? 1868].

Your Honor! I have owed you a long time my thanks for your dear letter of June 20 of last year, and I don't know what to do how to appreciate all the troubles you had in order to fulfill my wishes and even more. I accept with great pleasure the pictures you had made for me, and I ask you to send them to me by mail. By a new law, printed matter, pictures, and seeds can be sent since Jan 1 for 1-1/2 cents per ounce, but no letter must be enclosed. In the enclosed letters, which I ask you to deliver, I have tried to satisfy the wishes of my friends as well as possible, and I leave it to you to read them, if you think they are worth the trouble.

The party nuisance about which you complain in Schönbach, is here also very dominant. In political matters the Republicans (radicals) and the Democrats (conservatives) are the most bitter enemies. The first ones, which are now running the Government, are for the thorough extermination of the slavery and are also the creators of the 'Homestead Law,' by which every family can receive 160 acres of land for the 'red tape' fee. The latter ones, which use their name only as a cloak and seduce many thereby; many immigrants would like very much to found a realm of Lords and slaves or of rich and poor people.

But in religious matters, it is even much worse here. Every fool founds a new sect and proves by the Bible that he has the only true religion; only the Norwegians still stand to the Lutheran Church and have preachers from the old home country who are paid well, also the German Catholics stand mostly to their church. Most of the other Germans are the booty of the sects. The German Methodist Church counts the most members, and I sure wish you could attend one such a meeting. You would believe you are in a madhouse. Old women, shoemakers, and tailors believe themselves enlightened by the Holy Spirit (possessed by the Devil!) and elected as Apostles. <T108> You never heard such a screaming and yelling in a church before. The Meth. Church also has regular paid preachers, but they have to change their parish every second year. Every preacher has a district in which he travels around and holds his services, in some places in a house or schoolroom.

Concerning the red Indians, it is not as bad as you believe. They are powerless; only now and then do they attack the farthest advanced settlements, rob and murder and plunder. To the people concerned it is sure hard enough, but altogether it is not more but a little creek falling into the ocean. In the neighbor county, La Crosse, are already many Bohemians [Czechs—LPM], also many Norwegians and Germans. The native Americans die out pretty much. Their wives believe themselves too weak to raise more than one or two children. Medicine for this purpose is offered in public in the newspapers, and by using these the American women ruin their health.

Every poor German who can afford the money can have no bigger interest paid from it but to go to the U.S., but he must not stay in N.Y., and not go to the South either, but go to the Northwest. Millions of acres

land wait here still for a hand to cultivate them. The work—to be sure—is hard, but the result better. The soil is loam and is excellently fitted for wheat. This town as well as the whole country is only cultivated since 12 years, and there are fields which bore wheat for 10 continuing years without any fertilizer without losing their value.

Milwaukee is the main market for Wisc. and Minnesota. According to the papers, 129,000 bushel of wheat arrived there last week, while in the weeks earlier since last autumn every week about 100,000 bushel arrived. (A bushel weighs 60 lb. and costs \$2.).

I was very sad about the death of my cousin [presumably Karoline Christine- LPM] Zimmermann. I sure wish her children would come over here, especially the girl. Would it not be possible for you to have her come to you and learn a little bit more about her?

From: F.A.M.; To: Traugott Jähne.

<T109> Mr. Traugott Jähne, Professor and Curator [?] in Bautzen.

[Mar? 1868].

Dear friend of my youth. I heard with great pleasure from Mr. Jähning that you still remember me, but I regret very much that your health is not very good. As far away as the roads of our life led—they finally will come together again in the end, namely in the grave. You have had a beautiful career before you. If you have worked in the sense of enlightenment, the seed you sowed will bear fruit nearly a hundred times. Your spirit will live on in your students, and only the body will turn into dust.

Although I worked and lived in a hostile sphere, the spirit of my grandfather (who created the embellishment of the church in Schönbach) accompanied me everywhere. [Christian Friedrich Meißner, grandfather of F.A.M. was minister during the construction or reconstruction of the village church, which is still standing (as of 1989)—LPM] I maybe could have become rich, if I would not have spent everywhere so much of my time and strength to beautify my house, wherever it was. But the dream of my youth once to have my own house and farm, which arose especially when we had to leave the parish, got materialized.

My present home is in western Wisconsin, 28 miles east of La Crosse, and has much in common with Schönbach. The first origin of the La Crosse River comes out of my garden. The trout dike that silted up in Schönbach has arisen here again. I become 60 years last Christmas and enjoy excellent health. I am married with my 3rd wife 10 years. We have five healthy, cheerful children, healthy in body and mind, and when I wish still to live longer it is mostly for the reason that I want to gain time to educate my children's minds in order to keep them from going the wrong way. Despite the big difference in years, I live happily with my present wife, and I am contented with my life; and as much as I enjoyed hearing once again from Schönbach and old friends and acquaintances, I am too much accustomed to the conditions and life here as to wish to change these here for the others at home.

I hope and wish that your state of health improved so much that you can gratify me by answering my letter.

Your friend and playmate in the youth ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelmine Meißner.

<T110> Wilhelmine Meißner in Bautzen.

[1868].

Dear Cousin. I heard through the kindness of Mr. Jähning that you are now the only one from our family who is still alive there, and that you are unmarried. As much as I know, no male descendants of the many of our grandfather's children are still alive besides me and my brother Karl, who lives near Hamburg and has two sons (wife and daughter are dead!). But I did not hear from him since several years.

You maybe still remember when I visited you last in Zwittau before my departure to America. I was then 18 or 19 years old [1822?], and now I am 63. On my way to America, I made the acquaintance of my first wife in Hamburg. I returned from A. after some years and got married at the age of 21 [1826—but elsewhere he gives the marriage date as 2 Feb 1827, which would be just after his 22nd birthday. Karoline's birth date is 12 Nov 1826, which is "too soon" for the 1827 marriage date but is "OK" if they were married in 1826]. The fruit of this marriage was an only daughter [Karoline]. She is still living near Hamburg, is married, and has many children.

When I was 40 years old, I went to the States a second time, married a widow with four children. We lived several years in the state of N.Y., then in Mass. Seduced by charming newspaper reports, we went again south and that it to Florida. After a short time, we all had the fever. My wife died. My stepchildren scattered after their mother's death and I was again alone [note: no mention of Henry here—LPM], exhausted by the fever, and the little fortune we had acquired earlier all used up by sickness and travel expenses. With my last strength I went from Florida to Wisconsin, lived there four years as a widower, making my living as farmer and gardener. I got married a 3rd time at the age of 53 to a girl of 21 years. With this my third wife I live now since 10 years, happy and free of worries and contented. My health is now better than ever before, and Ernest, Adolph, Dora, Carl, and August, five merry and healthy children, are our most precious possessions. We also have no want of life's necessary things. My and my wife's work makes a good living for us all. As I have enough land for cultivating, I can hope to get soon help from my children that I will be able to sleep in peace when death comes to me and my family has enough wealth to live on.

I sure am unable to know what friends and relatives from your mother's side you have there, or else I would like you to <T111> come to us and live with us. I hope you will gratify me soon by an answer. Give your letter—without postage—to the mail and address it to your faithful cousin. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Juliane Ficker.

Juliane Ficker (minister's wife) in Spremberg near Neusalz.

[Mar.(?) 1868].

Dear Julie! I should better address you with Mrs. Minister, but in my memory you are still the cheerful girl and I am probably in yours the wild boy who often romped around with Volkmar. As I learned you are living in the parish of Spremberg as widow with three children.

It sure will appear strange to you in your big stone house, when I tell you that I live in a log house that is only 16 by 18 feet in size. The four walls surround a single room that serves as living room and kitchen. Cooking and baking is done in an iron stove that stands in the middle of the room. Along the walls are open trunks and chests with china, books, and clothes. Saws and other tools hang in between (we don't need a gun any more here, as the red Indians and the deer have already been expelled from this region). Below the living room is a cellar of the same size, and above it is the bedroom. I live happily and contented with my 3rd wife, who is 30 years old [b. Apr. 1837] and I am 63, notwithstanding the difference of age. Perhaps you believe that the honeymoon is not over yet. This surely can be the case, but it lasted already for 10 years and Ernest, Adolph, Dora, Carl, and August, five healthy, cheerful children, are witnesses of our love. In the same way will it appear strange to you that my wife is entirely alone in her household chores. Servants are something very unusual in this country. Indeed, German girls serve maybe one or two years in the neighborhood, where they get \$2 per week, but they usually get married soon. Besides my wife depending only on her own efforts, I also have to make a living for me and my family by the work of only my hands. As my oldest son is only eight years old, I receive no help yet from my children. (A daughter I <T112> had with my first wife still lives near Hamburg and is married.) I have enough land, but I am not yet able to cultivate it all, so I raise mostly vegetables, and I raise and sell seeds. Very often I have to change my living room into a court room and have to take pen and law book instead of plough and axe into my hands. On such an occasion the whole neighborhood usually assembles in my room and I send my wife and children to a neighbor's house. Sometimes also a couple in love arrives unexpectedly and wants to become husband and wife, and there is a lot of entertainment.

I have heard with much regret that my dear friend, your sister Marie, passed away, and I hope that you will tell me a lot about yourself and your sister in your next letter, which I expect soon to arrive.

Best wishes to you and your family from your friend and playmate of your youth, F.A.M.

From: Louise Zimmermann; To: F.A.M..

<T384> [Loose letter]. [Louise is daughter of Karoline Christine Zimmermann, nee Moser. Louise and F.A.M. are second cousins.]

Leutersdorf, April 4, 1868.

May God greet you! Dear cousin. I try to talk to you in my thoughts. I would rather converse with you in person, but it cannot be. So I will take the pen and write. We are told that you inquired about us, and wrote to the minister in Schönbach. He in return wrote to our minister. He said that you are still alive. I thought at first it was only a son of yours. ...

Dear Sir! You surely will forgive me for answering your dear letter of Febr. 5 only today, because I was burdened with a troublesome official task, and besides, my eyesight is so bad that I can do hardly anything around the house. I want to thank you above all for your dear letter, from which I was able to see that my letter arrived. As I made no copy of my first letter to you, and your silence made me afraid that it maybe got lost in the big ocean, I was quite troubled as I could not have remembered all the material I collected for you and especially the addresses. I was just about to inquire whether my letter had arrived. Therefore my joy was the greater by receiving certainty through you. But not only for me, also for Prof. Jähne, your cousin [presumably Wilhelmine—LPM] Meissner, and Mr. P. Rike, was it a great pleasure to have a letter—a sign of life—from you in hand. Your letter was of great interest to many old friends and acquaintances. With your kind permission, I read your <T384> letters that were to go to Bautzen and Schönbach. I made from it a report—leaving all personal and family matters out—and gave it to the newspaper that is read in the Lausitz here, which printed it. I heard already from many sides that many people read this excerpt with great interest and so—I hope—you will still give me your pardon for doing so.

Your request about Zimmermann's ... [?] was at once taken care of, and on the other side you have an—unfortunately very imperfect—correction of Zimmermann's daughter. She visited me with her married daughter, but without any interest to emigrate across the “big deep puddle,” as she said. The Germans probably are only a few percent in the tremendous migration of peoples. They are too much tied to the home country, which would be quite a nice attribute, if it weren't mostly just resistance to every improvement and to any new thing.

I don't know whether Prof. Jähne wrote to you as he intended to do, as work and sickness made a walk to Bautzen so far impossible for me. I am only glad that I could mail you the branches of the fruit trees that you wanted so much, on April 28. I sent already the explanations about the branches and the leaf of the millet a week ago. I got the millet from Röllick. There is little to say about the two other leaves [pages?—M.C.]. The photograph of your uncle only looked wonderful after several manipulations [retouching?—LPM], and I hope you will enjoy it. I believe I told you already in my last letter that the original painting of your deceased uncle is in the local church. There is not much to say about the 4th picture, which shows the whole village, as the photographer did not have at that time his big apparatus. The picture was taken from the so-called Friend Mountain, between the roads to Beyersdorf and Aurwalde [?]. In the left corner you can see the Hustberg [?] and then the Lotmarberg [hills]. In between is the Lausitz and some other Bohemian mountains. A piece of poplar avenue between the church and some houses left is the street to Löbau, which to the right continues to ... [?] where there are fruit trees that are marked by tiny points. The ... [?] is behind the street leading to Löbau, that means now behind the poplar avenue. From the middle of the picture I have only picked out the so-called Lochschenke [?], the second hotel from here. It stands with the front side opposite the observer. Above the Lochschenke is the <T386>Neudörfer windmill. Between the Lochschenke and the opposite house is the road to Bunswalde [?], visible as a white crooked line. Behind a poplar avenue above the Lochschenke is the house of Mr. Friedrich Tisch, the store of the old linen merchant Tisch from your time, who remembers you still very well. In a bigger scale you see his house below the village, about in the middle. To the right, the way passes toward the upper village, left along the ditch to the new village. This new village can be seen on the main picture. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Volkmar Jähnicher.

<T112, cont.> Volkmar T. Jähnicher, Bernstadt in Saxony.

April 11, 1868.

Dear Volkmar. Yesterday I had the big surprise to receive a letter from you, and as I know how uncomfortable it is to wait so long for an answer, I try to fulfill your wish at once, but I would have liked it better, if you would have written more exactly what you wanted to know. My answer can be therefore only very general.

Soap making and all other trades are done here by factories. Some Germans who don't like to work stay in the cities as innkeepers, but this profession is already overfilled. The best go to the country and work for their bread 'by the sweat of their brow.' For this class, enough room is here, because millions of acres of good land wait still for the hands to cultivate them. The richest as well as the poorest man can make his living here, but everybody has to work himself, because it is so easy to get land here, and therefore nobody wants to work for the other, or only at a very high salary.

The ways of getting a farm here is depending of the money everybody brings with himself. For \$2,000 to \$3,000 you can <T113> buy here a well established farm of 160 acres. For \$60 to \$1,000 you can get a half cultivated farm of 80 acres, where a family can find at once its living. For \$5 you receive one acre of uncultivated land. For \$15 you receive a 'Homestead claim' of 40 to 160 acres, which will be your own if you

have lived 15 years on it and cultivated it. The 'Homestead claims,' however, are rare in this region, as most of the land has already its owner, and to go farther west will bring you too close to the red Indians. Some people also work in the first years on a farm for shares. They give namely half of all they raise to the owner (vegetables excluded!). He who has a relative or friend here always finds easily a place to work and live, but for the entirely strange one it is usually hard before he gets used to the conditions here. Your daughter will be a big help to you. My wife has to take care for five children, the oldest of which is only eight years old and the youngest one year.

About two months ago, I wrote to your sister in Spremberg. You can learn my domestic state from her. I also wrote already two letters to Mr. Jähring, minister in Schönbach, which may contain something you would be interested in. In case you decide to come earlier, I might ask you to take a daughter of my late cousin Zimmermann along. My brother Karl is still living—so far as I know—near Hamburg. Best wishes to you and your children.

Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Louise Zimmermann.

Louise Zimmermann in Lautersdorf in the Josefsdorfe; to Gottlieb Siebern, No. 42.

May 30, 1868.

Dear Cousin. I have received your letter by the kindness of the minister Jähring. The cause for my inquiries is that your late mother was a dearly loved friend of my youth. For her sake, the wish arose in my mind to have you come over and maybe become useful. I read in your letter that you are poor, but have little interest and courage to improve your situation. In this country here work still brings reward. Nobody <T114> has to starve here if they want to work. Here the wheat grows, from which every year millions of bushels are sent to Europe. You depend on the good Lord: he is supposed to help you. He does so, too, when he shows you the 'Promised Land,' and you are guilty if you ignore his call. You will never save enough in your home country to pay for the trip. Here, you could pay them back in a few years, if somebody could loan them to you. A youth friend of mine, Mr. Volkmar T. Jähnicher in Bernstadt in Saxony (which should not be too far away from you,) thinks of coming over here this autumn. Maybe he takes you along, if you once would visit him.

Writing is too boring. I thank you for your letter and wish that mine will reach you in good health. Give my regards to your brother.

Your cousin, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.R. Jähring.

Mr. W.R. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Saxon Oberlausitz.

May 30, 1868.

Your Honor! On May 22, I received the pictures in an undamaged and fine state, and May 26 your letter arrived. On May 20, I received a very friendly letter from Traugott Jähne. I also received a letter on April 10 from my playmate of my youth, Volkmar T. Jähnicher in Bernstadt, and shortly afterwards one from a certain Mr. Taye, manager of Dom Moenau near Boxberg in Prussia. The w latter ones caused by your essay in the Bautzener paper. My cousin Wilhelmine, however, and Mrs. Post Ficker did not make the trouble yet to answer me. Also my uncle, court gardener Seidel in Dresden did not answer my letter yet. The pictures sent to me by your and friend Jähne's kindness will be kept by me as a treasure of my house and family. My neighbors tell me my grandfather and I look very much alike.

[U.S. President] Johnson has been acquitted, or rather 35 thought him guilty and 19 unguilty. According to law, 2/3 majority is necessary to condemn somebody [i.e., to impeach a U.S. President—LPM]. The secret societies in the South have much in common with the 'Feme-gerichten' ['kangaroo courts'] in the Middle Ages. In the <T115> same way as at that time the German knights did not want to bow before the laws and give up their supposed privileges, the southern aristocrats do the same here. Everything would be all going the same way, if Johnson would not always interfere. It will be up to the next president to destroy the knights and robbers, like Kaiser Karl.

After a drought lasting four weeks we had this morning a fertile rain. I used this interruption of my work to write the above things down, but as it stopped again and my work is very urgent I will continue writing another time.

May 31st.

As I was yesterday unable to mail my letter, I am going to add some more. My newspapers that I just received bring news about the Republican convention (which took place last Wednesday in Chicago). It has proposed Ulysses S. Grant for President, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives Schuyler Colfax as Vice President. As the Republican Party is the strongest, one can expect that these both are going to be elected next November. I personally don't think too much of Grant. He is no great man. He is a lucky man who has risen by the conditions, and it rarely happens that a shoemaker or tailor climbing the highest step of honor is not flattered. Besides, the Americans are prejudiced by money, and a President usually tries to exploit the four years of his ruling to his advantage. Grant surely was not selected either by the Party because they believe him to be a great man, but only because they hope they can beat with him best his opponent, the Democratic candidate. Also, the leaders of the party don't want a great man, because he would have too much will power and would not let himself be led by the party leaders.

As you are interested in our conditions, I am going to send you the pictures of Lincoln, Johnson, Stanton, Grant, Meade, Sheridan, Thomas, Hancock, Farragut, Forster, and of the political speaker, Miss Anna E. Dickinson. But I have to ask you to excuse the ink spot. While I am writing, my youngest son climbs on the table and overturned the ink bottle.

I read in your letter that I never told you about the climate here. Our winters are pretty long, the summers short but hot. Our main product is wheat, but in the valleys where the soil is too rich, corn is raised, which gives good, nourishing bread, but is preferably fed to horses and oxen and to fatten the pigs. In the potato fields, the potato bugs have done a lot of damage in the last few years—a disgusting worm of the size and form of a swelled pea, and poisonous.

As I just look at my lamp, I have to ask you, do you also have kerosene oil? If not, I can tell you that it gives a wonderful light. I honestly regret it very much that you suffer so much from your eyes. I have to use glasses for reading and writing, but I still can do my other business without them. I have to make again use of your kindness and ask you to deliver the enclosed letter to my aunt. I surely had hoped to receive an answer from my uncle, as I wanted to learn the address of my aunt who lives near N.Y., but my hopes were not fulfilled. I cannot help but to say my deepest thanks to you for the many kind favors you did to me, an entirely stranger to you, and I have to ask you, as you introduced me in your last letter to your wife and children, to give my best regards to your family.

Your devoted ...

== Post script:

To Louise Zimmermann: If you are—as I suspect—a decent, industrious girl, you will be welcome in my family and I will compensate Mr. Jahnichen for his expenses.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Pinneberg in Holstein, North German States.

June 17, 1868.

Dear Daughter! Yesterday I received a letter from Davenport, Iowa, and I was very surprised to find out that it was from you. It is a riddle to me, what might have caused that you sent the letter first to Davenport. It is dated April 14 and has been two months on the way; it would have arrived after 20 days if sent directly. Although my spring works are very urgent, I don't want to let you wait long for my answer. It seems to me that neither your love for me is very great, nor your curiosity to hear about me is very strong, as it took five years until you finally made the move and wrote to me. You can see from this answer that I am still alive. Your [half-] sister and brothers, Ernest, Adolph, Dora, Carl, and August, the oldest nine years and the youngest two years old, are all cheerful, healthy, well behaving, educated children. The elder ones sometimes talked of their big sister who is living across the big water and wondered that she never wrote a letter.

We have hard times here too; the bushel wheat costs \$1.75 of the last crop. The cause of this however is not that not enough is raised, but because it is sent to Europe. You can realize how much wheat is raised here by the fact that in Milwaukee, the main market for Minnesota and Wisconsin, weekly 100,000 bushels arrived since the last crop. Besides this there are still millions of acres of land waiting for the hands to cultivate them. Portland, the village or town I am living in, has 36 sections of land. Every section is a mile long and a mile wide. At least 25 sections or 100 quarter sections are not lived in yet. A quarter section is 160 acres, about as much as a big farm in Kummerfeld. If you once will write again, I sure would like to hear about your children and how things are going. Did none of your older children save enough money yet to

come to his grandfather, or does none of them have enough sense of enterprise to found an own farm? My wishes to all of you.

Your father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. W. Foge. Dom. Moenan.

Mr. W. Foge. Dom. Moenan by Boxberg; Reg. Ber. Liegnite in Prussia May 9, 1868 [out of order?].

Dear Sir! I received your letter of March 30 within 20 days and I would have answered at once if I would not have wanted to learn more details about the travel expensed from a man who arrived only two years ago. Mr. Breitenfeld, a Prussian from the Neumark, arrived here with eight persons via Bremen and Quebec, and he says that he had 500 Taler, which he used all up for the trip and made \$50 debts besides. He paid for the sea voyage from Bremen to Quebec 30 Taler per person, and from Quebec to Milwaukee by canal and railroad 12 Taler per person. The leftovers were for extra expenses. If you take these numbers you can easily find out what it might cost you. First you have to go to Hamburg or Bremen, from there to Quebec or N.Y., how it just fits best. In N.Y. you can buy a ticket directly to Sparta, Wisc., from where on you still are 15 English miles (or five hours by foot to walk) away from my home. The shorter you will stay in N.Y. or other places, the less it will cost you. You don't have to bring <T118> anything else but beds [bedding?], clothes, and linen along. For the sea voyage, you take one or two lb. of chamomile tea along. It will give you a better service than wine or brandy.

I give you a copy of a letter I wrote a short time ago to a friend of yours, so that you will see more about the conditions here. He also was moved by the Bautzener Weekly Paper to write to me. I give you also his address. Maybe you want to make the trip together. I also have to warn you—don't let yourself be seduced by brilliant descriptions to go to the South. I speak from experience. Don't stay in the big cities but go straight to the West. If you want to settle down in my neighborhood, I will gladly assist you with my help and advice.

I have to mention also that there are still other ways and many means how to acquire property than the ones I described in my letter to the friend of my youth. Breitenfeld arrived here having a debt of \$50 and now he has a house of his own and 80 acres of land. Already six families of his relatives live here, and a brother is expected any day now. So I could tell you many examples of my neighbors, that people starting out with nothing have in five to 10 years become wealthy farmers. An extract of my letter to Volkmar T. Jähnicher in Bernestadt in Saxony: ...

Now my dear unknown friend! I believe to have fulfilled your wish by the above content. I sure would like to hear from you again and get to know you in person. Best wishes to you and your wife ...

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Mapel Springs, Dunn Co., Wis.

7 July 1868 [excerpt].

... The children ... wished ... to hear from Netta, Nalia, and the rest. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: W.R. Jähring.

<T118, cont.> Mr. W.R. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Saxon Oberlausitz.

Aug. 10, 1868.

Your Honor!

I have your dear letter of July 16 in front of me, and I have to thank you again for your many kind favors you rendered to me. The pictures will probably arrive with the next mail, but as you want information on account of your brother-in-law, I hurry up to give it to you.

I believe that the watchmaker business makes a pretty good living here in the mushrooming cities in the West and causes little expenses. There are two watchmakers in Sparta; each one of them has a small shop, repairs watches and has clocks, wrist watches, and jewelry for sale. A German neighbor of mine who owns a pretty good farm has often—when he was <T119> short on money—left his wife and children behind on the farm, went to Sparta, put out his sign, and repaired clocks. In the big cities nearly every shop is overfilled. I would recommend to your brother-in-law Wisconsin, Minnesota, or Iowa. Tools and clothes are

about everything he needs to bring along, as the freight from N.Y. to the inner country is pretty high. I have paid \$4 per 100 lbs. I try as soon as possible to repay your favors, especially for sending me the picture.

With many friendly wishes I remain your devoted—F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Alvin Straubel.

Mr. Alven Straubel, Blufton, Mo., Morrison Street, P.P. R.

Nov. 9, 1868.

Unknown friend! I have received your letter of Oct. 14. I can recommend you this region as excellent. Many a guy whose health was weakened or ruined elsewhere by fever has recovered here. The climate is not too good for corn and fruit trees. Farming should be too hard for you also. But I think you could secure for yourself a good living if you would settle down in one of the small neighbor towns and raise here house plants and fresh vegetables. I would recommend La Crosse. If you don't have the means to build yourself a small living house and a hothouse (you can get a house lot on credit), you have first to work in small gardens for a summer long, whereby you soon will make friends and receive help.

If you should know the address of my aunt who supposedly lives near N.Y., I would be very glad if you would let me know it.

Best wishes from your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Eau Galle, Dunn Co., Wis.

Dec. 13, 1868.

From: F.A.M.; To: Minister at Seebach.

<T119, cont.> To the Minister of the Parish in Seebach near Meiningen in Germany [Late 1868 or early 1869]

Dear Sir! My brother-in-law and my parents-in-law want very much to hear from their former home and the relatives still living there, and as they received no answer to their letter, and don't know who is still alive right now to whom they could write, they turn to you, Sir, by me, and ask you to give them some information.

My father-in-law, Johann Heinrich Krauß, left Seebach about 22 years ago [1846?] with his wife and a son of 12 years [George Henry Krauß, b. May 1834] and a daughter of nine years [Eva Dorothea Krauß, b. Apr. 1837] and went to North America. He lived the first years in the state <T120> of Ohio and now in this state since about 10 years. The old man lives with his wife on a small farm, the yield of which plus some days work now and then with a neighbor gives him a trouble-free living.

His son George Henry is what one would call a self-made man. In his 15th year he escaped the hard treatment of his father and made trips, traveled through nearly all of the states of N.A. and returned—sick with fever—to his parents, where he was accepted with great joy. By reading books and self study, he acquired so much knowledge that he could dedicate his life to teaching, and now he is a very much liked teacher in our 'public schools' and receives \$30 a month as pay. he owns besides a nice farm, has a wife and four children. He would have written this letter himself if he would know how to speak German. He remembers still very well his teacher, Mr. Abt, his uncle in Herpf [?], the big dike near Seebach, his grandparents Heinrich and Susanne Heyl, the forests nearby, and the Arl-mountains.

The daughter of the old Krauß, Eva Dorothea, is my wife and now I want to make myself also known to you. I was born in the Saxon Oberlausitz, where first my grandfather and then my father were ministers of the church in Schönbach. If your Honor would feel himself moved to answer my letter, you would make my parents- and brother-in-law very happy.

With my highest respect, your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

To August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg.

Jan 4, 1869.

Dear Sir! I ask you to send me as soon as possible the seeds I will list below. I have a small seed business which I can easily enlarge if I can receive good seeds. I have received seeds from Mendel in Erfurt during the last two years, but was very badly served. I enclose a cheque for \$22, that will be enough, the Prussian Taler counted as 75 cts.

Address the seeds to F.A.M., M.P., M.C., Wis., U.S. of N.A. in care of Konstantin Württemberger, Post Agent in Bremen. Your ... F.A.M.

== To the above: Jan. 9, 1869.

On Jan. 5 I was in Sparta and tried to buy a cheque, but the banker had no connection with Quedlinburg or Brunswick; however, I received a cheque for \$32.40 in Friesian currency to the 'Vereins Bank' in Hamburg on Co. Mark Banco, which I mailed in Sparta with a letter and the list of seeds to you. I wanted to insure the letter, but the banker did not advise it, and said he would write me another one in case the cheque would get lost.

<T121> But now I realize that—if my letter should be lost—I would be in trouble, as a second order would come too late. I therefore send you a copy of my list of seeds and beseech you to send it at once after my letter has arrived. In case the cheque should get lost, I will send you another one right away, or you also can order the Post Agent in Bremen to collect the money.

Your devoted ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Johann Heinrich Krauß.

To Johann Heinrich Krauß, Moores Creek, Monroe Co., Wisc.

Febr. 16, 1869.

Dear Father and Mother! We just received a letter from Suba. If you want to hear something from your relatives in Germany, you have to come over here soon. Mother's parents are both dead and she can still collect a small inheritance. When you will come here, I can write you the necessary certificates. We are all healthy and send our wishes.

Your son-in-law, F.A.M.

Certificate: Anna Krauss.

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Anna Elizabeth Krauß, formerly Heyl, born in Suba in the Duchy of Meiningen, presently living in Monroe County in the State of Wisc., in the U.S. of N.A., hereby elect and choose Mr. Gustav Koch, Minister of Bettenhäusern and Suba, as my true, complete, and legal attorney of power, in order to collect and legally put in receipt for me and my husband and for our profit alone, my inheritance consisting of the estate of my late parents Susanna Katherine and Johann Heinrich Heyl, and to do all acts, things, and deeds which my named attorney of power thinks necessary or useful in fulfilling the mission I give him, as entirely as if I would do it myself if I were present in person; and I recognize and affirm hereby all the acts of my named attorney done in obedience to this certificate.

As affirmation of the content above, I have written it myself and sealed it on March _, 1869.

Anna Elizabeth Krauß.

Signed in the presence of: Johann Heinrich Krauß and F.A. Meißner; March _ A.D. 1869. State of Wisconsin, Monroe County, Ss.

<T121A [Two translation pages have the same number.]> The above Anna Elizabeth Krauß came personally to me and acknowledged having written the certificate above out of her own free will and signed it.

F.A. Meissner, Justice of the Peace.

From: F.A.M.; To: J. Ullrich.

J. Ullrich, Esq., Nord Stern [newspaper], La Crosse, Wisc.

March 24, 1869.

You find enclosed a list of garden and flower seeds. If you feel moved to send an order, you can write the amount due in my favor to the 'Nordstern' [Northern Star]. If you have the opportunity to talk with somebody from Sparta, you can easily learn that my flower seeds are not only as good but even better than Vick's in Rochester. My filled [double] zinnias are excellent, as well as the pansies, asters, and phlox. From the two latter ones I have separate colors also.

If you occasionally would recommend me to your friends I would try to be grateful.

== Garden Seeds ==.

I address this announcement to my German fellow countrymen, and to those readers of the 'Nordstern' to whom I am unknown yet:

I have a quite important business in raising seeds. I get every year from Germany all the newest kinds of flowers and vegetables that can be raised here in this country, and I have tested their value for this region and raised fresh seeds, and I sell the kinds (of which a small portion often costs me a dollar and more) for 10 cts. per paper.

I have a complete assortment of all common vegetable seeds, especially those that are wanted only by Germans, like Savoy cabbage, white and blue turnips, curly and broad leafy endive, summer and winter leek, spinach, celery, parsley, marjoram and thyme, etc.

My flowers are known all around here; my filled [double] zinnias are wonderful as well as my big leafy pansies, asters, and Stocks, phlox in eight brilliant colors, filled [double] strawflowers, reseda [mignonette], and many other kinds.

I will send seeds to everybody who wants them—postage free—by mail, and that is three papers for 25 cts., six for 50 cts., and so on. For those who rather give their orders to the office of the 'Nordstern,' there are seed lists available, or write to me. F.A.M., M.P., M.C., Wisc.

== <T122> Seed Potatoes ==.

Early Godrich, Cullivo, and Gleason. I will send—postage free—these three new, much renowned sorts, for which I paid \$1 per lb. last year in N.Y., for 50 cts. per lb. to all who like them.

M.P. M.C. W. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: J. Ullrich.

Mr. J. Ullrich.

Apr. 21, 1869.

I sent you today 17 papers of vegetable seeds and 45 papers of flower seeds. The papers have all the same price, 10 cts. for a single one or three for 25 cts. There are many old seeds on the market which is sold for five cts. per paper, but which is worth less than nothing.

The 'Nordstern' has missed already since two weeks its friendly visit to M.P. P.O. Probably it was left in the post office in Sparta. I want you to write \$4.20 in my favor for 17 papers of vegetables and 45 papers of flower seeds.

From: F.A.M.; To: F. Werner Engel.

Dr. F. Werner Engel, Drug Store, Black River Falls.

April 21 [1869].

I have received your letter. Answering it, I will send today by mail 185 papers of vegetable and 60 papers of flower seeds. Altogether 245 papers at five cts. each is \$12.25. In case one or the other kind should not be enough, I can send you more; and what will be unsold I am going to take back. The seeds are all fresh and good, so that they will make us customers for next year. I can send you fresh onion seeds for 30 cts. per ounce. The N.Y., Mass., and Conn. catalogs list these for 50 cts. I can sell you this autumn good dried sage for about \$40 to \$50 per 100 lb.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Eau Galle, Dunn Co., Wis.

9 May 1869 [excerpt].

... We ... send our best wishes to the second messias. ... [Son Docerus b 1 May 1869—LPM].

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Rudy & Co.

<T123> Mr. Rudy & Co., Bangor, Wisc.

M.P., Oct. 20, 1869.

The La Crosse 'Nordstern' has mentioned your factory several times in a commending way, which caused me to ask you whether I could buy my need of woolen winter clothes for my pretty big family less expensive with you than in Sparta. If you don't mind the trouble, then send me some samples and prices of twine for stockings, flannel, and tough pants stuff for boys, the last one would be best if half woolen.

... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Oct. 20, 69.

Dear daughter. I answered your letter of April of last year at once, but as it seems that you want to wait again for five years, I send you enclosed my picture that you won't forget me entirely and that you can imagine how an old man looks like.

My greetings to all of you. Your father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: F. Werner Engel.

Dr. F. Werner Engel, Drug Store, Black River Falls.

Oct. 27, 1869.

According to my book you owe me \$12.25 for 245 papers of vegetable and flower seeds to five cts. each paper. I hereby beseech you in a friendly manner to send me the unsold ones back—well packed—and by the same way to send me the amount of the sold ones.

I have sold all of my hay crop to Jähner and Gage in Sparta.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg.

Nov. 16, 1869.

The seeds I received from you this spring are doing quite well with some exceptions. Three-fourths of the salvia did not come up. I therefore suspect that you sent old seed mixed with some new one, which was a great damage to me as I sowed out the salvia myself. The onions were excellent, the cabbage pure and good, ...

If I sell such a bad seed, I am going to lose many customers soon. Is your white Brunswick cabbage better? You sent me some other sorts, and under false names besides. Of my flower seeds <T124> the sorts were partly mixed up. ...

I think of having my need for this year again sent from you, if you will try to avoid the mentioned errors as much as possible. I am less interested in the price, but mostly to receive the right and good kinds. The custom taxes and the freight cost me as much as the seeds themselves. Also it makes a big difference to me if I shall [send?] the money so long in advance. As I can buy here six months on credit, is there no way you can indicate by which I can give you security and you will allow me the same advantage as I have here? Expecting a reply soon, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Gustav Koch.

Mr. Gustav Koch, Minister in Bettenhäusern and Suba, near Meiningen in Saxony.

Dec. 15, 1869.

You will accuse me of laziness that I did not answer your kind letter yet, but you surely will allow me to say something to my excuse. When I received your letter, I brought it—by the preacher—to my parents-in-law, who live about 15 miles from here, and I had told them that Mother should bring the letter back soon, as I wanted to send it to Heinrich [Krauß], too, who lives more than 100 miles from here. I even offered myself to answer the letter for my parents-in-law and—if they wanted the inheritance—to make the necessary papers. I received no answer nor the letter back. My business is so urgent, especially in spring, that I could not take off. But as I received one letter after the other from Heinrich who was so impatient, one Sunday morning I went to Metgers Valley. Father had just come out of church, but Mother had gone just again to a prayer meeting. To my question, whether they did not want to answer the letter, I got the reply: “We sent already for the money.” This and the restoration of your letter were all that I could get out from the old man. I sent the letter to Heinrich who—as he wrote me—could not decipher it all [i.e., Heinrich can’t read German well—LPM], but was extremely happy about it. I read in Heinrich’s letter which I just received that he had written to his cousin and had received an answer and a post card from the old home.

In order to explain you a little the behavior of my parents-in-law, I have to tell you that the old man is a little insane; mother is still responsible, but both their sense got lost in religious fanaticism. They both forsook the church of their fathers and converted <T125> to the German Methodist Church. This kind does not only have service on Sunday but has every night meetings in which they feel possessed by the Holy Spirit (Devil!), scream, cry, yell, in such a way that nobody can imagine who never witnessed it. I gladly let everybody have his own religion, but ask also to be left in peace. But this sort of people want to convert the whole world, and every time when we meet Mother tries her luck on my wife, but who—God be thanked!—has still all her sense left. Heinrich and his parents are enemies. The cause of it is that he is—supposedly—in religious matters ‘a reed shaken in the wind.’ My wife, with whom I have five children, is a good mother and housewife, and we live, although I am much older, happily and contented.

You write in your letters about the hard times for the farmers in Germany. We hear the same complaint this year here also. We have namely too much wheat and too little money, but as one cannot eat the latter one and the first one makes good bread, we don’t need to starve.

My wife asks you to greet her relatives there, and thanks you with me for your very kind letter. We wish all of you the good and remain your devoted. F.A.M. and wife.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.R. Jähring.

Mr. W.R. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Saxon Oberlausitz.

Dec. 15, 1869.

Your Honor! When I answered your kind letter of July 16, 1868, I had not received yet your and your wife’s picture, but it really arrived by next mail and they are as a memory of the kind giver very precious to me, also my uncle’s picture refreshes again in my memory the well-known features. I include for you my picture, but have still to owe you the one of my wife, as she was unable to go to Sparta (15 miles away) being kept back by her small family.

Did your brother-in-law execute his plan? I have not heard again from Volkmar Jähnicher and other people who want to emigrate. Probably my descriptions were not charming enough, but here ‘the fried doves’ fly into nobody’s mouth. The Mrs. Minister Ficker never answered my letter; it showed only that she wanted her curiosity satisfied by mine [i.e., my letter], but I am <T126> really very sorry that my cousin Wilhelmine never answered me.

Now something about politics: As it seems, Benst’s spirit beats all obstacles and reforms Austria, but Bismarck’s fire seems to be pretty burnt out. Grant has quite confirmed my judgement about him, at least his great spirit could not yet be detected yet. The church meeting in Rome will probably in vain try to swim against the tide, but it is nearly unbelievable how much stupidity and darkness are on this earth—.

I think you got already used to it, that I ask you always for something, and you will therefore not be surprised. In order to have something living from the home of my youth, I would like very much to have some branches from the apple tree near the water trough, which pleased us children every year at Christmas time with its red fruit; also some branches from the plum tree near the Minister’s house, if it is still alive, the fruits of which my father enjoyed as delicacies. The branches can be cut some time in winter and can be sent

by mail. If the package is marked 'plants,' the postage (which has to be paid in advance) amounts to about three [?] silver nickels or one cent per lot.

Friendly greetings. I remain your devoted ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Karl Traugott Jähne.

Mr. Karl Traugott Jähne, Professor in Bautzen in Saxony.

[Dec 1869 or Jan 1870].

Dear friend! I saw from your very nice letter of April 23, 1868 that you preserved me your youth friendship and not only that, but also that it matured to a friendship between men, despite my separation of so many years. The year 1869 was a pretty hard one for us. First in spring, when it was just time to work in fields and gardens, I was lying very sick in bed for four weeks. In autumn my wife delivered a well-built girl, but who had to give up her young life during the hard birth. After that my wife had to stay in bed for seven weeks and suffered from weakness a long time afterward. So I had no help in her for collecting the seeds. How much this threw me back in my work only he can imagine, who knows how here everybody has to depend entirely on himself alone, and how everybody <T127> has to work hard especially in summer and cannot assist somebody else. We tried this summer to make up for the lost time and only now I find some time to relax my mind a little.

Your life has been quiet while mine was often shaken by storms. This is probably the cause that our philosophy of life is different, but everybody is happy in his own religion.

I have written to my cousin Wilhelmine Meissner at the same time I wrote to you, but I received no answer, which hurts me very much as she is the only still living relative from my father's side. I still remember very well when I visited her in Zwittau before my departure to America. If you have the opportunity to see her, give her please my best regards.

We are now well and healthy and hope to hear the same from you and your dear wife. With best wishes to all of you, I remain your F.A.M.

I cannot thank you enough for the beautiful memories of the home of my youth which was caused by your and Mr. Jähning's kindness and friendship. I only miss now a picture from you and your dear wife. I send you a picture of me and I would like to know whether you still can find a resemblance to your playmate. The picture of my dearly loved uncle, the court gardener K.A. Seidel, and an unfinished letter written a short time before his death, have also come into my hands as a dear memory of him.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

Mr. August Gebhardt in Quedlinburg in Prussia.

M.P. M.C. Wis.; sent by Griffin; Jan 12, 1870.

You will find enclosed a list of my need of seeds for this year, and also a check of the 'First National Bank in Sparta' for 24 Prussian Talers for payment of the amount or something more. Do I still have something in my favor from last year? As my seeds have to go a long way, you surely will send these as soon as possible.

== Seed list ... =.

Last year I had to pay \$8 as custom taxes. It would be better if you indicate the full value on top of the boxes. Send it again to Konstantin Württemberger in Bremen, who treated me nice last year. The N.Y. Spediteur [expediter?] however has tortured me and I therefore try to find out tomorrow in Sparta how I can do without him. F.A.M.

END OF BOOK 2 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 3: Jan. 1870 to Dec. 1877

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T128>To Mrs. Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Jan 10, 1870.

Dear Daughter! Christmas and the beginning of a new year is suited more than any other time to assemble all the loved ones around oneself—even if only in spirit—. On Dec. 27 [F.A.M. 65th birthday] and on Jan. 1 I started a new year and I have all the reasons to be happy and contented. The only thing that troubled my heart was that I missed on both days a sign from you. My two last letters both stayed unanswered. I therefore write once again, and if I will receive no answer either, I am going to erase you from the number of my children and try to wipe the memory of you out of my thinking.

Your Father, F.A.M.

The Postmaster of Pinneberg is most politely beseeched to deliver this letter personally to my daughter.

From: F.A.M.; To: E. Steiger.

Mr. E. Steiger, No. 22 & 24 Franklin St., N.Y.

Jan 19, 1870.

I happened to get your 'Literary Monthly Report' in my hands, and I found announced the 'Book of the World for 1870.' Please send me a sample for the enclosed 25 cts. and if it will be according to my expectations I am going to send you the full price.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Editor, La Crosse Republican.

<Written in English.> Editor, La Crosse Republican.

22 Jan 1870 [excerpt].

... I must believe that the Nord Stern, which has several times spoken against a protective tariff, speaks only in the interest of a certain party. I cannot believe that he is ignorant of the great trial that has been made in our mother country. Has he never heard of the German Toll-Verein—the Union of the States for a protective tariff?

When Russia and Prussia drove the great Conqueror, Napoleon the first, back to his den, (I was then a boy about eight years old and saw from my native hills the battle of Bautzen and the flashes from the cannons of the fighting armies, and counted 17 villages the same night in flames marking the course of the retreating French army.) and peace reigned again, there were very poor times in Prussia; all Germany was flooded with English dry goods. ... Prussia ... had a minister who was a great financier. ... He conceived the idea of a protective tariff. ... The smaller neighboring states ... one after another joined Prussia and I believe nearly all Germany is united in the Great German Toll Union. The German states, formerly poor and dependent on England's manufactures, now compete successfully. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: E. Steiger.

<T128, cont.> Mr. E. Steiger, N.Y.

M.P. Feb 16, 1870.

Last week I received one of your monthly reports by mail and this week arrived also the "Book of the World," but without color pictures, which—according to the table of contents, belongs to the flower pot. I therefore will send you this paper back. I suspect that the picture was torn out by somebody from the post office, but it did not happen at the Post station here, as I picked it up as soon as the mail arrived.

The "Book of the World" costs, according to the notice on the cover, five silver nickels. It can be ordered for that price from all bookstores here and abroad without a higher price, and is delivered into the house—postage paid. You, however, sell it for 25 cts., sent it without postage paid, what looks to me like swindle, as five silver nickels are not more than 16 cts. <T129> I expect that you will send me for the 25 cts. a *complete* copy.

F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: C. Schröter.

Mr. C. Schröter, Sauk City [WI].

M.P. M.C. W. March 19 [1870].

Dear Sir! The La Crosse 'Nordstern' has introduced me (in the issue from March 10) to your name and job, and as we have the same conceptions, but I am standing here all alone, I cannot suppress the desire to get to know you better. My religion and conviction have been formed entirely within myself without having heard or read anything about it; yes, I even did not know there existed other people who had the same or similar ideas as I. I however often felt the want to connect myself with people of the same way of thinking against the stupidity, the grumblers, and the ministers. I am unfortunately already an old man (65) and the time of my work cannot naturally last more very long, but I have five cheerful children from three to 10 years, and for their sake I want to live still so long until their reasoning is educated and formed, and it would be a great help for me to know that I could bring them together with some enlightened people.

As I saw from the 'Nordstern,' there are in your region so-called free communities, as whose founder and leader you are named. I would be very glad if you would let me know some more details about them and your principles and ideas.

With my respect to you, Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: J. Ulrich.

Mr. J. Ulrich, La Crosse.

M.P. March 30, 1870.

Dear friend and patron! Would you please make room for the enclosed announcement on the front page of the 'Nordstern?' Three times will be sufficient. Yesterday I received a letter from E. Schröter. You can count on me as a brother fighter against darkness and superstition.

With my friendship ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

Mr. Karl Frölich, La Crosse.

April 7, 1871 [Note gap in dates.].

I received your letter of March 31, but it was too late to answer it and to send it by return mail. I don't have any 'Goldlack' [wallflowers] but I wrote for it to N.Y., and as it will be blossoming only next year, it will still arrive on time. Besides the kinds of seeds printed on the list, I can still recommend you the kinds listed below. I will be in Sparta next week, and letters to me, care of Caspar Bedenk, Sparta, Wisc., <T130> will be answered by me right there, and the ordered seeds sent right away. We receive mail only twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays.

With my friendly wishes ...

[List of seeds.].

From: F.A.M.; To: H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> H. Crouse.

May 2, 1871

[Best wishes on birth of boy, presumably Ed. (Relations between F.A.M. and his brother-in-law seem quite cordial.)]

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Ulrich.

<T130, cont.> Mr. Ulrich, La Crosse, Nordstern.

Dec. 16, 1871.

Friend Ulrich. If I can obtain the 'Book of the World' through your bookstore, please send me as soon as fitting the first paper for 1871. If not, please let me know so I can turn to Steiger.

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To : Karl Friedrich Meissner.

Mr. Karl Friedrich Meissner, care of Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg.

Dec. 27, 1871.

Dear Brother Karl! Believing that you are still alive (you are four years younger than I), I write these lines to you on my 67th birthday, wishing to hear how you are doing and how your life is. I have heard from Kummerfeld that your wife and children are dead. I am now—as I mentioned before—already 67 years old, and enjoy still a very good health.

I am living in the country, about as in Kummerfeld, and do some farming and raise seeds. The region here and Schönbach [where they grew up—LPM] are very much alike. The climate in summer is however much warmer, so that we can raise corn. I have a beautiful spring in my garden, and a nice trout pond. I make with my hands' work a living for myself, my wife, and my children: Ernest, Adolph, Dorothea, Carl, and August. The oldest is 12 and the youngest five years old. They are all cheerful boys and a girl, who tear up in their happy wildness three times as many clothes as would be necessary, or as their mother can repair. And as clothes and other things are pretty expensive here, you can believe me that it is not easy to care for so many from one man's work, but we don't suffer want of anything.

I have received a letter from Uncle Karl some years ago, which he had written shortly before his death. I have received letters from Schönbach from Traugott Jähne, Volkmar Jähnicher, and others; also a beautiful copy of Grandfather's picture in the church. ... [A portrait of Christian Friedrich Meißner (1721-1802), who was minister when the present church building was constructed, is still hanging (1989) in the Schönbach church, opposite a portrait of Martin Luther. These portraits were said to have been commissioned by a relative in the early 1800s.] ... and pictures of the church and other parts of the village; also branches from our apple tree that gave us our Christmas apples, some of which I planted here.

If you are—as I have reason to believe—all alone in the world, it would <T131> please me and us all very much if you would make up your mind to come over here and to live with us. I will give you the gardening here and I will manage the farm work. You don't need to worry about living troubles; we also have enough to eat. We have butchered more than 1000 lb. of meat.

Every year thousands of people come over here from Germany. I cannot understand that none of my relatives decides to do the same. If nothing interferes, I can have answer from you in four weeks and can write you again if you want to come still this spring.

With a brotherly greeting, I remain—your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.>

8 Jan 1872 [excerpt].

... Your way of teaching is pretty correct, and I myself have tried to introduce it in our school but without avail; our women teachers are too lazy—they don't care if the children learn anything or not. And the children having their time not occupied get into mischief.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

<T131, cont.> To August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg.

Jan 24, 1872.

Dear Sir! Last year I was hindered by the war to get my need of seeds from you. I have waited this year in vain for your seed list until it nearly got too late. I therefore hope that you fulfill my orders as soon as possible, and ask three months time for paying. Send them as always to Konstantin Württemberger in Bremen and mark the box F.A.M., Sparta, Wisc. Besides, I want to ask you not to substitute a kind of seeds under the wrong name if you are out of one kind or the other.

With my friendly greetings, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Ulrich.

La Crosse, 'Nordstern.'

Jan 27, 1872.

Friend Ulrich. I did not like the 'Book of the World,' because its contents is neither liberal nor instructive. Please send me therefore the 'Nordstern' instead; old friends are the best in the end.—

I was a short time ago in Sparta's paper mill in order to buy paper for my seed capsules, but they produce right now nothing but straw paper; even the paper dealers had nothing. I need a sort of pretty thin paper, preferably yellow, red, or green, for flower seed capsules; and a stronger sort for vegetable seeds. But both sorts must be sized [treated] so one can write well on them. Don't you want to send me some samples together with your next 'Nordstern?'.

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

<T132> Mr. August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg.

Jan 31, 1872.

Dear Sir! In order to be sure, I will send you today again a copy of my letter and the list of seeds that I mailed to you last week.

With my friendly greetings ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> Henry Crouse.

Feb 1872 [excerpt].

... Your oldest both are girls.

From: E.D. M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> To Brother Henry.

Feb 1872. [excerpt].

... Now I will make a few remarks to your letter on Ernst [sic] and Adolf[sic]. The latter is not going to school because I need him at home. ... I do not agree with you to keep children reading the same book over and over again until they know it by heart. That is tiresome. Besides his school books, I encourage Ernie to read at home in newspapers, books about gardening, stories, law books, etc. Klaus [?] has a boy 14 years old who considers himself a great scholar. He goes to H. Cremer's school, but when he gets another book in his hands besides his reader, he goes blank. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Beyer Shaper & Co.

<T132, cont.> Mr. Beyer Shaper & Co, 616 North 5th Str., St. Louis, Mo.

February 7, 1872.

I received your catalog and, in order to repay your kindness at least partly, I beseech you to send me the small items listed below as soon as possible; celery seeds only then if your are convinced that it is bulb celery and not "Brant" or stalk celery. I have ordered my true need already from Germany; maybe more in another year. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Charles Helmuth.

Charles Helmuth, N.Y.

February 28, 1872.

I expect a box with seeds from Bremen. Please mail it as soon as possible to Sparta, Wisc., by 'People's Dispatch.' I send you enclosed \$10 for the expenses. Make your bill as cheap as possible. The remaining amount is going to be sent to you right after receiving your bill.

With my best wishes.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

Mr. Karl Frölich, La Crosse.

March 20, 1872.

I will send you today by mail: 12 pkg. vegetable seeds @ five cts, \$0.60; [?] bean seeds .. \$0.10; [?] flower seed (5 pkt. 25 cts.) \$0.60; [Total] \$1.30.

I expect any day now Stocks, Goldlack [wallflowers], and beautiful filled [double] garden carnations from Germany. I have at least the news that they are on the way. As soon as they arrive, I will execute your remaining order and also one pkg. Goldlack that I owe you from last year.

I have included with the seeds a list. Maybe you still find something you could use. I also would like you to recommend me to your friends. I will not forget about the celery.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Heiser.

Adolph Heiser, Esq., Jefferson, M.C., Wisc.

March 20, 1872.

Friend Heiser! Please read Page 989 Revised Stahlen [?], Sections 27 & 28 of Chapter 176. If you want to go this way, come as soon as possible to me and we will go to Krähenbühl and see what we can do. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Heiser.

<T133> Michael Belireus, Angelo, M.C., Wisc.

March 25, 1872.

Dear friend! Yesterday I received after many troubles your 'Fies [files?] on the Road Appeal Case' and send you these enclosed with \$1.50. Please let me know of their arrival, that I know they did not get lost on the way.

F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frank Delle.

Mr. Frank Delle at Mahony [?], Vernon Co., Wisc.

May 23, 1872.

Friend Delle! My sow had on May 8, eight beautiful Chester White pigs: two sows and six boars. I will sell these [when they are] four to five weeks old for \$2 apiece. I want to keep one sow for myself. If you want all or some of them for this price, you surely can earn some money, as there is a bigger demand at your place.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: Charles Helmuth; To: F.A.M..

<T384> [Loose letter]. Mr. F.A. Meissner, Mount Pisgah, Sparta P.O.—Wis.

New York, May 30, 1872.

I received together with your letter of the 26th a money order of \$6.50 for the Bank of North America, N.Y., as payment for the expenses of your last box with seeds.

Respectfully and devotedly, Chas. Helmuth, P.O. Box 4336.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

<T133, cont.> Mr. August Gebhardt in Quedlinburg.

May 16, 1872.

I send you enclosed your assets minus three [?] nine [?] in a check for Uel and Pillman in Brunswick for 22 Talers Prussian currency, and I would like you to confirm their arrival. I had a very bad luck with the

seeds this year as they only arrived on May 2. I received your bill from Febr. 21 very quick, and if you would have mailed the box so fast, it might have arrived by the same steamer as the letter. As you did not even include a list of the seeds either, I ask you to send me still one, that I will be able to make my order list from this one, if the catalog from next year should not arrive in time. I would also like it very much if you would send me an issue of a good German gardening paper.

With my best wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Besenstein.

G.H. Besenstein, Freeport, Ill.

M.P. M.C. W. August 15, 1872.

Dear Sir! Some days ago I received a letter from Mr. August Gebhardt in Quedlinburg, with whom I had been in a business connection since several years. He wants me to take over the sale of his crop of sugar beet seeds in America. He writes besides that:

<T134> "Last year Mr. G.H. Besenstein in Freeport, Il., brought as a trial 7,000 lb. of sugar beet seeds from me; I corresponded with him also about the contract of a new matter. I would like it if you would take at once the pending affair into your hands and bring it to a good end.."

I am soon going to write again to Mr. Gebhardt. I wanted to inquire whether I could do something to the furtherance of your both interests. The prices are, as he gives me:

White, fine leafy cultivated Silesian [..?].

Best Imperial [..?].

New white Vilmarin [..?].

Embulkage in sacks for 100 lbs. [..?] or in double sacks the double price.

The amount in three monthly checks to a German bank has to be added to the orders.

This last condition seems to be OK, but I think it is going to aggravate every business, or make it nearly impossible. One cannot expect that a sugar manufacturer from here has funds in a German bank from which he can draw, and should he buy here a cheque for a German bank, he has to pay cash and has nothing from the three month space. But this is a thing which I might not be able to understand. It seems to me only, that—if Mr. Gebhardt does not want to trust the local sugar manufacturer (which all are, after all, import establishments) that they are going to pay him after the arrival of the seeds—he cannot expect either that these send him the money in advance and wonder whether they will receive the seeds for it in return or not. I would like it very much if you could tell me more about this point, as I don't want to waste my time and work without a prospect of success.

Expecting a kind reply, I sign respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Besenstein.

G.H. Besenstein, Freeport, Ill.

M.P. M.C. W. Sept. 2, 1872.

Dear Sir! With reference to my letter of August 16, I want to tell you that according to a letter that I just received from Mr. Gebhardt, the continuing dry heat has entirely ruined the hope of a good crop of sugar beet seeds. Big areas are entirely burnt, and the few remaining seeds give a poor result. In the best case only 500 <T135> instead of 1000 per 'morgen' [a German field measure—M. Camphäusen]. Mr. Gebhardt sees himself therefore forced to raise his prices as follows [..].

As the prices probably will still be higher, because the supply won't cover the demand, you maybe can make use of the notes above.

Expecting a reply soon, I sign ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Beet Sugar Factory.

Beet Sugar Factory, Baraboo, Sauk County, Wisc.

M.P. M.C. Wisc. Sept 2, 1872.

In the beginning of last month, I received a letter from Mr. August Gebhardt in Quedlinburg in Prussia, with whom I stand since several years in business connection, whereby he asks me to take over the sale of his sugar beet seeds in the region here. He made at that time the following prices: [...] According to a letter from Mr. Gebhardt which I just received, the continuing dry heat has entirely ruined the hope of a good sugar beet seed crop and the remaining seeds give only a poor yield. In the best case they give only 500 instead of 1000 lb. per 'morgen.' Mr. Gebhardt sees himself therefore forced to raise his prices and gives the following [...]. In case you want to make use of the present, still cheap, notes (as one can expect that the prices are still going to rise, because the supply won't cover the demand), you can make your order through me or turn directly to Mr. Gebhardt.

Mr. Besensteil in Freeport, Ill., received last year as a trial 7,000 lb. of sugar beet seeds from Mr. Gebhardt, and I am corresponding with him on account of a new delivery.

Respectfully ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Hankee.

<T136> Portland, Sept. 6, 1872.

Friend Hankee. Mr. Hollister, Capt. Wilson, and Sheriff Johnson were here, and would have visited you if they would have had time. They want me to tell you, that—if you are interested in the 'Reform Movement'—it is very necessary that you will honor the mass convention, which will take place coming Wednesday afternoon at two o'clock in the Court House in Sparta, by your presence and to bring along as many people with the same way of thinking as possible. On this day the Reform or Greeley Party will be organized in this county, and will elect delegates for the Congressional Convention, which will take place the next day.

With my friendly greetings. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

Mr. August Gebhardt in Quedlinburg in Prussia.

M.P. Oct. 28, 1872.

As soon as I received your letter of July 20, I wrote at once to Mr. Besensteil and to the beet sugar factory in Sauk County. When I received your second letter of Aug. 8, I wrote again and informed both parties of the changed state of the prices. I waited in vain for an answer, which forces me to believe that I am of no use for you in this matter. Maybe both parties wrote directly to you.

In a letter dated May 26, I sent you your assets for the seeds you sent me in spring, in a cheque for Uhl & Pillerman in Braunschweig [Brunswick], but I can only suppose that you received it.

Unfortunately, I see myself forced to tell you that you served me this spring worse than ever. you must have somewhere in your business bad workers, or else such cruel errors would be impossible. The red onions were old seeds that did not come up, the straw yellow onions were red, the leek seeds were old, white radishes were red, etc. etc. etc. ... The seeds cost me in freight and customs at least as much as the sales price, and it is too bad to have to pay still customs and freight for old onion seed, of which every old woman knows that it won't come up. I sowed myself a big place full of leek and hoped to have a crop of at least \$20 value, and got only a few miserable plants.—You must not believe that I would accuse your seeds of anything if I would not be entirely convinced that it is the seed's fault and <T137> not the climate's or the country's. We have had here in this region an excellent wheat crop; one bushel (60 lb.) costs \$1.10 . The flower seeds also had a good crop, but something is always missing.

With my friendly greeting, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wilhelm Freise in La Crosse.

Nov. 11, 1872.

Dear Sir, I regretted reading about your accident in the 'Nordstern,' but read with pleasure that it did not turn out as bad as it could have, and you are already better.

According to our contract, I want to tell you that I can give you the following garden products: ...

The dried herbs are all especially beautiful. If you can make use of the whole supply, I will deliver it free to your house in La Crosse. If you can only make partly use of it, I am going to send you the wanted things to the railroad depot in Sparta.

With my friendly greetings, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wilhelm Freise in La Crosse.

M.P. M.C. Nov. 20, 1872.

I have received your letter of Nov. 12, and I have packed a box with the herbs you ordered, which I am going to bring tomorrow to Sparta and send it to you. In order to fill up the empty space in the box, I have included 1-1/2 lb. of marjoram and 11 lb. of sage, which I ask you to sell for me to one of the butchers, if you cannot use them for your retail trade. The butcher who lives northwest from your store told me last year that he will pay gladly \$1 per lb., if I want to bring him marjoram. The box therefore contains

Please write the above amount in my favor. Maybe I am going to come once personally to La Crosse this winter to pick it up.

With my friendly wishes, ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

Mr. Karl Frölich, La Crosse.

Nov. 20, 1872.

My celery is a little bit small this year on account of the drought, but the bulbs are healthy and smooth. I would have sent you already something during these days, if the frost would not have surprised me, but I will make up for the lost time as soon as we will have milder weather. I have beautiful big smooth roots <T138> of parsley for five cts. per lb., and celery for four cts. per lb. Could you and Mr. Ulrich use enough from both things in order to pay for one year for the 'Nordstern'?

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: F & J Becker.

F. & J. Becker, La Crosse.

Nov. 20, 1872.

Dear Sirs! I saw from the 'Nordstern' that you deal in vegetables. Could you not use 50 lb. garlic for 20 cts. per lb., and 50 to 100 lb. beautiful big smooth parsley roots for four cts. per lb.? I will send what you want as soon as the weather allows it—postage paid—to Sparta to the express office. A little frost will damage both things as much as nothing.

From: F.A.M.; To : Karl Friedrich Meissner.

Mr. Karl Friedrich Meissner, gardener with Mr. de Ray in Ütersen near Altona, Hamburg, Germany.

Dec. 1872.

Dear Brother. Nearly a year passed since I wrote a long friendly letter to you and addressed it to Lina to have it delivered. It is nearly impossible for me to believe that—if you received your letter—you did not think your only brother worth of an answer.

I therefore beseech you once again by these lines to shake you[rself] up from your indifference and to let me know how you are doing.

Your only brother, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

M.P., Dec. 8, 1872.

Dear Mr. Frölich. When I wrote my last letter, I expected for sure that the coldness would be only a passing announcement of the approaching winter, and when we had some milder climate last week, I saw my prediction become already fulfilled. Already yesterday, I made preparations in order to visit tomorrow my customers in Sparta, and to take also the celery along which you were so kind to order. But today the wind is blowing so cold from the northwest, that the winter means it serious. I therefore include \$2.50 with the request to pay for me the 'Nordstern' for the current year.

With my friendly wishes, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: William Hankee.

<T139> William Hankee, Portland.

Dec. 14, 1872.

Friend Hankee! You will find enclosed a small bill for the town. Don't you want to do me the favor and have yourself an order made for it and to use it toward my taxes?

With my friendly wishes ...

The Town of Portland; to F.A. Meissner, Nov. 5, 1872, one day as Clerk of Election, \$2.00

From: F.A.M.; To: Postmaster at Brunswick.

To the Postmaster at Brunswick, Germany.

[Dec. 14, 1872.]

Dear Sir, If I am not mistaken, there are many garden seeds raised around Brunswick. Would you please do me the favor and address the two enclosed letters to two different seed stores? Ready to do you a favor any time, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Seed Store in Brunswick.

To a seed store in Brunswick.

Dec. 14, 1872.

I would like you to send me as soon as possible your latest vegetable and flower seed catalog, with a list of the prices. Address: F.A.M., M.P., M.C., Wis., N.A.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, Wisc.

Jan. 3, 1873.

Dear Sir! As I had an excellent crop of seeds last summer, I want to enlarge my business a little. I therefore want to have my catalogue, which I send hereby to you, printed as an enclosure to the Nordstern and have it mailed with it. The paper should be at least as strong as the one of the Nordstern, the printing should be good and clear. I want it all on one side, the back side unprinted; it also has to be ready still this month and mailed right away. How big is the edition of the Nordstern, and how much would it cost me—at least approximately—to send with every copy an enclosure? I think 1/4 page of the Nordstern size will be sufficient. I ask for a reply soon.

P.S. After having written this, I received the Nordstern from last week and as enclosure the bearer's New Year's greetings. It seems to me that the paper hereby used would be pretty fitting to my catalog.

<T140> Before you start printing, I would like you to send me a sample so that I can correct some possible mistakes.

See above.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, Wis.

Jan. 13, 1873.

Dear Sir. I received your letter of Jan. 9 only yesterday (on account of snowdrifts). I had counted on \$15, maybe \$17 are not too much either. I ask you to have ready the printing and mailing if possible by the 24th. If you are going to send me a sample, you don't have to include the manuscript as I have a copy.

With my best greetings ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wilhelm Freise, La Crosse.

Jan. 13, 1873.

Dear Mr. Freise. As bad weather and bad ways kept me from going this winter myself to La Crosse, I would like to ask you to send me my small assets of \$19.00 per Postal Money Order to Sparta.

I still have so very nice garlic that I planted for you alone, as you told me you could use a barrel of it. If you should be short on your supply, please let me know about it. Don't you want to write me how much you could use next autumn from the articles listed below? ... So that I have more directions when I am going to sow.

With my best wishes... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

Mr. August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg in Prussia.

Jan 22, 1873.

After having waited for long and in vain for your new seed catalog, I see myself forced to get my need of vegetable seeds from here.

I beseech you to send me as soon as possible the following flower seeds by mail ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse.

M.P. M.C. W. J 27 [1873.]

I only received on Saturday your letter of the 20th with the enclosure together with the 'Nordstern,' and I am quite satisfied with the paper and printing. I am only sorry that you did not put the preface (which concerns the whole catalog) on the top across the whole catalog, which I sent you along as a sample. <Insert from T142: > This would have given a better look to it all. I also had hoped that you would have printed a small recommending notice into the no. of the Nordstern with which you mailed the enclosure. <End of insert.>

If you still have the form standing, I would like you to make me about 200 copies for my own use, where <T141> you could leave off the beginning like 'Enclosure to the Nordstern,' etc. Please send me the extra circulars by mail. According to my counting, they will add up to about \$4, wherefore I include you the post money as it has to be paid in advance.

With my respect ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wilhelm Freise, La Crosse, Wisc.

Jan. 31, 1873.

Dear Sir. I have received your letter with the enclosed Postal Money Order, and I thank you very much for it. I don't have any more celery, but very good parsley roots. I have a small supply of seeds that I can sell by the pound. You will find below what I have. I will send you paper seeds, especially flowers, as soon as I am through with unpacking ...

From: F.A.M.; To : Karl Friedrich Meissner.

Mr. Karl Friedrich Meissner, Ütersen, Pappenstrasse No. 33, near Hamburg, Germany.

Febr. 3, 1873.

Dear Brother Karl. I have received your letter of Jan. 2, which pleased me very much. But I am sure sorry that your health is not very good. You nearly entirely ignore with your silence my friendly proposal to come over here and to live with us. I think that a sea voyage would do you good, and I am sure that your spirit and mind will warm up if you are together with my cheerful boys. You must not be afraid that my wife would mind [be disturbed by? -LPM] you. We will all welcome you with our love; and concerning the work I told you to do—you are entirely wrong. you can just do what your health allows. In case you are unable to get the money for the trip, I will send it to you until the next autumn, even if I have to borrow it.

If your sense had not entirely shriveled up, so pull yourself together and come over here. You will have a new life, and feel once again happy. I send you my picture. Maybe it looks more like me than my handwriting. Won't you send us a picture of you?

Did you hear anything from Napoleon [Who?—LPM] ? Is he still alive? Or are we the only descendant Meißners left?

I also sent a newspaper and my seed catalog to you. We have an unusually cold winter, and hope for a warm summer. All my little ones send their greetings to their uncle, and my wife and I to the brother. Let us soon hear again from you.

Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Michael Binon.

<T142> Mr. Michael Binon, Milwaukee.

Febru. 3, 1873.

Dear Sir. Maybe it will please you to hear that a man entirely unknown to you has heard with his deepest sorrow about your loss, the death of your surely dear wife. I read it in the La Crosse Nordstern. By chance, I got your paper of the freemasons in my hands, by which I got to know you as a champion of the light.

I myself have excepted myself since my 18th year from the many prejudices (I am now 68). The first motive was given to me by a book about agriculture and Schiller's works: "You had hoped your wages are paid for. Your faith was your happiness given to you. You can ask your philosopher—what the minute does not give you—no eternity gives it back." I wondered already a long time that no apostle of the light would arise, and that so many educated men like Daniel Webster showed at that time so much sanctimony. But what is the American not willing to do if he wants his [political] office?

I am also very happy to hear about your paper, that there are now men who don't shy away from confessing their convictions in public, and are armed with courage and knowledge to fight for enlightenment; and that my former home, the Oberlausitz, has found a good place within it [?].

I would like to give my contribution also to the furtherance of this good cause, but I am quite short on cash at the moment. If you could use some garden or vegetable seeds, I am going to take one or two issues of the 'Free Thinker.'

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To : Michael Binon.

Mr. Michael Binon, Milwaukee.

Febru. 3, 1873.

Some of my acquaintances and fellow thinkers, to whom I recommended the 'Free Thinker,' promised to have sent for it. If they did not do so yet, would you please send them a free sample? And that to: William Hanke, M.P. M.C. Wisc.; Frank Dille, P.M. at Newry, Vernon Co., Wisc.; Henry Crouse, Eau Galle, Dunn Co., Wisc.

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To : Friedrich Thierstein.

<T143> Mr. Friedrich Thierstein, Marmon Cooly [Coulee?], La Crosse.

Febr. 17, 1873.

I have received your letter and I will send you all kinds of seeds, which cost five cts. per paper, for four cts. per paper, and I will have them postage paid delivered to you by mail. Beans and sweet or sugar corn, which costs 10 cts. per paper, will be sent to you for eight cts. per paper, postage paid. ...

I will send your flower seed by mail, postage paid, and I will give you 30 cts. discount for every dollar, so you have to send me only 70 cts. for every dollar of the catalog price.

Of course my offer is only as long good as I have supplies, and you can be sure that you will receive only good seed. You send best the money to Sparta by a Postal Money Order, which you can get in the post office in La Crosse.

... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse.

Feb. 19, 1873.

Dear Sir! With yesterday's mail I received an order for seeds from a Mr. John Boll in Dallas in Texas without money, and I am supposed to send them by Express. If I send the seeds by Express P.O. D. and they are not accepted, they will be returned and I have to pay the postage both ways. Mr. Boll claims to have received my catalog with the 'Nordstern.' I therefore suspect that you know the gentleman, and I take the liberty to ask you for your advice.

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, Dallas Co., Texas.

March 1, 1873.

According to your wish, I am going to send you today by Express the flower seeds listed in the inside and, as I suspect that at least part of them are to be sold, I have sent you a lot. All the seeds were raised last summer in my garden, and I therefore can hope that you will be satisfied with them. I recommend myself for further orders. ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, Dallas Co., Texas.

March 1, 1873.

I have sent the seeds by mail, as the Express would not accept them. Send me the amount by Postal Money Order to Sparta or La Crosse. Amount, \$7.30.

From: F.A.M.; To : Friedrich Thierstein.

<T144> Mr. Friedrich Thierstein, Marmon Cooily [Coulee?], La Crosse.

March 7, 1873. I received yesterday your letter of the 3rd. If you will reread my last letter, you will find that I told you to take a Postal Money Order to Sparta and to include it in your letter and to address it as usual to M.P. M.C. Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

Mr. Karl Frölich, La Crosse.

March 12, 1873.

I received your kind order and the enclosed \$5.00 yesterday and I will send you today the ordered seeds with the exception of one paper Premium Flute Dutch Cabbage and one paper leek, which I still hope to send you at the end of the week.

You don't have to include money in your future orders, if I can pay off my debt for the 'Nordstern.'

From: F.A.M.; To : Friedrich Thierstein.

Mr. Friedrich Thierstein, Marmon Cooly [Coulee?], La Crosse.

March 21, 1873.

I have answered your letter of the 3rd on the 7th and told you to take a Postal Money Order to Sparta. As I did not hear from you again, it could be possible that my letter or yours got lost. Therefore this inquiry.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> Henry Crouse.

25 Mar 1872 [excerpt].

... As soon as the Northern Pacific R.R. is ready, I shall go to Washington Territory.

From: F.A.M.; To : Wentzel Blumentritt.

<T144, cont.> Mr. Wentzel Blumentritt, New Hartford, Winona Co., Minn.

April 16, 1873.

Answering your letters from March 30, which I received yesterday, I have to tell you that I did not receive your first letter with the \$1.60 . If you would have sent me a list of the things you want in your last letter, I would have enclosed them herewith. But do so at once after the arrival of my letter and I will send you the seeds free, if you should not find your first letter again. I have received this spring hundreds of letters with money, but this is the first from which I hear that it got lost.

Also send me in your next letter an 'Affidavit' which a Justice of the Peace has to sign about in the way as the following, but changed to the particular circumstances:

"Wentzel Blumentritt being duly sworn declares under oath that on the fourth day of February A.D. 1873 a letter was mailed by him at La Crosse Wis. P.O. containing One and 60/100 dollars, addressed to F.A.M., M.P. M.C. Wis."

As the spring is so late this year, I think you will receive your seeds still in time if you write at once.

F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Ferdinand Brehme.

<T145> Mr. Ferdinand Brehme, Brownsville, Minn., P.O. B. No. 99.

M.P. April 16, 1873.

Dear Sir. I received your letter yesterday and I will mail you today the two papers containing the seeds you wanted (with the exception of spinach, and onions only 1/4 lb.) for which I include the bill.

My father and grandfather were ministers in Schönbach in the Oberlausitz. Brothers of my father lived in Pirna and in Dresden. My grandfather and uncle [Karl August Seidel] from my mother's side were court gardeners with the King in Dresden.

As all the seeds I sent to you are good, I can hope that you will be satisfied with them. Recommending myself to you, I sign ...

F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Anton Riedel.

Mr. Anton Riedel, La Crosse, Wis.

May 1, 1873.

Dear Sir! I received your letter of April 14 with the enclosed 60 cts. on the 15th and sent the ordered seeds on the 16th. postage paid. As you did not receive them (the cause of this is probably the present big confusion in the Sparta post office), I am going to send you the seeds again, and hope you will receive them this time.

With my best wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, W.

May 2, 1873.

Dear Sir! I have received your bill, but as I intended to make some necessary enlargements and improvements in my seed business, for instance the construction of a hot house, which I want to finish this summer, I want to ask you to give me time till autumn; I include however \$2 for the Nordstern.

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, Wisc.

May 8, 1873.

Your quite unfriendly answer to my friendly request is in front of me. The proverb, 'A good word finds a good place' does not seem to have been fulfilled here. You make me reproaches that I did not ask for more time before, but at that time I did not know yet that it would be necessary to make use of your indulgence, and I did not suspect either that you were under such a pressure, as I often read in your and other newspapers that subscribers owed the money for two to three years. I also could <T146> reply that you did not make beforehand your conditions how fast you wanted to be paid. I am not in the habit to make debts that I cannot and don't want to pay, but the long and hard winter has taken an unusual advantage of my money. I could not let my cattle starve etc. etc. ...

If I would have the money I would send it to you, but in order to show you my good will I give you hereby two of my assets which are both due and which you can collect.

From: F.A.M.; To : Ferdinand Brehme.

Mr. Ferdinand Brehme in Brownsville, Minn.

To F.A. Meissner, M.P. M. Co. Wis.

April 16, 1873 for seeds according to the bill, \$6.50

Please give the above amount to Mr. John Ulrich in La Crosse. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, Dallas Co., Texas.

To F.A. Meissner, M.P. M. Co. Wis.

Dr: March 1, 1873 for seeds according to the bill, \$7.30

Please pay the above amount to John Ulrich in La Crosse. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Ferdinand Brehme.

Mr. Ferdinand Brehme, Brownsville, Minn., P.O. B. No. 99.

M.P. May 30, 1873.

Dear Sir. I sent you the seeds you ordered in your letter of April 3, by mail on April 16. I would be very pleased if you would send the small sum of the bill, \$6.50—according to your promise—very soon by a Post Money Order to Sparta, W.

With my best wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, D.C., Texas.

May 30, 1873.

Dear Sir. March first I sent you by mail the flower seeds you ordered. I would be very pleased if you would send me soon the small amount of the bill, \$7.30 by a Post Money Order to Sparta.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Heller & Schram.

<T147> Heller & Schram, Sparta.

June 17, 1873.

Friend Schram. Please select a linen smock for my boy. I will pay you as soon as I come down. Give him a good one that can be washed, none of the bad yellow ones, and take consideration that it will fit, not too small and also not too big.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Wentzel Blumentritt.

Mr. Wentzel Blumentritt, New Hartford, Winona Co., Minn.

June 17, 1873.

About three weeks ago, I received a letter from the 'Dead Letter Office' in Washington, that a letter was sent there for me without stamps, and that I would receive it if I would mail in an eight ct. stamp. I suspected at once that it might be your letter, and I received it some days ago.

As you naturally cannot make use any more from the seeds for this year, I will hereby return your letter and the included \$1.60.

With my friendly wishes. ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To : Ferdinand Brehme.

Mr. Ferdinand Brehme, Brownsville, Minn., P.O. B. No. 99.

Aug 21, 1873.

Dear Sir. You did not even answer my friendly letter of May 30 with the request to send me the small amount of money (\$6.50) that you owe me. You force me, if I will receive no satisfactory answer either to this letter, to remind you of your debt by an open Postal Card.

With my friendly wishes ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, D.C., Texas.

May 30, 1873.

Dear Sir. You did not answer yet my friendly letter of May 30 with the request to send me the small amount of money (\$7.30) you owe me. You force me, if I will receive no satisfactory answer either to this letter, to remind you of your debt by an open Postal Card.

With my friendly wishes ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

<T148> Mr. Karl Frölich, La Crosse.

Sept. 1, 1873.

Dear Sir! I thought of sending some flowers and garden fruits to your next exhibition. I therefore had already sent to me a 'Prize List,' but as it contains no further 'Rules,' I would like to ask you for some information.

1. Is the exhibit exclusively for the residents of La Crosse Co., or is it possible for people outside of the County to become members by paying one dollar, and be able to demand the right to send products to the exhibit?

2. Is a certain time established, until which articles are going to be accepted? Namely, is it still enough time on the morning of the second day to deliver things for the exhibit?

3. Does the necessary space have to be (ordered) reserved in advance, and where can this be done?

I hope that you will fulfill my request, and will give me the wanted information. If you could give me some good advice besides, I would accept it very gratefully.

Respectfully, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wilhelm Freise, La Crosse.

Nov. 14, 1873.

Dear Sir, Already since four weeks I am preparing myself to come personally with my products to La Crosse, but bad roads and weather have always kept me back. I therefore will send you today samples of sage, summer savory, bulb celery, dwarf stalk celery, parsley roots, and leek.

I will deliver the articles above in barrels to the following prices to the Express Office in Sparta.

Sage in barrels containing 25 to 30 lb., at 30 cts. per lb. (If you want them divided into 1/2 and 1/4 lb., I am unable to sell them for less than 40 cts.)

Summer savory, divided into 1/4 lb. for 40 cts. per lb. (15 or 18 lbs. are everything I have here from.

Bulb celery ...; stalk celery ...; leek ...; parsley ...

<T149> I did not raise marjoram or thyme. My first seed was washed up by a flood and the second seed was ruined by the drought.

As soon as I will receive your answer, I am going to bring the goods to Sparta, but the vegetables only, if it is not too cold.

With my friendly wishes. ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wilhelm Freise, La Crosse.

Nov. 24, 1873.

Dear Sir, I am going to send you today two barrels (58 lb.) of sage for 30 cts. per lb.: that is \$17.40. As I owe Mr. John Ulrich from the 'Nordstern' \$17, you can pay him this sum for me, what you can do probably in goods. If you should need only one barrel sage, you can give the other one to Mr. Ulrich and pay him the balance. Wishing a good reception, I sign ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse.

Nov. 24, 1873.

If the early winter would not have surprised me and bad weather and roads kept me back, I would have come personally to La Crosse with my autumn crop, and I would have paid you my debt. I am going to send today two barrels of sage to Mr. Wilhelm Freise and I ordered him to pay you. But if Mr. Freise should want to keep only one barrel, please take the second one and sell it to your butcher (the lb. sage costs 30 cts. plus the freight to Sparta) and have yourself paid the balance from Mr. Freise.

Mr. John Boll, the honest man from Texas, has not paid me yet for my seeds from last spring.

I still have to tell you how the 'leaders' of the Reform Party in Sparta cheat the people and lead them around by their noses. Wilson sent me the tickets for this town with a note—as he said: by order of the Committee—saying that we should take care to have the tickets already in the morning at the polls and that they should be voted for. I will send you one of the tickets as a sample, and ask you to explain to me how

come that Graham received 540, while Wresheurn and the other candidates of the Republican ticket have a 133 majority <T150> in this county.

What a boring sentimental moonshine story did you serve us this time in the 'Nordstern.' I should think the compositor might lose his patience writing such a thing.

With my friendly greetings. ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, D.C., Texas.

Dec. 10, 1873.

Dear Sir! You did not keep yet your promise to pay me the small sum you owe me by P.M. O. It was not my fault that you received the seeds for last spring so late, and as the seeds are all very fresh you can sell these still next spring with a good conscience. When I received your order without the money in cash included, I first asked in La Crosse for information about you. I was told: "You have nothing to fear. The Bolls are honest people." You won't abuse the good faith your friends have in you, will you? I have to make a living for a big family, and as I am raising only seeds, I need the profit of them in order to be able to buy bread for my children.

With my friendly greetings ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: J.C. C. Rust.

Mr. J.C. C. Rust, Brunswick.

M.P. Dec. 16, 1873.

I received your catalog and friendly offer last spring, but it was too late to send still in for a small order. I have received my need for several years from Quedlinburg, but I was served so badly that I could not stand it any longer. I am less interested in the price, but mostly in good seeds and the right kinds. So far I got my seeds via Bremen, but I was always cheated by the N.Y. agent. I therefore will try it via Hamburg. I expect from you that you fulfill my order as soon as possible, so that I won't receive the seeds too late. It takes often the same time from N.Y. to here as from Germany to N.Y. I enclose the approximate amount in a Money Order for 18 Prussian Talers.

I would also like to know what difference there is, for instance with cabbage, between first and second grade. Please enclose a new catalog. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.R. Jähring.

<T151> Mr. W.R. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Oberlausitz, Germany.

[Dec. 27, 1873 (F.A.M.'s 69th birthday).]

Your Honor! Nearly four years have already passed since I owe you the answer to your dear letter of March 2, 1870, as well as the "Thank you" for the grafted branches you sent me at that time. Unfortunately the branches were so dried out that I got only three of them to grow, and those froze to death during the last hard winter. We namely have here in northwestern Wisconsin a special climate or soil (I believe that the latter is mostly at fault). We raise exceptionally good wheat and barley; oats and corn do also well. The heat rises in summer to 90, 95, or even 100 degrees. The winters—to be sure—last six months, but are not colder than in north Germany or in the north of the state N.Y., but in spite of that we cannot raise pears, apples, plums, and cherries. Many thousand fruit trees have been planted here already. They might grow for two to three years, but then they freeze again; sometimes a tree might even get eight to 10 years old. There are here wild 'Holzapfeln' [crab apples] and many wild plums, among them quite nice tasting kinds, which the frost won't harm, also the so-called 'sibirisch Holzapfeln' [Siberian crab apples] thrive very well here. We have to give here two bushel wheat for one bushel apple. One bushel wheat weighs 60 lb. and costs \$1.

I just read again friend Jähne's letter of April 23, 1868, and as he never wrote again to my answer at that time, I am forced to think that he is no longer alive. Or maybe my remark, that I owe my much moved life only to a free religious conception, has upset him so much that he broke the 'yardstick' over me.

The power of habit is very big. He who was born, baptized, raised, and lived and worked as Lutheran in Germany, surely finds it unnatural that there are still people who think differently. But here in America,

where often in one family the husband, the wife, and the children all belong to different sects, and everyone believes that he alone is on the right track, reason is in <T152> the foreground and religion in the background. I learned with great joy that also in my own home in the Oberlausitz the light of the Enlightenment rises.

Our five children are not only still alive, but also cheerful and healthy in body and mind. The oldest one (14) is just as tall as his father (5' 5") I noticed anyway that the children of the colonists are usually taller and stronger than their parents, which maybe has its reason also in the better and richer food.

You surely know about our political conditions from the papers. Your Bismarck surpasses all my expectations, and our Grant surely will stay back far behind him. Our Republican Constitution seems to need even bigger improvements. These popular elections have their good and also their bad points. For instance, a member of the Congress is elected in my village. The two or three candidates are entirely unknown in the village. The village consists of Norwegians, Germans, and Americans. Every group has about one or two political leaders. Candidate No. 1 has the most money, but is the biggest rogue. He buys the leaders of the Norwegians and the Germans. These go in front during the election, like the leading wether before a herd of sheep, and all the others follow. The Americans usually vote more according to their conviction, which they usually form by their newspaper, and these again are also bought, and so it comes that usually the worst guy is elected.

It is the same in the world of law as in the political world. Two farmers have a quarrel and bring it before a 'Justice of the Peace.' He has sent for six other men, who have to swear that they are going to decide about the matter in an impartial way. The plaintiff shows his proofs, the defendant his counter proofs—so far, everything is still pretty good. But now the advocate of the one and then the advocate of the other make a long speech addressed to the jury and the judge. Whose advocate lies best usually wins the case. Sometimes also the decision of the jury indicates that they did not understand a thing, or the sharpest party tries to get a leader <T153> among the jury whom the others follow blindly.

But I see my letter is getting too long. If you should think it worth an answer, I ask you very much not to follow my example and have me wait for it four years, as I become already 69 years today.

At the same time with the letter, I am going to mail you some flower seeds, not because I believe that you won't have as good ones in Germany, but because I hope that their blossoms will remind you of your grateful F.A.M. , who respects you very much and thanks you for your friendly signs of your kindness.

P.S. In case friend Jähne should be still alive, I would ask you very much to give him my greetings and to tell him that I don't know how to explain his silence.

P.S. Jan. 2, 1874: I just received the latest issue of the 'Nordstern,' and as it contains some items that might interest you, I will enclose it.

From: F.A.M.; To: J.C. C. Rust.

Mr. J.C. C. Rust, Brunswick.

Jan. 4, 1874.

Dear Sir! On Dec. 16, 1873, I mailed a letter to you containing an order list of seeds and a money order for 18 Prussian Talers to G. Uhle & Co. As it is possible that my letter got lost (which would cause a lot of trouble), I am going to send you today again a copy of my seed order list with the urgent request to send me at once the ordered articles.

Respectfully, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: F.A. Müller.

F.A. Müller, B. 45, Rushford, Minn., Fillmore Co.

M.P. M.C. W. Jan. 16, 1874.

I received your letter of May 7. Besides the kinds of seeds I listed in my catalog from last year (and which I will sell this year at the same price), I can recommend to you the following kinds: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

<T154> Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn.

Febr. 4, 1874.

Hoping that you were satisfied with the bushes I sent you last year, I want to recommend myself to you again this year with my seeds, and want to ask you besides for a small favor.

A certain Ferdinand Brehme received last year in spring seeds for \$6.50 from me. If you think you could collect this small sum for me, I am going to send you the bill, and will give you half of the money for your trouble.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, Wis.

Feb. 4, 1874.

Would you please print the following announcement in the Nordstern, and keep back the amount, as well as for the Nordstern, from the first order in summer that Mr. Frölich will send to me.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

==

F.A. Meissner

Seed Grower and Gardener, M.P. M.C., Wis.

I want to announce to my dear business friends as well as to the general public that I have again a supply of the best and most excellent kinds of vegetable seeds as well as fresh flower seeds from all the most beautiful and bright kinds fitting for the free country.

Vegetable seeds: five cts. per paper.

Peas, beans, and sweet corn: 10 cts. per paper

Flower seeds: 10 cts. per paper.

All seeds will be sent—postage paid—for the above price.

Address to F.A.M., M.P., M.C., W.

==

Verbenas, fire red and other new wonderful colors: Seeds, 25 cts. per paper.

Trophy Tomato, the earliest, the biggest and best tomato: The seeds are collected from fruits that weighed 15 [?] to 16 oz.: 25 cts. per paper

Sent postage paid for the above price.

Address to F.A.M. ...

<T155> P.S. May I ask you to have the enclosed English ad put into the 'Weekly Liberal Democrat' or into the 'Republican and Leader'—which of them you think best suited for—and either to have it paid in the manner as above or send a bill to me.

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn.

Febr. 18, 1874.

I received your letter of the 6th of this month. I am going to mail today with this letter a package for you with flower seeds, containing 18 kinds for 10 cts. each and 14 kinds for five cts. each: \$2.50

I also will include free a sample of my new verbenas and Trophy tomatoes.

You will find enclosed Mr. Brehme's seed order and a note saying to pay it to you. Do what you can. It takes much work and labor before the seed is ready for sale, and I have to feed many hungry mouths, who all earn only little or nothing.

Respectfully ...

==

Mr. Ferdinand Brehme in Brownsville, Minn.

To F.A. Meissner, M.P. Wi.

Db: April 16, 1873. Garden seeds according to order list: \$6.50

Please pay to Fred Gluck in Brownsville.

F.A. Meissner

From: F.A.M.; To: Prof. Dr. Renghly.

Professor Dr. Renghly, La Crosse, W.

March 6, 1874.

Dear Sir! I was told that you are quite interested in gardening and flower raising. I therefore take the liberty to hand over to you herewith my seed catalog, which surely does not impress anybody by disarming pictures, but if you want to give it a try you can convince yourself that I try to offer to my customers only a fine selection of the best and newest seeds.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: C.B. Richard.

Mr. C.B. Richard, Boas, N.Y. & Hamburg.

March 16, 1874.

On Febr. 19, I received the following announcement from Mr. Karl Jentsch in Brunswick:

==

<T156> Brunswick, Jan. 28, 1874==

Mr. F.A. Meissner in Sparta, Wis.==

I sent you according to your request, for your dear bill and risk #965, one box via train in Express freight by negotiation of Mr. G.B. Richard & Boas in Hamburg."

The box above, containing seeds, which were supposed to complete my assortment, has not arrived yet. It had not yet arrived in N.Y. by March 9—as you wrote to me—and I therefore suspect that it must have been misplaced in Hamburg.

The time for seed sales has come, and I have many orders here that I am unable to fulfill as I lack the articles that were in the box. You yourself can imagine how great my damage will be. I am sorry that my first attempt to have the seeds sent via Hamburg instead of Bremen came to such a bad end, as I also always had a preference for Hamburg, because I was formerly a gardener with James Booth.

Respectfully, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Jentsch.

Karl Jentsch in Brunswick.

March 16, 1874.

I received your letter of [Jan.] the 6th on Jan. 27, in which you indicated that you had received my seed order and money order for 18 Talers. You also mention that you will send the seeds off in a few days. But only on Jan. 28, that is three weeks afterwards, you finally mailed my seeds. you took so little consideration for my urgent request. The worst of it all is, however, that the box had not arrived yet in N.Y. on March 9, and must have been kept lying on the train or in Hamburg. Will you please—as soon as you receive my letter—inquire about it. The seeds will be too late anyhow for selling, but maybe I still could use some for my own sowing.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John A. Salzer.

<T157> Mr. John A. Salzer, La Crosse, Box 391.

March 20, 1874.

I have received your complaint that you had to pay 18 cents postage for the seeds that you received from me. I would be very grateful if you could tell me for what reason the Postmaster asked for this additional payment. As I promise to send my seeds postage paid, I will gladly compensate you for this expense. Please keep the envelope from the seeds with the address and the two-cent stamp. You also received last year seeds from me: Did you also have to pay extra postage?

You would do me a great favor if you could give me the above mentioned information.

Respectfully, ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Bayer.

Mr. John Bayer, Onalaska, La Crosse County, Wis.

March 27 [1874].

I mailed your seeds the day before yesterday. You will be able to get excellent beautiful asparagus plants as soon as the frost leaves the soil, but I will have to send these by express as they are too big for the mail. I would advise you to take the biennial plants.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

Mr. Karl Frölich, La Crosse.

April 23, 1874.

Dear Sir! I received today your letter of the 21st and I am very sorry that I have caused your displeasure, but you will excuse me if I try to explain it to you. When I received no order from you, and thought of the possibility that it might have been lost, I therefore addressed some lines to you. This is surely no [?] proof that I was interested in your order. When I received an answer to this letter either, I wondered how I could have lost your sympathy. Only Tuesday, April 14, your second order arrived, and that when I was in Sparta trading with seeds, so that I couldn't get everything prepared until the next Sunday (the 19th) in order to have it sent by mail to Sparta on Monday morning. Unfortunately, we had the hardest snowstorm of the whole winter on Monday, so that the stage could go only on Wednesday to Sparta, and the seeds are now probably in your hands. Your first letter did not arrive at all, and your second one only very recently. Maybe <T158> it is your Postmaster's or his clerk's fault, as I had quite a controversy with him, because he had John Salzer pay postage for a package of seeds.

With my friendly greetings ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn.

May 1, 1874.

I will send you today a box containing:

10 Chinese peonies, five red and five white ones @ 50 cts.: \$5.00

1 pink Chinese Hybridia, has to be covered in winter time; is also nice in a pot.

1 yellow filled [double] buttercup, hardy perennial

2 Lychius Hageniana, beautiful and fire red, also nice in a pot.

1 Delphinium Chinensa Pamila, nice in a pot.

How about friend Brehme? Did you squeeze anything out of him? Wishing a good reception, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Bayer.

Mr. John Bayer, Onalaska, La Crosse County, Wis.

May 1, 1874.

I will send you today by Express from Sparta 25 asparagus plants from the new big kind (Conovers Colossal). Wishing a good reception, I remain your devoted ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Christian Konrad Wrede.

Mr. Ernst Christian Konrad Wrede, in Brunswick.

Oct. 1, 1874.

Dear Sir! Two years ago I received, through the assistance of the Postmaster in Brunswick, your seed catalogue as well as that from Mr. J.C. C. Rust, but both arrived too late for my order. Last winter I sent a small order to Mr. Rust, now Karl Jentsch; the reason why I decided in his favor was that he raised the majority of the seeds himself. I however have no reason to be satisfied with the execution of my order. Mr. Jentsch received my order with the payment in cash in the beginning of January and mailed the seeds only end of the same month. The result was that they arrived too late for my spring seed trade, which caused me a great disturbance and made it necessary for me to buy seeds here once again.

<T159> Besides: Early short hard carrots were long Brunswick; long red English radishes were round; red Brunswick onions germinated only 1/4; and so many other kinds are a mixture of everything and anything. If I don't want to call this plain fraud, it indicates at least that Mr. Jentsch's business is in great disorder. I would have cheated my customers if I would have sold them long carrots as short ones, round radishes as long ones, and old onion seeds as new ones. But the question is now—can I expect anything better from you?—So I will give it a try, and will send you my order as soon as my answer arrives. This should be around the beginning of December, but as money here pays very big interest, I would not like to pay you for such a long time ahead in advance. I will therefore send you a money order to the First National Bank of Sparta, payable on May 1, 1875. If you will [take] this money order to the bank, it will send you in return a money order for Uhl in Brunswick.

Expecting a kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Jentsch.

Karl Jentsch in Brunswick.

Oct. 1, 1874.

Dear Sir! Last spring I received from you under the name 'Frankfurter Giant Cauliflower' a kind of cauliflower seed that is excellently early and gives very beautiful heads. I therefore suggest that it was the 'Earliest Erfurter Branch Cauliflower.' Please send me from the same kind, under the right name, two dozen capsules; and if you have Frankfurter Giant Cauliflower and it is very good for the free country, please send also a dozen capsules from this kind, both by mail. The postage has to be paid in advance and therefore [you] can put it on my bill. My early 'Berliner Shoot Cauliflower' has not produced a single head until now. In general, many errors occurred with the seeds you sent me this spring, like ...

As the seeds arrived too late, I cheated only a few of my customers with the wrong kinds. I did not sell the red onion seed at all, as I tested it and it was bad. The yellow one was good.

Please send me the cauliflower at once, and tell me whether <T160> you will compensate me for my loss caused by the bad seed. I will then send you a bill about it with my next order.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst C.K. Wrede.

Ernst C.K. Wrede in Brunswick.

Dec. 23, 1874

Dear Sit! You will find herewith my seed order and a money order for 20 Talers. I hope you will execute my order at once, and will send me good seed. It costs me with customs and freight the double price till here.

== Important Directions:

Pack the seeds into a box (not a barrel), the cover of which can be opened in the Customs House in N.Y. without breaking the box all apart. Address the box to F.A.M., Sparta, Wisc., N.A., and send it by Express to Konstantin Württemberger in Bremen. Include your bill—affirmed by the American Consul, which is necessary for the Customs House in N.Y.—If you will execute my small order fairly to my satisfaction (I ask

less for the price, but most of all for good seeds and good kinds), you can be assured of my gratitude and my continuing patronage.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst C.K. Wrede.

Ernst C.K. Wrede in Brunswick.

Jan. 1, 1875.

Dear Sir! I mailed on Dec. 26th my order list, and enclosed a money order for 20 Talers to Uhle & Co. in Brunswick, but as there is the possibility that the letter might get lost, which would cause a lot of trouble for me, I will send you herewith a duplicate. Please let me know by a postcard of their arrival.

Seed list ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, Wisc.

Jan. 4, 1875.

Dear Sir. The last Nordstern contained the following ad: "Wanted: A well educated boy, who knows how to speak German, can find a good job in the Nordstern office." I have a boy [Ernest] fitting pretty much the above description. He is 15 years old and over five feet tall, speaks and understands German, however is unable to read or write German. If you would let me know what he is supposed <T161> to do and how much he could earn, I could better decide whether he would fit for this job. I surely have enough work here for the boy, but I would like to use this opportunity in order to give him a better education.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Boll.

Mr. John Boll, Dallas, Dallas Co., Texas

Jan. 4, 1875.

Dear Sir! If you should feel yourself moved to send me the small amount of my bill from March 1, 1873 (\$7.30), you can do so best by P.O. Money Order to Sparta, Wis. and you can be assured of my gratitude.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> Henry Crouse, Greenville, Beaver Co., Utah Terr.

Feb. 17, 1875.

From: F.A.M.; To: Charles Helmuth.

<T161, cont.> Charles Helmuth, N.Y., P.O.. Box 4336

Febr. 19, 1875

Dear Sir! I just received your card saying that my seeds have arrived. I wrote you already some days ago that you should send the box by American Express, Sparta, Wisc. Could you not moderate your bill a bit? Last year I received my seeds via Hamburg and Mr. Richard & Bliss's bill was only \$11.00

Respectfully ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Bayer.

John Bayer, Onalaska, La Crosse Co., Wis.

March 1, 1875.

Dear Sir! I received your kind letter last Saturday. My seed crop from last autumn was so good that I can execute you and all other possible orders to the satisfaction of my dear patrons. Please recommend me to your neighbors. I don't have the kind of onions you want, but I have good seeds from early red and big red Wethersfield onions. I enclose my catalog.

Recommending myself to you, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, Nordstern.

March 1, 1875.

Dear Sir! Please print the following announcement in the Nordstern, if possible still this week, and have it there for this month.

I still have a demand to John Boll in Dallas, Texas. Would it not be possible to have it collected by your cousin who lives in Dallas? If you think it possible, please give me his address.

Respectfully, ...

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<T162> F.A. Meissner, Seed Farm and Garden, Mt. Pisgah, M.C., Wis.

Seeds

The climate of last summer and autumn was here at my place so good for seed raising that I can send you again especially good and fresh seed to my business friends and patrons this spring. I have a complete selection of the best vegetable varieties, and exceptionally good flower seeds; and I recommend these to the readers of the Nordstern. Seeds are sent postage paid for the catalog price to all regions in the U.S. Written inquiries or orders are to be addressed to: F.A.M., M.P., M.C., Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Tate.

<Written in English.> Henry Tate, Esq., Viroqua, Vernon Co., Wis.

March 25, 1875.

Dear Sir, I want to sell my place. I think it would be a good speculation for some rich man to buy the place for a tavern site. My place is certainly the best situation between Viroqua and Sparta for a stopping place. I own the whole valley up to Griffin's barn ... I own the whole 160 acres more or less, my water rights are worth 500 dollars, my buildings worth 300 dollars, my trout pond has the very best situation—no flood will swamp it. I have some of the healthiest bearing fruit trees, and my garden is in a high state of cultivation. I will sell the whole for \$1,500, the low price for certain reasons known to myself.

From: F.A.M.; To: Felix Meyer.

<T162, cont.> Mr. Felix Meyer, Bangor, Wis.

Sunday, March 28, 1875

Dear Sir! Last Thursday I received your letter with a seed order dated March 19, and I sent you the seeds last Friday. I sell my seeds this spring for 10 cts. per paper or three p. for 25 cts. I have been forced to raise the price because I sell only germinating seeds, and I am therefore forced every spring to burn a lot of seeds that did not pass the test. But I executed your order at the old price.

I will send the asparagus plants for Mr. Hussa as soon as the weather will allow it. Concerning the planting of the asparagus, I ask you to toll Mr. Hussa that it is surely good to make a two foot deep ditch, to fill it one foot deep with good rotten dung, and to cover it again with the dug up soil; and then to set the plants so deep that the heads are covered with four inches soil [diagram]. I plan to go to La Crosse via Bangor in a few days with seeds, and I won't forget to call on you then.

From: Karl Frölich; To: F.A.M..

<T381> [Loose letter].

La Crosse, April 10, 1875.

Dear Mr. Meissner, Be so kind and send me one paper of each of the following flower seeds: German aster, strawflower, phlox, Reseda [mignonette], asparagus, and zinnia. I also want to have about 1/4 hundred of the best asparagus plants.—If you have a dark red kind of peony, you can send me a plant, but please no white or pale red one, as I have already many of these.

Send me your bill and I will send you the money right away.

Respectfully ... Your Karl Frölich (\$2.00)

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

<T162, cont.> Karl Frölich, La Crosse, Wisc.

April 15, 1875.

Dear Sir. I will mail you today a paper of flower seed, a dark red peony, and asparagus plants will be sent to you in a few days.

6 papers of flower seeds: \$0.50; one plant dark red peony: \$0.50; 1/3 hundred biennial [second year?] asparagus: \$1. I ask you to write this amount in my favor: \$2.00 .

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: Karl Frölich; To: F.A.M..

<T381, cont.> [Loose letter].

La Crosse, April 21, 1875.

Dear Mr. Meissner, Last Saturday I received your letter of the 15th of this month, and the box with the asparagus plants arrived on Monday. Unfortunately I am still waiting today for the seeds, which were probably stolen at some post office. As it is late already for sowing, I ask you to send me once again the same, and also the following kinds for a neighbor:

2 papers Belfornien [?], one Stocks, one strawflowers, one Reseda [mignonette], one iron carnation, one zinnia, one phlox.

Send me once again your bill and I will send you soon the receipt from Mr. Ulrich.

Respectfully ... Your Karl Frölich (\$2.00)

P.S. There is a letter for you at the post office.

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

<T163> Mr. Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn.

April 26, 1875

Dear Sir! I want to thank you for your money order for \$1.75 which I received. Concerning Brehme, I can tell you the following details: On February 4, 1874, I wrote to you that Brehme owes me \$6.50, and I asked you whether you would not want to collect the default for me, in which case I promised to pay you for your kindness half of the amount. You answered that you wanted to try. I sent you the following bill on Febr. 18, 1874:

== Mr. Ferdinand Brehme in Brownsville, Minn.

To F.A. Meissner, M.P. Wis. Obr.

April 16, 1873. Garden seeds according to order list: \$6.50

Please pay to Fred Gluck in Brownsville.

F.A. Meissner

==

I also enclosed as proof Mr. Brehme's order list.

You replied to my inquiry from May 1, 1874, that Brehme is a slow payer and you did not receive anything yet. After reading this explanation, you will surely again remember this affair.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

Report from Nordstern, La Crosse, W., May 7, 1875

In the town of Jefferson, Monroe Co., close to the Pine Hollow Settlement, in the night of 29 to 30 April the new barn of Georg Klos burnt down, and with it some beautiful young horses, three cows, one foal, one calf, as well as wagons, plows, and other farming tools. The fire broke out after midnight. The origin is still a riddle, as nobody went to the stable with light or a pipe the night before. Four years ago the whole family went to church on Good Friday and found their house with beds, clothes, and all furniture in ashes when they returned.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> George H Crouse alias Krauss etc.

June 27, 1875

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> G. Henry Crouse alias Krauss, Greenville [Utah].

13 Aug 1875 [excerpt].

... We directed our letters to Beaver City as directed by you. If you change your name and post office so often, it will be hardly any use to write to you. ... We have built a new dwelling house, into which we intend to move this fall.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

<T163, cont.> Mr. Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany.

Aug. 20, 1875.

Dear Sir! For several years already, you were so kind and sent me your catalogs. I would not mind to order my small demand of seeds from you (despite the fact that your prices are slightly higher than in Quedlinburg or Brunswick, if I <T164> would be convinced that your seeds are better than the ones from the other suppliers). So far I took always only few seeds when I changed. Everyone praises his seeds, the paper [?] is patient, but rarely I receive what I want.

In order to repay your friendliness and to get to know you better, I would like to propose a small trade business to you. I have a beautiful assortment of Phlox Dommondii in separate colors, from which I could this autumn to give 16 to 20 'lot' away. I also have an excellent assortment of hybrid verbenas, scarlet red, fire red, a white one, blue, dark red, rose red, striped, etc. ... but not in separate colors but mixed, from which I am expecting to have five to eight spare 'lot.' I formerly had my verbena seeds sent from Germany, but never received so beautiful kinds as I have now. I would like to trade these seeds (or as many as you want) for other flower seeds from you, and I will send these postage paid for your own catalog price to you, and you will send me yours also by mail postage paid.

Besides Stocks of which I can use several 'lot,' I will need mostly only assortments or samples

Asking for a reply soon, I remain ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Plant Seed Company.

Plant Seed Company, St. Louis, Mo.

Aug. 20, 1875.

Dear Sirs! I raise a great deal of my seeds for my small trade business myself, as I experienced often that one receives bad and wrong kinds from Germany. The reason of this might be that the big stores have too many varieties. I raise only a small selection of all the best kinds, which I try to keep pure and good.

I have an excellent crop this year, and I could sell some articles by the lb. if you would favor me to do a small exchange with me. I would like to trade these for Kentucky Blue Grass, but you must guarantee me that the seed is fresh and good. If you will agree to my plan, I will send you as soon as possible a list of the seeds that I can give away. I will guarantee for their trueness and goodness. I was out of some articles in the spring of 1874 and I got these from J.B. Root, Rockford, Ill., partly because he was closest, and partly because I was seduced by his honest <T165> sounding announcements, but I was never cheated worse.

Expecting a kind reply, I remain ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wm. Freise & Co.

Wm. Friese & Co., La Crosse, Wis.

Oct. 3, 1875

Dear Sir! I received yesterday your letter of Sept. 29, and I can send you the reply that I can fill your order: Sage in barrels, 30 cts. per lb.; sage in 1/2 and 1/4 lb. packages, 40 cts. per lb.; summer savory in 1/2 and 1/4 lb. packages, 40 cts. per lb.; caraway seeds in 1/2 and 1/4 lb. packages, 40 cts. per lb..

I could also sell you parsley roots; price without the green leaves is \$4 per 100 lb. Five pieces make about a pound. If you want these with the leaves, I will give 500 pieces for \$5.00 and will deliver them with sage and summer savory postage paid to La Crosse.

Respectfully, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Samuel Kraenbühl.

Samuel Kraenbühl., Whitewater, Wisc.

Dec. 1, 1875

Dear friend! I first want to congratulate you on your marriage. Then I wanted to ask you whether you already disposed of your farm for the next year, as Sam will move away (so I heard). My boys get bigger every year, and I think if we would buy another horse, we could surely manage your farm also.

Give my regards to your wife and children. Expecting a kind reply, I sign ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Louis Hunt and others.

<Written in English.> Louis Hunt and others, Officers of the Melvina Temperance Lodge.

9 Dec 1875 [excerpt].

Gentlemen, I wish to inform you that I can not have my boy Ernest [about 16-1/2 years old—LPM] tramp every Thursday night rain or shine, through mud or snow, three miles down to the Melvina Schoolhouse to attend your secret meetings. I have forbid him to do so any more, and do hereby ask you and demand of you to strike his name from your roll ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Willi. Rud. Jähring.

<T165, cont.> To: Willi. Rud. Jähring, minister in Schönbach near Neusalz in the Saxon Oberlausitz.

Dec. 25, 1875

Your Honor! Dearest Friend! I surely can address you so, you, who have given to a man entirely unknown to him so many signs of friendship.

I received and also answered a letter from my former playmate Volkmar Jähnicher, but ass he maybe did not like the information I gave him about America, he never wrote again. His curiosity was satisfied. Friend Jähne, whose first and only letter—very friendly—ended with the assurance to continue the slow <T166> correspondence and to answer my letters as soon as possible, has never written again; and I cannot keep the thought out of my mind that he considers me to be a mangy scoundrel who is not worthy of his friendship. If you—my dearest friend—would not bind me to my old home by your friendly letters, I would become entirely strange to it. You must not believe that—just because I did not answer your last letter for nearly two years now—I did not think often of you and conversed with you in my mind.

Last winter here was unusually hard and long. The result was that nearly everybody suffered from rheumatism. I, who was spared till my 70th year from this disease that was very common in my father's family, got my right arm paralyzed, and that so badly that I had to stay in bed for many weeks and was made to sleep with pain, and did not know where to put the arm. This lameness made it impossible for me to hold a pen, and lasted till late in spring, so that my children had to take care of my garden. Summer is very short here, and the work therefore so urgent that no time is left for writing letters; and finally, when the most necessary autumn tasks are done, I can relax a little and write to you.

Last spring was very late, but the summer started out very promising, and all garden and field crops did excellently. On August 22 we had a hard night frost, which harmed corn, potatoes, and all tender vegetables very much. After it had recovered a little, a frost on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of Sept. ruined everything that had been spared the first time. The wheat crop was excellent, but much of it spoiled by the continuing rain when it stood on the fields after mowing, and we had had dry weather all summer long. Wheat cost until recently \$1 per bushel (60 lb.), but now it fell to \$(3/4).

I cannot understand how friend Jähne, who was in such a position that gave him the opportunity to acquire knowledge, can hand still so tight to his religion. He who was put into this life with so many privileges is not satisfied with the pleasures he enjoyed here and cannot give up the faith in a reward in heaven. The small soul he inherited from <T167> his father keeps him down.

I have come to the conclusion that it takes several generations in the world of plants to improve a variety [species?]. In the same way as the Englishman proves the ennobling of his horses by their pedigree, so little the mobility of the human spirit can be acquired by learning. Our two last Presidents are a good example of this. Lincoln climbed the throne by his own abilities, but when he was on top he got dizzy. He missed the inborn nobility. Grant was put on the throne by circumstances, but his rise did not ennoble him. He has and will always have a little soul. After his last speech to Congress, one should believe he finally woke up from his slumber and started to govern, but probably he did not write the speech himself. He has been forced to it by the circumstances and he will acquire thereby a 3rd term. How many families were ruined by his long negligence; during his whole past time of governing cheats were protected. When once one of these got the mask torn from his face and was punished by five or 10 years in prison, Grant pardoned him after a few months. This indulgence seduced rich and well respected (especially German) families, in whose hands lies the brewery business, to tremendous frauds with customs. Now suddenly as a lightning stroke out of the blue sky, the touching 'nemesis' of their frauds attacks them, and they are investigated and punished without mercy. Many left everything behind and fled.

I would like to say to Friend Jähne, if he still can hear, Schiller's words: "You had hoped"

As you know, I was born and raised in the Lutheran Christian religion and I was only 11 or 12 years old when my father died [Ernst Friedrich Meißner d. 1 May 1817 when F.A.M. was 12 y 5 m old], but later on I remembered still many things from my father's life that made me believe that his spirit thrived to get rid of the dead religion. When I was about 15 or 16 years old, I studied Leopold Trautman's Doctrine of Agriculture. The theoretical part was about chemistry, and proved that all organic creations are in a constant change. Now the scales fell from my eyes. I learned to understand how impossible resurrection of the human body is, as it is taught in the Bible. This was the first hole in my faith. With this <T168> small knowledge of enlightenment, I learned to understand many things about my favorite poet, Schiller, which were first dark to me. "A fire sparks truth only thrown keenly into the [?] soul ..."

I never read free-thinking literature, I only learned from them when they were occasionally mentioned in the common newspapers. I sent you with the Nordstern a sample of the 'Free Thinker,' which I had sent to me along time ago as a free sample. I never subscribed to the paper itself, but only read an issue now and then. I still have to mention about the 'Nordstern,' that it was formerly an opponent of Grant, but since its editor received a fat office last Autumn, the wind has changed. That's the way how the Government silences the opposition newspapers.

Concerning religious matters, I can tell you that the Catholics advance with giant steps, and small communities in the country bring tremendous sacrifices, to which only their religion enables them. The German Catholic Community on the St. Joseph's Ridge, some hours away from here, had only a small log chapel some years ago, but since that time they built a beautiful church from bricks which cost \$4,000 to \$5,000; a home for their minister, also bricks, for \$2,000; a Catholic school for \$2,500; and nuns moved into the old, still well-kept minister's house, and they teach there for the girls. Half an hour away from here is the German St. Peter community. Their new church (cost \$4,000) was broken down last summer by a storm. Now they are preparing themselves and cutting stones to build a stone church in spring. The whole community counts only 50 families, all farmers from Cologne near the Rhine or from Alsace. In La Crosse the Catholics built a big monastery, and a friend of mine who was in Minnesota a short time ago told me that they are going to build a monastery there that is supposed to be the most beautiful building in the whole Northwest. The Catholic communities are either German or Irish, but the latter don't seem to be as self-sacrificing as the former.

The Lutherans are represented by the Norwegians, which form big communities and build beautiful churches.

<T169> The German Methodists have less nice churches. They have their meetings in schools and farmhouses, also outdoors. As the churches here are not supervised by the State, every denomination has a

free hand, but I am very afraid that the enlightened people will remain the minority, if Congress does not go through with the taxation of church property. This law has thrived for already a long time here, and was recommended by the President in his speech this year.

You—dear friend—advise me to preserve religion as well as reason; but where is reason supposed to end and religion to begin? No reasonable man can any longer believe in the Bible as God's revelation. It contains, besides some good, too much nonsense. The faith that God is the Father of all and takes care for us as a Father is surely a nice delusion, but it is too much contradicted to reality. The faith in a higher, better world, where we are supposed to go after our death, is so much proven as false that it cannot exist any longer.

According to my belief, there is another life for body and soul after death, but no resurrection as it is taught by the Church and believed by her members. After death, the human body falls to ashes and dissolves itself into different gases. This dissolution serves as food for plants, the plants as food for animals, the dead things live again under another form: It is an eternal cycle. If all the plants, animals, and men who ever lived would not have been created always from the same material, the earth would be so overfilled with things that no little space would be left any more.

The same circulation goes for the spirit, and Luther's spirit goes on living—multiplied and enlarged—in his members; so do Schiller and other great men: the greater the spirit, the more it has spread and multiplied itself.

The explanation of the newer learned people about the creation does not seem right to me. They say the substance was here from the beginning, and the world was formed by natural forces. But where did the substance come from? Let's please have a religion instead. There is and was a God who created all this. But there is the question, who created God? Answer: God was there before all time. But if God is here since before all time, the creation has to be before all time also. If such a great, <T170> mighty Being with the power to create would have been without a creation for some time, he would have felt bored [?] in the limitless nothingness. Time and space, eternity and future, are thoughts that the human mind cannot grasp, and it can understand religion still less.

But we have conversed now long enough about higher spheres. That which we don't grasp and are unable to investigate, we want to leave be. We want to return to the earth, and accept that the earthly substance arose from an unknown origin. Where do the plants, trees, and animals, where does man come from? The learned people again say, nature brought forth all this. First there were only raw, imperfect kinds of animals and plants here, later on perfect creations arose, the best of which was man. But if this creative power is in nature, why does it not continue to bring forth newer and better creations? As much as I know, animals die out but I never heard of newly created ones. It is much easier for our limited reason to say that this creative power, this supernatural power, is God.

But my letter will get much too long this time. I will also enclose some excerpts from the papers that either confirm my statements, as the first speech of Rector Dillman in the University of Berlin, or some which I think you will be interested in.

I expect from your kindness which you showed so often to me, that (even if you are unable to agree to my thoughts) you won't punish me in this case with your silence.

Sending my best wishes, I remain your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany

Dec. 29, 1875

Please send me by mail the following seed samples. I will pay you as soon as they arrive.

Respectfully F.A.M.

[Seed list.]

P.S. You will know as well as I, that packages with goods samples should not be heavier than 1/2 lb., and that you therefore have to make two packages maybe. Also, the postage has to be paid in advance. I naturally will pay you back.

The above.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Jentsch.

<T171> Mr. Karl Jentsch in Brunswick

Dec. 29, 1875

I received your post card with the extract from your books, and although the loss I received by your bad seeds and false kinds is much higher I will only bill you for two Mark and 81 [?] in order to balance your assets.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst C.K. Wrede.

Mr. Ernst C.K. Wrede in Brunswick

Jan. 10, 1876

Please send me at once the seeds listed below, by Express via Bremen, by negotiation of Mr. Konstantin Württemberger. I will send you the amount by May 1. Last year's box was not strong enough and arrived here badly damaged. I ask you to fill my order as soon as possible. It is very urgent. I include your bill in your order, as the open bills are kept in the Customs House.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse, Hot Springs via Minersville, Beaver Co., Utah.

21 Jan 1876 [excerpt].

... My wife, your sister, went last Saturday to Metziger's valley to see Father and Mother. ...

From: W.R. Jähning.; To: F.A.M.

<T171, cont.> Schönbach near Neusalz, Saxon Oberlausitz.

Jan 31, 1876

Dear Sir! Dearest Friend! First of all my deepest thanks for your friendly memory. It was already a comfortable shake-up from my work when the Nordstern and the Freidinker were sent to me. How much more ever did I enjoy your letter I received two days later. I want to thank you very much for it, despite your different conceptions, my gratitude shall express itself by the fact that I am going to answer you letter right away.

The burden of work under which I groan is very great as it always is around this time, as I still have to take care also of a neighboring parish whose minister has gone and is not yet replaced. Besides that, I have a very bad eye problem, and I will be completely blind in the not too distant future, as I can not yet retire and get rid of my troublesome and eye-straining writing work. Our newest school laws from Oct. 1, 1874 brought us besides many good things also a lot of terrible red tape, for which a perfectly healthy man is needed; but let's forget about that.

When your letter arrived, I had the daily thought to write you at <T172> once, but was unable to get around to it on account of so much work. I wanted to tell you that on Dec. 29, 1875, our mutual friend, Professor Karl Traut [Traugott] Jähne died, caused by a dangerous stroke of his brain. His funeral was on Jan. 17, 1876 in Bautzen. I myself was unable, on account of the office, to be present at his funeral, which showed very clearly the great love and respect that our friend enjoyed with all parties. I therefore take the liberty to refuse your hard complaint that you used against him, that he did not consider you worthy of his friendship. I think that is not true. His silence is also unexplainable to me. I have talked more than once with him about you. It would have been possible that the only reason for his silence might have been that it was too much trouble for him in the last time, or maybe that he put it off from time to time. Jähne was no blind follower of a dead orthodoxy. Despite his firm faith, he was a free thinker until the end. I often asked myself how it could be possible that faithful Christianity and free masonry could exist next to each other in this man with the heart of a child. I can explain it today only by the fact that the desire for the 'humanitas,' as it is with the freemasons, has found a home in his soul, especially as his Christian viewpoint should tell him that it is very good.

According to my viewpoint, he had come to the point where religion and science started not to stand against each other any more so brusquely. He had a merchant's soul, as you called him a bad man in the past on account of his silence. He was surely the merchant of whom is written in Matt. 13: 45-46, who had

found the precious pearl. Therefore, because he has gone to peace, peace may also be between you and him. His silence hurts me very much for his sake and for yours, but I cannot believe in a bitter hatred against you; his nature was so noble, but it had to fight a lot during his last years with sickness and weakness. Despite his physical weakness, he had focused his eyes sharply to all matters of his time: political, religious and social matters; and still after his retirement his strength was taken more than it was good. Maybe this also is a reason for his silence, but now from something else.

<T173> I regret it very much that you yourself were sick. I hope you are better now, although these sicknesses often become chronic in the later years. You had during the past few years much rain and freezing; we had much drought, and that already since two years. As a result, 100 lb. of hay cost still five to six Mark, an unheard of price here. As a result of the drought and the rain that came too late, the potatoes were entirely ruined this time, while in other parts of Saxony these are supposed to be very good, this shows also their present price: 100 lb. for 19 to 22 [?]. Ours here are watery and slippery; fruit is more than since many years but very small by the drought. The market report from the last weekly market in Löbau states: 100 lb. wheat 10 Mk 49 [?]; rye 8.50; barley 8.00; oats 8.75; peas 11.50; young peas 11.00; lentils 12.00; groats 19.00; flax 13.00; rape seed 16.69; butter 2.90 for two lb.

The agriculture suffers now from the high salaries and the want of workers, as everybody prefers to work in a factory, where there is more lack of restraint, but also the factories don't have a business boom any more. Our economic situation is very bad and these Social Democrats have surely to become more careful about the firm [?] measures of their leaders. Concerning the Social Democrats, I would like to mention a short note. If the people in Berlin think to suppress the social movement, they surely have then miscalculated. If the government and the representatives of the people and the higher classes are not aware of their duty, their Christian duty, toward the working classes, and if they work on with the principle that sneaked into our own and the life of our economy, namely "Everyone for himself," and do not adopt the one of their American Freethinker, "What you don't want to have done to you, this do to nobody else either" [Golden Rule—LPM]—so is there no hope of getting this weird breed (put together from fire glow, sulfur vapors, and petroleum smell) out of this world.

But to another matter—politics! You complain about Grant's American method, who understands how to silence the opposition newspapers by fat titles and jobs. I think America is not too far ahead of Germany in this regard. Corruptible natures—called scoundrels—are here also, especially since the newspapers are mostly in Jewish hands. There is very little realized from the high <T174> and noble task of the papers to serve the truth and the education of the people. The golden calf eats money, around which even the best papers dance. If I would not have to, in order not to stay back in time, I would take no paper at all. Sometimes one feels like throwing up. I am naturally satisfied with our political success, but much less with our political laws. I am no friend of Jews and parsons [?]. Since my youth, a democratic feature still goes today through my heart. But I don't like the way, which is in such a hurry, with which the Liberalism built at our people's life since 10 years. Everything goes with steam, yes, what's the worst of all, after a one-sided pattern. As a rule, one never asks for the true interest of the people, the work is only there to show off, therefore the many laws that failed and had to be revised already after a few years, like work saved up for a later time. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: G. Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> G. Henry Crouse, Hot Springs.

7 Feb 1876 [excerpt].

I was very much surprised reading your letter of Jan 22 to Ernest, that you try to put such foolish notions ... in his head ... in his head ... last year ... he ran away, but after 14 days absence he came back sick and it took ... about four weeks to restore his health ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilh. Rud. Jähning.

<T174, cont.> Mr. Wilh. Rud. Jähning, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz, Saxon Oberlausitz.

March 17, 1876.

Dearest Friend! I want to write only a few words today to thank you for your letter that is so precious to me. As I have not enough time, I have to put off a full answer. I must consider it to be a great sacrifice you did for me, that is, to write such a long letter despite your eye trouble and the many tasks of your profession. I am very sorry that I lost my control while having a bitter emotion, and said such a hard judgement about friend Jähne, the more as he is no longer among the living and is unable to defend himself. He, Friend Jähne, surely knows now very well, assumed that a dead man can still be conscious, whether he received the

reward that his religion had promised him, or whether Schiller's word became true: "You had hoped, your guilt is paid off, your faith was your share of happiness, you could ask the wise men—what you lost in a minute, no eternity will bring it back."———[My "Bartlett's" includes the quote: "What one refuses in a minute, No eternity will return." from Schiller's "Resignation" (1786).]

<T175> Our political world looks now all mixed up, which you surely heard already from the papers, and which the enclosed excerpt from the 'Nordstern' tells you in the American way.

But everything is also mixed up in our physical world. The whole winter was very mild without snow or sled tracks. Usually two to three cold days were followed by five to six days of thawing. On Febr. 28 we had quite an electrical storm with hail showers and rain. The morning of the 29th, a foot of snow lay before our door, which increased to 1-1/2 foot during the night. For some days, nice winter weather followed. On March 4, we had south wind and the sun was very warm.

In the morning of the 5th it rained, thundered, and flashed. The snow turned to water and a strong flood went through my garden (I live at the end of a small valley, where it spreads out into a bigger valley), but there seemed to be no immediate danger. At two o'clock at night, we were awakened by the noise of the water as it fell into the cellar under our house, and when I opened the front door, a stream of water came towards me so that I had to close it very quickly. I and my two oldest boys climbed out of the window, from where we could reach the stable which was still dry. We drew the cows and calves through the flood to a higher place, hitched the horse to the wagon, drove back to the window, and after all of us had climbed onto the wagon we pulled, in the dark night with heavy rain, through the raging flood, which luckily did not reach up yet to the wagon, and we went to a new house, situated on a higher place and which is about to be finished; there we waited—wet and cold—till dawn. It got colder in the morning and the water fell a little bit. We went back again to the old house as we were unable to make a fire in the new one. During the whole day a fine foggy rain fell, which covered everything with an inch thick ice crust. Many trees broke down.

On March 8 we had again full winter, and the whole nature was wrapped in an icy dress. On March 9, around noon it started again to thaw. In the night we had <T176> an eclipse of the moon, and on March 10 in the afternoon again rain and thunder, which caused a still greater flood than before, but as we had taken precautions, we did not have to leave the house. All bridges in Monroe County are flooded away, all mill dams broken, two big mills are entirely flooded away so that no traces are supposed to be left, other mills are broken down, railway dams and bridges ruined; in short—it was the biggest flood here that man ever witnessed. The last three days we had again a hard storm, and today snow lies 1-1/2 foot deep and it is very cold.

When I think of the many reports in the papers about floods and awful storms, I think it very superfluous to have troubled you with the tale about our experience, especially as we escaped only with a scare. But what one experiences himself always seems to be more important than what happens elsewhere, and so I might hope for sure that the friendly interest that you took till now in me may serve as my excuse.

For the same reason, I take the liberty to trouble you again with a request. Already last year I wrote to Brunswick for millet besides other seeds, but I received none. I just received a package of seeds from Eisleben; it contains everything, only millet is missing. I find millet listed on the Löbau market report that you enclosed, which causes my hope to rise to have the wanted articles sent to me by your kindness. Little packages that do not weigh more than 3/4 lb. can be sent by mail if they are marked as "samples without value." I would send you the amount, if our paper money would be valid with you, but I would rather repay your kindness by seeds, if you would like to have anything that I have.

Now my best wishes, and that's enough for right now.

Your ...

<Insert from T177>

[Sketch]

The following may serve for a better understanding:

The region here has much in common with Schönbach, only that many small valleys flow into the bigger one in which Schönbach lies. Mount Pisgah lies on the upper end of the main valley on the springs of the Little La Crosse River. Sparta is 18 miles to the north of here. At the lower end of the valley in Sparta, the Little La Crosse River flows together with the bigger one of the same name, and goes from there 30 miles to the southwest, where it flows into the Mississippi near La Crosse. <End of insert.>

From: F.A.M.; To: Charles Helmuth.

<T176, cont.> Charles Helmuth, N.Y.

March 20, 1876

Already more than two weeks ago I received a note from Brunswick telling me that a box with seeds is on the way to me, but I waited in vain for some lines from you. Send it as soon as possible. American Express Co., C.O. D., to Sparta, Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: Erickson Brothers.

<Written in English.> Erickson Brothers, Mt. Pisgah.

Apr. 3, 1876.

Please do not sell my boys any shot or powder, nor tobacco, nor anything on credit without my written order.

Yours truly, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Oster.

<T177> [1876]

Friend Oster!

The very bad weather and road make it impossible for me to come down again before Wednesday. I therefore have to ask you if you need the money badly to get it from the bank against my included note, which you have to sign.

With my friendly wishes. ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: C.K. Wrede.

C.K. Wrede, Brunswick, Germany

May 15, 1876

Dear Sir! The seed trade was so bad this spring that I nearly did not even sell half as much as usual, and besides I had to sell most of it on credit with the promise to have it paid in autumn. As uncomfortable as it is, I see myself forced to pay off my debt not at the promised time, and therefore have to make use of your indulgence.

Your devoted ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilh. Rud. Jähring.

Mr. Wilh. Rud. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Neusalz.

May 15, 1876.

Dear Sir! I received yesterday your kind letter of April 19, and in order to fulfill your wish, I hurry up and will answer it today. I was not able yet to find out how it came that my letter went off without postage. I was not able yet to see the Postmaster. As I had no stamps, I sent the letter to the post office anyhow with <T178> the money for postage. I am very sorry that I caused you so much trouble with the millet, but as I probably will receive this spring again seeds from Germany, I hope to receive it among them. Concerning the 'samples without value,' I know only so much, that I received this spring two packages, each weighing about 3/4 lb., by this way.

I was very pleased about the news that a cousin of mine, a grandson of Minister Unruh, is still alive, and I will fulfill your desire as much as I can, and will fill the gaps for the making of a family chronicle. It will be a pleasure, as I had already the same desire for a long time, to which your dates seem very welcome to me.

2. Karl Friedrich Meissner was a house teacher in Hamburg, married a rich merchant's daughter, founded a school in Ütersen near Hamburg, lived his last years off his money, and left a son Karl, who is still alive so far as I know.

3. Gottlieb Friedrich, Merchant in Pirna, died there, left a daughter who married the salesman and took over the business.

4. Johann Christ[ian], I never heard from him.

5. Wilhelmine Friederike, lived with my parents and was the very dear friend of us children; lived after my father's death in Odernitz with Uncle Moser, where she also died.

== From the second wife:

2. August Friedrich, Merchant in Dresden, died in Dresden and left two daughters.

3. Gotthelf Friedrich, Merchant in Pirna, died in P. without children.

My mother died in Dresden [about 1820—LPM] and after her my brother Ernst [d. about 1824, aged 17] who was an apprentice in the Court Printing Press. My brother Karl lives still as a gardener in Ütersen near Altona.

In order to fulfill your request and to give you a detailed sketch of my life, I am unable to do so today (no time!) and so I will put it off to another time.

I still remember that I visited with my parents my Uncle Unruh in Crosten. It must have been late autumn, because I remember still very well all the red apples they had there.

We have today already may 15 and the nature just starts to wake <T179> up from her long winter sleep. Bushes and trees are still gray.

With my best wishes ... Your devoted ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Dahl.

<Written in English.> Mr. Dahl, North La Crosse.

29 May 1876. [excerpt]

Dear Sir, I understand that you harbor my runaway boy Ernest who pretends that he is looking for work. I ... shall not pay any bill for boarding, clothing, or anything else on [his] account.

From: E.D. M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse.

4 Sept 1876 [excerpt].

... In your last, you disclaim any intention to vex Ernest away; this may be so, but the tenor of your letters has put some foolish notions in his head, and was insulting to his father and mother. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Marie Petersen.

<T179, cont.> Mrs. Marie Petersen, Augusta, La Crosse Co., Wis..

Sept. 4, 1876.

Dear friend! I hope that these lines will reach you and your husband in good health, and that you had had good luck with the seeds I sent you in spring according to your wish by mail. You can send me the amount (\$1.30) in a letter. I still have a request. Please ask the butchers in Augusta whether they can use some sage this autumn. I sell it in barrels for 30 cts. per lb. Please send me the names of the butchers and I will send them a sample.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wm. Freise, La Crosse, Wis.

Sept. 18, 1876

Dear Sir! My herb crop is nearly finished. They are of an excellent quality, and I can send you this year as many as you want, packed in 1/4 lb., at the following prices per lb.:

Sage, 30 cts.; summer savory, 30 cts.; marjoram, 50 cts.; thyme, 50 cts.

If you could sell for me sage in barrels or bags to the butchers for 30 cts. per lb., I will give you five cts. per lb. for your trouble and will deliver the goods to La Crosse.

As I will have to pay off a debt at the end of this week, I would be very grateful to you if you could send me \$15 or \$20 by money order to Sparta.

With my best wishes, your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Frölich.

Mr. Karl Frölich, Nordstern Office, La Crosse, Wisc.

Sept. 18, 1876

Dear friend! As I always wanted once to get square with the Nordstern, I hereby send you a bill about my assets and ask you to let me know how much I owe you. I want you to print the ad below three times in the Nordstern.

With my friendly wishes, ... F.A.M.

April 15 1875: six pks. flower seeds, \$0.50; 1/4 hundred best asparagus plants, \$1.00; one red peony plant, \$0.50;

<T180> April 26, 1876: eight pks. flower seeds, \$0.70; three syringia Persia @ 25 cts., \$0.75 = \$3.45
== Announcement for Butchers.

The undersigned has for sale some hundred lb. sage of best quality, raised and dried by himself, as well as marjoram, thyme, and summer savory. Samples and prices are sent by mail on request.

Address: F.A.M., M.P., M.C., Wis.

From: E.D. M.; To: Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Jane Crouse [wife of G.H. Crouse].

5 Oct 1876 [excerpt].

... Ernest ... about 10 days ago came home sick and worn out, and is still unable to work ...

From: E.D. M.; To: Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Jane Crouse.

13 Nov 1876 [excerpt].

... You say Henry is a kind and indulgent husband—oh how I wish I could say the same of Meissner ...

From: F.A.M.; To: E.C. Konrad Wrede.

<T180, cont.> Mr. E.C. Konrad Wrede in Br[unswick].

Nov. 20, 1876.

Dear Sir! I have in front of me your letter with your bill. It would be a pleasure for me to send you the amount, but I see myself forced to put up a counter-bill for damages caused by bad or false seeds received from you.

Cauliflower: new, earliest Erfurter dwarf. This kind was fully false, high bony, and late. I did not get a single head from the 1,000 seeds I planted, while the plants from a small portion of seeds that I received from another source as a sample gave beautiful heads with the exception of three or 4, and which I sold for 10 to 20 cts. per head. Counted the average price as only 10 cts., I lost from your seeds \$100.

White cabbage: special early small white sugar cabbage. I received one lb. of this kind, but a test showed that the variety was wrong and completely worthless. I received the right kind last year.

Red cabbage: early Erfurt and late Holl were both the same variety.

Carrots: half long Brunswick and best red long one. The seeds from both of these were imperfect and hollow. My customers complained that nothing came up. With the best of care, I only got out of them about one-tenth.

Red beets for canning as well as long ones, were old seeds from which only some weak plants came up.

Not even considering the damage I had myself, I cannot even <T181> discern yet how big the one will be which I will have by selling bad seeds to my customers. But I am willing to accept \$200 as an equivalent.

In case you have doubts about my information, you only have to send your bill to the First National Bank in Sparta, M.C. Wis. or to the Prussian Consul in Milwaukee in order to have it collected, which can then test my counter-bill.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse.

2 Dec 1876 [excerpt].

Your letter of Nov. 20 is ... neither very friendly nor polite ... it seems you cannot bear a friendly joke; what do we care if you or your wife become Mormons ... you are trying to arrange my wife, your sister (Eva Dorothea, not Effie, is her name) against me, and to sow discord in my family. Such efforts will avail nothing. My wife is the most reasonable woman I know, so much unlike her relations that I and she herself have often wondered about. She will never become a Mormon nor a Methodist nor an Adventist, not because I don't want her to, but her good senses shows her the folly of all this sectarianism.

You advise her to have her letters written by Ernst [sic] or Adolf [sic]. She is perfectly able to write a letter herself, but she is always so busy in mending, sewing, or knitting that she prefers to have it done by me.

We always rejoice to hear that you are doing well, and wish you a happy Christmas.

From: F.A.M. and E.D. M.; To: G.H. Crouse.

<Written in English.> G.H. Crouse.

10 Dec 1876 [excerpt].

Dear Brother, We return your last letter and ask you to keep it for a while and then read it over again, when we feel certain that you will feel ashamed of the same. We do not envy your good luck of having plenty to eat, to wear, and to cover, but are always glad to year that you are doing well.

Yours truly, F.A. and E.D. Meissner

P.S. [from E.D. M.] The letters Meissner has written in my name are not only written with my knowledge but also with my full approval. Your sister, E.D. Meissner

From: F.A.M.; To: Marie Petersen.

<T181, cont.> Mrs. Marie Petersen, care of Peter Petersen, Augusta, Eau Claire Co., Wis..

Dec. 10, 1876.

Dear friend! I received no answer yet to my friendly letter of Sept. 4. I would be very much obliged to you if you would send me soon \$1.30 for the seeds I sent to you in spring by mail. My address is: F.A.M., M.P., M.C., W.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Dec. 1876.

Dear Sir! I cannot omit to say my deepest thanks to you for the friendly interest you seem to take in me and my family, and for the much trouble you undertook in order to make my ancestors known to me.

Judging by your letter, we must have been schoolmates. Don't you want to fetch up my memory and tell me in which region your parents lived?

As you mention my old teacher Schuricht (is his son Fritz still alive?), I have to tell you a small anecdote out of my school life. It was at that time—maybe still today—the custom to announce someone's death by ringing the bells. Schuricht had bigger boys do this ringing. Once, I believe it was in summer, no big boys were in school, and I and several other small boys were trusted with this important responsibility. We hurried merrily to the bell tower. Having arrived there, however, we did not know whether to start with the big bell or the small bell. We argued about it and nobody wanted to start until I—with courage—took the rope of the big bell and started ringing; but oh! it was the wrong one. The first stroke was hardly finished when my <T182> good Schuricht came storming up the stairs in a rage. "Who has started?" "Adolf," was the shy reply. But as soon as this accusation against me was out, I sneaked under Schuricht's arm, who stood at the upper end of the stairs, and down the stairs. Then i did not go to school any more for a long period of time.

I hope that the paralysis of your hand, which kept you from writing in spring, has completely gone and you will give me an opportunity to get better acquainted with you.

With my friendly wishes, ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilh. Rud. Jähring.

Mr. Wilh. Rud. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Dec. 1876.

Dearest friend! I received your "Centennial Greeting" as well as very soon afterward your dear letter with my pedigree. I nearly feel tempted to sit in front of my name and to design a coat of arms. But leaving out joking—it is very interesting for me, and it has to be still more interesting for my descendants to know where we came from.

I often wondered, while talking to Americans who were maybe two or three generations here in this country and did not know where their ancestors came from. Now we came from Bohemia, from Lutheran descendants who had to leave their home for their faith's sake—my grandfather a Lutheran minister with strong orthodox views, my father already with much more moderated viewpoints, and I—?—a free thinker.— If we will all come into the same heaven, I would like very much to have you, dear friend, with me. One always says, "The apple does not fall far from the tree."

Only a few minutes ago I had an English paper in my hands with an article entitled: Goethe's Mother. She is described as a strong believing woman, and was Goethe not also a free thinker? I don't dare to compare myself with Goethe, only in order to excuse my deviating from the rules.

Your "Centennial Greeting" shows its admiration for our so-called free institutions. The principle is surely good, and it may appear quite nice from a distance. But how defective it still is on closer view and in reality.

We don't know yet who will be our next President. At any rate, he will be the one whose party knows best <T183> how to cheat and bribe. If thousands of votes are bought by money or an advantage, and thousands of false or illegal votes are cast, can this still be called a free vote of the people? We Germans were proud of Karl Schurz, but in the last election he proved himself also a purchasable politician. It is true that we have some good things. We have free thinking, freedom of speech and freedom of religion, but everything is still a mixed-up chaos. We cannot say yet, we can only hope, what will become of it: whether the good or the bad will win in the end.

Concerning political matters, my sympathy is with the Democrats and with the South where conditions have changed. The Negroes have become the lords and the white men or the educated class have become the slaves. Since the Negroes obtained the right to vote, all public offices in most southern states are taken up by carpetbaggers—from the Governor to the Justice of the Peace. (A carpet bag is a traveling bag, and a carpetbagger means a man who came into this country with nothing more than a traveling bag. [Not quite -LPM]) These used their term of office only for bleeding out the country and to get rich, so that many of the big landowners are nearly about to starve.

With the word 'slavery' and 'freedom for the slaves,' the Republicans only throw sand into the eyes of other countries. People in Germany think a slave is a Negro with a chain on his hands and feet. How different is the reality! A plantation is the same as a 'Rittergut' [manor] in Germany. The owners live in a big house surrounded by the yard, gardens, and stables. About 15 or 30 minutes away live the Negroes. Every

family has its own house with gardens, chickens, pigs, and so on. Every Saturday, provisions are distributed in the yard. Every family receives according to their number of members flour, bacon, and syrup. Some of the young people work as cook, housemaid, coachman, and servant on the farm, where they have a good life and consider it to be a favor they enjoy. The other family members rise early and go—while it is still cool—to the fields to work. The old people stay at home with the children. A foreman gives everybody his place to work and takes care that the work is done well. Now you should see once how <T184> fast the work is done. Soon breakfast, taken along, is eaten in the field, and around two in the afternoon the work of the day is done. Now they all go home and have dinner; they rest during the hot afternoon; around evening some of them work in their gardens, others go fishing, and if they have a good catch they bring them to town and buy in return tobacco and other luxury articles.

They get all their clothes from the farm owner, as well as medical care when they are sick. Such a so-called slave family had a much more carefree life than any white working family. Every Saturday evening, the young people have music and a dance. The whip is only used very rarely and then only against very lazy and stubborn individuals. Most plantation owners treat their slaves like their own children; they all seem to be just a big family.

That's the slavery that I got to know myself when I lived in the South. There are unfortunately some exceptions, too, and from my experience I can say that they were there where rich people from the Northern states had acquired plantations in the South. The rich Southerners have more education; the rich people in the North have only pretended education and their pride in their money.

[We now turn to a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe ...—LPM]

I will be 72 years old in a few days, and despite this fact I sometimes think that I have just begun to live; how many things would I still like to get! Surely the dream of my youth, "a family, a house, a farm, and property of my own," has become reality. I have a good wife, healthy children, troubles but no real need; but—if I look back to my past life—I am not satisfied. The battle with the world outside has no end; one always has to be alert here in America where one comes together with people from all nations. There is no peace, no stopping. If it were not for my family that still needs me, I surely would want my eternal peace.

Now, my dearest friend, I wish you and your wife all the good things for the coming New Year that might gratify us as earthly pilgrims, and my wife joins in these wishes too.

Adieu for this time.

Your faithful friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Marie Petersen.

<T185> Marie Petersen, Augusta, Eau Claire Co., Wis..

Jan. 4, 1877.

Dear friend! I have received your letter with the \$1.50, but as you owe me only \$1.30 I return to you herewith 20 cts. You seemed to object to my sending you a post card, but it is a general custom now. As you did not receive my letter that I personally mailed in Sparta, I hereby send you a copy of it:

Sept. 4, 1876. Dear friend! ... [mailed at Sparta]

I would be glad if I could send again some seeds to you this spring. Maybe you could recommend me to your neighbors. Wishing you and your husband a happy New Year, I sign ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wm. Freise, La Crosse, Wis. (Post Card)

Jan 5, 1877.

I received your letter of Jan. 2 as well as a letter from Mr. Langdon, Goodband, & Co. I wrote them that I will bring the goods next Monday or Tuesday.

With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany.

Jan. 15, 1877.

I enclose a money order for 16 Reichsmark. Your bill from last year amounted to 12 Mk 60 [?], from which I take the liberty to deduct still a Mk for 20 gr. filled [double] rose balsam [Impatiens?—LPM] as the seeds were old and not a single plant came up. I therefore have 4.40 Mk with you in my favor. The vegetable seed samples I received were all true to their varieties, but the flower seeds were all mixed up. For instance, Bismarck asters were 3/4 false, viola tricolor maxima Kaiser Wilhelm had only a single true one among 20. As the customs taxes and other expenses in N.Y. double the price of seeds from Germany, I will order only as much as I can have sent by mail.

According to our postal laws, packages up to four lb. can be sent by mail—which I believe is also valid for the big Postal Agreement. I therefore ask you to send the seeds listed below in two packages:

1-1/2 kilo sage, fresh seeds; 1/2 kilo reseda [mignonette]; 1-1/2 millet, yellow; 20 gr. onions, round yellow Zittau giant; 20 gr. lettuce, red edged Algerian.

<T186> I am very interested in getting the sage seed fresh and soon, as I want to sow it all myself. I hope it is not mixed with old seed, or else the combination will be either too thick or too thin. I asked already last year for your millet, but received none. If you have none in stock, you can also send it a little bit later, as I cannot sow it out before the middle of May. With my best wishes ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: E.C. K. Wrede.

Mr. E.C. K. Wrede in Brunswick, Ger.

Jan. 17, 1877.

I will try to answer also very politely your very polite letter of Dec. 13, 1876. I read the following story in a newspaper, "The N.Y. Sun."

Ten Thousand Dollars Expenses for a 25 cent Trade: Six years ago, Lewis D. Monat, a farmer in New Jersey, bought from Mr. Walrot Johnson & Co., seed merchants, 25 cents worth of early beet seeds, but which proved to be late beet seeds. He brought the salesman before a Justice of the Peace and received \$90 as compensation. The salesman appealed a year later to the Court of Common Pleas, which confirmed the decision of the Justice of the Peace. The matter was then brought before the Supreme Court, which also confirmed the decision of the lower court. The salesman, still not satisfied, brought the matter further to the Court of Errors and Appeals, which confirmed the decisions of all former courts. More than \$10,000 had been wasted by this complaint.

You can see already from this story how very obligated a seed merchant is here.

The cauliflower was at no rate earliest Erfurter dwarf. If you don't want to believe my judgement, I can bring you many of my customers who reproached me because I had sold them late instead of early cauliflower, which grew tall but produced no heads.

I know very well that the special early white genuine English sugar cabbage is a good variety. That is why I ordered it, but you sent long sugar [?] instead. As I planted only about 1/2 lot for a test from these seeds you sent me, along with other seeds from last year, I can return these to you as I can make no use of them.

I readily agree that the carrots could be freak seeds, but they were all hollow and not fully developed. Maybe the weather was too <T187> dry when they were harvested.

The red beet seeds were at any rate old. I planted them side by side with my own seeds.

I have already received my seed requirements for this year from someone else, but as I am in the same situation as you, I will propose to you a cheap comparison.

According to the law here, packages up to four lb. can be sent by mail. If I am not mistaken, the same is true for the big general Postal Agreement. Please send me by mail the seeds listed below, with a receipt for these as well as one for the seeds received last year. I will then also send you a receipt for my demand for compensation.

[List ...]

Respectfully ...

P.S. Send me fresh seeds, so that I can test them this year and sell them next year.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben.

Jan. 22, 1877.

I just received your new price list. On Jan. 15, I sent you a money order for 16 Reichsmark and an order for 1-1/2 kilo sage, 1/4 kilo reseda [mignonette], 1-1/2 kilo yellow millet, 20 gr. yellow Zittau giant onions, and 20 gr. red edged Algerian lettuce, which I asked you to send me by mail. I would now like to add: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wm. Freise, La Crosse, Wisc.

Febr. 9, 1877.

I am sending you today by mail the seeds you ordered. Altogether 340 papers for 2-1/2 cents each, that is \$8.50, which I would like you to write to my favor. Wishing a good reception and sale, I sign ... F.A.M.

List: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. W. Freise, La Crosse, Wis.

March 15, 1877.

Dear Sir! At the end of this week I have to pay off a debt that I have with a butcher. Please be so kind as to send me right away the small sum (\$9.00) that you owe me, by a money order to Sparta.

With my friendly wishes ... F.A.M.

Essay on Buddhism:

<T188> Buddhism: According to a notice in Nordstern, Minister Reims [?] made a speech in the Lutheran Church in La Crosse upon the above mentioned theme, from which I took the following excerpts.

Buddhism was founded 600 years before Christ by a king's son named Gaudama or Buddha.

This religious system, which only in later times has received its deserved attention, and still today is the most widely spread in the Orient, is founded on discipline, morality, and humanity, does without the adoration of a Creator and Keeper of the Universe, has no cults, no prayers, and none of the usual apparatus of worship. The doctrine is that a Highest Being governs the world, invisible and without heavenly body; therefore no image is imaginable and it can be worshipped only by silent meditation.

Buddhism was derived from the so-called Sankiah philosophy, which taught materialism as the main principle, also eternity and immortality of substance, which is moved by two great principles: Nature and Soul, and which is continually changing. The fall is only apparent; in reality it is only a change.

Buddha taught equality and brotherhood of all men, abolition of all privileges and of the caste problem.

The soul of his religion should be love, generosity, humility, support of the poor and needy, chastity, etc. People must not swear, lie, slander, kill, steal, or take revenge, but must love modestly and calmly, in order to realize by silent meditation the personal being and the being of the Deity.

Life is a torture through many evils, and in order to escape this torture man should rid himself of every emotion by religion and philosophy, and receive the vision that finally everything is transformed into its original nothingness. This is the original substance in which both powers, activity and peace, are contained—by which the origin (activity) of the world is caused, which belongs to the causes and effects, and so these produce thereby a change effect of creation and destruction, as well as deliverance from all earthly suffering, the ceasing of the <T189> self-meditation and conscience, which closes itself in a circle and is so a little piece of the nothingness from whence we come, only an apparent death. ...

Unfortunately, the Buddhist religion degenerated and its purity was lost when it was misused by princes and clergy for their own low selfish purposes. It also became mixed with the dirt of avarice and tyranny, and declined into idolatry. Thus Buddha came to be worshiped as God; religious pictures, relics, etc. were exploited; monasteries were built, etc.; so that the religious system was fitted to personal intentions and viewpoints.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilhelm Freise.

Mr. Wm. Freise, La Crosse, Wis.

March 26, 1877.

Dear Sir! I asked you in a letter dated March 15 to send me the small sum of money, \$9.00, that you owe me, by Money Order to the post Office in Sparta. you did not fulfill my request, and as I have to pay interest on April 1, I find myself forced to repeat the request.

If you will consider that I first have to work a full year to raise the seeds and prepare them for sale, and then I still sold them to you at an exceptionally good price, I am sure you will fulfill my request and send me the money still this week.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferd. Kaiser, Eisleben.

March 26, 1877.

I received the seeds I ordered. The big package arrived not by mail but by Express. If it had been sent by mail, the postage would have cost no more than \$1.00; now it costs me \$4.00 . I was still more surprised to find, when I opened it, peeled millet instead of seed. It is worth the 75 cts. to me for cooking, but I find myself forced to bill you for the \$2.00 (8 Mk) you wasted on unnecessary shipping charges.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Ulrich.

Mr. John Ulrich, La Crosse, W.

March 26, 1877.

Dear Sir! My lack of money is so severe here that I can sell only little and am paid even less. (According to the many ads for dances, theaters, and other pleasures, it must be better in La Crosse.) I therefore find myself forced to limit my expenses to the most necessary <T190> things, and I ask you therefore to delete me from the list of Nordstern subscribers. I want to pay off my debt as soon as possible, but I don't want to increase it.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Milwaukee Herald.

Milwaukee Herald.

March 26, 1877.

I read in the La Crosse Nordstern that the German-American commercial paper and the 'Fortschritt der Zeit' [Progress of the Times or Times-Progress—LPM] have been combined. Accordingly, I request a sample issue of your publication. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilh. R. Jähring.

Mr. Wilh. R. Jähring, Minister in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

March 26, 1877.

Dearest friend! You have done me a great favor by sending me the millet. I am sure it will thrive here very well. Please thank Mr. Münsche on my behalf for his letter. The loss of the President battle will be no news to you, but maybe you are interested in reading about it in an American paper. I therefore enclose the Nordstern. I would also like to call your attention to an article on the last page. It is surely very strange that a man, "Buddha," had the same thoughts and viewpoints more than 2000 years ago that force themselves upon me when I am thinking.

Giving my best wishes to you, I remain your F.A.M.

From: E.D. M.; To: Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Mrs. Jane Crouse.

30 Aug 1877 [excerpt].

Dear Sister, Your friendly letter of Aug. 12 came to hand ... We are troubled with much sickness. In spring about planting time the children all had the measles. After they got better, both of the biggest boys had a relapse ... they got better just in time to go to the marsh and make our hay ... came home sick ... Father and the two little boys Carl 12 and August 10 years old had to do the work. Carl is a very good and industrious boy but ... [now he is sick] ... So you see that I have my hands full ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Georg Klös.

<T190, cont.> Mr. Georg Klös, Jefferson

Portland, Oct. 10, 1877.

Dear friend! You want to know what I want to have for the stones for your barn cellar. You can give me five bushel good wheat for it; this won't be too cheap. So you know that your cattle were on my pasture all summer long. For this, I will take \$10 or 10 bushel of good wheat, whichever you would prefer. Please let me know soon whether you agree, and whether you would rather pay in money or wheat.

From: F.A.M.; To: Matthias Suhr.

Mr. Matthias Suhr, Jefferson

Oct. 12, 1877.

Dear Sir! You surely know that your cattle have been on my pasture all summer long. You therefore won't consider it as <T191> unfair if I ask for it a small compensation of \$10 or 10 bushel wheat. Please let me know whether you agree, and whether you would rather pay in money or wheat..

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Zscherneck.

Mr. Mr. Zscherneck.

(As above)

From: F.A.M.; To: James Rogers.

<Written in English.> Mr. James Rogers, Portland.

22 Dec 1877 [excerpt].

... I charge you one Dollar for every day you keep and harbor my boy Ernest. Please send me by the bearer two dollars for Dec. 21 and 22.

From: F.A.M.; To: James Rogers and Ernst Meissner.

<Written in English.> Mr. James Rogers, Portland.

24 Dec 1877 [excerpt].

Dear Sir, I forbid you keeping and harboring my son Ernest.

Ernest Meissner: You are commanded by your Father to come home right away and resume your duties.

From: E.D. M.; To: Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Mrs. Jane Crouse.

25 Dec 1877 [excerpt].

... Ernest ... got it in his mind to go this winter to the Pinery, there earn lots of money, then go in the spring to Minnesota, earn some more money, and in the fall take the cars for Utah and make Uncle a Christmas visit. ... Adolf [sic] about 17 years old ... likes to go to dance, but he also likes to work. Next Dora nearly 15

years old is getting quite a help to me. ... Carl [13], a tall lean industrious boy. Next August, a mischievous unruly healthy looking boy of 11 who likes to play but hates anything like work. We ... have a pleasant comfortable home ... E.D. M.

END OF BOOK 3 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 4: Mar. 1878 to Jan. 1884

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Christian Rüdy.

<T191, cont.> Mr. Christian Rüdy, Waseca, Waseca Co., Minn.

March 11, 1878.

Dear Sir! Your brother in Bangor, who has ordered seeds from me for several years, and from whom I got your address, has given me to believe that you might also want to try out my seeds, and that I might get still more customers in your region by your recommendation. I therefore take the liberty to send you herewith my small seed catalog, and I will try to do as well as I can if you will give me a small order.

Yours respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

Mr. Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn.

April 15, 1878

I sent you by today's mail a package of seeds containing:

...

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

Mr. Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn.

May 26, 1878

I would have answered your kind letter of March 17 already sooner if I had had some time. I will send you from Sparta by Express 100 asparagus plants for \$2.00, and here are the instructions for planting them:

Make a ditch two feet wide and two feet deep. Fill it preferably with rotten dung and stamp it firmly. (Fresh horse dung is not good. It would become hot and burn the plants.) Then you make a second ditch close to it, so that you will have 12 inches of good topsoil to put on top of the dung in the first ditch and <T192> you can put the heavier soil from the bottom on the sides of the ditch. The ditch should be completely filled with good topsoil. You can make a third ditch and do the same, and keep making ditches until your bed is as big as you want it. Then you use the heavier soil from the first ditch to fill up the last ditch.

Now you plant the asparagus in rows with the plants five inches apart and 1-1/2 foot deep. [Diagram.] I separate the soil with a spade and stick the plant in so that the roots go straight down and the top is about four inches under the soil. Then I compact the soil firmly, from the sides, not from the top. I still have asparagus that I planted 20 years ago and is still good. You can cover it in the winter with a few inches of dung.

From: E.D. M.; To: Phoneta Jane Wilson.

<Written in English.> Phoneta Jane Wilson, Castle Valley, Utah.

July 19, 1878.

From: E.D. M.; To: Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Mrs. Jane Crouse.

4 Dec 1878 [excerpt].

... Ernest ... has left home for a warmer climate ... I have heard from Ernest that you have become a grandma, and that Phoneta and her husband live with you again...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To Ernest Meissner, Tyrone, Monroe Co., Iowa. Dec. 20, 1878.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To Ernest Meissner, Tyrone, Monroe Co., Iowa. Jan. 8, 1879.

From: F.A.M. (or E.D. M.); To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> 12 Jan 1879 [excerpt].

... When Ernest asked your advice about his intended movements, you would have told him, if you had been his true friend, to consult his Father and Mother instead of his Step brother [George Henry Meissner or Sennewald?—LPM] and not such nonsense as running after a conjugal partner ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To Ernest Meissner, Tyrone, Monroe Co., Iowa. 27 Jan 1879.

From: Adolph Meissner.; To: Vernalia Crouse.

<Written in English.> To Vernalia Crouse, Hot Spring, Utah

2 Feb 1879 [excerpt].

... My brother Ernest is on his way to Utah ... your brothers can earn plenty of money ... [Adolph is almost 18 years old, Vernalia is at least 13 and probably older.]

From: Adolph Meissner.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To Ernest Meissner, Tyrone, Monroe Co., Iowa.

14 Feb 1879 [excerpt].

... I keep my pledge and shall give up using tobacco ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Geo. A. Richardson.

<Written in English.> Geo. A. Richardson, Sparta [state legislator?].

Aug 1879 [excerpt].

... My Adolph is 17 years old and has so far done pretty well but since we have two Saloons at Hazen's Corner and one at Melvina we have lost all control over him.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

<T192, cont.> Hague & Schmidt, Erfurt (Germany).

Sept. 18, 1879.

Please be so kind as to send me your seed catalog for this year, as the new one would arrive too late for me to order anything.

From: F.A.M.; To: Peter Penand.

Peter Penand.

Oct 11, 1879.

Dear Sir! Mr. De Barr, the blacksmith of Kelliant's mill, has authorized me to collect six Talers which you still owe him. If don't want any expenses, you should pay this debt right away.

From: F.A.M.; To: John Langton.

<Written in English.> John Langton, written by Adolph's hand.

2 Dec 1879 [excerpt].

... [I have] met with an accident which confines me to my bed ... Our post office at Mt. Pisgah is broken up ... direct your letter to Melvina ... [See Dec. 1881 letter to Karoline at <T194> for more details.]

From: F.A.M.; To: H. [Crouse?]

<Written in English.> to H [Crouse?] (written by F.A.M.)

Hazen, Monroe Co., 12 Dec 1879 [excerpt].

... [On] Nov the 29th ... a heavy stack of timber ... dropped and its weight crushed me to the ground. Some bones in my shoulder are broken ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

<T192, cont.> Hague & Schmidt, Erfurt (Germany).

Hazen, M.C., Wisc., N.A. Sept. 18, 1879.

I want to thank you very much for the seed catalog you sent me. I enclose a small list of seeds, which I ask you to send by mail as 'Sample without value.' For bigger packages that have to pass the Customs House, the N.Y. manager's expenses are much too high. It pays only if one imports big quantities. You will find also a money order enclosed. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To Ernest Meissner, Whatsheire [What Cheer], Keokuk Co. [Iowa], c/o B.F. Baxter. Feb. 17, 1880.

From: E.D. M.; To: Jane Crouse.

<Written in English.> Mrs. Jane Crouse.

18 March 1880 [excerpt].

... How is Nicolaus Wilson and Phoneta getting along on their farm in Castle Valley? ... My Ernest came home temporarily ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

<T192, cont.> Fred Gluck, Brownsville, Minn..

April 4, 1880.

With pleasure I will send you today by mail ...

Wishing a good arrival, I sign ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: H. Crouse?

<Written in English.> to H Crouse?

1 July 1880 [excerpt].

... Our Post office has been baptized once again—first it was Mt. Pisgah, next Hazen, and now Cashton ... [Hazen's Corner still exists, 1/2 mile west of Cashton. The name was changed to Cashton when it became a railroad station: see <T199>—LPM]

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

<T193> Hague & Schmidt, Erfurt in Prussia.

Sept. 19, 1880.

The seeds that I ordered in spring all arrived here in good condition, but I did not receive the catalog for 1880 that you probably must have included, as you labeled and billed the seeds according to it. As a born German, I still have a preference for my old home country, which was also why I had seeds sent from there. However, my expectation of receiving good seeds and genuine varieties from there have quite often been deceived.

Old seeds that did not come up at all were: ...

Old seeds from which only a few specimens came up were: ...

In your flower catalog for this autumn, I find some seeds listed that I would like to have, and as I still have a little bit of money in my favor with you, I would like you to send me the following items by mail ...

Please include a catalog for 1880. Respectfully, ...

My cauliflower that I raised this year from your seeds was not nearly so nice as the ones I raised last year from seeds I got from Plant Seed Co. in St. Louis. I did not have a single white head; they were all yellow or pink. It might also have been caused by the weather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

Hague & Schmidt in Erfurt, Germany.

Cashton, M.C., Wis., N.A. Jan. 11 [1881].

Dear Sirs, I received your seeds and the terrifolia peonies last autumn. Everything was in good condition. I was especially happy with the latter. You will find enclosed a money order for \$11, and below a small list of seeds. In case my order is too much for the money and you don't want to wait for the balance until my next order, please cut off from the end of the list.

Very respectfully, ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> Ernest Meissner—Warren's Mill, Wis.

16 Feb 1881 [excerpt].

We all were very glad to hear by your letter that you and Adolf [sic] had arrived safely at your destination, and that you have obtained employment. ... Your Father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Kamperschnör.

<T193, cont.> Mr. Kamperschnör, Portland.

August 3, 1881.

Dear friend! Don't you want to be so kind and come down and look at the damage your oxen and cows did to my fields? It could hardly be paid off with \$20.

Your devoted ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: H. Crouse?

<Written in English.> to H Crouse?

Dec 1881 [excerpt].

... I came to this town in the summer of 1856 ... the country was nearly all wild then. I remember only one settler [on the road] about half ways of the 30 miles from here to La Cross.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T194>To Mrs. Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Dec. 1881.

Dear Daughter! It is already 10 or 11 years that you gave me no sign from you, which proves how unimportant it is to you whether your father is still alive, healthy, or sick. I will be 77 years old in a few days, and I still enjoy good health. Two years ago in November, I was knocked down by a heavy piece of oak wood that I had on my right shoulder, and my shoulder bone broke into several pieces so that I had to lie on my back in my bed all winter long without turning or moving. I was very much afraid of being permanently crippled, as someone of my age could hardly expect the bone to grow together again. But God be thanked, I again have full use of my arm.

Parents should expect their children to support them when they get old, but here in America everything is entirely different. Everyone cares only for himself. Ernest, 22 years old, is now in Utah, 1,000 miles away from here; he works for a Mormon bishop, receives \$30 (120 Reichsmark) per month and food. In spite of this, he does not think of sending me a single penny, and I would never think of asking him for it. Adolph, 20 years old, works near here and earns about \$15 per month plus his food. Dora 18 years, Karl 17, and August 15, are at home; and with their help I manage my land and garden, and from the proceeds I live with my household and I am happy when the year rolls around if my expenses are not higher than my income. You are very much mistaken if you think that here in America "fried doves fly into one's mouth."

My letters seem to have no value for you unless they contain money, and you answered my last one only after repeated inquiries. If you have bad times, you must realize that you and your husband are still young. Your children must be nearly grown now. I sure am puzzled that thousands and thousands of people have come over here from Germany in recent years, but none of you <T195> ever got the idea of trying your luck over here.

I would appreciate your answering this letter soon, and telling me the truth about your situation. I also would like to know whether my brother Karl is still alive, and how he is doing!

Your Father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Karl Gottlieb Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Dec. 1881.

Dear Sir! When winter comes and the farm work is a little bit less urgent than usual, I remember old friends and signs of friendship. I have your letter of Jan. 21, 1877 in front of me. I will be 77 years old this Christmas [Dec. 27], and I still enjoy good health. Two years ago in November, I was knocked down by a heavy piece of oak wood that I had on my right shoulder—my foreman dropped it, which broke my shoulder bone into several pieces. I was very much afraid that the bone would not grow together again on account of my advanced age, and that I would remain crippled. But God be thanked, I got back the full use of my arm.

As you don't care about politics, I don't want to bore you with it, and will rather tell you about our family life. According to the papers, thousands and thousands of immigrants are arriving in N.Y., but we hardly notice anything here. The country is so vast that nearly all of them disappear invisibly, and as the export of meat, flour, and wheat is so large, and also the payment for these things is in gold, there is a surplus of money, which in return is used again for building railways etc. Because of this, workers are in demand and are well paid; the normal wage is \$1 including meals or \$1.75 without meals [per day, apparently—LPM] (four Reichsmark or seven Reichsmark). However, immigrants who bring German money along cannot get more than 22 or 23 cts. for a Mk, as the rate of exchange is now so low.

Last summer was very unusual here. The temperature was very high, and it was so dry in some regions that forests, villages, cattle, and wheat burned down, and only with difficulty people escaped and saved their skins. Here at our place, after <T196> about three or four weeks of dry weather during which the crops were harvested, it started to rain at the beginning of August. This rainy weather continued till now—with hardly any interruption; we are now having a little frost and snow.

The rivers are swollen, bridges are washed out, railways are under water for miles. The Mississippi has broken its dykes and flooded whole villages. The greatest damage caused by the rain was that it flooded the stacks of wheat and hay. All the wheat here is put up in stacks on the fields and is threshed there. Also very few farmers have barns for their hay. They put it in stacks on the fields and meadows, and pick it up in

winter with sleds. We produce all sorts of grain here, but wheat is the main crop, also corn that is plowed and furrowed somewhat like potatoes—in rows four feet apart. I have an ear of corn that has 40 grains in length and 32 around, that is 1280 grains for one ear; normal ears have 40 grains in length and 20 around, that is 800. We now cultivate a new plant here called Sorghum or sugar millet. It is treated about like corn, grows six to eight feet high, and gives a lot of good syrup.

When we work in our garden, we often find stone arrowheads, which the red Indians used many hundred years ago before they knew about iron. I will send you some as a curiosity. I will hereby end my long letter. I would be very happy to hear that these lines reached you and your family in good health.

Your Father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilh. Rud. Jähring.

Mr. Wilh. Rud. Jähring, M. in Schönbach.

Dec. 1881.

Dearest friend! I cannot complain that you left me for so long without any news about your well being, as I sinned in the same way before, but when I honestly confess I surely may hope to be forgiven.

I hope very much that when these lines reach you and your good wife you may be as well as I am feeling right now with my own family. My oldest son Ernest, who was always restless at home (he wanted to see the world), is now in Utah, 1,000 miles <T197> away from here; he is managing the farm of a Mormon bishop. The bishop is in the South at a mission where he tries to make converts. He has two wives who live in separate houses. One week Ernest has to eat at one wife's table and the next week at the other wife's. His monthly salary is \$30 (120 Reichsmark). My wife's brother lives with his family another 40 miles from there in a desert, through which a road leads to the mines in New Mexico [Must be Nevada -LPM]. He has an inn. The whole region is devoid of water, except that there are two hot springs at his house. He cools the water in big tanks and sells it to the drivers. He also provides water for 4,000 sheep that are owned by a company and graze in the desert.

The state of politics keeps getting worse. The worst people rise to the top by corruption. The people are cheated of millions by their officials. Highway robberies happen daily; laws no longer have any power; guilty and innocent people are lynched by mobs.

President Garfield, the most infamous scoundrel, is revered as a saint since his death. I have read in the papers that there were church services for him in Germany and England. I will enclose herewith some stories from the last election, from which you can recognize Garfield's character.

I will now close, so as not to tire you.

I remain your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Benary.

Mr. Benary, seed merchant in Erfurt, Germany.

Jan. 20, 1882.

You will find enclosed a money order for eight Mk and 40 Pfennig for which I ask you to send the seeds listed below as 'samples without value'.

List ...

Send according to the list as far as the money reaches.

Two years ago I received from Thorbium in N.Y. a portion of your new red giant cabbage. The variety was very bad. Last year I tried again with seeds from Hague & Schmidt; the variety was still no better. I am especially interested in good cauliflower. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

<T198> Karl Gottlieb Wünsche in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Febr. 4, 1882.

Your very kind letter of Dec. 21, 1881 was a true relaxation for me. The good memory that you carried over from my grandfather and my father to me also, pleases me even more because of the fact that I live in a country where most people remain strangers to each other; yes, where families do not even stay together.

The prices of all agricultural crops were very good last autumn, and are still very good this winter. (1 cent = 4 pfennig): for one lb. or fine wheat flour, four cts.; wheat, two cts.; rye, 1-3/4 cts.; corn, one ct.; potatoes, 5/6 ct.; pork, seven cts; beef, six cts.; mutton, six cts.; chicken, six cts.; butter, 20 cts; lard, 10 cts.; eggs, 12 to 20 cts. per dozen; oak fire wood \$3 to \$4 per cord (128 cu. ft.); 2,000 lb. meadow hay, \$8; Timothy hay, \$10; straw at the paper mill, \$6; a little pig four weeks old, 50 cts. in autumn, \$1 in spring; a cow in autumn \$12 to \$14, in spring with calf \$20 to \$30.

Where there is still government land, every citizen and every immigrant who promises to become a citizen can receive 1/4 section land = 160 acres (1 acre = 160 square Rute [rods]) as property if he pays the document and survey fees, which amount to about \$10. But around here there is no more Government land. One acre of wild land costs \$5. To have the trees and bushes cleared out costs \$10; breaking the soil with a big, strong plow costs \$5; burning the bushes and roots costs \$2; so that an acre costs \$20 by the time it is ready for sowing. The first crop is usually winter wheat, and the yield—if it is not a bad year—is about 20 bushels. The average price per bushel is \$1; besides this, the work of sowing and reaping must be considered. Naturally, young strong people who can do all their own work don't have to pay anything. Once the land is cultivated, with fertilization it will bear a crop of wheat, barley, or corn every year for 20 years or more. The soil is plowed in autumn, the wheat sowed in April and harrowed afterward, and is cut in late July or early August.

So far this winter we have continuing mild freezing weather, and only since <T199> about 14 days, four inches of snow. The sun rises at Christmas at 7: 40 and sets at 4: 21. On Johannis [midsummer] Day the sun rises at 4: 12 and sets at 7: 52.

Finally, I want to thank you very much for all your good wishes, and I want to return the same. Please give my regards also to your wife and to Minister Jähring who promised me also a letter in a postcard. My address is now Cashton, to which name M.P. has been changed, since it became a railroad station. Farewell; maybe I still have some years in front of me, maybe not; my children are now nearly all grown up—the youngest son is 15—so they will be able to get along without me. One after the other leaves the parents' house. The only friend who stays with me is my wife. She will—so I hope—close my eyes; I feel tired sometimes, and sure would like to go to sleep. F.A.M.

Postscript: As I still have so much empty space left on the paper, I will try to find something else that might be of interest to you. The land here is all divided into regular squares and measured by Government officials according to the latitude and longitude degrees of the earth. A square six miles long and wide is called a town [or township—LPM]; a square one mile long and wide is called a section: 36 sections make a town. Each section is again divided into quarter sections and these again into quarters. A section contains 640 acres, 1/4 section is 160 acres, and 1/16 section is 40 acres. This is the way records are kept in the land offices and all land sales are made this way. Here is an example: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> Henry Crouse, Termas via Minersville, Utah, Mar 4, 1882.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T200> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Febr. 4, 1882.

Dear Daughter. The same time I wrote to you, I also wrote to Schönbach, from where I already received an answer 14 days ago. I had almost completely given up hope of receiving an answer from you, when I got surprised today at the post office by a letter from you, and as I right now—before my seed trading begins—have still the best time, I will answer your letter right away.

It is very hard for me to imagine you as an old person [she is now 56—LPM]. You still live in my memory as a young, pretty girl like my Dora is now [Dora is 19, the same as Karoline's age when F.A.M. left Germany—LPM]. You still have three children at home; so do we, except that ours are a few years older. Is your youngest child Friede a girl? Our Dora, who loves to write letters, would like very much to write to you some time, if you could only understand English.

Your motto, "Pray and work and God will always help," surely sounds nice; also the other one, "Stay in your own country and make an honest living," but many a person has nearly starved following these. The Frenchman says, "Help yourself so God will help you." I heard from Schönbach that a weaver working as hard as he can makes three Mk a week, from which he and his family have to live; while groceries are twice as expensive as they are here. In America, a common workman makes four Mk a day plus food, or seven Mk without food, and I am sure that people in Schönbach pray more than they do here. Is God not unjust to let the poor people there nearly starve! God has given us a brain; we have to use it. If you jump into the water, God will not pull you out, but your reason will warn you not to jump in.

I can remember only very few people in Kummerfeld, besides your two closest neighbors, John Heidorn and his fat wife, and Jochen Timm. But your garden is still before my eyes. Are the big apple trees still there next to the house? How big are the ones up at the ditch? Did the pear trees that I planted down toward Klopfenburg grow big? Is all the heath now cultivated? Are you still working with cows? If you don't have any more gardening, I cannot understand how you can support a household alone from the yields of your land. Fruit trees don't thrive around here, where we <T201> live. They die in a few years or freeze to death in winter, even prunes. But we have some very good kinds of wild plums and Siberian crab apples that can stand the winter. But in return, the soil is so much better for wheat. Cultivating is sure a very hard labor and costs \$20 per acre if one is unable to do it himself. But the soil bears then a crop for 20 years or longer without any fertilizer, wheat, barley, corn, or clover. The fields are plowed only once—in autumn—and in April wheat or barley is sowed and furrowed in. In May it is plowed for corn and potatoes. What keeps the farmer down is the high wages. He has to pay at harvest time even \$2 = eight Mk per day, and has to give the best food besides. Generally, life is more comfortable in Germany for the one who is not poor, but here a poor man has it much easier to make a living, even acquire a nice farm.

When you or your husband write to me again, I would be happy to hear more about your family. Farewell for today. We send our best regards. Your Father, F.A.M.

P.S. Heinrich [George Henry Meissner] is married, lives in this State, lost a foot in the war and receives a pension; he is doing fine.

From: F.A.M.; To: Math. Wunz.

Madelia, Wis.

March 15, 1882

Dear Sir! Although I do not print a catalog, I have on hand a complete assortment of good fresh seed. I sell all varieties for five cts. per paper and pay the postage. However, I have to ask 10 cts. per paper for sweet corn, peas, and beans if I send them by mail.

List ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Fred Gluck.

Fred Gluck, Esq., Brownsville, Minn.

[1882].

Dear Sir! If you can use seeds this spring—I have here a complete assortment of good fresh garden and flower seeds, with which I want to recommend myself to you.

Very respectfully ...

My post office address is Cashton, since we have the railroad.

From: F.A.M.; To: Jacob Sternberger.

<T202> Mr. Jacob Sternberger, Esq.

March 30 [1882].

I came home late last night. The road was good till Lion, but became then worse, so I finally had to stop my wagon. Last Sunday we had here a great flood for this season. I hereby send you the seeds you ordered, and greet you and your wife very heartily.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> Henry Crouse, Minersville, Utah, Mar 30, 1882.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wm. R. Jähring.

<T202, cont.> Wm. R. Jähring, M. in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

June 5, 1882.

Dearest friend! I received your card from Dec. 26, 1881, and I would have answered it already a long time ago if I had not kept waiting for the letter you promised. I was very happy that you could still answer my letter, but I am very sorry that your eye problem has not improved but got worse. Maybe the rest will help a bit, once you have exchanged the rough Schönbach for the friendly Dresden.

The millet did not want to thrive here. Corn replaces it completely, and surpasses it in yield as well as in taste. Since Mount Pisgah has become a railroad station, it changed its name to Cashton. We are having a wonderful spring, but it is late. Wheat is doing well, but a strong nightly frost has almost entirely ruined the apple and plum blossoms. I would hardly have had time today for letter writing, as springtime is so short and the work consequently so urgent, but a sprained foot has kept me in bed for the past two weeks.

With many greetings to your dear wife, I remain your devoted >F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche. Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

June 5, 1882.

On Febr. 4 I answered your very dear letter of Dec. 27, 1881, but I have not heard yet whether you received my long epistle. We have a wonderful spring, only it is late. . Wheat is doing well, but a strong nightly frost on May 23 greatly damaged the apple and plum blossoms. I have to mention it as something unheard of, that last winter potatoes and cabbage were imported here from Germany and England. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near P. near Hamburg.

[June 1882.]

Dear Daughter. I answered your letter of Jan. 11 right away, but never found out whether you received my answer. Also <T203> the letter Gerstenberg promised me never arrived. We have a wonderful but late spring, but a strong nightly frost about May 23 almost entirely ruined the apple and plum blossoms.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wm. R. Jähring.

Wm. R. Jähring in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

June 20, 1882.

Dearest friend! I received your very dear letter of June 6, on June 28. It seems that we thought of each other at the same time, because I wrote you a short letter on June 5, which is probably in your hands by now.

I see from your letter that even the faithful are not spared disease and bad luck. Naturally God sends these to test their faith and to prepare them for heaven. But you must not think that God or Providence—whichever you call it—has entirely forgotten about me. On May 20, a very harsh rainy day, my cows broke out of their pasture. I followed them—carrying my umbrella—to keep them from doing damage to my neighbors. Along the side of a steep slope, I started running to head off the cows, and I slipped and fell. When I tried to get up, my left foot hurt so much that I thought I had broken the joint. I hobbled home in terrible pain. The foot and the leg swelled so tremendously that I was unable to determine whether the joint was broken or sprained. For a whole week, I needed hot compresses day and night, which had to be changed at least every half hour, to soothe the pain a bit; the second week I needed cold compresses. At the end of the second week, the swelling was reduced enough so that I could have the foot examined by a doctor, and found out that the joint was neither broken nor sprained but was only bruised by a stone onto which I had fallen. I had to lie quiet in bed for four weeks. During the 5th week I could sit up a little, and now in the 6th

week, where I am now, I try to hobble around a little. I don't tell you all this so you will be sorry for me, but to show that the good Lord shows his mercy to the impious also—only to lead them back to the right way, of course.

But I have still more bad news. On Tuesday morning, June 27, for the first time after my five weeks of captivity, I visited my garden, which consists of about five acres (800 square Rute [rods]). My wife and children had planted it according to my instructions, <T204> which I had given to them from my bed. My heart jumped for joy: everything was excellent. We had a beautiful spring, always enough rain but never too much. I counted already in my mind that this autumn I could not only pay off my debts but also make some improvements. On the same day I went to the garden again in the afternoon—how did it look then? Everything, but really everything, was ruined.—Who had done this? Was it my neighbor's horses, cows, oxen, and pigs? No! No! God had done it! Is this not a merciful God—a half year's work, from which I expected to make a full year's living for my wife and children, was ruined in a half hour.

At about noon a hard thunderstorm came up in the north and another one came from the south. Just above our heads they collided, lightning after lightning, thunder after thunder, followed by streams of water; storms and hail put the whole valley where my garden lies under water. Most of my best soil is washed away; other places are covered one or two feet deep by big stones that the flood dug out from the upper part of the valley, and everything, everything was hit by the angel. In another valley where I had planted five acres of corn, it is the same. These five acres would have brought at least 250 bushels or 15,000 lbs. of corn. These with the straw or stalks were planned as food for my pigs and to feed my horses, cows, sheep, gees, and chickens during the winter. On the high country where the hail hit, all wheat is ruined. In Cashton several houses are reduced to their basements.

But don't dare to feel sorry for me. I must still be grateful to the dear Lord that he was so merciful to me. If he had wished, he could have killed me and my family in my house. I read in the paper that in Iowa 1,000 people lost their homes and more than 100 were killed by similar storms. What a merciful God! Or should everything be an accident—should God not govern the world? As long as you hold your office you surely have to defend the faith, but once you are in Dresden I hope that your spirit will be more free and that you will shake off the chains of the Faith habit. But if not, <T205> you will always remain my dear, my truest friend, if you find me worthy of your friendship in spite of my heretical ideas.

Now a little bit about politics: I cannot agree with you that the rich should take care of the poor. It is just unfortunate that there are rich and poor people. In Germany it is the standing military man who sucks out the citizens; here it is the military veterans who receive a pension. The House of Representatives has just passed again a law that raises the pensions for those who lost an arm, leg, hand, or foot during the last war, to \$40 a month. In this way the Republican Party is trying to buy votes for the next election. Some years ago Congress made a law that everyone receiving a pension should get a raise, dating back to the time when they got their first pension. Another clause granted a pension to anyone who took part in the war whether he was wounded or not. By these laws millions have been paid. Many farmers, my neighbors who are wealthy and as healthy as anybody, receive pensions. And there are still so many laws not yet implemented that the Pension Bureau will still take many years to fight its way through.

Next to the pensions, the army of Government officials is second. Almost every Congress raises their salaries and creates new offices, so the last Congress made a law that several officials are to be appointed by the President, every one of them with a salary of 5,000 or 6,000 Talers, who are to supervise the elections in Utah, as another law takes away the right to vote from anyone with more than one wife. Congress could also make a law that only those who have so many thousand Talers have the right to vote.

We have three parties: the Republicans, who are running the Government right now; the Democrats, who would like very much to run it so they could give good jobs to their friends, and the Greenbackers, who want to bleed the rich. The last party should be the voice of the people, but it does not have enough influence, as it has no money to bribe the newspapers. There is no hope for improvement if the people don't act like the Irish and French and slaughter the blood suckers—

<T206> The luxury of clothes is as big here as in Germany. A maids dresses well and sometimes even better than her mistress. She can easily do so, when she gets paid \$2 to \$5 per week, which is often hard for the employer to pay. I cannot entirely condemn their desire to have clothes as good as the noble ones. It is to some extent a sign of ambition. This is an emancipation of the lower classes, so long as we still have higher and lower classes. But the difference is not as pronounced as it is in Europe—it is only maintained by the immigrants, especially by the English. The true American eats at the same table with his servants, who in Germany would be called 'Dienstboten.' Our Constitution [actually, the Declaration of Independence—LPM] says that all men are born equal and all have the same right to [the pursuit of] happiness.

I was pleasantly surprised by the mention in your letter of your four daughters. Until now, I had believed that you had no children and sometimes I felt sorry for you.

To answer your questions, here are some copies of my marriage certificates:

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Extract from the Population Protocol of the 2nd Rellinger Community 1827, No. 2

In the year 1826, on Dec. 2, were engaged, and on Febr. 2, 1827, married: Friedrich Adolph Meissner, Gardener in Thesdorf; The legitimate son (born Dec. 27, 1804) of the minister in Schönbach near Löbau, Ernst Friedrich Meissner, and Juliane Eleonore, born as Seidel from Dresden—

with Elise Henriette Sophie von Mithofen, the legitimate daughter (born Sept. 28, 1792) of the Captain and Heir of Tiekenschold in the Duchy Oldenburg Christian Friedrich von Mithofen and Sophie Charlotte, born as Knoth.

The bridegroom has sworn the oath of integrity; the bride has obtained the consent of her elders.

Composed by the 2nd Rellinger Community

Febr. 11, 1860 [Seal of Parish Rellinger] provesu estimatu sulfide pastoruli Mehstorff.

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<T207> My brother Ernst died at the age of 18 in Dresden, where he had been an apprentice in the Court book printing press.

My brother Karl is (or was, at least, six months ago) still alive. He is a gardener and lives in Ütersen near Altona. He was married and had a son and daughter, who are both dead. He now lives as an eccentric in a little room next to his hothouse.

My mother died in Dresden one or two [or as many as five: see FAM letter to Sallie Stafford 16 Aug 1857] years before my brother died.

It seems that I am the only descendant of the Meissner family [i.e., the only survivor named Meissner among the descendants of Christian Frederick Meissner?]. I had only one daughter by my first wife, who is still alive, is married, and has nine children—sons and daughters. By my second wife [Eva: note that Doris is not mentioned here—LPM] who emigrated as a girl of eight [or nine—LPM] years with her parents from Sachsen-Meiningen and came here, I have four sons and a daughter.

Now I think you will have no reason to complain about this letter's shortness. I remain with my best wishes to your wife and daughters, your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: J. Schramm, Jr.

Mrs. J. Schramm, Jr., Sparta, Wis.

July 30, 1882.

Madam Schramm: As I have no other choice, I will send already today the celery plants that you ordered. I am sure they will be worth the express charges. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

July 30, 1882.

Your very dear letter of July 9, which I found yesterday at the post office, was a nice interruption. (It took only 20 days to cover the tremendous distance.) By the aid of ink, pen, railways, and steamers, we can converse with each other and exchange thoughts while being many thousand miles apart.

Your neighbor who emigrated to Texas is homesick—wait till next spring and he will think differently—it was the same with all of us when we first came over here, even if we did not go so far south. Ignoring the floods, hail showers, and storms, which keep hitting some regions periodically, we have had a very beautiful summer here so far, only a little bit cool; wheat, barley, oats, and rye do very well. The harvest of rye and winter wheat has started; summer wheat and oats are still green. Corn is very far behind because of the cool weather. You may have already heard from <T208> Minister Jähring how severely we were hit by bad weather. As my foot is so much better that I can wear a shoe, I have to try to make up for lost time. So please

excuse me that I only respond to your letter with a few lines. I return your handshake and remain, with my best wishes, your friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], Kaiserin Augusta Straße 59, Berlin, Germany.

Dec. 27, 1882.

Dear Karoline! Your name sounds nice to me, especially as it is also your dear mother's name as well as the name of a cousin who was my dear playmate when I was young [Karoline Christine Moser, daughter of aunt Wilhelmine Fredericke Meißner].

After waiting for many years in vain for a letter from your mother, I fought my pride and wrote her a letter about a year ago, to which I received a very friendly answer. I have written again twice to your mother during the past year, but she seems to have relapsed into her former silence. I cannot understand it. Can you, dear Grandchild, not explain to me what the reason is, that your mother won't spend an hour of her spare time writing to her father?

Your dear letter arrived here on Christmas Eve and compensated me a little bit for your mother's silence. I want to thank you also for the picture of you and your brother. I think you look like your mother and your brother looks like his father. I sure would like to have a picture of your parents, but I don't want to ask your mother for it, as I rarely receive a letter from her.

As you have been to England, you surely must be able to understand the English language. If so, then my daughter [Dora], your 19 year old aunt, will write to you some time. I am 78 years old today, and still enjoy pretty good health. I would like it very much if you would address me in your next letter with 'du' [the familiar address—M.C.]. Your brother Wilhelm is married and is working in a piano factory, and you are working as a cook, so your mother told me. How much do you earn per week or per year? Is your sister Emma not also in Berlin? I would be very happy if you would write to me again soon; and it might even be possible, if you don't dislike America as much as your mother does, that we will yet meet in person. Greetings to you and your brother—your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Daughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T209> Karoline Gerstenberg.

Jan. 4, 1883.

Dear Daughter. I received yesterday your and your children's letters from Dec. 8th of last year, and I give myself the pleasure of answering them. We also had an excellent summer here, snow since mid November and good tracks for sledding since the beginning of December. The cold has been mild so far, but since New Years Day it has been very cold.

We have had two hard nuts to crack again this summer. In the middle of May, on a rainy and gloomy day, our cows broke out of their pasture. I followed them, with an umbrella in my hand, along the slope of a steep hill. I started to run to cut off their way, when I stumbled and fell. When I tried to get up, I thought I had broken my joint. I hobbled home in awful pain. My foot and leg swelled up all the way to my knee. For a week I had compresses that had to be changed every half hour day and night to soothe the pain a little bit. When the swelling was mostly gone, a doctor examined my foot and told me that it was not broken but only bruised. I had to lie in bed for a long time and did not know where to put my foot down. After six weeks I finally started walking again.

On June 27 I visited my garden for the first time since my accident. I found everything in good shape. We had had a beautiful spring; peas and potatoes were in bloom; lettuce was planted, 200 heads of cauliflower and 1300 of cabbage were planted, onions, melons, cucumbers, pumpkins, flowers—everything looked beautiful and promised a rich crop. My heart was singing. But around noon a thunderstorm came up from the south and another from the north, and they met right above our heads. Lightning after lightning, thunder after thunder, followed by torrents of rain, hail as big as walnuts or chicken eggs, set the valley under water, pulled all leaves and fruit from the trees. After the water had flowed off, there was nothing green left in my garden. Big pieces of soil as deep as the land was plowed were washed off, still others were covered by stones that the flood had washed down from the upper end of the valley. Many things started to grow again, but it took three to four weeks for it to look green again. <T210> All the crops were late and bore little or no seeds; instead of 300 bushels or 1800 lb. of corn we harvested only 10 bushels; instead of 30 or 40 bushels of

onions we had one bushel; instead of 200 or 300 bushels of potatoes we had 10 bushels; instead of 300 lb. dried sage we had 100 lb., etc. I have lost at least \$300.

And then people still believe that God governs the world and pray that he may take care of them, if an accident can ruin everything in a few minutes. The misfortune did not hit me alone. Many of my pious neighbors who often go to church and do not eat without praying before and afterwards, are beaten also. "God helps those who help themselves." Many plowed their fields and sowed buckwheat or beets, others folded their hands and prayed to God for help. The first ones still had an excellent crop—as we had a beautiful autumn—but the latter ones either can starve this winter or have to go begging. We manage as well as we can and hope for a better summer.

We are all healthy and hope the same is true of you. We all send our wishes. I especially greet your husband, who will soon write me a letter. Your Father.

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Dear Otto! I was very glad to receive your little letter. You write very well—the tails are a little too long. I am surprised that all the big apple trees near the house are dead. I cannot remember any more the sweet apple tree from Münster. Please write and tell me what crops you had last year. How many kilo of rye, potatoes, cabbage, and so on; how many cows, pigs, and chickens; how much hay; and so on.

My best greetings to you, your Grandfather.

Dear Frieda!

I have already asked your mother whether you are a boy or girl; I will take you for a girl till I hear differently. You must be about 11 years old now. Do you already help your mother with the housework? What do you do from morning till evening? Your letter was written very well, only you spelled the names of phlox and Chinese carnations wrong.

I forgot to tell your mother that I received a letter on Christmas Eve from your sister Karoline from Berlin, with <T211> a picture of her and her brother Wilhelm, which was a wonderful Christmas present for me. If your mother does not have time, you and Otto must write again soon. With my best wishes, your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Benary.

Mr. Benary in Erfurt, Germany.

Jan. 9, 1883.

You will find enclosed a money order for 19 Mk and 82 Pfennig for which I ask you to send the seeds listed below. if the seeds should cost more than the amount enclosed, I will pay the difference with my next order. I am very satisfied with the seeds you sent me last year.

About the seeds: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: H. Crouse

<Written in English.> to H Crouse

11 Feb 1883 [excerpt].

... having nearly made up my mind to emigrate to Washington Terr. ... [FAM is now 78 years old—LPM]

From: F.A.M.; To: Emma Schломann.

<T211, cont.> Mrs. Emma Schломann, care of H. Rolfs, Jersey City Heights, Palisade St. 367, cor. Franklin St.

Febr. 19, 1883.

Dear Emma! Your letter came as a surprise, but was no less welcome because of that: Neither your mother's letter that I received on New Year's Day nor the letter that your sister Lina wrote to me last autumn mentioned that you were in America.

I can only praise your decision to go to the country and to found a permanent home there, but I cannot advise you to go to Dakota. Why not? You could claim 160 acres of land for a homestead for only a few Talers. But then what will you have? A big piece of desert land with no bushes or trees, no house, and no water. First you will have to build a house, then you will need some strong oxen to break open the soil, a breaking plow, a harrow, a wagon, two or three cows, and more. The first year you will be able to raise little or nothing. Only the second year you will have a good crop in autumn. In winter the climate is very cold on those prairies, and the snow is very deep—and no trees. Many people from here have gone there, but they usually return in winter and go back there in spring.

Is your husband German? Does he know anything about farming? Do you have the means <T212> to buy all these things and then to live for nearly two years out of your own pocket? I have a neighbor who wants to go to Dakota in the beginning of May. He went there last autumn and has claimed his land. He loads two railway wagons full of stuff, the first has a ready made house and the other two horses, two mules, two cows, plows, harrows, and household goods. He himself will follow behind with his eight children. He wants to rent his farm here, which is sown with winter wheat. Most of the land has been plowed in autumn. There is a good house, enough wood, and good water. The usual rent is 1/3 of the crop. It seems to me that this would be a good opportunity for you. You could live here for a little while at first, and then if you still want to go to Dakota your husband can go there next autumn and look around. If you will write me soon, I might be able to hold this place for you, but you would not have to come before April. We live so far north here that spring comes at least one month later than in N.Y., either here or in Dakota.

Your way to Dakota passes only a few miles from my home. You can buy your ticket in N.Y. via Sparta, Wis. From there it is only 18 miles to Cashton, to which a branch of the Milwaukee Railroad goes. I live about 1-1/2 miles from Cashton. you can leave your luggage in the depot at Cashton, and anybody can show you the way to my house. I would be pleased to hear from you again soon, and it will be a pleasure for me to help you with my advice and deed. My wife and children also send their regards.

Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

P.S. I would rather like it if you would address me in your next letter with 'du'. We have had a very hard and lasting winter; the snow lies two and three feet deep.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martin Rade.

Martin Rade, Minister in Schönbach near Löbau, Saxony.

Febr. 28, 1883.

Your Honor! Your letter of Jan. 22 was a welcome surprise, and has again refreshed my memories of my birthplace and my youth. My dear friend Jähring seems to have entirely <T213> forgotten about me since he gave up his residence in Schönbach. I hope that sickness is not the cause of his silence. I am very interested in the news of the parish; I find many a familiar name among them, along with many unknown ones. I can still remember very well the late Mrs. Friedricke Luise (wid. Zitsche, born Binzig) who visited my mother when she was 12 or 13 years old and learned to knit and mend.

The comparison chart shows that over 100 years, between 1782 and 1882, births and weddings doubled but deaths quadrupled. The number of communicants has decreased rather than increased; that might be a sign that the light is starting to shine in the old home also. I can surely honor the attachment old people have for the religion that they drank with their mother's milk, but I would like to ask you whether you, as a young man who not long ago was at the University where you were surely unable to close your eyes to the achievements of science, can harmonize your office and everything around it with your reason. (If this question seems disrespectful to you, considering the newness of our acquaintance, please ignore it.)

Winter has been long and hard in Wisconsin this year. The snow started early in November. It continued snowing off and on, and now we have snow two to three feet deep. The temperature has remained between 20 and 30 degrees Fahrenheit, or sometimes even 40. Last winter we had hardly any snow at all, and very mild weather.

My wife and I return our friendly wishes, and send friendly greetings to you and your sister. Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: K.G. Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche in Schönbach, near Löbau in Saxony.

Febr. 28, 1883.

My hopes have not been deceived. My friends from my homeland have not forgotten about me (at least not you! I have not heard from Mr. Jähning since he went to Dresden). When Christmas and New Year's Day passed without news from Schönbach I began to feel bad, but then your letter arrived. What a clear picture it gives me of how Schönbach has changed from my youth.

Germans seem to prefer pleasure-hunting, and here in America, in small towns and big cities where many Germans live, there are <T214> so many clubs and associations, like acting clubs, military clubs, gymnastics clubs, singing clubs, etc. Here the men spend the money, while their family at home is in need of many things. In public life the railway and highway robbers were on top for a while, but now nearly all have been shot or imprisoned. But almost daily big frauds are increasing; the treasurers of the States, the Counties, and the big corporations commonly run off with thousands or hundreds of thousands of Talers and leave empty carcasses and bare banks [?].

We have had a very good year around here and nearly everywhere in America, except for some regions where hail or floods ruined everything. Wheat costs 1-1/2 cts. per lb., pork seven cts., butter 25 cts., eggs two cts. each (butter and eggs will be cheaper as soon as spring comes), flour three cts. per lb., corn and rye one ct. per lb. The winter is very hard and lasts a long time. It started snowing in November, and with short intervals between it has snowed all the time since, so we now have two to three feet of snow and temperatures from 20 to 30 degrees, sometimes even 40. In states south of Wisconsin (Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania) they have already had thawing weather for the past two weeks. The rivers swelled over their banks and the results were terrible floods. We hope for a good summer and hope keeps us alive.

I read in the parish news about the death of Friedricke Luise Binzig, former Zitsche. This interested me very much, as I knew her well when she was just a girl. She was about two years older than I. Her death reminds me that my time is also running out.

But the inner or psychic world changes as well as the outer or physical world, and so I am very much afraid, my dear friend, that your pious wish that your new Minister may succeed in leading his community back to the old pious religion will not be fulfilled.

From: F.A.M.; To: A[ugust]. and Emma Schlomann.

A. and Emma Schlomann, Jersey City Heights, N.J.

March 8, 1883.

Dear Emma, dear Schlomann! Yesterday I received your letter of Feb. 29 [!], and I want to thank you very much for your picture, which must suffice until I shall see you personally. I am afraid this won't happen very soon. <T215> In order to manage a farm this summer you have to have at least a team, but you cannot buy a pair of good working horses for less than \$200, and two cows will cost about \$60 more. You could earn about \$200 or \$300 this summer, but then winter comes, at least six months long, during which your money will all be spent.

The railroad through Denver is supposed to be finished next summer (1884) to the Pacific Ocean. If I am still alive and healthy, I and my family will emigrate to Washington Territory. The climate there is about the same as in England, neither too warm nor too cold, so that in the coastal counties the grass stays green all winter and cattle can always find their own food. Apples, pears, plums, and cherries are of excellent quality; water and wood in abundance.

Here in Wisc. we have good soil for wheat, but cannot raise fruit. The trees die off or freeze in winter. We have very good spring water and enough wood, but the winters are very long and very cold, and the farmer has to work hard all summer long to provide food for his cattle in winter.

My advice therefore is: stay where you are and save as much as you can, and when the Northern Pacific Railroad is finished, go to Washington Territory; where you have wood and water and a mild climate, getting started is much easier. Even if you don't have much money you can establish a good home. If I am still alive then and can sell my farm, I will go with you.

But we won't have the pleasure of seeing you with us for a long time yet. Your sister Lina [Karoline] will probably come over also in the meantime. Only a few days ago I received a letter from her in which she writes that she will leave her job in April.

From which country do you come, dear Schlomann? Where do your parents live? Where did the two of you meet?

Dear Emma, do you have a little garden? If so, I will send you some flower seeds. My wife and children were so happy to think that you might be coming soon, but now they are all very much disappointed.

With my best greetings, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T216> Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], Kaiserin Augusta Straße 59, Berlin, Germany.

[March 8, 1883]

Dear Karoline! I received your dear letter a week ago, and I would have answered it right away if I had not been waiting for a letter from your sister, Emma Schlomann. About two weeks ago I received a letter from her saying that they are thinking of moving to Dakota this spring and taking up a Homestead there where they can farm. As the route would take them through Wisc., she promised to visit me. In answer to her letter, I told her what they would need in order to establish a farm in Dakota. Yesterday I received a reply from her and Schlomann, in which they confess that they do not have the necessary means. In my answer today I advised them to wait at least two more years, and to stay where they are right now and save as much as they can.

So if you, dear Lina, decide to come to America (the passage from Hamburg to N.Y. is very cheap), you will find your sister and her husband still living in Jersey City Heights, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str. This is very close to N.Y.

Emma and her husband also sent me their picture. She looks pale, but it is surely the fault of the big fat baby [Hans?] that is sitting on her lap.

Give my regards to your brother and tell him that he should not entirely forget me; and write once in a while after you leave Berlin.

From: F.A.M.; To: A[ugust]. and Emma Schlomann.

A. and Emma Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

June 11, 1883.

Dear Children! You have not yet answered my letter of March 8, and if I did not have your picture in front of me I would think it was only a dream. Shortly after I mailed my last letter to you I received a letter from the Postmaster in Montesano, Chehalis Co., Washington Territory, which I enclose herewith and which confirms what I wrote to you about that region. (Please return the letter.) I also read in the paper that the Northern Pacific Railroad might even be finished this autumn.

<T217> We are having a very late, but especially good spring. The apple trees have just finished blooming, the corn is rising, potatoes are not up yet, the oaks are not yet entirely green. My wife has been ailing for a couple of months, so that she has to be in bed most of the time. I hope that these lines may reach all of you in good health. My wife and children send their regards. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martin Rade.

Mr. Martin Rade, Minister in Schönbach near Löbau, Saxony.

June 11, 1883.

Dear Sir! I received your letter of May 10, and I was glad that you took the trouble to try to inform me about some dark [?] things. I will try to answer your letter, but it is written in such general terms that I don't know where to start.

It is surely difficult for an uneducated man to discuss anything with an educated man, but educated men often go the wrong way too. So Prof. Darwin believes that man is the descendant of the ape, and an educated minister in Berlin teaches that the earth stands still and the sun revolves around it.

If you understand the Christian Religion to be the Religion of Love, and if this is what you preach, then I entirely agree with you that your task is a beautiful one. But the Freethinker's religion is also the Religion of Love. Only his reason refuses to believe in superstition, nonsense, and impossible things. The stupid Catholics (most of them are probably not!) (genuine Christians!!) [believe] that the virgin Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost and that she was still a virgin after Christ was born. The Methodists (genuine Christians!) believe that all their sins were washed away by Christ's death—they accuse the Freethinkers of all possible vices.—If you want to look for the biggest cheats, you will find them among the most respected and zealous

members of the Church. The Christian Church is not only the Religion of Love, but their adherents are also obliged to believe nonsense and impossible things; with the result, that right now a minister is before <T218> the Clerical Court in N.Y. because he refused to believe and to preach:

1) That the Old and New Testament is [not] God's Word, but only contains it;

2) That he does not recognize the Supremacy of Love, the holiness of Christ; much less that the virgin Mary was made pregnant by the Holy Ghost; he does not believe either in the miracles of the Old and New Testaments; that the doctrine of the Holy Ghost is falsely interpreted; and that there is no such thing as the "Last Day";

3) That he did not believe and teach the above mentioned and other principles of the religion, as he had promised to do when he was appointed to his office;

4) The fourth accusation contains various trespasses against some of the articles mentioned.

I enclose herewith a newspaper clipping, if you want to see more details. But I don't want to argue with you. If you have been around in this world so much, and still hang tight to your blind faith, it would be in vain anyway. Therefore I would like to think with Sosa: "A fire sparkle of truth keenly thrown into the tyrant's soul ..." [?]

Now I will answer the questions you asked: If you or other people believe and teach that there is a heaven or hell, where people are rewarded or punished after their death, I have to say that this is nonsense. Where should heaven be? In the air above us or in the moon? Where is hell? In the bowels of the earth? The human spirit is not a personality; we recognize it only by its works and deeds. Luther's spirit is still living, while the weak mental powers of many people go out when their body dies.

In the same way, the doctrine or belief about the resurrection of the body is nonsense. All organic bodies pass over after their death into putrefaction; they dissolve into gases from which the plants live, which in return are food for animals and the animals again are food for man—that is an eternal cycle.

But why should I tell you all this if you studied Natural Science at the University. You know it all better than I—if you want to know it.—

<T219> If God or Christ would awaken, on the "Last Day," all people who lived on the earth from the beginning of the world, what a number this must be! Where should they take their bodies from? Since they are all formed from each other, where should they all find room? For instance, you have one lb. of lead; you make it into 10 balls. Then you melt the 10 balls again and make 10 other balls. You continue doing this and every hour you make new balls; that would be 86,600 balls in one year. You are now the creator of 86,600 balls [i.e., all from one lb. of lead—LPM]; you can also calculate this number, but you cannot possibly make it happen.

You say that the need for religion is urgently felt now; but by whom? By the rich, powerful people, to whom blind faith is the best way to keep people in ignorance and suppression? Not only the Christian but all religions have always been used to suppress mankind.

In Boston, a man and his wife are before the court right now because—out of too much piety and blind faith—they have slaughtered their child and sacrificed it to their god.

In St. Louis a man was taken into custody and forced to eat (he had fasted for eight days!). He believed it necessary for the salvation of his soul to fast for 40 days.

"Light and men and all good and perfect gifts come from above." Is our reason not the greatest and most perfect gift that God has given us? We have the body in common with animals. Reason is what raises us above them. But how can I believe that my weak pen will make any impression on you? As an educated man, you surely have also read, besides the doctrines of the Christian Church, also the works of our great 'Freethinkers.' (They unfortunately have no parish to grant!) If they couldn't convince you, I surely cannot do it myself.

"Every religion is good that teaches man to be good."

"I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church. My mind is my one church."—Thomas Paine.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T220> Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 8 Blenheim Mount, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

July 1, 1883

Dear Lina! I received your letter of June 3 on the 20th, and I enjoyed hearing how and where you are. The news of your father's illness makes me realize how hard this must be for your dear mother. Here too, not everything is as it should be. My wife has been sick for four or five months now, and has to stay in bed most of the time. If it weren't for my little Dora, it would be very bad for us. She has to milk three cows, make the butter, bake the bread, cook the meals, and nurse her mother.

What kind of work do you have to do? You said you were glad to hear that your sister is doing quite well. She wrote me that she used up \$100 for her household goods etc., and that besides that they saved \$200 this year. Aren't you close friends, as you did not write to her yet; and how is it that your mother never mentioned that Emma is in America? Please give me a little more information about your relationships. Your picture always looks at me so friendly. I hope you will be sure to have enough time to answer these few lines. Keep healthy, and don't forget your Grandfather who loves you.

From: F.A.M.; To: A[ugust]. and Emma Schlomann.

A. and Emma Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Aug. 19, 1883.

Dear Children! I have received your letter of June 17, and I would have sent my congratulations on the birth of your new baby [Clara] already a long time ago, if there were not so much work at harvest time. I only hope you are all still as well as you were when you wrote your last letter. My wife is still sick, sometimes better and sometimes worse.

Two or three days ago, I received a letter from Lina. She thinks that you feel hurt because she did not return the money that she borrowed from Emma. I enclose Lina's letter, from which you can see that she is entirely innocent. She also sent me the envelope and a letter to the German Consul in London, which I will keep as I intend to send both to the Consul <T221> in London to find out whether the money can be recovered. I hope you will write to Lina after you read this letter and relieve her fear. Lina's address is: Karoline Gerstenberg; 8 Blenheim Mount; Bradford; Yorkshire; England. You always misspell my post office: it is called Cashton. Farewell for now, and let me hear from you again soon. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 8 Blenheim Mount, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

August 19, 1883

Dear Lina! I received your letter of Aug. 13. I wrote to Emma and Schlomann today and enclosed your letter. I enclose for you herewith Schlomann's last letter, from which you will see that Emma has fortunately given birth to a second girl, and that they are all well and happy.

From the tone of your letter, I suspect that you are not doing to well in England. Please come over here as soon as you can scrape the money together. Close to N.Y. you will find your sister, who will surely welcome you with open arms; and here is your Grandfather who would still like to embrace his second Lina before he dies. You must not worry about a job; you will find enough here. You will also see from Schlomann's letter that he and Emma arrived in N.Y. entirely without money, and that they are doing well. A common housemaid makes \$2 per week here, and cooks from \$3 to \$5 per week; and then the girls are treated much better here than with the proud snobbish Englishmen.

I will also still write to the Consul in London today. Maybe you can still get your money back. Emma's address is: A. Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J. When you come to N.Y., you take the railroad to Jersey City, and there you can easily inquire for the address. That's enough for now. My wife is still sick. I hope to hear from you again soon.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T222> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg.

Aug. 19, 1883

Dear Daughter! Even if you don't write to me very often, you surely won't mind my writing to you more often. I have been corresponding continually with your two daughters, Lina and Emma. Lina, who is still in England, complains in her last letter of Aug. 1 that she has not yet received a letter from home. Schlomann wrote on June 17 that Emma had another healthy girl; this is now already the second one. He

also writes that they are all healthy and well and doing fine. “We feel happy and contented, and have already saved 300 Talers in the 2-1/2 years; we spent \$100 on our household and have \$200 in cash.” Schlomann is a clerk in a grocery store. I am really surprised that you never wrote about Schlomann and Emma being in America.

How are you? That is a useless question. I have to wait a long time for an answer. My wife has also been sick for about six months and sometimes has to stay in bed. I hope and wish that you are all healthy.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martin Rade.

Mr. Martin Rade, Minister in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony, Germany.

Sept. 6, 1883.

Dear Sir! I have your letter, better called sermon, from Aug. 8 in front of me. It is useless to try to answer it, as I recognize that you cannot understand me or don't want to. But I will still try again.

First, I cannot understand why you should be insulted if I hint that you manage your office for the sake of the income. I am a farmer and I plow my field for the daily bread that I want to reap. The shoemaker makes boots for the same reason; the tailor works for a living and so do most people. We need food to keep us alive.

The fact that so many new churches are being built does not prove the purity of the Christian church; it only proves that there are many stupid people and that the clever ones are taking advantage of the stupidity of the others for their own purposes: the more churches, the more jobs for ministers.

Now about missions: what the rich people donate is hardly worth mentioning, but the poor people are cheated of their hard-earned pfennigs, which they should be using instead to by bed for their children, to finance an expedition to Africa where Christian love will be taught to fat <T223> Negro girls. As for the newspapers—they can be bought or bribed in religious matters as well as in political matters. The church is the last means for keeping people in Christian slavery. Next, concerning the limits of our knowledge: I never believed and never said that reason can explain everything; but I won't bother to brood about things that go above my mental horizon.

“Natural knowledge and our senses do not teach us what is good and what is evil. If thought would bring us to the religion of love, why did the great wise men of antiquity not find this truth?” [from Rade's letter to F.A.M.?] I have a little pamphlet here which shows that Seneca taught the same things as St. Paul. It gives many examples where Seneca taught about love, but in different words. This pamphlet ends as follows: “Meanwhile ... the Christianity of Nature.”

If this essay has not yet convinced you that you are wrong, I want to add some extracts from a speech by Minister Reims that he made in the Lutheran church at La Crosse: [See Buddhism, <T188>.]

“When Christianity came, slavery broke down by itself.” You are wrong about this too, Mr. Rade. The Christian Southern States in America had slavery till a few years ago. Not only the masters but also the slaves were members of Christian churches, and the ministers—for the benefit of the masters—told the poor slaves that in heaven the masters would become the slaves. On the farms in Holstein, not too long ago, the farmers were mere slaves; in Poland the farmers are or were slaves of the noblemen; also in Russia—all countries with the Christian religion.

Haven't you read the Bible recently? I have to give you back this question, or else you would know that there is as much bad in the Bible as good, or even more. I think the Catholics are very right when they don't want to give the Bible into a common man's hand. You no longer know the Christianity that you are trying to teach. How do you conclude <T224> that I reject pure Christian doctrine? I only reject the nonsense that ministers have written into it for their selfish interests. You speak so much about the equality of men, and love for our neighbors. You should also put this into practice. Don't dress better, don't eat better, don't drink better, and don't live better than your neighbor, Mr. Weaver, who has to give his money to beautify your home. Give something to beautify his home, or postpone him to heaven like the Southern slaveholders did with their slaves.

“Test everything and keep the best.” That is exactly my principle; but how am I to do it if not by my reason?

“Without religion, a child will kill his father in order to possess his belongings.” Just read English history: how the Christian kings and princes murdered their fathers and brothers to get the crown.

Your letter would sound very good from a pulpit, where nobody is allowed to talk back. But before the court of reason it would collapse into nothing. Judging from our short acquaintance, I would think that you had been educated as a Jesuit, and I am very much afraid that you and people of your kind will try to obscure or even make impossible the light of reason (the candle of God) that has started to shine in my old home country also.

With my best regards to your sister, I remain your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Wilh. Rud. Jähring.

Mr. Wilh. Rud. Jähring, Minister emerit., Dresden, Altstadt, Glückstrasse 6, ground floor.

Sept. 6 1883.

Dearest friend! When I did not answer your very dear letter sooner, you must not believe that I wanted to 'take revenge.' I surely could say as an excuse that in our short summers the urgent work leaves little time for letter writing, that I always put it off to the next Sunday, but many a <T225> Sunday came when we had guests who wanted to see my garden, or other interruptions; but instead I will confess to a sin of negligence and ask for forgiveness. I enjoyed your letter very much as I was able to hear how comfortable you feel being retired: You live in paradise, even better, because there [in paradise] are no bakers, butchers, grocers, and all the other nice things you have. I can still remember my dear old Dresden very well. I also spent some nice days there in my youth. The trade gardener Seidel of whom you speak is probably an illegitimate son of the Court Gardener or of Traugott and Jacob and [?] Seidel [or Traugott Jacob Seidel?], neither of which had any legitimate children.

So far we have had a very good but cool summer with plenty of rain but not too much, while in the neighboring states tornadoes did a lot of damage, destroyed cities, blew railway cars from their tracks like balloons and rolled them away, causing many people to lose their lives. I only hope that the frost won't come too early this autumn, as everything is doing well in my garden, but is far behind in season. My health is still quite good but my wife has been ailing for six months; she has to stay in bed sometimes. She is at the age (46) where women usually have to suffer a lot.

To show how highly I value your friendship, I will make you my confidant with regard to my correspondence with Mr. Rade, of which I enclose a copy. Please mail the letter after you read it.

Very friendly greetings to your wife and daughters, and best wishes for all the long and undisturbed pleasure of your present nice situation. I remain your honest friend, F.A.M.

The Victory of Religion Over Reason

In Pennsylvania, in an isolated region on the shore of Lake Erie, a wealthy farmer named Sylvester Knoth lived. Some months ago he attended the meetings of the Salvation Army about eternal damnation. The sermons he heard there inflamed his mind so much that he had no more peace. The last two weeks he wandered up and down the banks of the lake—in rain, sunshine, or storm—painting the horrors of hell <T226> in loud monologues, and he told all sinners to repent and escape eternal damnation. Yesterday morning he erected a big cross in the woods, intending to nail his eight year old son to it, believing this to be the only way to save him from hell. With supernatural strength, Knoth held his son while he pushed a big nail through his hand—unmoved by his crying, but some hummingbirds heard it and came to help. After Knoth knocked one of them down with the hammer that was in his hand, he ran away and jumped into the lake.

A search did not find him hiding in the woods, so it was believed that he drowned. But not so: At midnight he returned, broke the door of his house, and knocked his wife unconscious at a single stroke. He went to the room where his only daughter Minna, a pretty girl of 17, was sleeping, tied her hands and feet and carried her to an isolated place in the woods where hundreds of cords of logs were piled up. He made an altar there and tied the girl to it. "I am going to sacrifice you to the Lord, as Abraham did with Isaac," the madman sang, and lighted the pile of wood. The flames soon destroyed the bare limbs of the poor girl, whose miserable cries for mercy only sounded comfortable in his ears. he called on the Lord to receive this sacrifice as penance for his sins as he brought more wood for the fire.

Two young people coming home through the forest from a dance saw the fire in the distance and heard the girl's shouts. One of them threw the crazy father down while the other broke down the burning pile and lifted the almost naked girl down from her fiery bed—still alive. her feet, legs, and shoulders are covered by big painful blisters, and the terrible catastrophe has darkened her mind, so it is feared that she may end up in an asylum.

F.A.M. Diary

<Written in English.> Monday, Sept. 17, 1883.

Clear with a little light frost this morning. Fine weather all day. Forenoon Father went up to Cashton and bought Mother a light pair of shoes and some baskets for going to fair. In the evening Father Mother, Dora and August went to Adolf's [sic] wedding with Loretta Hastings [sic: m. Loretta Haskins 17 Sep 1883—LPM] which was performed by Sqr. Mech. Behrens at Mrs. Hastings lodgings in Cashton. Got home by fine moonlight about 10 o'clock.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T227> Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 8 Blenheim Mount, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

October 13, 1883

You surely will have received my letter of Aug. 19. I wrote at the same time to the Consul in England and received an answer yesterday saying that the amount of your money order was sent about May 6 of last year to the Imperial Foreign Office in Berlin to be paid to you. Therefore, if you have not received your money yet, write to your brother and have him pick it up. It will be strictly necessary for you to send your brother the following lines: "The Imperial Foreign Office in Berlin is requested to pay to my brother Wilhelm Gerstenberg the amount of a money order sent from America, which was returned to Berlin about May 6 of last year by the Imperial General Consulate in London. Karoline Gerstenberg."

On Sept. 15, Schlomann wrote me that he, Emma, and the children were doing fine and that they surely not angry with you, and that you can keep the money if you can get it back; that they only wrote about it because they were having a difficult time when they started out [in America] but now they do not need it any more. So dear Lina, if I might advise you, take the money and use it to buy passage to America. But don't go in the middle of the winter; it is too dangerous. Or do you have to stay a full year in your present job? Hoping to hear from you again soon, I remain your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: A[ugust]. and Emma Schlomann.

A. and Emma Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Oct. 13, 1883.

Dear Children! I have received your letter of Sept. 15, and I was happy to hear that you are all well. Grandmother is pretty well now also, and the rest of us are all healthy. What is your first name? August? Anton? or Adolph?—

Yesterday I received a reply from the Imperial General Consulate in London. Lina will <T228> get her money back.

Last summer was quite cool; wheat, barley, and rye were very good and the harvest weather was wonderful. On Sep. 8 we had a hard frost that damaged my garden considerably, also the corn that was beginning to ripen is frozen. In early Oct. we had a little snowstorm, then nice weather again, and today we have quite a snowstorm, which gives me some time to write letters. So much for now; more next time. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martin Rade.

Mr. Martin Rade, Minister in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Oct. 28, 1883.

Dear Sir! As I started to do in my last letter, I still have to send you the following extract from my latest newspaper, which presents very clearly "The Victory of Religion over Reason." [see <T225>.]

From: F.A.M.; To: Willi. R. Jähring.

Mr. Willi. R. Jähring, Minister emerit., Dresden, Altstadt, Glückstrasse 6, ground floor.

Oct. 28, 1883.

Dearest friend! Hoping that the enclosure in my last letter did not give you indigestion, I will burden you again with some lines. I read in my last paper, datelined London, Oct. 20, that the Trichinosis disease has increased and spread in Saxony; already 500 cases have been reported, etc. The politicians are trying to make people believe that the disease came into the country with American meat. Already last year when I read about Bismarck's prohibition against importing pork, I felt sorry for the poor people in Germany who were thus forced to eat their bread dry. The farmers here in this country live almost exclusively on pork, bread, and potatoes; and nothing is heard about Trichinosis, and the newspapers usually trumpet out everything they can put their hands on. Pigs are surely not fed anywhere as well as here; most of them are fattened on corn. The prohibition has depressed prices so much that fat pigs are worth only three cts. per lb. live weight; butter cost 20 cts. per lb. last summer but this summer it <T229> sells for only 10 cts.—

My fear of an early frost became reality; already on Sept. 8 the corn and all the tender vegetables in my garden froze. The crop of wheat, barley, and rye is very good. Wheat costs 1-1/3 cts. per lb., barley 4/5 cts, and rye 2/3 cts.

I take again the liberty to enclose an open letter for Mr. Rade, as you might be interested in its contents.

Greeting your wife and daughters, and hoping that you will spare some time for me soon, I remain your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: H. Crouse

<Written in English.> to H Crouse

7 Dec 1883 [excerpt].

... August 17 and Karl 19 ... came home tipsy ...

From: F.A.M.; To: ?

<Written in English.> to ?

7 Dec 1883 [excerpt].

... My boy Ernest is now in ... Beaver City, Utah ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T229, cont.> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Dec. 27, 1883.

Dear Daughter. I have received your letter of Sep. 30, and was happy that you still think of your old father. I am 79 years old today, and I will use my birthday to write to you—maybe for the last time, because old people die very quickly and unexpectedly here. I am still quite healthy and able to do my ordinary work. My wife is also better again, and so are all our children. The two youngest [boys], Carl and August, and Dora are at home. Adolph took a wife [m. 17 Sep 1883] and lives in Cashton, and Ernest lives in Beaver City, Utah, in the land of the Mormons. He is doing fine and will get married next spring [m. Martha Ann Bradshaw 25 Dec 1883—he had actually been married two days when this letter was written.—LPM]

I also received another letter from Lina a short time ago from England. Her employers went away and she took another job. She will send her address soon.

As I read in your letter, you had a bad summer. We, on the other hand, had a very good one, always enough rain and never too much (not counting some heavy floods in January that did a lot of damage in the valleys). Everything grew very well, but the season was about a month late. Wheat, barley, and rye were excellent and we had a wonderful harvest weather. Corn, the main crop here, was ruined—half ripe—by a hard night frost on Sept. 8, along with all of the tender plants in my garden. The prohibition that excludes exports of pork from America to Germany for fear of Trichinosis is ridiculous. We all live on pork and know nothing about Trichinosis. However, it has greatly depressed the price of pork and as a result also the price of butter. Fat pigs sold for six to eight cts. per lb. live weight last year, only three cts. this year. <T230> Butter was 20 cts. per lb. last year, this year 10 cts. Wheat costs 1-1/3 cts. per lb., barley 4/5 cts, and rye 2/3 cts (1 cts. = 4 pf.).

I am glad to hear that Doctor Schlüter still remembers me; please greet him from me. You never wrote that your husband suffers much from gout. Some years ago I also had a severe gout attack. My right arm

was completely lame for several months. But it passed and I have never been troubled again since that time. At that time I washed my arm with a solution of saltpeter mixed with brandy. I don't know whether this helped or whether my nature helped itself.

You wrote me about your mother's illness and the good care you give her. I hope God will reward you for it and that in turn your children will take care of you the same way. My wife who is in the corresponding situation here has been a faithful nurse to me during all my frequent severe illness, and I have the consolation that she will close my eyes when my last hour comes.

Best regards from all of us to all of you. Your father, F.A.M.

F.A.M. Diary

<Written in German; translated by Hilmer W. Besel>

[1883 recap; between entries for 31 Dec 1883 and 1 Jan 1884; excerpt.]

... I must also remark that Adolph married a certain Miss Loretta Haskins in autumn [m. 17 Sep 1883], and lives in Cashton. We just received a letter from Ernest also, which informs us that he married Miss Margarethe Bradshaw. He lives in Beaver City, Beaver County, Utah. ...

F.A.M. Diary

<Written in English.> 1 Jan 1884 [excerpt].

... Adolph [sic] has got him a wife and lives with his mother in law in Cashton. Ernest who lives in Beaver City Utah, writes us also that he has got married.

[There is a discrepancy in the dates here: In the following letter dated Jan. 2, F.A.M. apparently doesn't know yet that Ernest is already married.]

From: F.A.M.; To: A[ugust]. and Emma Schломann.

<T230, cont.> A. Schломann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Jan. 2, 1884.

Your little letter, dear Emma, pleased us all very much, especially because we heard that you are all well. We thank you for your good wishes and return them from the bottom of our hearts. We also stepped into the New Year healthy and well.

Since the last letter that I wrote you, we also had a letter from your mother and one from Lina, who wrote that she left her old job and took a new one, and promised to send me her new address in a few days. But a long time has passed and her address has not arrived yet.

You have four [half-] uncles and an aunt. Ernest is 25 years old and lives in Beaver City in the Land of the Mormons. He is doing well and writes that he wants to get married this spring. Adolph is 23, was married last autumn and lives in Cashton. Dora is at home; she will be 21 years old in spring. Carl is 19 and August 17; they are both at home. I was 79 years old on Dec. 27; my wife will be 47 next April.

I think that Lina will come over this spring. She is by herself in England. I still hope to see all of you together. You sure have a nice living. The farmer is surely very much dependent on the weather, but he leads a much nicer and freer life than you, Schломann, seem to have. Now farewell and don't forget about your Grandfather.

END OF BOOK 4 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 5: Jan. 1884 to Apr. 1886

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

<T231> Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche in Schönbach near Löbau, Saxony.

Jan 12, 1884.

It is now nearly a full year since I received your last letter, and I cannot resist the desire of my heart to write a few lines to you, hoping that you will accept them kindly and that you have not excluded me from the number of your friends on account of different viewpoints on religious matters. You must consider how different from yours the conditions have been under which I have lived my life. Childlike faith, as Schiller points out in his "Walk to Essenhammer" ("A pious knight was Fridolin ...") is surely very nice; it fills the heart but not the mind.

On the 27th of last month I was 79 years old, and I still enjoy good health, although my strength has decreased a bit. My wife and children are also healthy.

I still have a married daughter from my first wife in Germany near Hamburg. Her married name is Gerstenberg. She has several children. One son [Wilhelm, b. abt. 1851] is in Berlin, one [prob. Ernst, b. 1863] in Hamburg, and one [prob. Otto, b. abt. 1867] in Altona; they are all married. There is a daughter in England [Karoline 2, b. Nov 1859] and another one [Emma, b. 1861] with her husband in Jersey near N.Y.; although in America she is still 1,000 miles away from me.

I have three children still at home. Our oldest son Ernest is in Utah, the Land of the Mormons, 1,000 miles west of here; Adolph lives in Cashton; both are married. Carl and August and our daughter Dora are still at home.

Because of the large amount of snow last winter, spring was very late and the whole summer was unusually cool. A late frost destroyed the apple and plum blossoms again; pears and cherries don't thrive here at all. Wheat, barley, and rye were very good, however the crops were one month later than usual. Corn, which is the main crop here, was completely ruined—half ripe—on Sept. 8 by a severe night frost; also all my tender vegetables in the garden.

The prohibition that excludes American pork from being imported to Germany is ridiculous and <T232> I feel sorry for the poor people who are thereby forced to eat their bread dry. We all live on pork here and don't know anything about Trichinosis, but it has greatly depressed the price of pork and so also the price of butter. Fat pigs sell for only three cts. per lb. live weight, butter 10 cts, wheat 1-1/3 cts., barley 4/5 cts, and rye 2/3 cts (1 cts. = 4 pf.), meadow hay \$4 to \$5 per 2,000 lb., Timothy hay \$6 to \$8. You can get straw for nothing; also little pigs were given away last autumn; potatoes sell for 1/2 ct. per lb., wheat flour 2-1/4 cts. per lb.

The winter started in Nov.; we have one foot deep snow, and had 40 degrees (Fahrenheit) temperature a few days ago. In summer the temperature rises to 90 or 95 degrees.

Have you heard again from your neighbor who went to Texas? Is he still homesick?

Wishing and hoping that these lines may reach you and your dear family in good health, I remain with "greetings and a kiss," Your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl August Meissner.

Mr. Karl August Meissner, No. 519 Astor Street, Milwaukee.

Jan 20, 1884.

Dear Sir! By chance I got a copy of the Herald for Jan. 3 into my hands. I read there that you and your wife celebrated your silver wedding anniversary. As your name is the same as mine, I cannot resist the impulse to ask you whether we are perhaps relatives. I had an uncle named Karl Meissner who lived in Ütersen near Hamburg and died there also. He came originally from Schönbach in the Saxon Oberlausitz, where my father and grandfather were ministers. Expecting a kind reply, I sign, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl August Meissner.

<T233> Mr. Karl August Meissner, No. 519 Astor Street, Milwaukee.

Jan 27, 1884.

Dear Sir! I received your letter of the 24th with the anniversary songs and was very pleased about everything, and although the branches or our tree may be far apart, they may have all come from the same root. My friends in Germany, who still give my father and grandfather a place of honor in their memory, have taken the trouble to search for the origin of the Meissner family and have sent their results to me in a letter some years ago. [See <T181> letter Dec. 1876 to Mr. Wilh. Rud. Jähning, Minister in Schönbach: "... I received your ... letter with my pedigree ...] As you have the same name, you might also be interested, so I give you the following excerpts.

[M. Camphäusen translation edited by Hilmer W. Besel and Bartocha:] In the year 1650, Emperor Ferdinand III expelled all his Lutheran subjects from his countries. Some of the people who fled first from the little Bohemian town of Platten asked the Elector of Saxony, Johann Georg I, for permission to settle down on the Fastenberg mountain, only one hour distant from Platten. The request was granted. There they took possession of two little cabins.

On Febr. 24, 1652, a petition signed by Caspar Clench [sic; should be Caspar Bernd] and Christopher Meissner was sent to the Elector saying, "Our grandparents, miners, built two cabins for themselves some time ago on the Fastenberg near the Bohemian border, to stay in while working. Afterwards they settled down there permanently. They also received a piece of land from the forester of Burghartsgrühn and paid yearly fees for it in order to have a pasture for a few head of cattle. They also paid civil and church taxes. Now we want to keep on living in these cabins, inherited from our parents, but first we have to rebuild them. We therefore beseech you to give the order that these cabins and pasture land that were given to them be granted to us and our heirs in return for a stipulated inheritance fee, and also that the lumber shall be given to us free of forest tax."

These first eleven settlers on the Fastenberg were followed, on the cold winter night of Christmas [eve] 1653 by 39 other families from Platten, carrying all their belongings on their shoulders. Among these <T234> were Johann Löbel Jr. and Abraham Löbel. These on Febr. 12, 1654, asked the Elector's permission to settle down on the Fastenberg and to build a little town there. Their wish was granted on Feb. 23, 1654, with the condition that they name it, after the Prince's name, Johann Georgen Stadt.

On Nov. 21, 1656, Johann Löbel, Sr. was elected as mayor. On Oct. 18, 1665, Johann Georg II granted tax exemption to the Löbels' house in Johanngeorgenstadt.

Christian Friedrich Meißner was born June 15, 1721 in Johanngeorgenstadt in the Saxon ore fields of Erzgebirge. His parents were descendants of two old refugee families that had come from Bohemia. His father, Master Christian Meißner [or Meichsner—LPM], citizen, blacksmith, [b. 1687] died 1769, 83 years old. His mother, Johanne Christiane Löbel, died 1772, some 70 years old. [Note: Church records in Johanngeorgenstadt give Maria Catherina Löbel (1698-1772) as mother of C.F. M. Furthermore, according to Frank Teller, the Meichsner ancestors of Christian Friedrich Meißner probably came from Eibenstock in Saxony and were already living on the Fastenberg at the time of the Exile.]

He [C.F. M.] attended his hometown school and the Johannis school in Leipzig, 1740 the Bautzen school, 1744 to Leipzig University, and then to Wittenberg. On Jan. 28, 1753, he made his examination speech in Schönbach and on March 11 his first sermon. He had 16 children from two wives, and preached for the last time in 1800. He died [at Schönbach] April 1802 at 80 years of age. He was only 11 months short of his 50th anniversary in office.

On Christmas 1790, Ernst Friedrich Meißner, a ministerial candidate, was appointed assistant to his father. He held this office for 12 years. After his father's death, he worked 15 more years as minister. He died young, on May 1 1817, 53 years and 10 months old. He left three children: Adolf, Ernst, and Karl.

Friedrich Adolph Meissner, born Dec. 27, 1804, last Christmas 79 years old, is the writer of these lines. I have five children, four sons and a daughter. I live 1-1/2 miles from Cashton and do gardening and farming.

So far as I remember, Mühlhäusern is not far away from Johanngeorgenstadt. [There are several places with this name—the most likely one is about 100 miles WNW near Eisenach, between Erfurt and Kassel—LPM.] It would therefore easily be possible that the roots of our family trees are joined.

<T235> I see on the envelope in which you sent the songs, "Wholesale Druggist." Is that your business? I raise 200 to 300 lbs. of sage every year; I could raise twice this amount if I had customers. I still have one barrel here from my last crop, priced at 30 or 40 cts. per lb. Could you perhaps use it for 20 cts.? I will send you a sample. Tomorrow when I take your letter to the post office I will give Mr. Utzinger your greeting.

[See Appendix 2: The Founding of Johanngeorgenstadt.]

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T235, cont.> Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 2 Clifton Villa, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

Febr. 10, 1884.

Dear Lina! I just received your letter, written as you said on New Year's Eve. We were already very much worried about you, as you left us so long without any news. We are very sorry that you are ailing; it is worse when one is among strangers. I am pretty old and you won't be able to depend too much on me, but if you would come over here my wife and children would welcome you with all their hearts and you

would then be among friends and relatives. I should think that your sister and Schlomann would also be very happy. On Christmas I received a letter from Emma. She, her husband, and the children were all well, and they were getting ready to decorate a Christmas tree for little Luise. I will write to Emma today and send her your new address. Now, dear Lina, I and all of us hope and wish that when these lines reach you you will be well again and that you can soon spare an hour to write to us again.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August and Emma Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Febr. 10, 1884.

Dear Children! I just received a letter from Lina. She writes that she is having a lot of trouble with her teeth and often feels depressed. The cause, in her opinion, is the climate. She says that she has not yet received an answer to the letter she wrote you. Accordingly, I am sending you her new address. How is Schlomann's health now? He surely does not have to suffer from malaria in the winter. You write that things are pretty hard for him right now in his job. We don't work all the time <T236> in winter, but if it was a bad year like the last two, it is all we can do to make a living. We can't even think of saving anything. We are all quite well, and hope you are the same. Let us hear from you again soon. We all send our regards. Your Grandfather.

Lina's address is: 2 Clifton Villa, Bradf. Y. Engl.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Febr. 24, 1884.

Dear Children! We have received your letter of the 17th, and we are happy to hear that you are all well and doing fine. You must live awfully economically if you can save so much, while so many people who have their own business can hardly make a living. I think you can still see the difference: When the weeks or the months are over, Schlomann has earned a certain amount of money, whether his employer can spare it or not. Take good care that you don't lose your dearly saved money when you start a business of your own. We will always be happy to hear good news from you. With our best wishes we remain, Your Grandparents ... etc.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 2 Clifton Villa, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

[March or April, 1884.]

Dear Lina! I received your very short letter today. I learned from it that you have a very bad leg, but are otherwise quite healthy. I would be interested to know whether you got your money back, and whether you plan to come over here this summer. We and also the Schlomanns have heartily invited you[?], but you don't say a word about it. Schlomann wrote to me that you sent him \$5 in cash and that you did not want to come because it is so far from home. Don't you know the old German song: "Where is the German's Fatherland? Wherever the German language is spoken and God in Heaven sings his songs, there it shall be; this, wise German, call your own." A letter from England does not get to Kummerfeld much sooner than one from America. For the past two years we have had a neighboring farmer; last year his sister and brother-in-law came over here, and a few days ago his married brother and his parents arrived. They all left their old home and obtain a new one here. Last week I met a German family in a nearby village, <T237> a young wife about 20 years old, her husband a common laborer; the wife's 18 year old sister had just arrived from Germany, and had made the trip from Bremen to N.Y. in 10 days. I honestly have to confess, dear Lina, I cannot become smart from you. You write so very conservatively. I cannot understand what should tie you to England, much less to Kummerfeld. You cannot make a living at home. Open your heart once fully to your old Grandfather. If you don't have the travel money, we will send it.

Ernest (25) and Adolph (23), my two oldest sons, each took a wife last winter. Ernest lives about 1,000 miles from here, and Adolph lives nearby. With greetings from my wife and children, I remain,

Your Grandfather F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Mr. A. Schlomann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

April 28, 1884.

Dear Schlomann and dear Emma! I have received your letter of the 10th and was glad to hear that at least Emma and the children are well. Your rheumatism, dear Schlomann, will probably—let us hope—get better as the weather improves and gets warmer. You must not trouble yourself with too many worries about the future: “Comes time, comes advice also” [German proverb—M.C.].

I cannot understand why Lina does not want to come over. What is keeping her in England? The English are snobbish; here all are equal. A farmer who is our neighbor, a German, has been here only a few years. Last year his sister and brother-in-law arrived; a few days ago his brother with wife and parents came also; so we now have three [German] families in the neighborhood. Last week I met a German family in a nearby village, a young wife about 20 years old, her husband a common laborer; the wife’s 18 year old sister had just arrived from Germany, and had made the trip from Bremen to N.Y. in 10 days. So thousands and thousands are coming and looking for a new home.

For the last two weeks we have had beautiful weather with a little frost at night, so the soil is just dry enough <T238> for sowing. The bushes are starting to get green and the sheep and cows are finding some grass.

I can’t supply your appetite for goose breast [liver?], because the geese had been doing a lot of damage to my garden and so we butchered them all last autumn and did not save their breasts.

We are quite well; only my wife is ailing. I think Emma leads quite a lonely life if you are gone from home all day, but you can’t always have everything just the way you want it.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

June 1, 1884.

Dear Daughter! I have your letter of May 1 in front of me. You write about an obligation that I am supposed to have in my hands, and which you want me to cancel and return. I have looked through all my old papers, but can find no such paper. It has been so long since I left Kummerfeld, and I have seen and learned so much during this time, that I can only remember something vaguely. So I don’t know, either, what the cancellation certificate that you want should look like. Please be so kind as to draft the note as you would like it to be, and then send it to me, and I will sign it and send it back to you.

Best wishes to all from your Father and Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martin Rade.

Mr. Martin Rade, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

June 1, 1884.

Dear Sir! As you took the trouble to answer my last letter, I don’t want to delay acknowledging it, either.

If you cannot understand me, this proves only that your reason is held captive by the prejudices of your profession. I don’t reject at all Christ’s good doctrine, any more than that of the world’s other wise men. I only reject blind faith. I put reason above religion. The cruel stories that I told you should only prove to you where religion can lead if it is not directed by reason. You say Christ has founded a church; according to my understanding he was only a teacher. The clerics themselves have done the church-founding, which wants to live off the stupidity and the <T239> sweat of their fellow men. There is the Lutheran church, whose members believe everything their ministers tell them; there is the Methodist church, and so many other churches. There is Joseph Smith who founded the Mormon church; his apostles go through the whole civilized world and convert the stupid believers, and lead them to Utah where they willingly and patiently give 1/10 of their income to the clerics.

But enough for this time. Even if I don’t write a book, I still have so many necessary things to do that I can hardly spare any time at all.

Your devoted, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

June 1, 1884.

Dearest friend. I have your very dear letter of Febr. 3 in front of me, and I read it very often and with great interest. It is a true consolation for my heart. Your friendship has not failed in the hard test, but I am very much afraid that friend Jähring, who showed so many signs of friendship to me, has admitted to prejudice. I have had a very interesting correspondence with Mr. Rade, but he seems to be a 100% Jesuit; he meets reasons with pious phrases. He is either stupid or a hypocrite (these expressions will appear quite strong to you, but they are American). He always talks about Christian love, but he seems to take care more for his own comfort than for his poor neighbors. You once wrote to me some time ago, how little money the poor weaver makes; it was no more for a full week than one makes here in a day. (My son Adolph has taken a wife last winter. He now works in a shingle mill and each day earns \$1-3/4 = seven Reichsmark. You write in your last letter about a wonderful altar cloth and voluntary donations to the Luther celebration. Wouldn't new clothes for the poor weaver be—according to Christian doctrine—a better gift for God than new clothes for the altar?

June 18, 1884

After a long lasting drought, today we had a nice thunderstorm with rain. I hope it moistened the soil enough so that I can set out my cabbages and many other plants that we have had to keep alive so far by watering them. In general we anticipate a good crop except for the <T240> hay which is very thin.

July 20, 1884

A little bit more, but not too much, rain has improved the grass and everything else. Harvest time is just beginning, and it is looking very good. All that we have to be afraid of now is hail and frost. I will end my letter now and write another one later when I have more time. Goodbye for now and keep up your friendship for your honest friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Meissner.

<Written in English.> Ernest Meissner, Beaver, Utah.

5 Jul 1884 [excerpt].

... Adolf [sic], his wife, and baby [Thalia Dorothea "Dillie," b. 25 May 1884] are visiting us ...

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T240, cont.> Lina Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

July 20, 1884

Dear Lina! I have received your short letter of May 26 and was glad to hear that you are well again and doing quite fine. I hope that your plans may become reality to your satisfaction. We are all well now; we are having wonderful weather and are looking forward to a good harvest.

We will all be happy to hear from you again. Stay healthy, and don't forget your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

A. & Emma Schломann, care of H. Rolfs, Palisade Ave. 367, corner of Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

July 20, 1884.

Dear Children. I received your letter of the 4th and was glad to hear all of you are well and are trying to make life as pleasant as possible. A mother-in-law in the house is often a big help, especially if she loves children; but on the other hand she can be a lot of trouble.

We never had better weather than this spring and summer. We are making hay now, and harvest time will soon begin. Winter wheat and barley are already almost ripe. Everything is doing well, but prices are

very low: butter sells for only 10 cts. per lb., eggs 10 cts. per dozen; wheat 70 to 75 cts. per bushel. Farmers who have the right opportunity are deciding to raise mostly cattle, as fat cattle bring the best prices. My farm is very well suited for this purpose, but all of my boys leave as soon as they come of age. If you want to try farming, you could go in partnership with me. I will sell you half of the farm, and we can manage it together. If you have <T241> about \$400, we should be able to come to an agreement. My farm is worth about \$1,500 to \$2,000 now. With your help, we could increase the value to \$3,000 in a few years. I can't take it with me when I die, but even so I at least have the consolation that I did not work entirely for strangers; if not for my children then for my grandchildren.

We have three cows and two calves, three horses and one colt, five pigs, 16 sheep, and many chickens.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

I, the undersigned Friedrich Adolph Meissner, a former resident of Kummerfeld, certify and declare that I was paid in full in cash and with interest the 1200 Mk—Twelve Hundred Mk—that were promised me by my daughter, the married Karoline Marie Eleonore Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld, in the sales contract dated July 31, 1845.

I therefore propose and grant that the cancellation of these 1,200 Mk be recorded in the debt and pledge protocol or the real estate record book.

== Dated at Portland in the County of Monroe, State of Wisconsin, this 16th day of August, 1884. F.A.M.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Aug. 16, 1884.

Dear Daughter! Here is the receipt that you requested, signed and certified. This will set your mind at rest now.

I am sorry that your health is so bad. What is the reason for your frequent illness? We are all very well except my wife, who is always ailing too.

I received a letter from Schlomann and Emma, saying that they are all well and Clara has already learned to walk. They also say they just received a letter from you. Schlomann's mother has come over, but she is not too fond of Emma and the children, and it seems that she has disturbed the family's peace quite a lot. I received a letter dated May 26 from Lina, saying that her lame leg is better again. It seems as though she wants to get married in England. I will also write to Emma soon and tell her to answer your letter, but it seems to be a habit with all of you (not answering letters!).

I don't know whether I already told you that Ernest and Adolph both got married <T242> and that Ernest has a little son [Ernest Richard, b. 24 Jul 1884] and Adolph has a little girl [Thalia Dorathea Dillie, b. 25 May 1884]. It seems to me that the Meissner family is in no danger of dying out soon.

We are having an excellent year, a bit dry but always enough rain. We have been spared so far from hail and rain storms. Harvest time is nearly over. What we fear most is an early frost. Now I think I must stop, or else you will not have the patience to read such a long letter. Best wishes to all of you from your Father and Grandfather F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August & Emma Schlomann, Jersey City Heights, N.J.

[Aug 1884.]

Dear Children. Some days ago, I received a letter from your mother in Kummerfeld. She says that both her hands and her feet are almost completely lame. She wants to know how you are doing and how the children are. She thinks you did not get her letter, because you haven't answered yet.

You also haven't answered my letter of July 20. I made you what I consider a very generous offer. Please let me know what you plan to do. I think farming is a more pleasant occupation than store keeping. We have the nicest spring water: as cold as ice in summer, never frozen in winter. No king has better cream than what we put in our coffee—the same is true of butter, milk, bread, vegetables, and other things. We are all well; the weather is wonderful. Harvest time is nearly over.

Best wishes to all of you from your Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Aug 24, 1884.

Dear August and Emma! I only made my proposal because I wanted you to be with us, and because I thought it would provide a more comfortable life for you than store keeping; but if you are so happy in your present business and you have a good chance to get rich there, you should stay there of course. Your earlier idea of settling in Dakota made me think that you would prefer living in the <T243> country to city life. You ask me, will it pay off? In terms of money, it might not pay off, but as for a more comfortable and healthier life—yes, I think it would. Perhaps you think that city life is more comfortable.

Now I will try to explain my plan in a little more detail. I will sell you a separate half of my farm for—let's say \$800, and give you a mortgage on it. You won't have to pay me the \$800; you still owe it to me. So then we go in partnership and manage the farm together, each according to his ability: for instance, Schlomann the fields and I the gardens. One week Emma will cook and the next week my wife. However, a farm cannot be managed without capital. If you will put up \$400 or \$600, I will put up the same amount. I own four 40-acre plots (total, 160 acres). You will see how they are situated from the enclosed maps. If you were to come here, my plan was to buy the two additional 40 acre plots marked "O" (naturally, with your consent), so that we would have 240 acres. This would have nearly doubled the value of the farm.

After my death, my half of the farm will go to my wife. She can then replace me with one of the boys and the partnership can go on, or you can sell the farm and divide the money between the two of you. Just as you don't want my family to expel you after my death, I also don't want my wife to be expelled by you.

You misunderstood me: not all of my children have left me. Three are still here: Dora, Carl, and August. You don't seem to know much about American young people: as soon as they are old enough, they want to run off; young people always think they are smarter than their elders. They want to be independent.

We are having a little more rain now; otherwise everything is still the same.

Your Grandfather.

P.S. You offended me a bit—you seem to think I intended to cheat you.

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T244> Lina Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 13 Oak Villas, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

Sept. 6, 1884

Dear Lina! Yesterday I received your letter of Aug. 21. I was not surprised that it was short, because I am now accustomed to that. Judging by your letter's content—that's all I can do, because you never tell me what you think—I have to believe that your marriage prospects don't look so good right now. I have sometimes wondered why such a pretty girl as you must be (judging from your picture) has not yet found a husband. But maybe your expectations are too high and you are too particular. I believe that if you were here you would have just as much opportunity to establish a family; or if you want to go on working for other people, the difference between masters and servants is not as sharp here as it is in England. Here, the maids eat at the same table with their masters, and are not called servants but "hired help." That is true of Americans. The English immigrants still maintain the difference between masters and servants.

You will find a true friend and sister in my daughter Dora, a very good girl, who is only a few years younger than you. I have received two recent letters from your mother. According to her last one, her lame limbs are better again. I have sent her a receipt for the 1,200 Mk that was recorded against her property. Schlomann, Emma, and their children are still doing well. They have started their own business. Schlomann's mother has come over also, but she was not getting along with Emma and she was unfriendly toward the children, so she is not living with them any more. Ernest's wife has a little boy and Adolph's a little girl.

Now, dear Lina, if love does not keep [you?] in England, take fresh courage and come over here. You will be with friends and relatives. Come before the autumn storms make the trip dangerous.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T245> Mr. August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Sept. 9, 1884.

Dear Children! I have received your letter of Sept. 3. In case you decide to come here, I also promise you a friendly reception, and you will have the opportunity to look the matter over before you accept my proposal. In case you should not like my family or my farm, I have a neighbor, a fellow countryman of Schlomann, who lost his health this summer in an accident, and who wants to rent his farm with horses, wagons, and field tools. Maybe you would like this better.

We have been having very hot weather for several weeks, and some severe thunderstorms as well. The wheat harvest time is over. The farmers are busy right now threshing; soon we will start to stack up our wheat. So far we have not yet had frost.

We all send our greetings. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Loretta Meissner.

<Written in English.> To Loretta Meissner, Ontario, Wisconsin. Oct. 26, 1884.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T245, cont.> August & Emma Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Oct. 26, 1884.

Dear Children! I received your letter of the 21st yesterday and have little to answer, but was glad to hear from you. We have had an especially good autumn; only a few days ago the first hard frost. I have had my biggest crop of flower and garden seeds in many years. Next week is the election, and I hope that it will make Cleveland the President. No honest man can vote for such a cheat and briber as Blaine is. Best wishes to all of you from your Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Dec. 1884.

Dear Daughter! Already in August I sent the receipt that you requested, and I haven't yet heard whether you received it. I will be 80 years old this Christmas [season] and my health is still good enough so that I can do my work. Unfortunately, my wife is always ailing. We have had a very beautiful autumn; no frost <T246> until everything was harvested. The crop was excellent, but all the prices are so low: wheat is only one ct. per lb., pork five cts. per lb. (1 ct. = 4 pfennigs). We just elected a new President, and it seems that this time the people have won. I hope and wish that you are enjoying better health. With best wishes to all, your Father and Grandfather ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Dec. 1884.

Dear friend! I have your very dear letter of Sept. 14 in front of me, and learned from it that on almost the same day when frost destroyed our hopes for a good fruit crop, frost also harmed your region. We also had very good weather here earlier, and it was dry at harvest time. Hail and cloudbursts came down only a few miles from here, but we were spared. After the harvest we had a lot of rain which was troublesome for threshing. (Here the wheat etc. is put into big stacks in the field, and is threshed by big machines that are pulled by steam or by horse power.) The autumn was very beautiful. On Oct. 9 we had the first frost, which did no more damage because my seeds were already harvested. Two years ago hail, and last year frost, destroyed everything for me. This year, I had an excellent crop of flower and garden seeds. The potatoes were mostly spoiled. Wheat is unusually beautiful, but the price is barely one ct. per lb. Live fat pigs sell for 3-1/2 cts. per lb., pork 4-1/2 cts. per lb.

The election is over and, thanks mostly to chance, we elected an honest man, Grover Cleveland, for President for the next four years instead of the big scoundrel, James G. Blaine. More people voted for Blaine than for Cleveland. The number of believers who were persuaded by the officials and money makers, who hoped to make a big profit from Blaine's election, was bigger than the number of reasonable people.

You believe my opinion of Martin Rade is wrong or unjust, but somebody looking over a city from a mountain <T247> is better able to judge its size than somebody living in the narrow streets of the town.

You seem to identify the Freethinkers with superstition and unbelief. The Freethinker recognizes reason as the highest law court. He also does not believe in March fogs [?], Seven sleepers [something like Ground Hog Day?] and Twelfth-nights; any more than he believes in Heaven and Hell. Why? Because they are all superstitions; they are all contrary to reason.

You have painted me such a beautiful picture of your Heaven, where God resides as President. Now tell me, where is your Heaven? In the air above, on the moon or sun, or on which star? Doesn't God reside throughout the whole universe?

I don't want to rob you of your religion: It makes you happy. You believe what you have been taught since childhood, what your minister preached every Sunday, without asking your reason whether this could be possible. Schiller says: "Your guilt is paid off; your faith was your share of happiness. You can ask any wise man: what you refuse in a minute, no eternity will bring back."

Now some notes from the papers. The Department of Agriculture reports the value of farm products from the last year: Wheat, \$800 million; corn, \$695 million; wheat [?], \$437 million; hay, \$410 million; butter and cheese, \$353 million; cotton, \$272 million. A committee in the state of Kansas that was appointed to investigate cattle raising in the states west of the Mississippi reports that there are 23 million head of cattle there.

I also read in the papers that Socialists were elected to the German Reichstag. Could you please explain to me what their political principles are? Maybe you could send me a Socialist newspaper.

I will be 80 years old this Christmas [season]. My health is still good enough so that I can do my usual work. I hope and wish that you are also well, and that you will please me very much by a reply soon.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T248> August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Dec. 27, 1884.

Dear Children! I have been hoping for a long time to get a letter from you, to find out how you are getting along. I read in the newspaper that there are many poor and needy working-class people in your region, and as I think these are your main customers, this could be bad for your business. Are all of you well and healthy—especially Emma and the children? I am 80 years old today and my health is still good enough so that I can do my usual work. Unfortunately my wife has been sick for several weeks and has to stay in bed, but she seems to be a little better now. Our Dora takes good care of her and manages the household. Carl and August chop and haul wood, and I am busy with the seeds. Since the beginning of December we have had very cold weather and good tracks for sledding, but for the past few days it has been thawing and raining.

You should be glad that you did not go to Dakota. You might have starved and frozen to death. Many people have come back to live here during the winter. Our farmers are complaining a lot about bad prices, but all of us have enough food and wood and water.

Best wishes to all of you from your Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Benary.

Ernst Benary, Erfurt, Germany.

Jan. 6, 1885.

Dear Sir! Herewith I am sending you an order list and a money order for 19 Mk 89 pf. According to your catalog, the value of the seeds would be a little bit higher than the enclosed amount, but I suspect that you have adjusted your prices for present conditions. Here we are hardly able to get half the price of last year for most products: wheat was \$1 per bushel, now it is less than 50 cts. Landneth in Philadelphia, the biggest seed trade store in America, offers "Select Early Dwarf Erfurt Cauliflower" for #3.25 or 13 Mk per ounce or 31 grams. Other seed traders are even cheaper but unreliable. If possible, I want to have only separate colors for my flower seeds, as almost all kinds that I ordered <T249> last year, although listed as a grand mixture, consisted of only two or three colors. Send the seeds again, as before, as "sample without value."

List of seeds ...

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline Gerstenberg.

Caroline Gerstenberg [b. Nov. 1859], 13 Oak Villas, Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

Jan. 6, 1885

Dear grand-daughter! I have received your letter of Dec. 21, 1884, and I want to thank you for your good wishes for my 80th birthday.

My health is still good enough so that I can do my usual chores. Unfortunately my wife has been lying in bed sick for five or six weeks, but she seems to be better now. Dora and the others return your wishes. We all wish you a Happy New Year and hope soon to be invited to your wedding. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Jan. 6, 1885.

Dear Children! We have received your letter of Dec. 28, and you will surely have received mine of Dec. 27 in the meantime. It was raining as I was writing to you then; on New Year we had a cold snap, followed by some pleasant days and then last night by a real snowstorm. The boys could do nothing today but shovel snow. The snow now lies three feet deep, and it will be several days before we can use the roads again. Mother is slowly getting better. We are glad that your business is doing well so far, and that all of you are well. We also received a short letter yesterday from Lina, but there was nothing in it except birthday and New Year's greetings. She seems to be very reserved [taciturn; incommunicative]. It would make me and all of us happy if Emma would visit us next summer. It would not cost too much: children under five travel free. We return your good wishes for Christmas and the New Year, and send our regards. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T250> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Jan. 16, 1885.

Dear daughter. Yesterday I received your letter of Dec. 23, 84. I was very happy to hear from you once again, and I will answer you again while I still have the strength. Although I still feel quite well, I notice that my strength is decreasing. My wife has had to lie sick in bed for the past six weeks or more, but she seems to be getting better now. Our daughter Dora takes good care of her, and I enjoy seeing how well she gets along with her mother.

As I learned from your letter, death had rid my poor brother [Karl Friedrich Meissner, b. abt. 1809] of the burden of this life. He has had little happiness, not even a loving hand to close his eyes. His wife and children went before him.

My wife is only 48 years old, and is at the age when woman's nature changes. If she gets over it, I hope she will then become very healthy again. It seems that women here in America have to suffer a lot in this regard; also old people die here very quickly.

Since the beginning of Dec. we have been having snow and tracks for sledding. Christmas and New Year were very cold, but now the snow is nearly three feet deep. Carl and August, the two youngest sons, who are still at home, are kept very busy. They chop wood and bring it home so that we can stay warm. We have two work horses, two colts, three cows, one calf, eight sheep, and two pigs; this means a lot of food for such a long winter. The hay has to be picked up from a meadow that is one hour away. The meadow is too wet in summer, and we can only drive there in winter. In summer the horses and cows go to a pasture that we fenced in with iron wire. We have a spring in our garden that forms a small creek. The water is so warm in winter that it never freezes, not even during the coldest weather; in summer it is ice cold.

At the same time as your letter arrived, I also got one from Emma and Schlomann. They seem to be doing well. We write to each other often, and I believe that Schlomann is an industrious, decent man; also thrifty and a good businessman. <T251> You can be proud. I believe Emma has chosen well. I also had a letter from Lina a short time ago with greetings for my birthday, Christmas, and New Year's; this was about all it contained. She seems to be very reserved [taciturn; incommunicative] and never speaks openly about her situation.

I hope that I may live long enough to receive another letter from you. I quite understand that you have been having difficulties. I, too, have to worry about how to make an honest living. Fried doves don't fly into

people's mouths here either. Now farewell, and give my regards to your husband and children. Your Father and Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Emma Schlomann.

<Written in English.> Emma Schlomann. [Or from E.D. M.?)

25 Jan 1885 [excerpt].

... The largest [longest] is for you, the one with the pink ribbons for Louise and the one with the blue ribbon for Clara ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T251, cont.> August Schlomann.

Feb. 23, 1885.

Dear Schlomann! I made you wait a long time before answering your letter of Febr. 4, and I send you herewith 263 papers of flower seeds, all fresh seeds from last year and beautiful varieties. I bill you three cts. per paper and you sell them for five cts. There are several kinds that cost 20 to 25 cts. in the big seed stores.

I hope you will soon tell us whether you can come or not. We don't know Uncle and Aunt in New Orleans. Grandmother does not feel much better yet, and we all have colds as well. The weather is still cold. More later—I don't have time for any more if I want to get to the post office on time. Greetings from all of us. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Smith & Lytle.

Smith & Lytle, Viroqua.

April 13, 1885.

Dear Schlomann! I will send you today by express a package of seeds. It contains a package for you, as well as one for Mr. Graves, Mr. Lysne, and Mr. Hazen, which I ask you to distribute. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T251, cont.> August Schlomann.

April 15, 1885.

Dear Children! Are you still alive, or are all of you dead? On Febr. 23, I sent you two packages of flower seeds by mail. More than six weeks have gone by, and I still don't know whether you have received. them. Grandmother feels better; she is starting to do some kitchen chores again. The snow is all gone and I think we will be able to start <T252> working in the garden by next week. Greetings from all of us to all of you. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann.

April 27, 1885.

Dear Children! I received your letter of the 16th, and would have answered sooner but I returned from a short trip only yesterday. We have not received your letter of March 13. That is the first time, to my knowledge, that a letter addressed to me got lost. We have had beautiful spring weather for the last eight or 10 days. We are all well except Grandmother, who is still ailing. Business is slow here, too; prices are very low. Butter sells for only 12 cts. per lb. all winter long; wheat is now a little bit better; the sale of seeds has started out pretty good. Stay healthy, and let us hear from you again soon.

Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Emigration Depot, Castle Garden, N.Y. City (by the India from Hamburg).

May 19, 1885.

Dear Ernest! Yesterday I received your letter of May 1. If everything goes well, you will arrive in N.Y. at about the same time as this letter. First you surely want to visit your sister Emma and brother-in-law Schlomann who live close to N.Y. You will land at the east side of N.Y.; then you have to go to the west side. There you will find a steamboat to Jersey City, where they live on the hill. Their address is: A. Schl., Jersey City Heights, Corner of Webster A. & Franklin Street.

It is still a long trip from there to Wisconsin. You have to go by the Emigrant Train to Chicago; from there by the Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad to Sparta, Wisc. From Sparta to Cashton is 10 miles; you can either go by foot or again by train. Anyone in Cashton can tell you where we live. Above the depot in Sparta there is a German inn owned by P.M. Oster. I think you should write again from Jersey before you come.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

<T253> May 19, 1885.

Dear Children! Yesterday I received a letter from Ernest Gerstenberg, dated Kummerfeld May 1, 1885. Ernest writes that he and his friend Herman Mayer will leave Hamburg for New York on the ship "India" on May 7. I answered his letter and addressed it to Castle Garden, N.Y., where they will probably have arrived by the time you get this letter.

I have not heard from you for quite a long time, and I hope that you are all still in good health. We are all in good health too, but have our hands full of work as it is a good spring. When you can, send the money for the flower seeds: Take an order for the post office at Sparta, or else for the American Express Co. at Cashton.

With my greetings. Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

== Sunday, June 7, 1885.

Dear Children! A week ago Saturday, Ernest Gerstenberg arrived here well and happy. He gave me your short letter and the money for the flower seeds. Already for the past week, Ernest has been working efficiently with my boys. The cleared out bushes and trees so as to cultivate more land. He seems to be an industrious, decent boy, and he seems to like it here very well, too. Ernest made the trip from N.Y. to Sparta in two days, and the whole trip here from Hamburg cost him only \$8.50—that is surely cheap!

We have unusually warm and fruitful weather. Nature seems to want to make up for what it missed in early spring. We are all quite well, and were glad to hear the same from you. We would all be very happy if you could sell out, or if you could at least visit us this summer.

From: F.A.M.; To: W.C. Wilson.

<Written in English.> to W.C. Wilson, Vernon Co. Leader.

7 Mar 1885 [excerpt].

... I import every year the newest and improved varieties of flower seeds, raise and acclimatize them here and sell them for a trifle what they cost elsewhere. ... In Sparta I am known as the Seed man whose Seed are sure to grow ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry Crouse

<Written in English.> to Henry Crouse, Esq., Moab, Emery Co., Utah June 16, 1885 [excerpt].

... As soon as we can sell out we are going to Washington Territory ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T253, cont.> August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

July 12, 1885.

Dear Children! We received your letter of June 23. First, our congratulations to the young crown prince. We hope you are all still as well as we are, except mother who just won't <T254> get well.

The weather was pretty dry until July 4; on the 5th the long awaited rain came, but just enough to freshen everything; then some hot humid days, and on the 8th a terrible rainstorm that destroyed many houses in Sparta and all around here. It knocked down some oak trees, but otherwise did little or no damage to us. The winter wheat harvest has just started. Most of the fruit around here is very good. Also everything in my garden is growing well.

Ernest has been working for three weeks for a farmer in Leon. For the first three weeks [after he arrived in WI] he worked with us. Ernest and my August cleared a piece of land. Everything went well the first week, but the longer they worked the slower progress they made. In the morning at 6:00 or 6:30 we had coffee, then they sharpened their axes, so they didn't start work until seven or eight o'clock. At 9:30 we brought them breakfast, and we had dinner at 12:00 noon. Then they worked for two or even three hours; at 4:00 coffee and sandwiches, and then they worked till sunset and had supper. During work they often stopped to rest in the grass. I had hoped that Ernest, who was the oldest [b 1863] and who—as I thought—was used to working in Germany, would inspire my August [b 1866], but it was just the opposite. As long as Ernest stayed with us, he liked it quite well, but since he has been working in Leon he talks every Sunday when he visits us about going somewhere else. My Carl said to him, "What if you can't find a better job?" [Ernest answered:] "Then I will walk as long as my soles last, and if they fall off I will go barefoot." The farmer in Leon where Ernest is working now has two other Germans and a Norwegian as helpers. They have to get up at 4:30; then the four of them milk 13 cows, often with the help of their master. Breakfast is at 6, then they go into the fields until 12 o'clock, then there is a one-hour noon break, then they work till six o'clock, then supper and milking afterwards. It is pretty hard for Ernest to find a job because he does not understand English, and the big farmers who want workers are all Americans. The Germans all manage their farms alone with their families.

Business is slack here, the same as everywhere: eggs sell for eight cts. per dozen; butter cannot be sold—a storekeeper who bought butter for eight cts. per lb. sold it in Chicago for five cts. after deducting his expenses.

<T255> We haven't received any letters from Germany or England either, for a long time. I was very surprised that Ernest did not bring along a letter from his mother. Our Ernest who was in Mormon country went to Oregon with his wife and child and a wagon and two horses to look for a farm. With many wishes for Emma and the baby from my wife and Dora, I remain your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Aug 17, 1885.

Dear daughter. I received your very short letter on Aug. 10. I informed Ernest, who has been working for about two months in Leon (10 miles or two hours away from here) that there are letters here for him. He came yesterday, Sunday, to pick them up, and will return again this evening. He said that he likes it well. I asked him how he stands the high temperature; "Oh, a little heat doesn't hurt me." He seems to have very good health. We told him not to sleep on the ground in the grass. "Oh, that won't hurt me." So you see, there can be no question of giving him advice—he is smarter than we are. What language do you speak now in Kummerfeld? Ernest had already learned to say words like "Yes" and "No" instead of "Ja" and "Joh."

With greetings to all, your father F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Aug. 17, 1885.

Dear Children! I have received your friendly letter of July 23. Ernest has not visited us since my last letter to you (6 weeks ago). We did not know whether he was still in Leon or went somewhere else. Last week I received a short letter from Kummerfeld containing several letters for Ernest. I wrote to Leon, and yesterday, Sunday, Ernest came. He is now sitting there and writing letters. He will come back here this evening. Ernest says that he likes it quite well in Leon. To my question how he stood the high temperature he said, "Oh, a little heat doesn't hurt me." He seems to be <T256> very cheerful.

I am very glad that your business is going so well. I think it is impractical to send butter and eggs from here. After a very hot spell, we had two weeks of rain that did lots of harm during harvest time. Last week we had good weather again, and last night a severe thunderstorm.

We all hope and wish that you, the children, and your young son are all well and we greet you very warmly. Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

P.S. Ernest got the news from Kummerfeld that they sold the horse [house?] for 90 [?] and five Mk, and a 10 week old calf for 80 Mk. If we could get prices like that here, farming would be a great job. Here \$40 for a cow with calf is quite a good price, and a 10 week old fat calf would not bring more than \$10. That is exactly half of what they got. I have heard many people say that I have the most beautiful flower garden in the state. Ernest tells us right now that they have still much nicer flowers in Kummerfeld—Kummerfeld must have changed tremendously.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph F. Meissner

<Written in English.> to Adolph F. Meissner, North La Crosse, Wis.

Sep 1885 [excerpt].

... [concerning houses available for rent in Cashton] ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T256, cont.> August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Oct. 21 [1885].

Dear Children. We have not yet received an answer to my last letter of Aug. 17th. Are you still alive? Or maybe you have become so rich that you no longer remember your poor relations. We are all still quite well, but the frost has done a lot of damage this autumn.

Ernest has worked for three months for a farmer for \$15 a month. He now has a grubbing job with a farmer two miles from here and visits us every Sunday. Ernest agreed to clear seven acres and he will get \$7 per acre plus food. He says he can grub an acre in seven to eight days.

We are having very beautiful autumn weather right now with frost at night. A few days ago we had our first snowfall but it has all thawed. Our oldest son, Ernest Meissner, who lived in Utah, emigrated with his wife and child to Oregon, and has claimed a piece of land there for a farm [under Homestead law?]. Adolph, our second son, works in a shingle mill in La Crosse, about 30 miles from here. He has a wife and two children; the youngest—a boy [Albert William Meissner, b. 14 Aug 1885]—is about nine weeks old. Dora, Carl, and August are still at home.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T257> August Schlomann, Corner Webster Ave & Franklin Str., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Nov. 8, 1885.

Dear Children! On Oct. 21, I wrote a letter to you asking whether you are still alive, as you had not yet answered my letter of August 17. Now another 18 days have passed and we still have no answer. Why? Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, 45 South St., Corner of Webster Ave., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Nov. 15, 1885.

Dear Children. Yesterday we received your letter dated the 9th and mailed on the 11th. You say that you are all well and business is going fine. Apparently you did not receive my letter of Oct. 21st. Why don't you inquire at the post office? I read your letter to Ernest, who visits us every Sunday. He will write today also. He says that he also wrote some time ago. We have not heard from Lina nor from Kummerfeld for a long time. If business is going so well, we surely have to put off the pleasure of seeing you here with us, unless you should have a great love for farm life.

We are all well. Carl was 21 years old on Nov. 5, and August was 19 yesterday the 14th. How is the young Master Schlomann doing? What did you name him?

From: Dora Meissner; To: Emma Schlomann.

Emma Schlomann.

Dec. 8, 1885.

Dear Emma! We have received your letter of Nov. 23, and just as your husband has to write in English for you, my father will write in German for me. (I can actually speak and understand German but I cannot write it.) Ernest is still here with us, but he intends to go to the Pine Woods in a week or two, and to come back and work here during winter. Ernest received a letter from your mother a few days ago. They were all well, and Lina from England and Wilhelm from Berlin went home and visited them. When you come to visit us next summer with your children, how they will roll around in the grass and pick flowers! Tell your husband that eggs are now expensive here, too, and that the butter is only bad in winter when the cows live on dry food. Dear Emma, you can certainly answer me in German. We will all be glad to hear from you again, and will be even happier to see you here with us. <T258> I would surely like to visit you, but my mother's health is so unreliable that it is hard for her to get along without me. We had the nicest autumn weather till Dec. 3, only mild frost and hardly any rain at all. But on Dec. 4 we had a regular Dakota blizzard—that is a storm where the wind blows the snow in the air so nobody can open their eyes. Here in the valley we did not feel it so much, but Father came home that day from La Crosse with the horses and wagon, where he had to drive about 20 miles over the "ridge." He says that it was the worst snowstorm he ever experienced in his whole life.

Now dear Emma, kiss the children for me. Mother and Father send their regards, and so do I, to all.

Your Dora Meissner

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Benary.

Ernst Benary, Erfurt, Germany.

Jan. 4, 1886.

I have received your bill, according to which I still owe you 4 Mk and 40 Pf. I would rectify this trifle with pleasure except that so many kinds of seeds were the wrong ones ...

I don't plant my flowers simply for pleasure, but also to raise seeds for sale from them. For example, if I were to raise only enough seeds of each variety for 10 portions and sell them for 10 cts. each, I would make \$4. Besides, if the Chinese Carnations had been as good as those that I received two years ago from you under the same name, I would certainly win first prize for it at the fair. You will therefore understand that I am not in your debt, but that you are in my debt.

As compensation, you can send me the following seeds: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: E.C. K. Wrede.

Mr. E.C. K. Wrede in Brunswick, Ger.

Cashton (formerly Mt. Pisgah) [Jan 1886].

Dear Sir! I thank you for the kindness that you show by sending me your seed catalog. I would surely like to make use of it if we did not have to pay a 20% custom duty, and that is not the worst of it. The manager's fee for clearing merchandise through the Customs House is still much higher, but I hope that Congress will put seeds on the free list this year. If so, then we might be able to do business together. Seed samples in packages up to 12 oz. can be sent by mail and imported duty free. If you wish, you can send me some samples, about 20 grains each, from the following varieties of seeds: ... <T259> Write on the package, "Sample without value," and don't seal it nor put a letter in it. The postage is very little. With my best wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Jan. 24, 1886.

With the arrival of the new year, I had been expecting a letter from you, dearest friend, but my expectations were not fulfilled so I got out your previous letter of last January. Suddenly it dawns on me that I did not answer it! I don't know how this happened.

We have survived for another year, and I still feel as cheerful as last New Year, and I hope and wish that it might be the same with you. For the past four years we have been fortunate that the frost did not destroy the fruit blossoms in the spring and we got a pretty good fruit crop. The summer was unusually good, too good in fact: everything grew well but made no seeds. Suddenly on Sept. 5 a severe frost came and ruined all our hopes. The cause was surely the eclipses of the sun and the moon that preceded. Afterward, we had beautiful autumn weather again, and we have not had very cold weather or very much snow until the past two weeks.

There is not much to say about the political horizon. We farmers want free trade so the prices of things we need will be lower, and the manufacturers want high tariffs so that they can sell their goods for twice the price. The manufacturers grow rich and the farmers poor. Now our Senators fight about this topic in Congress, but Fott [Taft?] seems to be on top and so we will probably lose the battle.

To familiarize you with conditions here, I enclose some excerpts from a local Socialist paper, but you must not believe that they represent my own views, even though they contain a lot of truth. Wishing you and your family well for the New Year, I remain in friendship your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. A. Spies.

<T260> Mr. A. Spies, 107 Fifth Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Jan. 24, 1886.

Dear Sir! Some time ago I read in the "Inter Ocean" a report about your meeting with the parsons of Chicago. This was the first I had heard about the existence of you and your paper. I have surely often heard about the Socialists, but I had not found out what they were. The article in the "Inter Ocean" didn't enlighten me much, either, so I am asking you to send me a sample issue of your paper. I read the report about your meeting with parsons with great interest, and—judging from the report—I think you must be an educated man. I am only a common farmer with nothing but a healthy mind. As a result, I don't believe in heaven and hell, but I am a so-called Freethinker. I am an old man, and it took me a long time to rid myself of the prejudices that I sucked in with my mother's mild, but I believe that I am finally rid of them.

The workers who you have for this purpose, Germans and Irishmen, all brought their prejudices along from the Old Country, and surely only a few of them are at the same educational level as you; and you want to try great things with such unreliable helpers? And by force? You can surely make a big blood bath, but you cannot force your convictions on anybody. Your opponents are too powerful. When a war comes, everybody takes up arms, even only to receive a pension afterward. People are still too stupid—I don't mean you neighborhood, but mine. In the next village there are two Catholic parishes. They send tribute to the Pope, and have masses said for their dead, etc., while their children go barefoot. They don't vote intelligently, but the way some leader tells them, who has perhaps been bribed. Socialism has already partly begun, but they need more training.

The soil belongs to the people. Every family is allowed to receive 160 acres—that's social. But the people, through their representatives, give away millions of acres to railroads; and other millions were sold to big capitalists. That is unsocial, according to your principles. Would it be right to take these millions of acres back by force? I would rather try another way. Let the people make a law by <T261> their representatives, that every family can manage their 160 acres tax free, and that all who own more than 160 acres, or who own land that they don't manage and live on, have to pay a certain tax for every acre. Make the capitalists pay the taxes, instead of the workers. We farmers are nearly all in debt. Just for example, my farm is "assessed" at \$1,000, but I am \$500 in debt. Nevertheless, I have to pay taxes on the whole \$1,000, and I have to pay 10% interest on the \$500 besides. Now let me pay taxes on \$500 and make the capitalist pay taxes on the other \$500. You could say, nobody will lend any more money. What will the rich man do with his money? He cannot eat it.

You seem to be for the protective tariff, so that your factory workers will be paid better. Who has to pay the tariffs? The consumers; the farmers. But we are workers too. We must earn all we have by working, and fried doves don't fly into our mouths.

If the manufacturers have their work done by machines, so that they don't need so many workers, why don't the others go to the country, take up a Homestead, and grow their own food? But there they will have no beer houses, singing clubs, theaters, or dances. There they will find out what work is. eight hours? A

farmer has to work 12 or 14 hours. We farmers are socialists. The father works along with his children, eats with them, and dresses like them; and when interest and taxes are paid, nothing is left, and sometimes there is not even enough to meet our obligations.

I could go on, but will stop for now. I would surely like to subscribe to your weekly paper, but money is scarce and I already take the "Inter Ocean," which costs only \$1. Why are all the German papers so expensive?

Respectfully, ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Schlomann.

[Jan. or Feb. 1886].

Dear Children: We received your letter of Jan. 16th, and were glad to hear that you are all still well and haven't forgotten us. In your business, you probably cannot avoid lending things, and so some losses are also unavoidable. I would advise Schlomann to be come a citizen—the sooner the better. We don't want <T262> to be Germans here any more; we want to be Americans. If I am to be your son's Godfather, you can certainly give him my name, Adolph Friedrich, but call him Hans if you like this name better. None of my children have been baptized but they are still alive. Unfortunately, my wife has been sick again for several weeks and has to stay in bed. Dora and the rest of us are still well. Do you want me to send you flower seeds again, or do you have some left from last year? Ernest has been in the Pinery four weeks but has not written. We have three feet of snow and have had some very cold days, but now it is milder again.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Philips, Price Co., Wis.

Febr. 24, 1886.

Dear Ernest! Yesterday we received your letter (unsigned!) and were glad to hear that you are still alive and doing well. Everything is still the same here, and as you will soon be finished with your work and coming to us, we will discuss it all when you get here. Best wishes from all ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann

March 30, 1886.

Dear Children! We received your letter of the 16th, and were glad to hear that you are all well. It is still the same around here, only Mother is better again. We had a letter from Ernest about four weeks ago. He writes, "I have found a very good job; there is enough food to eat. We will be finished with our work in two weeks." We haven't heard from him again since then. We still have good sledding tracks, and it still snows every day but it is not too cold.

Best wishes to Emma and the children. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

March 29, 1886.

Dearest Friend! First I want to thank you for your friendly letter. In spite of my heretical beliefs, you have not expelled me from your friendship; but Friend Jähring seems to be angry with me. In your last letter, you gave me a look at your work and your thinking. I will try to respond by enclosing a copy of my letter to the editor of the Socialist newspaper in Chicago. If I might make another request of you—I would like to have a picture of you. After I die, it will stand next to mine as a witness of our spiritual friendship.

Which of <T263> the playmates of my youth are still living? Volkmar Jähnichen, the soap maker, or his sister Julie, the minister's wife? [See <T111>: Juliane Ficker in Spremberg near Neusalz.] The Friedler family lived next to the parsonage, and their daughter Christel was my daily playmate. The Meissner family has almost completely died out in Germany (my brother Karl is dead, too), but they seem to be growing new

roots in America. I have four boys. The two oldest each have a girl and a boy [?? But oldest son Ernest has two boys: Ernest b. Jul 1884 and Frederick b. Jan 1886. Adolph has daughter Thalia Dorothea (Dillie) b. may 1884 and son Albert b Aug 1885].

Like the artisan guilds that have existed in Germany, America now has workers' unions that are all joined together in a big union called "Knights of Labor." On orders from their leaders, thousands of workers lay down their work—here this is called a "strike." There are a few strikes right now. Several thousand miners are striking because the mine owners wanted to cut their pay. A whole railroad network is shut down for the same reason.

Our farming machines are now improved so that they bind the wheat right away [as it is cut]. While plowing, the farmer no longer walks behind, but sits on the plow. The hay is raked by horses while the driver sits on the rake. In the barn, the hay is unloaded from the wagon by a horse. Big factories are heated by burning air (gas!) instead of coal. This air comes out of the ground and is transported by pipelines hundreds of miles long. But maybe you have all these things in Germany too.

== April, 1886.

Today's paper brings me the news that Grand Worker Powderly [Terence V. Powderly, Grand Master Workman] of the "Knights of Labor" is negotiating with Jay Gould, president of the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company, to put an end to the strike, but they were unable to reach an agreement. The newspaper states that 51,000 workers stopped working, causing 450,000 people ...

END OF BOOK 5 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 6: Apr. 1886 to Jul. 1894

From: F.A.M.; To: Gustav Goltz.

<T264> Gustav Goltz, South of Foundry [?].

April 26, 1886.

Dear Friend. The cow bore a healthy calf last Saturday evening. I will bring it down this week, or next Monday.

With my regards, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Kuhman.

Mr. Kuhman, Sparta, Wisc..

May 6, 1886.

Dear Friend. I received your letter yesterday evening. You say you want to buy a cow but you don't have time to come up and look at it. You want me to bring the cow down, and you will buy it if you like it. But I don't have any more time than you do, and I can't drag my cow around in such an uncertain way. Goltz already cheated me once, and I don't want to be cheated again.

The cow that is for sale is black, well proportioned, and had her second calf about a week ago. She is a good milk cow, and not mean or wild. The price is \$25. You probably work in the paper mill. If Mr. Newton or the Clerk writes a few lines saying that the money is there ready for me, I will bring you the cow next week.

From: E.D.M.; To: Henry Crouse

<Written in English.> to Henry Crouse, Moab, Utah.

May 9, 1886 [excerpt], from your Sister.

... Our boy Ernest lives at Kerbyville, Josephine Co., Oregon ... has two children, a girl and a boy ... Ernest Gerstenberg ... of 23 summers ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T264, cont.> August Schlomann, 45 South St., Corner of Webster Ave., Jersey City Heights, N.J.

[May or June, 1886].

Dear Children! We would like to know whether you are still alive and well, and whether the workers' movement has harmed your business, too. We have not heard from you since March 16th. We are all well now except Grandmother who is always ailing. Ernest Gerstenberg has returned from the Pinery healthy and well. He cooked for us for four weeks, and is now working in the shingle mill in La Crosse where my Adolph works. As we hear from other people, he is well and doing find. But he doesn't take good care of his belongings. He told us that he lost a \$20 gold piece in the pine woods; last year he lost \$7 at the county fair in Sparta. Here in our house, we also found a \$5 bill in the trash.

We are having very dry weather, which is doing a lot of damage around here. Many farmers who live on the Ridge have no water. Their pastures have dried up and the summer wheat that just came up has stopped growing.

We have plenty of spring water and we have to water a lot. My winter wheat <T265> and corn are excellent. Let us hear from you soon. Our regards to all of you. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

June 23, 1886.

Dearest Friend! Your friendly letter of May 2 finally reached the right harbor after a long journey. The reason for this was that you changed my address a little. I want to express my deepest gratitude for the trouble you are taking on my behalf, to make the life of my youth mates known to me.

The clouds in the political sky are gone, but with great desire we are looking out for clouds in our weather sky, as we are tortured by a long lasting drought. Winter wheat, barley, and corn are doing well so far; rye, oats, and summer wheat are one foot high and already have ears. We will not have much hay this summer, and the fruit crop was destroyed again by frost on May 16.

The reason for your refusal to send me your picture remain quite obscure to me.

Concerning the much-praised Christian Love, I have to confess that in my opinion the so-called Christians possess it least of anyone. To prove this, I only need to direct your attention to the recent cruelties in Belfast in Ireland in the name of religion. In my opinion, all religions were invented for the sole purpose of enslaving people. Jesus, Buddha, and Mohammed were good teachers of morals, but—the people who turned their doctrines into religions did it only for their own advantage; they sowed discord and forgot that all men are brothers.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Jersey City.

July 7 [1886].

Dear Children! We received your letter of June 18, and were glad to hear that all of you are still alive at least. The intense hot spell and drought still continues, and even gets worse from day to day. Your aunt who has traveled to Washington Terr. probably has friends and relatives there already. What is her husband's profession, and in which county is Ellensburg? About the strike, I fully agree with you—they want to work only eight hours. <T266> Your business could not exist if you worked only eight hours [a day]; neither could the farmers. My Adolph visited us on July 4 with his wife and two lovely children, and stayed a few days. We also expected Ernest [G.] but he did not come. People say he spends all his money in the saloons. he makes \$1.40 per day. I am very sorry for him, but he won't listen to advice. He is too smart. Emma said he was never dependent upon himself [never dependable?], and he told us that he was his own master since he was 14 years old and made his own living with strangers.

Aunt Dora nearly always has a toothache. She has had a few teeth pulled, but that doesn't help. Grandmother has to do most of the work by herself. Louise [Emma's daughter, b. abt. 1881—anticipating her visit] will not have to herd the cows; they are on pasture. But there are plenty of little things to do, so the time will pass quickly for her. Dora—as old as she is—is only a child herself, and likes to play sometimes too.

July 9, 1886:

This morning we had a nice shower. The good Lord has not completely forgotten us.

July 19, 1886:

Since the single shower of rain, the hot spell and drought has continued, although the last few nights have been cold. The drought is doing a lot of damage, but hail and storms could do even worse harm. We have been bringing in the crops and making hay.

With greetings to all of you, your Grandfather.

Dora went to La Crosse with Adolph and his wife for a few days, so she is not at home.

P.S. I am afraid that I'll never have the pleasure of seeing you visit us. You will soon become so used to city ways that you can't enjoy farm life.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Works for Bernhard Brook, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

Sept. 26, 1886.

Dear Ernest! On the 21st of this month Dora mailed you a <T267> package with your picture in it, at the post office at Cashton. She addressed it to Adolph F. Meissner, as you had never written to her personally. Yesterday we got a letter from Loretta, saying that Adolph and his wife and children have moved. I will write to the postmaster in Eldred, instructing him to deliver the package to you. I never received the letter that you claim to have written to me from La Crosse. If you aren't going to Oregon you can stay with us again this winter. We are the same as always, and send out greetings. Your Grandfather.

When you write to us, use the correct address: Cashton, Monroe Co., Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: Postmaster at Eldred, Dakota Terr.

<Written in English.> to Postmaster at Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

26 Sep 1886 [excerpt].

... My son Adolph F. Meissner ... has left for Oregon ... if Ernest is still there, I wish you to deliver the pictures and accompanying letter to Ernest Gerstenberg instead of returning the same. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

<T267, cont.> Ernest Gerstenberg, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

Oct. 27, 1886.

Dear Ernest! I see from your letter that you are well and healthy, and are making good money. Loretta wrote in a letter to her mother that they arrived safely at Ernest Meissner's place in Oregon and that they would like to return right away if they had the money. We would like to have you stay with us again this winter. Carl, August, and Dora send their regards.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Nov. 15, 1886.

Dear Friend! I have received your letter of Sept. 12, 1886 and was happy to hear that the good Lord gave you such a good crop. We cannot complain either. Summer was very dry, the winter wheat was very good, and the whole autumn was very beautiful. We have not yet had any snow so far, and only mild frost.

I return Mr. Rade's greeting, in the same friendly way as he has given it. I was happy to hear that he does not consider me an outcast, despite my different religious views. <T268> I also think that Minister Rade is a very good man despite his pious faith, who preaches what he is paid to preach. You seem to consider it an insult that I called Mr. Rade a disciple of Loyola [i.e., a Jesuit: see <T239> June 1, 1884]; instead, he should consider it an honor. The Jesuits, who were expelled from almost every country in Europe,

have got a good foothold here and are very highly respected, as well as the Catholics of other orders. Almost every little town has a monastery and three, four, five, or six churches. You can see from this that we are pious. You find it strange that a Jewish Rabbi preached in a Christian church. Here we all believe in one God. The good woman who gave you a description of America would surely know better if she were to come over here.

Only a short time ago, eight Socialists were condemned to death in Chicago—among them Mr. Spies to whom I wrote the letter of which I sent a copy to you. [Haymarket riot, May 4, 1886: “The affair aroused anti-labor feeling, weakening the labor movement.” This, along with the failure of a strike in 1886 against Gould’s railroads, led to the decline of the Knights of Labor.—World Book Encyclopedia.]

[Insert from <T269>:] In La Crosse, a town 28 Engl. miles from here, due to a complaint from all the ministers who combined their efforts to support the law, the Mayor had everyone arrested who did any business on Sunday, as there are butchers, bakers, barbers, newspaper printers, streetcar and railway conductors, beer and brandy inns, and all kinds of other stores. The next Sunday the ministers were arrested by the contrary party because they also do business on Sunday. In Sparta, a small town 16 miles from here, anyone who wants to sell beer or brandy has to pay \$600 a year in advance, but they cannot sell it on Sunday. [End of insert.]

Here in the country we live quite peacefully. Everyone believes whatever he wants. Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, and whatever they might be, are good neighbors. You can see what religion can do, by the fact that in Ohio a woman claims to be a goddess in a human body. She has many followers, and a short time ago a respected preacher joined the community. Faith works wonders. The reason of many people is still very limited.

In Chicago, 25,000 workers of the “Pork and Beef Packers” (people who slaughter pigs and steers and cure the meat!) are on strike. That means they aren’t working because their employers want them to work 10 hours a day and they want to work only eight hours.

In spite of the beautiful weather and the good crop, the farmers complain about hard times anyway, because prices are so low. Fat steers sell for 1-1/2 to two cts. <T269> a pound live weight, pigs three cts., summer wheat 50 cts., winter wheat 65 cts.; butter was only eight cts. per lb. in summer, 15 cts. now.

I hope, dear friend, that this letter of mine will reach you while you are not only alive but also in good health. I feel no great change in my strength. I hope you will favor me soon with another letter. Thanking you for the many signs of friendship that you have given me, I remain your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

Nov. 18, 1886.

Dear Ernest! Yesterday we received your letter of the 14th. Until the day before yesterday, we had the most beautiful autumn weather: sunshine, mild frost and no rain. The cattle were still on the pasture. For the past two days it has been snowing all the time. We already have six inches now. We sowed wheat onto the cultivated land on the hill; the boys also made a nice road up to it. We have received 20 small carps from Washington that we want to put into our little lake. We had a crop of 68 bu. wheat and 48 bu. rye, all put in and threshed in beautiful weather. Our corn was also very nice. We fattened a cow and want to slaughter it tomorrow. <T270> We also have two big pigs that need to be slaughtered. So we won’t run out of meat and bread this winter, although money is scarce.

You wrote that you would like to have your pictures. I already told you in my last letter that your pictures were in the package that we sent to Adolph, and that I wrote to the Postmaster to give the package and the letter to you. Didn’t you sign the receipt in Adolph’s name? If you have the package and the letter addressed to Adolph, then open them and you will find everything.

You say you won’t be staying where you are any longer. What are you thinking of doing? Will you come back here or go to Oregon? Ernest’s wife wrote us that Adolf [sic] and Ernest took up homestead claims next to each other, and that they are going to build a barn right away. Both families and their four kids live together now in one small room.

Sophie Kloes, wife of Henry Kloes in Cashton, died a short time ago after the birth of her baby. Dora is not married yet—she will soon go to a cloister [joke-LPM]. We are all quite well and send our greetings. Write again soon. We have not heard from Schломann nor from Kummerfeld for a long time.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Louis Runkel.

Louis Runkel, Druggist, La Crosse, Wis.

Nov. 26, 1886.

Dear Sir! I received your inquiry about marjoram and thyme on Nov. 23rd. I don't have any more marjoram, but I still have 11 half-pounds of thyme stalks and 1/2 lb. of leaves. If you wish, I can reduce the stalks to leaves, but I believe that the leaves retain their strength better on the stalk. Thyme sells for 25 cts. per lb. with stalks and 50 cts. without; or if you take my entire stock I will throw in the 1/2 lb. of leaves for <T271> half price (25 cts.) Let me know whether you want to have it shipped by express or otherwise.

I still have about 100 lbs of sage, for 20 cts. per lb.

If you will tell me how much marjoram and thyme I can sell you next autumn, I will take this into consideration when I plant it.

From: F.A.M.; To: Louis Runkel.

Louis Runkel, La Crosse, Wis.

Nov. 29, 1886.

I will send you today six lb. thyme for 25 cts. per lb. = \$1.50 by express.

Received with thanks.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Dec. 3, 1886.

Dear Children! Even if you are still alive, you seem to have entirely forgotten about us. If August has too much to do with his business, Emma at least could write a few lines. We are all quite well. My Adolph went to his brother to Oregon with his wife and children and took up a homestead claim there. Ernest Gerstenberg loaned Adolph \$40 more for his trip. About two weeks ago we received a letter from Ernest Gerstenberg. He was in Dakota—well and happy—and was working with a steam-powered threshing machine, making \$2 a day plus food. Dora sent her picture to Emma some time ago. Did you receive it?—

We send you our greetings. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Joseph Schamm.

Joseph Schamm, La Crosse, Wis.

Dec. 11, 1886.

Dear friend. I have a good fat cow that I would like to sell to you. I think it would be best to slaughter the cow here, put it on a wagon, and drive it to you. How much would you pay per lb., and when would you want the meat? Or would you rather come up here and buy the cow while it is alive? Please reply soon.

Your friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T272> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Dec. 27, 1886.

Dear daughter. It certainly seems that you don't care whether I am still alive or dead, but anyhow I want to let you know that I am celebrating my birthday today and that I am in very good health. I am now 82 years old. My wife has been ailing ever since her last childbirth—18 years ago [17—see <T126>: dau, b. autumn 1869] The child lay the wrong way around and was born dead.

It seems strange to me, dear Lina, when I think of you as an old woman already [b. Nov 1826—now 60]. My two oldest sons, Ernest and Adolph, who each have a wife and two children, are in Oregon, 2,000 miles

west of here. They each have a homestead claim = 160 acres and are making farms for themselves. The climate there is a little warmer than here. Carl and August are still at home, also our Dora.

Your son Ernest worked with my Adolph last summer in La Crosse, 30 miles from here, in a shingle mill. In autumn, both went to Dakota to help with the harvest. Adolph went on to Oregon, and your Ernest [G.] wrote me that he is working with a threshing machine and makes \$2 a day plus food. Since then I have not heard from him. The enclosed picture shows Ernest [G—see also 1 Jan 1887 letter to E.G. below.] seated with my daughter Dora beside him and a Norwegian girl standing behind them.

Last summer was very dry, but good nevertheless. The autumn was very beautiful, and now we have good tracks for sledding, but without severe cold. We have not heard from Schlomanns lately.

With the sincere wish that these lines may reach you in good health, I wish you a Happy New Year. Your father.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Jersey City Heights, N.J.

Dec. 27, 1886.

Dear Children! As you have not yet answered my letter of Dec. 5, I will try once again to rouse you from your sleep. <T273> I am 82 years old today, and am still enjoying good health; so are all the others except Grandmother, who is always ailing. We hope that you may enter the New Year happy and well. Next summer, if Emma cannot come out, you must at least send us Louise, so she can play in the fresh air.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Biron.

Mr. Biron, Editor of a German Journal, Milwaukee.

[Dec 1886 or Jan 1887].

Dear Sir! If these lines reach you (I do not have an exact address. I can only remember that I read many years ago a Freethinker paper called "The Torch" (Fackel). I would like to ask you to send me a free sample issue of the Freethinker paper if you still publish it.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

Jan. 1, 1887.

Dear Ernest! We received your letter of the 26th of last month, and we thank you for your kind Christmas and New Year wishes. Our New Year wish for you in return is for a young, pretty wife, and a good farm where you will be able to raise young Gerstenbergs by the dozen.

Enclosed you will find a letter from your mother. I have already answered her, and sent her a picture of you and Dora.

I tried to explain to you how it came about that we addressed your pictures to Adolph, but you seem unable to understand me. I now enclose a letter to Adolph and 25 cts. You should mail it, and they will send your pictures to you.

We are all well; there is 1/2 foot of snow and good sledding tracks.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August and Emma Schlomann

Sunday, Jan. 9, 1887.

You finally sent me a sign! We no longer knew what to think, and we were starting to fear that you had an accident. I picked up your letter on Friday when I went to the post office. Last evening, Adolph [August?] went there again and brought home your Christmas gift. We are sorry to have you go to so much expense.

On Dec. 28, I received a letter (dated Dec. 14) from your mother at Kummerfeld. She is very much worried about Ernest because he has not written. I answered her at once and <T274> enclosed a letter that I had received from Ernest a few days earlier, as well as a letter from Dora and a picture of Ernest. This should calm her down for now.

I have looked on the map for Ellensburg [WA] (the place where your aunt lives). It is in the middle of the state in Yakima Co, on the Yakima river, in a very fruitful but still very sparsely settled region, but a railroad is planned which will go close by.

We also received a letter from Oregon yesterday. Last autumn the boys build a house, a barn, and chicken and pig sheds on their claims, and cleared four acres of land. They have not had any snow yet. Winter has just started, with rain.

We had a very dry summer, but a good crop nevertheless. Now we have 1/2 foot of snow and good sledding tracks. The boys are getting firewood for summer and making railroad ties. Farm products are very cheap here. I just sold a fat cow for \$18.

If you, dear Schlomann, have trouble with your business, why don't you confide in me. You think of me as a friend. We hope you won't make us wait so long again for news about you. We all send our regards. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph F. Meissner.

<Written in English.> Adolph F. Meissner, Kirbyville, Josephine Co., Oregon.

Jan. 1887.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Hase.

Mr. Hase, Ellensburg, Washington Terr.

Jan. 9, 1887.

Dear Sir! I am the grandfather of Emma Schlomann in Jersey City, and for a long time I have been planning to sell out here and go to Washington, and I just heard from Schlomann that you have already lived there for several years. How do you like it? Aren't the summers too dry and the winters too wet? Is there homestead land near where you live? How much does land cost per acre? Do you have good drinking water, or is it alkaline? If you could give me some information about all of this, I would be very much obliged to you.

From: F.A.M.; To: Michael Biron.

<T275> Michael Biron, Milwaukee, Wis.

[Jan 1887].

Dear Sir! You will find enclosed 10 cts for the issue of the "Lucifer" that you sent me. After having read it, I understand that you write for a mostly Catholic audience. With your permission, I will tell you some of the thoughts that crossed my mind while reading.

You commend Jesus' doctrine as the ideal humanity that makes man happy. But I believe that the deity, or the "Word," as you call it, has spoken through many wise men before and after Christ. Christianity (the Christian church) can exhibit more cruelties than any other known religion. Jesus' doctrine, we must love our enemies, is impossible. Prussia is arming herself, fearing France's hostility. She should say instead, "Oh, dear France, don't hurt me. I will gladly give you whatever you want."

You prove by old books that Christ was a child of love. My reason already convinced me of this a long time ago. Among plants (as well as animals!) no female being brings forth fruit or seed if it was not stimulated by a male being. The origin of Christ is supposed to honor all illegitimate children. There is a natural marriage and a legal marriage, just as there is a religion and a church.

You say that the New Year will bring us a step closer to our ideal. It seems to me that the present era is going backward. I cannot find any of the big newspapers that think quite free. They accuse the Socialists and the Freethinkers whenever anything bad happens. All over the place, monasteries have been built and bigotry raises its proud head.

I also cannot agree with you on the question of property. You say that nature has been formed from stones, so the material from which it is made cannot be separated from Nature itself[?]. I would certainly like to know, when you go out in the wilderness and spend long years carving a farm out of a raw piece of land with hard toil and deprivation, <T276> how you can separate your work from the earth and soil that you have brought into this beautiful condition. You want inheritance tax like in England, where the real estate that one has occupied reverts to the King if the family dies out. You take the Bible as your rehabilitation [authority?], but who made the Bible, God or men?—

In America, the land belongs to the people. Anyone who wants to work can have 160 acres for his own use. Unfortunately, the representatives of the people have wasted millions of acres. Now let the people make a law that the 160 acres that are managed and occupied by a family are tax free, and that all other land is supposed to pay a certain amount of tax. Then tax capital, not labor. A farmer whose farm is supposed to be worth \$1,000, but who is \$1,000 in debt, has to pay taxes on \$1000 and interest on \$1000 as well. The capitalist who owns the money does not have to pay anything.

I don't want to bore you any further with my idle talk. I have little hope. People are too stupid. Papers like yours are not read widely enough, and the big newspapers all turn their sails into the wind.

To make myself better known to you, I will tell you that I am 82 years old and that it has taken me a long time to get rid of the prejudices that I swallowed with my mother's milk, but now I think I am almost entirely free, and have chosen reason as my guide.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben.

Jan. 27, 1887.

As payment for your bill of Feb 2 1886 for 23.15 Mk, I send you herewith a money order for 22 Mk. [I have assumed credit for:] Phlox, best mixture, first quality, 1.40 Mk. From these phlox, not a single plant came up. I still had a few seeds of the same variety that I received from you two years ago. They all grew nicely. About the other seeds ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph F. Meissner.

<Written in English.> Adolph F. Meissner, Kirbyville, Josephine Co., Oregon.

Jan 1887 [excerpt].

... near Ernest ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T277> August and Emma Schlomann

[Feb. 1887].

Dear Children. We received your letter of the 3rd and we were glad to hear that all of you are well. We are all still the same as always.

I certainly believed for a long time that the continuing strikes are doing a lot of harm to your business. The farmers here are also having hard times because of the low prices for farm products. However, many people who own wooded land can help themselves out by making railroad ties, which bring more money.

We have had a very moderate winter, little snow, no severe cold except for a few days, and very good sledding tracks. Yesterday we had the first thawing weather this winter. It rained all day, but not enough to destroy the sledding tracks. Today we have north wind again and the weather is bright and clear.

Greeting all of you from us, I remain, your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl August Meissner.

Mr. Karl August Meissner, No. 519 Astor Street, Milwaukee.

Febr. 25, 1887.

Dearest friend! I see from the announcement that you sent about your entrance into the Chas Bainboal [?] Co. that you have not completely forgotten about your name-mate. I also see that you are still in good health. I was 82 years old last Christmas, and am still enjoying very good health.

I still have about 60 lb. of good sage here. If you could use it in your business, it would surely please me. I sell it here for 20 cts. per lb. wholesale and 40 cts. retail. If you wish, I will send you a sample.

With my friendly greetings, your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. Sternberger.

Mr. Sternberger.

March 25, 1887.

I received your letter a bit late. The new Postmaster in Sparta probably never heard of Mt. Pisgah. Since the railroad was built, the name is changed to Cashton. I therefore ask you to excuse me for being late.

<T278> I enclose the Stocks seeds that you requested. If the weather permits, I will come to Bangor next week.

With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

March 25, 1887.

Dear Ernest! We received your letter of March 17. Do you want to get married, since you need money so badly? I would be glad to send you \$100 if I had it, but unfortunately I do not. It is so hard to sell anything. If you want to have a cow, you can certainly have one. If we have good winter wheat, I might make some money in autumn.

Have you written to your mother? Adolph's address is: Kerbyville, Josephine Co., Oregon. We will be happy to hear from you now and then.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann

May 24, 1887.

Dear Children. You are surely wondering why I have not yet answered your letter of March 29. If one puts off something once, he will hardly ever get around to it again. As an excuse, I can say that I had my head and hands full all the time. Carl has been sick in bed for the past five weeks now. Also my wife has had a bad leg for about the same time, so not only were both of them unable to help me, but also Dora had to nurse them day and night. So August and I had to do all the spring work alone.

You say you have a lot of time now. Why don't you send Dora [?? should be Louise?] to visit us? How do you dare to think that a farmer and gardener has lots of spare time in the spring, even if no sickness gets in the way?

We were all glad to hear that your little family was increased by a small boy, and we hope and wish that Emma and the little prince are well.

Karl feels better now, but I am afraid that it will take <T279> a long time for my wife to get well. We are having a very hot and dry spring and are waiting for rain every day, but in vain. You see that everyone has their own trouble.

With greetings and a kisses, I remain, your Grandfather.

P.S. It has been a long time since we last heard from Ernest. He was in Dakota.

Concerning Eva's Illness:

See <T126>: A daughter died at birth in autumn 1869 when she was 32. Her last live birth was Nov 1866. See also <T272> Dec 1886. "My wife has been ailing ever since her last childbirth—18 years ago [i.e., 1868?] The child lay the wrong way around and was born dead." This letter to August and Emma Schlomann dated May 24, 1887 is the first mention of her "bad leg," which was sore for the rest of her life, beginning just about at her 50th birthday. See <T297> Dec. 1888: "Her leg is sore from her foot almost up to her knee. It is swollen and infected, and a watery liquid comes through the skin, along with considerable itching. She has tried all kinds of lotions, but nothing helps. New skin forms but then breaks open again." These symptoms resemble "adult onset" diabetes, which could have been aggravated by childbirth.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

May 27, 1887.

After I received the "Evangelical Lutheran Community Newspaper," your welcome letter arrived also. If your handwriting weren't always the same, I would think that your letters were composed by different people. While some of them seem quite free-thinking, others are back in darkness; but I still value your letters, whether they express firm belief or free thought. You are very much mistaken if you think that reason will gain the upper hand here in America. Here more than anywhere else, I think, the ministers try hard to keep the people in ignorance. Also in political matters we have a good comparison to your Gypsies—the black population. They were slaves a few years ago but can now be found in Congress as legislators.

I have read about your big snow blockade. We had something similar in Dakota, where houses and stables were buried under the snow, so that people had to climb out of their roofs and dig holes into the stables from above to keep the cattle from choking. Here in Wis. we had the nicest winter, with little snow and good sledding tracks, so that the farmers were able to work in the woods all the time. Spring planting time was also very good, but the good weather is still continuing and it is so dry that many seeds aren't coming up at all. There will be little or no hay.

As you will have learned by reading this, I am still alive, and I still enjoy quite good health. In spite of this, I am not making any calculations as to how long I still have to carry the <T280> burden of life. Here in America, everything goes at a fast pace: red today, dead tomorrow.

With friendly greetings, your friend F.A.M.

If it has given you as much pleasure as it did to me, then let us continue our exchange of ideas as long as we can hold a pen.

P.S. I think the climate here is much the same as in Schönbach. We have been eating lettuce from the garden for the past two weeks. The peas are in bloom. Fruit trees blossomed without a frost and promise a rich crop, but many garden seeds have not come up because it is too dry. The cattle feed themselves on the pasture. A pound of butter sells for 50 pfennigs, and for twice as much in the city; a dozen eggs, 30 pfennigs.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph F. Meissner.

<Written in English.> Adolph F. Meissner, Waldo, Josephine Co., Oregon.

24 Jul 1887 [excerpt].

... How far are you from Ernest? We hardly understand how you can manage such a big farm. Kiss Dillie and Albert for Grandpa ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T280, cont.> August Schlomann

July 24, 1887.

Dear Children. I am writing to find out how you are doing. How are Emma and the little prince and the other children? We would surely be happy if you could send Louise to us for this summer, but I am not sure the child could make the trip alone, and besides Emma might need her there to rock the little prince to sleep. How is your business coming along?

We are having a very dry summer and high temperatures, 100 degrees and more. For many farmers, everything has burned up—that is, dried up. Things are quite good with us. We have a cool spring that never fails right at our door. Many farmers have to carry water for two miles and their cattle are starving on the pasture.

Grandmother's leg has improved enough so that she can do light housework. Carl is also better, but has not yet recovered his strength.

We have not heard from Kummerfeld nor from Karoline (is she still in England?) for a long time, nor from Ernest Gerstenberg. Our boys in Oregon were still well, the last we heard. If you don't have time, Schlomann, have Emma write a long letter to us.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest F. Meissner.

<Written in English.> Ernest F. Meissner, Kerby, Josephine Co., Oregon.

28 Jul 1887 [excerpt].

... Adolf [sic] by hiring [renting] that farm has gained an easier existence. Loretta will not need to starve any more on pork and beans, but in the end I think you will come out best. I have seen no one yet who works farms on shares, getting well off. How is it? Mrs. Haskins has written home your claims were railroad land, you could not hold the same. Is Adolf's claim as good as yours, and how can he hold the same if he doesn't live on it? ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T281> August Schlomann

Aug. 6, 1887.

Dear Children. We received your letter of July 28, and we are glad to hear that all of you are well except the little prince, and that he is better too. We were also glad to hear that your business is going well. We cannot tell you of any improvement since my last letter. The drought continues and is getting worse every day. All hope for a good rain is abandoned, so that we lose all our courage.

Emma must have been overjoyed by Anna Gerstenberg's arrival. I would surely like to know which great-grandmother she resembles (you surely mean grandmother!). Did Lina make a good choice in England? Maybe she married a rich man. She seems to have completely forgotten about us, and so has Ernest, who never writes. It is the same with Kummerfeld. Since I sent them the receipt for 1,000 Mk, of which I did not actually receive even 1,000 pfennigs, they no longer care whether I am still alive or dead. Have you ever been to Kummerfeld, August?—I built a beautiful house and planted beautiful fruit trees. I left all this behind so that I could finish my life in peace. But I had better close; I feel so depressed today. With our best regards, your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph F. Meissner.

<Written in English.> Adolph F. Meissner.

11 Sep 1887 [excerpt].

... I see by your letter that you not only had to give up working the great farm and making your fortune, but that you also have given up your homestead claim and are now again without a home and live from hand to mouth like you did in La Crosse. You talk of your little hut you had on your claim—why didn't you build a bigger one when you had plenty of nice big timber. But we feared from the beginning that Loretta was not made for a farmer's wife. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest F. Meissner.

<Written in English.> Ernest F. Meissner, Kirby [Oregon].

11 Sep 1887 [excerpt]. from your Father.

... Loretta writes Adolph and Mr. Brey are going in the fishing business. ... ["Mr. Brey" would be a relative of Loretta's mother, but which one was in Oregon in 1887?]

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann

Sept. 11, 1887.

Dear August. We received your letter of Aug. 31, and we were glad to hear that all of you are well. We are all well too, except Carl who had to stay in bed for two more weeks. He was so weak all summer long that he could only do some light work or none at all, which put us so far behind.

The drought and high temperature has ended, and it has been raining almost every day. The cattle have plenty of grass on the pasture and the garden is full of flowers. Everybody says, "What a nice place you have." The best spring water, good soil, good pasture, enough wood for the stove, good butter, milk, and cream, good bread, eggs, chicken, vegetables—we live like the king of France. Apples and melons are so abundant that we can't sell them, <T282> can't even give them away free, as everyone has plenty.

Last week was the county fair. We got prizes for: best 3-year-old mare; best bushel winter wheat; best bushel White Dent corn; best jar butter; the biggest and best variety of vegetables; the biggest and best variety of apples and grapes; 12 prizes for flowers. Altogether about \$30.

With regards to Emma and Anna. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann

Nov. 2, 1887.

Dear August. Although you have not yet answered my letter of Sept. 11, I still believe that you are alive and doing good business. We are all well too. Because of the dry summer, feed is scarce this winter so I had to sell off some of my cattle. Couldn't I sell you two barrels of salt beef, and how much could you pay per lb.? About a week ago we had some wintry weather and got 1/2 foot of snow. Now we have very nice weather again. The cattle go to pasture and have plenty of grass.

We have not heard from Ernest Gerstenberg all summer long, but yesterday we got a letter from him saying that he now wants to start for himself, but he did not say what he wants to start. If Emma might like to write to him, his address is: E.G., Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota. Answer soon. With greetings to all, Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

Nov. 2, 1887.

Dear Ernest. We received your letter of Oct. 24. You wrote that you are going to start out for yourself, but did not say what. Do you have a homestead claim, or what else?—

If you will send me my note I will send you the money for it. What's the name of the closest town to you where there is a money order office?

We have had a very dry <T283> summer. Many farmers had no crop at all. We threshed 18 bu. wheat from six acres.

Adolph is still in Oregon. He left his homestead claim because he did not want to starve there. How could you expect the poor devil to have \$40 to spare in such a short time? He is now working in a lumber yard, and lives with his mother-in-law, who has remarried. His address is: Adolph F. Meissner, Grants Pass, Josephine Co., Oregon. Your sister Anna is now living in J.C.H. with Schlomanns. Lina in England is married. We are now pretty well; however, Carl has been sick all summer and so has been unable to do hardly any work at all. Your little Aunt Dora is sitting next to me and knitting stockings. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Gerstenberg.

Ernest Gerstenberg, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota.

Dec. 4, 1887.

Yesterday I received your letter dated the 21st and mailed Nov 28. We will send the money right away. Write at once. If you are in such a hurry, why did you wait almost a month before you answered my letter of Nov. 2? I enclose a Postal Money Order for \$28.50; that is \$25 plus \$3.50 for two years' interest. This should surely be what you wanted.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, J.C.H., N.J.

Dec. 6, 1887.

Dear August. I would have answered your letter of Nov. 13 sooner but I still did not know what to do. Now I have sold my beef here at a pretty fair price. Potatoes did not do well this year, and they are as expensive here as where you are. We get our apples from Michigan and Ohio. The hens do not lay many eggs in winter, and it's the same with butter.

I got another letter from Ernest Gerstenberg a few says ago. He says he took up a homestead claim of 160 acres and bought two horses and a wagon. We have very unsettled weather, alternating between winter and summer almost every week. I have had a lame back for the past few days and I am hardly able to write. The others are all well.

<T284> Greet Emma and the children, and Anna if you can. If you have a picture of Anna, please send me a copy.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Dec. 14, 1887.

As I have not heard from you since last spring, I don't know whether you are still walking in this vale of tears, as I am—poor man., or whether you went to eternal heavenly bliss and are looking down from there mercifully to me—poor man of reason. But I will assume the first case and stop to converse with you a little.

Recent times are bursting with many important events. The illness of the German Crown Prince, the events in France, the execution of the anarchists in Chicago, and the newest and most important for us—the speech by the President of the U.S. [Cleveland, elected 1884] during the opening of Congress. The death of the German Crown Prince would probably have many important consequences. The movements and changes in France seem to indicate to me that France—a country divided within itself—will not be a strong opponent of Germany. The execution of the anarchists in Chicago is a shame for mankind: Murder was punished by murder.

However, the President's speech is a bright masterpiece. I and many others feared that he, like Bismarck who now [?] with the Pope, would hang his coat into the wind to keep from spoiling things with the opposition party for his re-election. But he had the courage to speak out freely. Our common laws are made so that we will soon have only rich people and poor people. The Government collects 100 million dollars more in tariffs every year than it is able to spend. The government's vaults are overflowing with money and with silver, so they have to keep building more. The Democratic Party wants to reduce tariffs; the Republican Party wants to keep tariffs because they are the means to enrich the <T285> manufacturers and the big corporations. The Eastern or manufacturing states become rich, while the Western or agricultural states become poor. The farmers are nearly all in debt. My paper says that the farms in the West owe to the rich people in the East \$1,000 million, for which they pay \$80 million a year in interest.

But my letter is getting too long; I had better finish. If there are not too many scoundrels among our representatives, we might get some relief. Your friend, F.A.M.

P.S. I forgot something important. The U.S. Supreme Court decided that the temperance laws that have been passed by some states are valid.

We had a very dry summer, and the winter has been mild so far.

From: F.A.M.; To: a newspaper in Kansas.

<Written in English.>

21 Dec 1887 [excerpt].

... I think there is no healthier or more nourishing drink than Beer made of Barley and Hops, but them Saloons are a nuisance and a curse to the people and the beer that we get now is not much better than poison ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T285, cont.> August Schlomann, J.C.H., N.J.

Jan. 10, 1888.

Dear Emma & August! We received your friendly wishes for my birthday and the New Year, and we return your good wishes. But we don't have such beautiful silk cards to send to you. You ask how your brother Ernest is doing, and you would like to have his address.

In my letter of Nov 2, I wrote to you: "I just received a letter from E. Gerstenberg, saying that he now wants to start for himself, but he did not say what he wants to start. If Emma might like to write to him, his address is: E.G., Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota." In my letter of Dec. 6, I wrote: "I got another letter from Ernest Gerstenberg a few says ago. He says he took up a homestead claim of 160 acres and bought two horses and a wagon." Did you forget about all of this, or did you not get my letters?

Please ask Anna if she knows whether Ernest's mother received the picture of him that I sent to her. Is Anna living with you again, or is she still working in Hoboken? If it is at all possible, please send me a picture of Anna.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferd. Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany.

Jan. 1888.

I received your catalog, as well as three others addressed to Schlomann, <T286> Crouse, and Gerstenberg. You can save the postage for the latter three in the future, because we all belong to one family.

I enclose a small order which I want you to send me as "Sample without value." I also enclose a money order for 16 Mk, for the amount of 10 m 25 pf plus five m 75 pf for seeds from last year. Order list ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, J.C.H.

Jan. 14, 1888.

Dear August! We all got drunk, and it is your fault, because what was in the bottle tasted so good we drank all of it to your health. Also the cake was so sweet that we stuffed our stomachs. But there were the Altmaner [?] drops, and a dose of these made us OK again. August is enjoying the cigars (Carl and I do not smoke!) What Mother and I like best are the chocolate and the cocoa. Little Aunt Dora is sick in bed; the rest of us are well. We have two feet of snow and severe cold, but we have enough good dry oak wood to keep us warm.

Greeting all of you, I remain your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, Hoboken, N.J.

Jan. 14 [1888].

Dear Anna. A. Schlomann gave me your address, so I will write a few lines to you. I admire your courage to come to America. Your brother Ernest, who now lives a few hundred miles to the west, is doing well so far as I know. He has not yet picked up a letter that I wrote more than a month ago, from the post office. He has probably moved again. When I hear from him, I will send you his address.

Can't you tell me whether your mother received my letter with Ernest's picture? Have you heard from Kummerfeld lately? How old are you, and how many of your sisters and brothers are still at home? How do you like it here? Have you found a nice place? Haven't you heard from your sister Lina? If you have time,

answer my letter soon. Your brother Ernest is a very negligent letter writer. With my greetings, your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T287> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Jan. 23, 1888.

Dear daughter. Your letter that you mailed Jan. 2 arrived here on the 18th. So it made the long trip in 18 days. I can't tell from your letter whether you received my last letter that I wrote on my birthday a year ago. Ernest's picture was in that letter. We are quite well so far. My wife and children can understand [spoken] German but don't know how to write it. We often receive letters from Emma and Schlomann. They are all well. Anna is working in Hoboken, not far from J.C. where Schlomanns live.

I got a letter from Ernst dated Oct. 24 saying: I want to start for myself. Up to that time he had been working for farmers. I asked him in my reply: What do you want to start for yourself? Then he wrote on Nov. 28: "I claimed a homestead of 160 acres and bought two horses and a wagon." I answered him on Dec. 4. A few days ago my letter was returned and the Postmaster writes that Ernest left the place and he does not know where he is now.

We had a very dry summer. Many farmers on the high plains had no crop at all. We live in the valley, but have some land on the hills also. We have a good spring and a small trout lake. The farmers on the high plains had to go two or three miles for water. As we had no late frost in spring, we had fruits in abundance, corn also was good, but I had little or no garden seeds and vegetables at all.

Up until Christmas we had beautiful winter weather and good sledding tracks, but then followed a severe cold spell and heavy snow. Dakota, where Ernest was living, is about 200 miles northwest of here, along the big railroad to Oregon. That country is a big prairie with no hills or trees, has good soil for wheat, and can be cultivated without much trouble. On Jan. 14th or 15th they had a terrible blizzard (that's a snowstorm) and the wind blows so hard that nobody can stand against it or keep their eyes open. Farmers on the way home with <T288> horses and sleds had to unharness the horses and crawl under the sleds. The cold was so severe (55 deg.) [negative?] that many people froze to death. 22 have been found so far. School teachers returning home with their children froze on the way. Farmers who went from the house to the barn to feed their cattle never came back. This was in South Dakota. In North Dakota, where Ernest was, it was not quite so bad.

I sent you four pictures: In one I am sitting and my wife is standing next to me; one is of our daughter Dora, and the two others are Carl and August. I would have liked to have your picture very much, but I begged for it in vain.

Ernest can be glad that he is no longer in Germany. I think around spring you will have a new king. I will write to you again as soon as I hear from Ernest. I would have answered sooner, but as you had not answered my last letter I thought you did not care much about me. Give my regards to your husband and children. Your Father.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, J.C.H.

Jan. 23, 1888.

Dear August and Emma. You probably received my letters of Jan. 10 and Jan. 14. A letter was returned to me from the post office that I had mailed to Ernest Gerstenberg on Dec. 4. The Postmaster says that Ernest left the region and he does not know where he went. They had an awful blizzard in Dakota on Jan. 14th and 15th, which extended from there down to Texas, more than 1,000 miles. In Texas a lot of cattle were frozen by [negative?] five deg. temperature and in Dakota more than 200 people froze to death by [negative] 55 deg. temperature. The blizzard was worst in South Dakota; Ernest lived in N.D.

I got a letter from your mother a few days ago; she wrote that they are all well. I enclose a package with our pictures, four items: Father and Mother together, and Carl, August, and Dora each alone. Let us know whether they arrived. The cold weather continues. Dora is quite well, and so are we. Greeting all of you, I remain your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Loretta Meissner.

<Written in English.>

24 Dec 1887 [excerpt]. To: Loretta Meissner at Grant's Pass, Oregon

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

<T289> Mr. K.G. Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Jan. 25, 1888.

Dear friend. I missed getting a letter from you, which would have completed my birthday celebration. It came this morning, and so I will have a little post-celebration, and I will use it to converse with you.

First, I want to correct a few errors. The primeval forests have been gone for a long time, and with them the deer, because everybody can hunt freely here. I never smoked tobacco, as we children believed that excessive smoking caused our father's early death. Wisc. is 1500 Engl. miles west of N.Y. A daughter of my daughter (who is still in Germany) lives there. It takes four days for a letter to go to N.Y. and six days to Oregon, and it costs only two cts. per ounce.

The big N.W. Railroad goes through Minnesota, Dakota, and Montana to Oregon, and was built only a few years ago. Minnesota was already quite cultivated, but Dakota has only been inhabited since the railroad was finished. The region is a big prairie without hills or trees, and as the land can be cultivated without much trouble and the best wheat can be raised there, it has been fully claimed admirably [?]. But the region has its disadvantages. Like the Sirocco in Africa, they have the Dakota blizzard. This is a snowstorm as fine as sand and so strong that nobody can stand against it. On Jan. 14th and 15th, following a period of beautiful, comfortable winter weather that had charmed people out of their houses, suddenly a blizzard came. Farmers returning home with their sleds had to unharness their horses and crawl under the sleds, where they were found dead the next day. Others went to the stables to feed their cattle and never returned. School teachers trying to take their children home froze on the way. The temperature was 55 deg. below freezing [below zero?]. Two hundred people have already been found dead so far. The blizzard went south from Dakota through all the prairie states to Texas, where a lot of cattle froze to death at only [negative?] five degrees temperature. The worst of the storm passed about 30 miles west of us. We had [negative?] 40 degree temperatures. <T290> On the 19th, the temperature fell to 55 deg. below the freezing point [below zero?] but we aren't feeling it so badly here. First, we live between mountains or hills, then we are also better prepared and have plenty of fire wood. The houses in Dakota are built very weakly, as the materials have to be transported 100 miles by rail. A ton of pit coal costs \$12 there. Many young people who are starting out right now, and who were seduced by the misrepresentations of speculators to go there, now have no wood, no money, and no bread.

Until Christmas we had nice weather and good sledding tracks, but since then a lot of cold and snow. The summer was so dry around here that many farmers living on the high plains had no crop at all and had to lead their cattle many miles to water. I live in the valley and have an eternal spring, and a small trout pond near the house. I had a good crop of corn, but not much wheat or rye. The worst thing is lack of winter feed for the cattle. Many farmers had to sell or give away all their cattle.

If I am not mistaken, I am the only member of the Meissner family still alive [who lived in Schönbach]. My brother who lived near Hamburg is dead, and his wife and children are dead. My daughter in Kummerfeld near Hamburg, married Gerstenberg, has nine children [? I know of 11, of which four died before 1880—LPM]. One of her sons [Wilhelm] lives in Berlin, another [Otto?] in Hamburg, another [name ?] in Altona, a daughter [Karoline] is married in England, another one [Emma] lives in N.Y., and an unmarried son [Ernest] is in Dakota [also Frieda at home?]. Two of my sons live in Oregon, on the Pacific Coast. They are married and have several children. Two of my boys and a daughter are still at home.

What you call progress in my old homeland, I would rather call regression (so different are our points of view). It is only a pity that Minister Rade is not a member of the Catholic Church, or else the Pope would make him a saint for his great efforts to make the people pious (ignorant), and his name would be displayed in bright red letters on all our calendars.

Now, my dear friend, let me hear from you again soon. Your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Martha

11 Mar 1888 [excerpt].

... I also have got Ernest's letter of Feb. 11 wherein he tells of the safe arrival of No. 3 ... another little son [George Albert MEISSNER b: 7 Feb 1888 in Kerby, Josephine, OR] ... I remember when August was born ... we were contented and happy. When two years later another little girl [was born feet first and died] ... , in consequence for about a half year my wife was very sick and has never regained her health and so notwithstanding that she has many comforts now she could not have the first years she never enjoys life and neither can I, hearing her complain all the time. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T290, cont.> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

April 22 [1888].

Dear daughter. I received your letter postmarked Febr. 17, 1888. I am sure that it was only because of your worries about Ernest Gerstenberg that my <T291> that you answered my letter more quickly than usual. I would have already answered you sooner, but just a short time ago I got a letter from Ernest from Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota. He wrote, "I have spent the winter in Minnesota, and now I am back." That is all the news he gives, so it is all I can tell you. If you want to know anything more, you will have to write to him yourself.

We have had a very long and cold winter. Yesterday was the first reasonably warm day, so that I could start planting my garden. There is still some snow in shady places.

I hope these lines reach all of you in good health. Your Father.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

May 8, 1888.

Dear friend. You know as well as I do that the spring is a very busy time for farmers, and especially for gardeners. Besides, the winter lasted until late April. So you will excuse my delay in answering your letter. But we have had a rainy spell for the last two weeks and it is impossible to work in the fields or in the garden, so I got out my unanswered letters and busied myself with them.

I read your letter several times with interest, but I find that you are so far ahead of me in history and logic, so I won't even try to debate with you. I'll just enjoy our friendship that you have proved to me in many ways. The Bible verse you quoted in your letter, "The sins of the fathers will be avenged on their children," seems to be coming true in your King's family.

You mention the dreadful Trichinosis disease in Cunewalde—I would not have believed that American pork travels as far as Cunewalde. Bismarck should know all about it. There is nothing nice to be said about politics. Our newspapers are all full of truth and lies about our next Presidential election.

We had a very long and hard winter, a lot of snow and severe cold. Spring is late, but it seems to be promising a good summer. Anyway, one must not give up hope.

Hoping that these lines may still reach you in the bliss that the good Lord bestowed upon you, and hoping that you won't forget your Atheist friend, I remain your ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph, Grant's Pass, Oregon

8 May 1888 [excerpt].

... We all rejoice about your good luck. Look out that you have a clear title so that it doesn't turn out again as before when you went to work the big farm. Schlomanns ... arrived from Jersey City. ... They had sold out their grocery business. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby, Oregon

8 May 1888 [excerpt].

... A letter from Loretta tells us that they sold their house and lot in Grant's Pass and entered a homestead on which is a house, ... which an old German had built and planted. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T292> August Schlomann, J.C.

July 3, 1888.

Dear August. We received your card saying that you are back in the Promised Land again, and that you want to send us your address soon. Later we got a big package of newspapers, but no address. Yesterday I opened one of the papers, and a letter fell out, but there was no address on it either. I will send this letter to J.C. again, and when you receive it, please send me your new address.

We are glad to hear that all of you are well. We have had very hot weather and a lot of rain. If you had known the region before, you would hardly recognize it now, it is so green and beautiful.

Carl is quite well now. August has cut and peeled all his logs. The rest of us are the same as usual. I have not heard from [Ernest] Gerstenberg again. His last address was: Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota. We hope to hear from you soon. Greetings to all of you. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby, Oregon

4 Jul 1888 [excerpt].

... Schlomann has two girls and two boys between one and seven years old ... I am getting old [83]; my strength is nearly gone. If I work a half a day that is all I can do. ... I am a Rationalist that is a man who doesn't believe anything that is against reason. ... Your mother is as much of a freethinker as I am; so is Dora. I would like to know what you are. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Martha at Kerby, Oregon

5 Aug Jul 1888 [excerpt].

... [Dora and Carl are sickly.] August is the only one I can rely on with my work but he has such a bad temper. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Loretta Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Loretta Meissner at McAllister, Josephine County, Oregon 5 Aug 1888 [excerpt].

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T292, cont.> Aug. & Emma Schlomann, J.C., N.J.

Sept. 16, 1888.

Dear Children! Please let us know whether you are still alive, and how you are doing. All of us are well except Mother, who has a bad leg. Our wheat is already threshed and put away. A few days ago we had the first frost, which did quite a lot of damage to the corn. In Dakota, near where Ernest Gerstenberg lives, they already had frost in August and damaged the wheat a lot. We have not heard from Ernest lately. Our boys in Oregon are well and they write that everything is fine.

As I have no other address, I will mail this letter to J.C. and hope that you will answer soon, when you get it. Greetings to all. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, Railroad Ave., Corner Elm Street, West Hoboken, N.J.

Oct. 15, 1888.

Dear Children. We finally heard from you. Unfortunately we heard from your letter that you have been sick a lot, and we hope that little Fritz is better now. I sure would have liked to <T293> keep Hans here, but I was always afraid that an accident would happen, because he always followed the horses. Mother has a bad leg all the time, and Carl is still sick. Father and Dora are the same as usual. August's has built his barn, but he still works on it every day. It is 40 feet long and 20 feet wide. It took 13,000 shingles to cover it. Today we are having the first raindrops in four weeks. Our potatoes are very poor because we had a big flood during summer that washed them out. The corn is good; so is the wheat. We had a very good second crop of hay that we got in the barn during the last dry spell. Potatoes sell for 25 cts. per bushel here. But I think easier ways could be invented. The freight from Cashton to Chicago is 13 cts. per 100 lb. I could not find out how much it costs from Chicago to N.Y. Oats sell for 20 cts., corn 40 cts.

We have not heard from Ernst Gerstenberg, nor from Hasse or Kummerfeld.

I have faith in Cleveland and tariff reform. You surely must have received my last letter by now. My greetings to Emma and the children. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Louis Runkle.

Mr. Louis Runkle, La Crosse, WI.

Oct. 27, 1888.

I will send you samples of herbs and prices today ... I would like to know by next week whether I can sell you anything, and how much. Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, Railroad Ave., Corner Elm Street, West Hoboken, N.J.

Oct. 29 [1888].

Dear Children. I just got back my next-to-last letter. You must have received my last letter. Everything else is still the same here. We are having beautiful autumn weather here. We heard indirectly from Oregon that Adolph's wife had twins but that they both died. Next week will be the big [election] battle. Hurrah for Cleveland! Write again soon. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Martha at Kerby, Oregon

6 Nov 1888 [excerpt].

... We have heard that Loretta had twins and that they died. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph at McAllister, Oregon

Dec 1888 [excerpt].

... Glad that you have got a good home a good start and feel satisfied. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

<T293, cont.> Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche, Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Dec. 16 [1888].

Dearest friend. (I will omit the "Sir.") I had thought several times already of inquiring whether you are still alive or whether you entirely <T294> forgot about me, but then on Dec. 11th I received your letter of Nov. 26th, and today I am pleased to answer it.

First, I want to give you a weather report. Spring was late, but beautiful fruitful weather made up for the delay. It was a pleasure to look at the field and garden at the beginning of July. Then, on July 3, a violent rain storm came and broke down everything and flooded the garden. The next morning, when the water had run off, my garden was a picture of destruction. Many plants partially recovered, but continuing rain kept flowers and vegetables from going to seed, but it encouraged the growth of grass, clover, and hay.

Although last year many people's cattle starved or nearly died of thirst, this year there was plenty of water, pasture, and hay and grass. When harvest time began, we had good weather, and everything was brought in well; also it was threshed (we do our threshing in the field with steam-driven machines). Winter wheat matured before the rain, and was very good; barley and oats did not set in; corn did well [at first] but did not get enough heat to ripen. At the time for sowing winter wheat, it was very dry, so that many fields, whose owners were waiting for rain, have not come up at all yet. Luckily, I sowed early after a little rain, and my seed is very good. In the beginning of Nov. we had mild freezing weather with no rain nor snow. Yesterday and today we are having the first rain in a long time.

This was the weather in Wis., but that does not apply to all of America. The different regions had greater differences in weather than ever before, almost. In Dakota, for many years so much wheat was raised that the price fell, but this year they raised almost nothing. As a result, the price of wheat rose from 50 cts. to one dollar. This is the end of my weather report.

Second chapter—Religion: The Catholics in America are increasing very <T295> much. They build so many churches and monasteries and the poor stupid people have themselves patiently bled, meanwhile sending their Peterspfennig [pennies] to the Pope in Rome (the poor man). Associations to eliminate the papacy have been formed recently. There are laws in several states that women have a right to vote in educational matters. In an election for school principals in Boston Mass. a short time ago, all Catholics were expelled from [?] the schoolteachers with the aid of 20,000 female votes.

Third chapter—Politics: You know from the papers that we had a presidential election and also who was elected, but surely the sprigs that brought forth the result are not fully apparent to you. The old proverb, "Money runs the world" became true in this election. Mr. Harrison was elected by bought votes. An honest onlooker could despair about our so-called free constitution when looking at the result of the election. The party of the rich has won, the party of the farmers lost, but they owe it mostly to their own stupidity. Just as in religious matters the poor man lets himself be taxed for the benefit of priests and the Pope, so the farmers for the benefit of the rich factory owners, of the coal mine owners, who are all millionaires. We farmers have to pay almost double the price for everything we need, for the sake of the manufacturers. The slogan of the Democratic party was "lower tariffs for the benefit of the people." Their leader was Cleveland. The slogan of the Republicans was "keep and raise tariffs for the benefit of the manufacturers." They made Harrison their leader and blinded the people with money and lies to vote for their party and they have won.

But I don't want to bore you any more with my idle talk. You can read about it in the papers. I enclose an excerpt from a German paper with part of Cleveland's speech, and this will give you a better understanding of the way America works than my idle talk. The speech is even stronger in English <T296> than in German. But I am afraid that you will disagree with me in politics, just as you do in religion. I will give you an example of how tariffs have made everything more expensive: The farmer who brings his goods to town and wants to warm up his stomach a little has to pay five cts. (20 pf.) for a tiny glass of Schnapps; in Sparta, the next town, he has to pay 10 cts. (40 pf.). A gallon of alcohol costs \$3. The innkeeper in Cashton has a \$125 per year license for permission to sell beer and brandy at retail; in Sparta he has to pay \$525 and in even bigger cities \$1025. The first \$25 goes for a Government license, the other \$100, \$500, or \$1,000 for the Town license. If we buy sugar for \$1, we have to pay \$0.75 for tariffs, and so on. You are glad about the mercy [generosity?] of the Germans. This proves only that there are even more poor people and rich people than here.

That's enough for now. If my letter has some value to you, you won't keep me waiting so long for an answer.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. Fischer.

Mr. Fischer, M.D., Norwalk, Wis.

Dec. 19 [1888].

Dear friend. Perhaps you still remember our conversation about my wife's sore leg. Her leg is sore from her foot almost up to her knee. It is swollen and infected, and a watery liquid comes through the skin, along with considerable itching. She has tried all kinds of lotions, but nothing helps. New skin forms but then breaks open again. My wife has now decided to take blood cleaning medicine. You said you could make something for her and send it to Cashton. If you have the medicine ready and no occasion to come to Cashton, please write to me and I will have it picked up. I suppose the medicine will have to be used for a long time. If you don't have some of the ingredients, we are not in too great a hurry and you can send for them. If you have a chance to send the medicine to Cashton, please address it to Frank Delle.

<T297> P.S. I must also mention that my wife is very old-fashioned. That's all I can think of for now. If you want any more information, please write to me. With my friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Matthias Heinz, Jr.

Matthias Heinz, Jr.

Dec. 19, 1888.

Dear friend. You seem to have entirely forgotten that you still owe me 90 cts. from last year for seeds. Be so kind as to tell Fred Springer that he also owes me 40 cts. from the same time. With my friendly wishes ...

If you don't want to come down, you can leave the money with Mr. Delle.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. Fischer.

Mr. Fischer, M.D., Norwalk, Wis.

Dec. 31 [1888].

Dear friend! Ten or 12 days ago I wrote you a letter and asked you to make a blood cleansing medicine for my wife who has—as you may recall—a sore leg. You said you would send it to Cashton, but so far I have received neither the medicine nor any reply. My wife gets impatient. Please write and tell me whether you received my letter and the medicine is ready, so that I can have it picked up. With my friendly wishes ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Miss Anna Gerstenberg, 411 Bloomfield Str., Hoboken, N.J.

Dec. 31 [1888].

Dear Anna. Nearly a full year has passed since I received a letter from you. If you are still at the same address you will receive this letter from me and perhaps you will let me know how you are doing. And if you want to make me very happy, send me your picture.

I, your Grandfather, and my children who are still at home, Carl, August, and Dora, are all well, but my wife is ill. Schlomanns visited us last spring: August, Emma, and the children [see <T292>]. They live in West Hoboken now. This must be close to you. I am expecting a letter from them any day.

We send you our greetings and wish you a Happy New Year. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T298> Aug. Schlomann, Railroad Ave., Corner Elm Street, West Hoboken, N.J.

Jan. 4, 1889.

Dear A. & Emma. Just imagine that it is possible. Santa Claus paid us an unexpected visit from N.J. He was locked in a box. August took a hammer and pliers and opened the box, and so many things came out that I can hardly remember: a beautiful dress for Dora, a wonderful bushel of cigars for August, Altona drops [candy?] for Carl, Stomach Bitter for Father, cocoa for Mother, apples, nuts, candy, and a candy heart that Dora took.

We were happy to hear that all of you are well. We are quite well also except for Mother. If you have time to write again, let us know whether you bought something, and how you like your new place.

I wrote to Anna a few days ago. If she no longer lives at the same address [411 Bromf. Str., Hoboken], she will have to pick up the letter at the post office. Dora will write to you as soon as she has time. Poor girl, she has both hands full with work to be done. Carl does the chores, and August is celebrating Christmas.

On the first day of Christmas we had beautiful warm weather; on the second day it snowed all day, and since then we are having beautiful mild winter weather, with 1-1/2 foot of snow on the ground, but it is getting less every day so that the sledding tracks are becoming bad.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany.

[Jan 1889].

I read from the notice attached to your catalog that you had a bad seed crop last year. It is not much better here with me. Besides, we went a step backward in the last Presidential election.

The seeds I received last year were all good with a few exceptions ... My order for this year is small, and although your crop was bad this year you must still have some good seeds left from last year.

Seed list: ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Mike Baetz.

<T299> Mike Baetz, Cashton, Wis.

Jan. 19, 1889.

Dear friend. If you want an easy way to make money, I will give you a chance: Sell my farm and I will give you \$25 commission.

I have 160 acres of good valley land and good ridge land, enough wood for personal needs plus some to sell, good pastures, good corn land and excellent wheat land, a good road to the ridge, the best water that never stops, a good new barn, a good road to Cashton and many other advantages. I will sell it cheap and you will make "Twenty-five Dollars."

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

Mr. August Breitenfeld, Bruce, Brookings Co., Dakota [now SD].

Jan. 19, 1889.

Dear friend! How do you do? How do you like it in Dakota? How is your dear wife doing? Is Julie married yet? My wife has had a sore leg now for several months.

If you don't like it in D., come here and I will sell you my farm very cheap. Here you will have a road in front of your door, also water; it's only two miles to Cashton, good corn land and pasture in the valley, good wheat land on the ridge. Last summer we build a new barn, 20 by 48 feet.

I believe there is no farm like it in all of Portland, that has so many advantages as mine and is so easy to manage. Let me hear from you soon. Give my regards to my wife and Julie. Your friend F.A.M. (Address: Cashton, M.C., W.)

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Jan. 21, 1889.

Dear Daughter. I always hoped that I would receive a letter from you for my 84th birthday, but my hopes were not fulfilled. I wanted to write to you some time ago, but I always put it off, waiting to hear from Ernest. But I have not heard from him since last spring. So I wrote to his postmaster before Christmas, but received no answer. <T300> I wrote again a few days ago, and today I received the news that Ernest was there last summer and autumn, but this winter he has probably gone to work in the deep woods again. This is all I can tell you about him.

Last spring, Schlomann sold out his business for a good price, and came with his wife and children to visit us. They stayed here for three weeks and then returned to N.J. The trip cost them \$100 (= 400 Mk). They now have another store in West Hoboken, N.J. They wrote me in their last letter that they have not received any letters from Kummerfeld. Emma is fat and seems to be quite good-natured. Anna visited the Schlomanns at Christmas and brought gifts for the children. Emma told me that you are fat too. I really can't imagine this, remembering what a slender girl you were.

I would have liked so much to have a picture of you, so that I will recognize you when we meet in Heaven, but my request is in vain, no doubt. Emma said that I shouldn't feel hurt if you don't write. You have too many children and they all want letters from you. Emma had her 5th child last September, but it died of whooping cough.

You must be 61 or 62 years old now [She is 62 and he knows it: b. 12 Nov 1826]. How is your health, and how about your husband, is he still well? As Emma and Ernest have told me, you now have quite a big farm

and you have added extra parcels to it. I am still quite well. People say I'm not getting any older, but I can feel my bones getting stiffer. You don't have to worry about Ernest; he will surely manage.

We had a pretty good summer, plenty of grass and hay, and we are now having a very mild winter.

Greeting you all, I remain your Father.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby, Oregon

22 Jan 1889 [excerpt].

... We are better situated than ever before, have a good road on the hill, a good barn, a nice pair horses, wagons, harrows, plows and most every kind of tools, still I would sell out if I had a chance. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

<T300, cont.> Emma & Aug. Schломann.

Jan. 24, 1889.

You must have received my letter of Jan. 4 by now, and maybe you will answer it. We are still having beautiful winter weather, nice sunshine, and not too cold, and good sled tracks. Please be so kind as to deliver the enclosed letter to Anna. Dora has a dressmaker here who can make her new dress, but oh—there was not enough material: six yards is not enough to make a dress for her. This morning she went <T301> to Cashton and bought two more yards, but she couldn't find cloth as good as what you sent her. Mathias Cremer, the saloon keeper's father, died suddenly a few days ago. I am unfortunately still alive, and don't know when my time will be up. Greetings. Your Grandfather.

P.S. I wrote to Ernest Gerstenberg's postmaster. He replied that E. picked up letters in summer and autumn, but he does not know where he is now. He is probably still working in the Pinery this winter.

From: E.D.M.; To: Henry Crouse.

<Written in English.> To: Henry Crouse, Moab, Emery Co., Utah; from sister Eva.

Jan or Feb 1889 [excerpt].

Dear Brother. I just received your letter of Jan 26 1889 wishing me to tell you whether I still have any of your letters, written to me while I was in Elyria, O. in the winter of 1857–1858, also whether I still remember seeing Henry Krauss at his home in Montolpha [?] on July 4 1861. ... I reply: Of course I remember very distinctly seeing Henry Krauss, talking to him and calling him Uncle Henry, on the 4th of July 1861 ... I have not got any of your letters you wrote to me at Elyria, neither do I remember anything about their contents. You wrote to me in English which at that time I could neither read nor understand [?? But she had been in USA for 10 years before 1857 and had attended school in OH]. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

<T301, cont.> Mr. A. Breitenfeld, Bruce, Brookings Co., Dakota.

Febr. 20, 1889.

Dear friend! I received your letter, and we were all glad to hear that all of you are well and that your dear wife found a good home with Wilhelmine. I can understand if you don't feel completely satisfied. It's the same with me. I am old and unable to manage the farm alone. But the boys want to play Master, and I cannot stand that either. That's why I wanted to sell. We have not had severe cold so far. We have just enough snow for sledding tracks. Mathias Cramer, who used to live in Pine Hollow, died suddenly. Bill Hankee is now Postmaster and Chairman, C. Person is Treasurer, and Albert Jones is Town Clerk. Christ. Erikson is Registrar of Deeds in Sparta. That's all the news I can think of. Give my regards to your dear wife and Wilhelmine. If you write again, you must address your letter to Cashton. Your friend.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Miss Anna Gerstenberg, Care of Hermann Rübssamen, 124 East 81st Str., N.Y.

Wednesday, March 13, 1889.

Dear Anna! I received your letter last Saturday, and your picture arrived on Monday. You look very friendly to me. I am glad to hear that you are well and healthy and that you are doing fine. Your picture seems to confirm this. From their name, I assume that the people you are living with are Germans. I don't expect that I will ever see you here with us, because you wouldn't <T302> be able to earn as much money here as you do in N.Y. If anything should ever happen to you, remember that your Grandfather is your friend. I got a letter from your mother recently. They were all well. I have not heard from Ernest yet this spring. We are all quite well, too, except for my wife. I send you our and Dora's picture. Dora is not quite as tall as she appears in the picture. Right now we don't have any more pictures of the boys. We'll be glad to hear from you again, and we send our best regards. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: J. Sternberger.

Mr. J. Sternberger, Bangor, Wis.

April 25 [1889].

Dearest friend. Yesterday I received your kind letter of the 18th that was mailed on the 25th. I will send Madam Bossart the flower seeds she ordered today. They should not be planted before May. The beautiful weather turned cold and rainy today. Recommending myself to you and your dear wife, I remain your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, 1237 Franklin Ave between 168th and 169th Str., N.Y.

May 15, 1889.

Dear Anna. I received your lovely letter of April 29, and was glad to hear that you are still well and that you still think of your Grandfather. We have not yet heard from your brother Ernest this spring. We are having very beautiful weather, the apple trees have already blossomed and everything is green. It was just a little bit dry, but today we had a nice rain. The fields are all in order, but in the garden the sowing and planting goes on all year. I can't do hard work that goes on for a long period—I leave that to the boys. When you write again, tell me about your domestic life. What business is your master in, how big is his family, and so on. My wife's leg is no better. Greetings. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

A. Schlomann, Railroad Ave., Corner of Elm Street, W. Hoboken, N.J.

May 15, 1889.

The return address on your last letter was J.C.; however, I am addressing my letter the same as before. My answer is delayed, but Dora already excused me. This spring we are having <T303> beautiful weather. The apple trees have already blossomed. Wheat and rye are already putting on their kernels. But it was very dry until today; now we are having a beautiful rain. We are all quite well except for Mother's leg.

Anna sent us her picture. She is a pretty girl. I think she looks like Emma. We have not yet heard from Ernest Gerstenberg this spring.

Delle's business is going well. His wife works as his clerk. Cashton House has a new innkeeper again. I hope and pray that you and your children are all well. August has cleared three acres of land, which we will soon break up, and in autumn we will sow wheat on it. Our wheat and rye is excellent. When you have time once again, please answer. Greetings to Emma and the children, from F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

May 18, 1889.

Dear Daughter. Yesterday I received your letter of May 1st, and I am glad to hear that you are still alive and thinking of me. But we all feel cheated because you did not send us a picture of you. Did you forget your promise? You will have the same feeling when you get this letter and I tell you that we have not heard from Ernest yet. We wrote to him once already this spring, but got no answer. A little while ago I got a letter

from Anna saying that she is well. She is earning \$14 a month. She also sent me her picture. She is a pretty girl and looks quite pleasant and happy. A few days ago I also got a letter from Schlomanns saying that they are all well. I cannot quite say the same about us. I have some rheumatism, and my wife still has her sore leg. We are having excellent spring weather. Rye and wheat will soon bloom. This spring August cleared three acres of land—that means he pulled out trees, burned the brush, and sawed off the roots—with the help of another boy. Now the trees and roots have to be hauled off, and in June the land will be plowed, and sowed with winter wheat in autumn. Carl helps in the garden. He is tall and broad, but his health is not very good <T304> and he cannot stand hard work. Dora milks the cows and does the housework. She suffers a lot from toothache. My children speak and understand German but don't know how to write it.

According to the newspapers, there is quite a movement in Germany. 100,000 coal miners are said to be on strike. We are also having hard times here. Farm products are very cheap, but coffee and sugar are expensive.

From: F.A.M.; To: Emanuel Habel.

Mr. Emanuel Habel, Bangor, Wis..

Jun. 10 [1889].

Dear Sir! Your letter of June three almost failed to reach me, as Mount Pisgah has already been forgotten for a long time—our post office is now called Cashton. We have good rosemary plants and several seeds. If you want to visit us, go first to Sparta and from there to Cashton, where anybody can tell you where I live. You will arrive here at 10 o'clock, and can return again in the evening. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

A. Schlomann, Railr. Av., Corner of E. Str., W.H. N.J.

Jun. 10 [1889].

Dear Children! When I brought my last letter to the post office, I picked up your letter of May 13. We were glad to hear that you are still well and thinking about us. Since my last letter the weather has changed a lot. We have had a lot of cold rain and frosty nights, which ruined the corn and potatoes. It has been raining almost every day, but we have not yet had any heavy storms or flooding, as we read in the papers that many places were damaged by these. The corn and potatoes are recovering, and everything will still be alright if we get warmer weather.

A little while ago I got a letter from Kummerfeld; all was well there. But I have not yet heard from Ernest. Did he write to you perhaps? Mother's leg seems a little better, but I have rheumatism, Dora has toothache, and Carl is lame too. Greetings to all. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T305> Aug. Schlomann, Railroad A., Corner of E. Str., W.H. N.J.

[Sept? 1889].

Dear Children. If I expect to hear from you, I suppose I first have to remind you of the fact that we are still alive. I am as usual an old man with a white beard. The rheumatism I had in spring is finally gone. Mother's leg has improved enough so that she can get around the house, but she cannot stand to wear a shoe on her sore leg.

Dora had a tooth pulled just a week ago today, and since then she has had so much pain day and night that she cannot sleep nor eat. Carl is always sick; he can only do light work. August is strong and well, but spends half his time in Cashton.

We are having the nicest summer and autumn weather imaginable, just enough rain and not too much. My flower garden is a true spectacle. Our wheat and barley are doing well. The corn has bigger ears than ever before. If we don't have frost too soon, it will be extraordinarily good. Our barn is full of hay. The horses have enough food, the cattle have enough pasture, and four of our five nice pigs will be butchered this autumn leaving one sow to raise little pigs. If you could see our farm now, you would not think we are poor

How are you doing? Did you make a lot of money this summer? How is Emma and how are the children? All well, I hope. I have not heard from Kummerf. nor from Ernest G. The last time we heard from the boys in Oregon, they were all well.

Write soon and let me know how you are doing. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, W.H. N.J.

Oct 14, 1889.

Dear Children. Your letter of Oct. 8 came. I thought you knew that we don't have \$100 in cash to buy potatoes, and if I had them I would not risk them for such a <T306> small and uncertain profit.

We are glad that you are all well. We are fine too, and we are having the nicest autumn weather imaginable. Regards, Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Michael J. Müller.

Mr. Michael J. Müller, Stocking Manufacturer, Sparta, Wis.

Dec. 6, 1889.

Dear friend! As you requested, I brought you 30 cabbage heads and 35 celery bulbs, for which you owe me \$2.20. I expect to be in Sparta next week and I will call on you. In case you are not at home, leave the money with your wife, as I need it very badly. I will also bring butter with me, if you would like to have some. Be so kind as to let me know whether you received this letter. With my friendly greetings, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

[Dec. 1889].

Dear Daughter. I have your picture in front of me, looking at me in a friendly way, but it is hard for me to change the mental image that I have had so far of a slim pretty girl to one of a respectable matron. My family says you look very much like me, and I think you look like my mother's brother, Uncle Karl August Seidel, whose picture I have.

I would have answered sooner, but I had hoped to hear from Ernest. I wrote several letters to him, to no avail. But I believe he is quite well. He just doesn't like to write letters.

We had a cold, wet spring, a very good summer, an early frost in autumn, and then beautiful weather again till about two weeks ago. Now we are having fog and heavy air. My two boys in Oregon are doing well. Ernest has three children and Adolph has two, but he is expecting a newcomer any day now [Adolph Elmer MEISSNER, b: 08 Dec 1889 in Merlin, OR]. August, Carl, and Dora are still at home and my wife and I are quite well.

As we read in the papers, the great powers in Europe keep preparing for war. This means big expenses and <T307> hard times. Are any of your children liable for military service? I can hardly expect to receive an answer from you soon. Writing seems to be difficult for you. When I hear anything about Ernest I will let you know. Farewell for now, Your Father F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

Mr. August Breitenfeld, Bruce, Brookings Co., Dakota [now SD].

Dec. 30, 1889.

Dear friend. I see from your letter of Dec. 4 that you are still alive, and that you sometimes think about your old friend. We are also still alive and quite well. August is in the Piney Woods; Carl and Dora are at home. We are having beautiful weather—no snow so far. We had a cold, wet spring and an excellent summer; autumn was a bit dry. The wheat was good, the barley very good. Some cornfields were damaged by the wet spring, but all of the prices are very low: wheat 60 cts., corn 25 cts., barley 15 cts., fat pigs three cts., butter 15 cts., eggs 18 cts.

Everything is still the same as always. How is your wife? Is she still living with Wilhelmine? You are thinking of going west—I should think you will soon be too old to start a new farm. My two boys in Oregon are well. They each have three children already and a homestead farm. Give my regards to your dear wife and to Wilhelmine as well. Write soon again, and tell me how you are doing. Your friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld near Pinneberg near Hamburg, Germany.

Jan. 4, 1890.

Dear Daughter. I received your birthday greeting, and you must have received my letter too. I am 85 years old and am still able to walk as far as Pinneberg (Cashton) [i.e., the distance from Kummerfeld to Pinneberg is about the same as from here to Cashton]. Already this year I have had several attacks of rheumatism, but now I am completely free of it. But when one is so old, life offers nothing more. I have all I could want, good clean clothes, beds and nursing; but the best food or drink, coffee, tea, beer, or wine does not taste right or I cannot stand it. <T308> And if I want to do some work that is heavy, I have no strength for it. I have, as they say, outlived myself. It is a comforting to think that my time has run out. We can die at any age, but I know it is inevitable.

I can't remember the day and year when you were born [Karoline Marie Eleanore MEIBNER b: 12 Nov 1826 in Germany] but I know it was autumn. We lived in Thesdorf and had a fried goose that your mother helped eat before you were born. I was about 22 years old then, and now I am 85, so you must be 63. Your birth did not cost your mother's life, but it cost her health, which caused quite a lot of discomfort for both of us for many years.

It hasn't snowed here yet, but it has been cold since New Year's. August, along with several other young people from the neighborhood, went to work as a lumberjack at the Piney Woods, where they pay quite well. Carl feeds the horses and cows, and hauls wood. There is nothing else to do in winter here; Mother and Dora do the housework and I sit in the room most of the time and read papers or books.

You wrote that Frieda has left you also. That makes it quite hard for you. I have not heard from Ernest yet; also not for a long time from Heinrich Meissner (Sennewald). He is living in this state, has lost a foot in the war, is married and receives a monthly pension of \$30. We just received a small box of Christmas gifts from Schlomanns, so I assume they are all well. Give our regards to your husband and Otto. I wish you all a Happy New Year.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, Railway A., C. of Elm Street, W.H. N.J.

Jan. 4, 1890.

Dear Aug. and Emma. A cigar box arrived yesterday, addressed to me. Carl brought it home. I opened it and found a box of cocoa, dried figs, Altona drops, and a needle pillow. Dora just said, "It is a Christmas ... It is from Schlomanns." Today we made a good cup of cocoa and drank it to <T309> your health. Maybe we will still get a letter. We are all quite well, and hope the same is true of you. We wish you all a Happy New Year. August is in the Pinery; we don't have any snow yet, and hard frost only since New Year's Day. Dora went to the New Year's Eve dance in Cashton, and in the morning she brought the news that fire broke out in the night in the meat market, and that all the houses along that side burned down, as far as the blacksmith shop. I have not gone to see it yet. Louise probably already has a beau, Hans pushes your market wagon, and what are Fritz and Clara doing?

Once again, good luck for the New Year and success in your business.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferdinand Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany.

Jan. 8, 1890.

I received your catalog yesterday, and I want to send you my small order right away. Please ship it as soon as you can. Send it to me by mail as "samples without value." I will pay you for it this summer, along with what I still owe you from last year.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, R Ave., C. of E. St, W.H.

Feb. 10, 1890.

Dear August and Emma. Why haven't you written? You must have received my letter saying that we received your Christmas box.

This winter we had two weeks with sledding tracks, then it thawed, and now it is freezing again.

August is home from the Pinery. He got sick. We all had the sniffles or a cold, but none of us had been very sick. We are afraid you may be sick. Write soon and let us know how you are doing.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, W.H. N.J.

Mar 8, 1890.

Dear Children. Is it because you are too lazy that you haven't written, or are all of you sick, or did you hit the jackpot and become stuck-up? Why is it?

We are all quite well. We are having real winter and cold weather, but only since the first of March, and Carl and August bring in enough wood so that we aren't suffering too much from the cold.

Your grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T310> Aug. Schlomann.

Mar 20, 1890.

At last you have shown signs of life! We are glad that you are well. Emma has again presented you with a pledge of love. As the Bible says, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth." Our best wishes to your little daughter. I'm sorry you live so far away and we can't come and see you. Carl is still sick. He can't even do his chores any more. Mother is always ailing, too. Dora and August are still coughing from the influenza.

We are having warmer weather again, but the soil has not thawed yet. We have been having a bad time lately. Everything we have for sale is cheap, and everything we have to buy is expensive.

How is your business doing? Are you doing well financially? Are you still planning to sell out for a good profit?

I am very sorry that I did not receive Anna's letter. My regards to Emma and the children from your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Mrs. Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerf. near P. in Holstein.

Apr. 22, 1890.

Dear Daughter. Today on the 22nd, I received your letter of April 6.

You ask me whether I haven't yet heard from your son, my grandson Ernest G. His last letter was from Mar 31, 1888, Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota. I have not heard any more from him since then. My letters after that were returned unopened. Also the postmaster at Eldred, to whom I wrote, could not tell me anything more about him. My two sons in Oregon have also written to me that they have no news from him either. Also your two daughters Emma Schlomann and Anna have not heard from him. Ernest G. has vanished and is missing.

Poor daughter! What will you do if Otto has to become a soldier? Your husband is ailing and you are old. Who will do the work? Your father, F.A.M.

Monroe County, State of Wisconsin. This 23rd day of April 1890, F.A. Meissner appeared before me, a Notary Public, and swore an oath that the facts stated about Ernst Gerstenberg are true. [SEAL] Henry H. Cremer, Notary Public

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

<T311> Mr. Hague & Schmidt in Erfurt, Germany.

May 21, 1890.

If you will send me the seeds listed below as soon as you receive this letter, they will arrive in time for me to raise plants for next year. I enclose \$1, which should be sufficient. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Gerstenberg (not a relative).

To Ernst Gerstenberg, Saloon Keeper, Corner of E Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C.

[1890]

Dear Sir. I found in the "Weekly Wisconsin" a wonderful report about the talents of your inhabitant [?], Mr. Charles Kinkel, but what interests me most is your name: Ernst Gerstenberg. Namely, a daughter of mine has a son with the same name who has been missing for a couple of years. It is certainly very unlikely that you are the young man, but I thought it would be worthwhile to write to you. My daughter's son Ernst Gerstenberg is about 27 years old and was last in Dakota, so far as we know. His parents still live near Hamburg in the Holstein region.

Asking you to greet Mr. Carl Kinkel for me, I sign respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

To Mrs. Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerf. near P. in Holstein.

Aug. 18, 1890.

Dear Daughter. I received the letter that you started on July 8 and completed July 24. I learned from it that you are still alive, that your health and your husband's are not too good, and that you are having bad weather.

We had dry, cold weather in May, with frost almost every night. In June it thundered and rained continually, so that we had several big floods that destroyed bridges and roads and did a lot of damage to my garden. Then we had a week of very hot weather, so that horses fell down dead while working in the fields, and many people died of sunstroke. We had good weather during the hay and wheat harvest, and it is continuing now. My garden is very poor this year: few potatoes; wheat, <T312> barley, and rye have plenty of straw but not much grain. Corn is good, unless we have an early frost. In some regions it's so dry that there are no crops at all; in others wind, rain, and hail ruined everything. Butter costs only five cts. = 20 Pf. per lb. this summer. The price for wheat has gone up, and potatoes cost \$1 per bu.

We too were sick a lot this summer. We have not yet heard from Ernst; also Schlomanns have not written for a long time.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hermann Meyer.

To Hermann Meyer, care of J.H. Holze, Barrington, Cook Co., Ill. [Came to U.S. with Ernst G.—see T253.]

Sept. 13 [1890].

Dear friend. I received your letter of Sept. 7, but I cannot give you the information you are looking for. His last letter was dated March 31, 1888. His address at that time was Eldred, Cass Co., Dakota. Since then I have not heard anything more from him, and our letters have not been answered. We don't know whether he ever claimed land. An appeal in the "Germania" will probably be of no help.

My daughter wrote me that you had returned to Kummerf. for a visit. If you ever come this way, please visit us. With greetings ...

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

August Schlomann, W.H. N.J.

Oct. 18, 1890.

Dear children, Are you still alive, and how are you doing? Have you forgotten how to write? Must I always remind you to do it? We are still alive and quite healthy.

We had very dry, cold weather in May, and in June thunder and rain every day, then such a hot spell that the horses fell down dead while working in the fields. The last part of the summer and the fall were excellent, and we had a pretty good crop. However, the good weather seems to have come to an end; today there is rain mixed with snowflakes.

How is your business doing? How are Emma and the children? Write soon. Many greetings to all. Your Grandf.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

Mr. Ferd. Kaiser, Eisleben, Germany.

[Oct. 18, 1890].

Dear Sir! About your seeds: ...

A neighbor returning from Germany says <T313> that the summer there was very wet and cold. Here May was cold and dry, June brought hard thunderstorms and rain every day, then we had a very hot spell so that horses dropped dead while working in the fields. The last part of the summer and the fall were excellent, and we still had a good crop. But now the good weather seems to have come to an end. Today we had hard rain mixed with snowflakes. When it clears up, we will surely have frost.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Emma Schlomann, W.H. N.J.

[1890]

We received your letter of Oct. 27. We are glad to hear that you and the children are quite well. There is always someone sick, if only it does not get too bad. But where is August? Is he on a trip? Or is he mad at me? I could not imagine why. We feel so sorry for poor Anna. She looked so healthy in the picture. Please write and tell us how she is doing. Greetings. Your Grandf.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest and Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest and Martha

2 Nov 1890 [excerpt].

... We ... got a letter ... written by Loretta in bed. She says: as they had all been down sick and no one to take care of them they had to move to Grants Pass ... when Adolf [sic] gets able to, he will go out and put the windows and doors in the house he has built on his claim and they will move out again. They are very poor.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ferdinand Kaiser.

<T313, cont.> Mr. Ferd. Kaiser, Eisleben, Pro. S.

Nov. 23, 1890.

Dear Sir, I have received your reply of Oct. 31 to my letter of the 18th. I cannot possibly believe that you dictated it, but I find it impertinent of your writer to accuse an old man of lying. Today I received late cauliflower instead of early ones; it can't be due to a mistake. Such things don't happen in a well managed seed store. Therefore I take it to be fraud. I won't try to convince you by further reasoning; if you could not understand my letter of the 18th, I have to accept that I have forgotten how to express myself in my mother tongue, German.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Miss Anna Gerstenberg, care of H. Beckmann, 218 East 6th Street, N.Y. City, N.Y.

Dec 9, 1890.

Dear Anna. Yesterday I received your letter dated Nov 20 and mailed Dec. 5. I have not received the two letters that you wrote earlier. On Oct. 27 I got a letter from Emma saying that you had cramps.

Early in August I got a letter from your mother saying that she also planned to write to you. Maybe she does not have your correct address. I am enclosing her letter. I also received a letter <T314> in Sept. from Hermann Meyer. He wanted to know where your brother Ernst is, but unfortunately I could not tell him.

Fruit and potatoes were bad here too, but otherwise we had quite a good crop. Wheat, barley, and oats are bringing good prices. Pigs and cattle are worth almost nothing at all. We farmers here have enough to eat, but money is very short.

We are all very sorry to hear of your ill health. Maybe city life does not agree with you. Like the Schlomanns did, you should get on the train and come to visit us. A summer in the country might make you well again. My wife and your aunt Dora, who is only a few years older than you, will welcome you with love, and I also will be happy to meet my little—or better, big—granddaughter.

I am still quite well, but my wife is not. Dora and Carl are still at home and do most of the work. We had beautiful fall weather until Dec. 1; the cattle had plenty to eat [from the pasture]. Now there is two feet of snow and it is rather cold.

My wife, Aunt Dora, and Uncle Carl send their regards, and we all wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope you will write us again soon. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerf.

Dec. 9 [1890].

Dear Daughter. Yesterday I received a letter from Anna. She write: "I was very sick at times this summer. Three weeks ago I was sick for two weeks. I kept getting weaker, and I had cramps, but now I am feeling better. Have you heard anything from Kum.? I have not received any letters for a year." In the letter that I got this summer, you told me that you were intending to write to Anna too, so she must not have received your letter. Her present address is: Miss A.G., care of H. Beckmann, 218 East 6th St., N.Y.

We had an especially nice autumn. Up to Dec. 1, the cows had plenty to eat from the pasture, but now there is two feet of snow and a light frost. The price of wheat, barley, and rye, as well as butter and eggs, is high; but cattle and pigs are very cheap. A good cow that will bear a calf in spring costs only \$12.

<T315> We are still the same as always, and hope that you may enter the New Year with new hopes. We still have not heard or found out anything about Ernst.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.>

18 Dec 1890. To: Adolph at McAllister

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

<T315>, cont. Mr. Karl G Wünsche, Schönbach near L. in S.

Dec. 21, 1890.

Old friend. You never answered my last, very long letter of Dec. 16, 1888. If you are still alive—if not, then you are in heaven, a place I never intend to visit—I will try once again to converse with you. I will be 86 years old in a few days, and still what people call vigorous. But life has little to offer me. I have enjoyed all its pleasures, and have fought against many obstacles. But I expect no reward after my death, either for the one or for the other.

The Meissner tree has blossomed again through me, and now has many branches. A daughter by my first wife, who is still living near Hamburg and is 64 years old, has nine children: a son in Berlin, two sons in Hamburg, two sons in Altona, one in America, an unmarried daughter in England, a married daughter near N.Y., and another daughter in N.Y. I have five children by my second wife [Note—no mention of Doris Sennewald or of "George Henry Sennewald Meißner"—LPM] : two sons, who with their families are both in Oregon near the Pacific Ocean, and two sons and a daughter still at home.

I could say a lot about weather, crops, and politics, but I only wanted to knock, and now I want to see whether the door is opened to me.—

From: F.A.M.; To: Gas. Hauschild.

Gas. Hauschild, Topeka, Kans.

Dec. 22, 1890.

In an old issue of the "Field and Garden Paper," I found your ad for a weed cutter that can be attached to cultivators. Please send me your circulars. Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Miss Anna Gerstenberg, care of H. Beckmann, 218 East 6th Street, N.Y. City, N.Y.

Jan. 7, 1891.

Dear Anna. On Jan. 5 I received your letter of Jan. 2. It tells me that you got my letter, but not much else. You completely ignored my freindly invitation to improve your health next summer <T316> in the fresh country air and to keep Dora company. I also got a letter from your mother a few days ago, but I haven't heard from Schlomanns. Did you visit them on Christmas? Judging from his name, your employer must be German. What kind of business does he have, and what are your duties? Dora has asked me to thank you for the pretty New Year's card, and we all send our regards and wish you good health and a rich husband. Your Grandf.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerf. n. P. n. H.

Jan. 7, 1891.

Dear Daughter. I received your letter of Dec. 14. I want to thank you for all your good wishes. I also got a letter from Anna a few days ago, and she said she also got a letter from you. I suppose you also got my letter of Dec. 9. We are having very mild winter weather, and hardly any snow at all. We are all quite well. Give my regards to your husband and children. Your father.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, W.H. N.J., R.A., corner of E St.

Febr. 4, 1891.

Dear A. & Emma. I received your short letter of Jan. 9, and was glad to hear that you are still alive. I had quite an attack of influenza, but am getting better now. Grandmother has the same disease too. We hope and wish that these lines may reach you in good health. Give my regards to the children. Your Grandf.

Today is the first wintry day with four feet of snow and good sledding tracks.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

Hague & Schmidt, Erfurt.

Febr. 7, 1891.

Thank you for sending me your summer catalog. I enclose \$1, so that according to your bill of June 5, 1890 I still have 96 pf [?] in my favor. Please send me by mail as "samples without value" the following seeds ...

From: F.A.M.; To: A. Wünsche.

Mr. A. Wünsche, Schönb. near L. in S.

Febr. 14, 1891.

Dear Sir! I received your letter of Jan. 18 and read it with great interest. I sincerely regret what happened to your dear father. It is nearly impossible <T317> for me to believe that such a learned man has passed

away. All I can imagine is that reason and faith fought together, and both lost the battle. You write that you belong to the German Freethinkers in political matters; why not also in religious matters? It seems to me that the two cannot easily be separated.

It is true that we live in a so-called free country. But there are many clerics in high places, supported by the stupidity of the immigrants, such as Poles, Hungarians, and Russians, from the lowest classes. Native Americans are free-thinkers.

You seem to have a very interesting family, but I have cannot actually expect your son to visit me. It is 1500 Eng. miles from N.Y. to Wisc—express mail takes three days—and from here to Oregon (where two of my boys live) is another 2500 miles and letters require six days. I live close to the road.

What factories have been built in Schönbach; and where does the railroad lead, to or from there?

Last year our potatoes here were also spoiled. We had a bad spring, but a good summer and a very good autumn. Crops were good around here, but in some other states it was so dry that nothing grew. But the whole country is crossed by so many railroads that it is easy to ship produce anywhere. We are having a very mild winter and not much snow. So far we have had only two cold days. Wheat costs 1-1/2 cts. per lb, barley two cts, rye and oats one ct., eggs 1-1/2 cts. each, butter 12 cts. per lb. Current prices are (for 50 kg of each) [Bad arithmetic—LPM]: wheat \$10 (6 Mk), rye \$8.75 (4 Mk), oats \$7.95 (4 Mk), barley \$6.80 (8 Mk), corn [?] (2.40 Mk), <T318> potatoes \$2.20 (4 Mk), hay \$2.80 (1.60 Mk). Also one kg butter \$1.80 (1.20 Mk), 1000 kg straw \$30.00 (20 Mk). For 12 ckickens 0.72 Mk; 50 kg live pigs 12.50 Mk, 50 kg live cattle eight Mk, one kg pork 0.64 Mk, one kg roast 0.64 Mk, one kg stew meat 0.40 Mk.

Now I have lived in Wisconsin for 35 years. When I came here it was still a wilderness—the wolves howled, the foxes in the hills barked at night, deer crossed [?] our horses. Now there are no wolves, foxes, or deer. The country is known to all [cleared?—LPM]. Good farms with good houses are located along good roads. We have good soil, good spring water, and enough oak wood to make the winters bearable. But fruit trees don't thrive—they die off after a few years.

Schönbach has surely changed a lot too; now it looks more like a town than a village.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry H. Cremer.

Henry H. Cremer, Esq.

March 12, 1891.

My 40 in Jefferson N.A. of S.W. Sept. 19 [What is this?—LPM] is probably due. I will probably come to Sparta next week to pay it; you don't have to advertise it. With friendly wishes, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. Fritz Lindelman.

Mrs. Fritz Lindelman, Bangor.

April 7 [1891].

I lost the seeds of the dipper gourds, so I am returning your 10 cts. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

Aug. Schломann, W.H. N.J.

Aug 20, 1891.

Dear Aug. & Emma. These lines may tell you that we are all still alive and quite well. Mother is still having a lot of trouble with her leg. Carl is sick all the time, and August has been sick alot this summer. Dora is Mother's best helper. We are having a very pleasant summer. My garden looks especially beautiful and the crops are quite good. We would be glad to hear how you are doing. Please write soon to F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T319> Karoline Gerstenberg, Kummerf. n. P. n. H., Germ.

Aug. 20, 1891.

Dear Daughter. These lines are to tell you that I am still alive and feeling quite well. I can say the same for the other members of my family.

We had a very beautiful summer. My garden looks especially nice, and the crops are quite good.

I have kept hoping—but in vain—to hear something about Ernest G. I would be glad to hear from you again soon. Your father.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, care of H. Beckmann, 218 E 6th Str, N.Y.

Aug. 20, 1891.

Dear Anna. I apologize for not having answered your letter of Febr. 6 sooner. You have not written again, either. If you are still living at the same place, you will get this letter and you will see that I have not forgotten you and that we are all quite well.

We had a very beautiful summer, and the flowers in my garden are blooming wonderfully. Also the crops are quite good.

I also wrote to Kummerf. today. I would enjoy hearing from you soon, and knowing that you are well and doing fine. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karol. Gerstenberg, Kumm. near P. n. H., Germ.

Nov 4, 1891.

Dear Daughter. I suppose that you have received my letter of Aug. 20, and I would have been happy to hear from you in return.

I just read in the paper that you have had a lot of snow in Hamburg and that the temperature is seven degrees [?] below freezing. We have not had any snow yet this fall, and our cows and horses are still on pasture. But the weather is very dry and the grass is very short. There was not much hay this summer. We had a crop of 100 bu. wheat. one bu or 60 lb[?] now costs three Mk 20 p [?]; 60 lb potatoes cost one Mk. We have not yet harvested our corn. We have hardly enough barley for the horses, so we have been feeding them corn too. Corn makes very good millet; cooked in milk it tastes like rice. We have two working horses and two young ones, one 1-1/2 year old and the other 1/2 year old. As we have so little feed for them, we want to keep only three cows and two calves through the winter, and butcher the rest. But cattle are so cheap. Eggs now cost 72 p [?] per dozen; one lb butter costs the same.

<T320> Threshing is done by steam powered machines that are driven from one farm to another. My threshing was finished in two hours. It cost me \$5 plus the labor. This machine can thresh 1000 bu per day. There are also harvester machines, pulled by two or three horses, that mow wheat and bind it immediately. Wheat, rye, and barley are stacked up in the fields and threshed there.

If you don't have time, tell Frieda or Otto to write a long letter to me some time and tell me what your crops were and how much they amounted to, and how you manage it all.

On the same day when I wrote my last letter to you, I also wrote to Anna in N.Y., but her letter was returned to me unopened, with a note that she could not be found. Also we have not received any letters from Emma and Schломann since spring.

== Nov 13, 1891.

Winter came suddenly today, with a little snow and severe frost.

It is my hope and wish that these lines may reach you in good health, and that you will write a long letter soon. Your father, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

Aug. Schломann, W.H. N.J.—R.A. Corn. or E. Str.

Nov 15 [1891].

Dear August. You must have received my letter of Aug. 20, but you haven't answered it. So I will ask once again whether you are still alive. If you had died I would surely have heard about it. How are you and Emma and the children? How is business coming along? You have certainly become rich! In Hoboken you only have to pay \$300 for \$3000 [?].

We had a good, but very dry, autumn. On Nov. 13 we had our first snow and hard frost; today it is raining. We are all still alive. August and Carl are both always ill. Give my regards to Emma and the children, and write soon. Your Grandfather, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Loretta Meissner.

<Written in English.>

27 Nov 1991. To: Loretta Meissner at Merlin, near Grants Pass

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

<T320>, cont. Aug. Schломann, W.H. N.J.—R.A. Cor E. Str.

[1891].

Dear August & Emma! I wrote a letter to you on Nov. 15, and have been expecting an answer every day since then. <T321> Last week a car with N.Y. mail was burned between Chicago and Milwaukee, so your letter might have burned too. So I am writing to you once more, hoping to get an answer soon.

Do you know where Anna is? A letter that I sent to her was returned unopened. Your Grandf.

From: F.A.M.; To: A. Wünsche.

Mr. A. Wünsche, Schönbn. near L. in Saxony.

Dec. 15, 1891.

Dear Sir. It's true that I have left your letter of March 18 unanswered; nevertheless I have thought of you often. I am very sorry about your father's final affliction; I hope my last days won't be so hard for me. So far, my mind is still clear and my bones haven't failed me.

So far we have had some frost, but no snow yet, and it has been raining for the past few days. Overall, summer and fall were dry; the wheat crop was good but we didn't get much hay. As a result, beef prices are very low. A fat cow won't sell for more than 12 or 15 dollars. Pigs are cheap too; they sell live for \$3 per 100 lb. Wheat is 1-1/2 cts per lb (6 p [?]), ryke the same, barley one ct per lb, potatoes 1/4 ct = one p [?], hay \$10 per 1000 kg (1 ton).

We are looking forward to a new Presidential election next year, so political groups are quite excited. Besides the two main parties (Republicans and Democrats), a third one has been formed: the Farmers' Alliance. But I don't believe that this one has much of a following. The current President is Republican, but the Democrats hope to win next time. Soon there will be only rich people and poor people here. By poor people I don't mean beggars but those who earn a living by hard labor, and by rich people I mean millionaires. The Machine Age has changed everything. Just as a poor weaver in Germany cannot compete with the factories, so also a small farmer is unable to compete with the big landowners. Harvesting machines cut the wheat and bind it, steam powered threshing machines thresh 1000 bu a day, and so on.

I don't know what else might interest you. I would be glad to hear that you and your dear family are well.

<T322> With my best regards, Your F.A.M.

P.S. Is Volkmar Jähnich[er] still alive? Nobody there remembers me, except him. Your father sent me his picture. Maybe you would delight me with one of yours.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

Aug. Schломann, W.H. N.J.—R.A. Cor E. Str.

Jan. 3, 1892

Dear Children! It must be a difficult chore for you to write a letter. If August doesn't have time, why can't Emma write? We were beginning to get worried. Yesterday I received your letter of Dec. 28 and I see that you are all well. The children must have grown quite a bit. I surely would like to see all of them together for once.

We haven't had much winter so far. On the day before New Year we were still still pasturing our cows. It started to rain that evening, and the next day we had two inches of snow. Today August sledded for the first time. The crops were quite good, but summer and fall were very dry, causing the winter hay crop to be very scanty. We still have our two horses and the two colts, one is a yearling and the other is a two-year-old. We slaughtered or sold all our cattle except three cows and three calves. But cattle were very cheap this autumn, as none of the farmers had enough feed and had to sell them.

We are all a bit unhealthy. We all have colds; Mother's leg is still bothering her; August was sick all summer long and did hardly any work; Carl is always ailing, too; and I am getting old. This summer we hired one of the Hansen boys, but at harvest time he got sick too.

A big steam mill has been built in Cashton, as well as several new stores. Kissel sold his house and store and repurchased the "Cashton House" for \$800.

We haven't heard anything from Ernst G., and have not received any letter from Kummerf. recently either.

Everything the farmers have for sale is very cheap and eggs cost 22 cts. per dozen. Tomorrow we want to slaughter another fat cow.

We wish you good health and good fortune for the new year, and hope to receive a letter from you before the next New Year.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, 149 W 12 Street, N.Y.

Jan. 3 [1892].

Dear Anna. I just found out your address from Schlomanns. I wrote a letter to you in August, but it was returned as the mailman was unable <T323> to locate you. If you change your address, you should write and tell me. We are all quite well and hope the same is true for you. We wish you a Happy New Year and hope to hear from you soon. Greetings—your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

Hague & Schmidt in Erfurt, Prussia.

Jan. 4, 1892.

I enclose \$1 and I want you to send me some cauliflower seeds Numbers and prices are based on last year's seed list. If the prices have changed this year, send more or less. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, 149 W 12 Street, N.Y.

Jan. 7, 1892.

Dear Anna. I received your letter of Dec. 30 '91 just after I mailed a letter to you. We were glad to hear that you have been thinking of us, and that you are well and doing fine. On the same day, I got a letter from your mother and a short one from Otto. They wrote that they all are well. Also Scholomanns sent me a letter, so I shall be satisfied for the time being. Thanking you for your good wishes for the new year, I remain—your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karol. Gerstenberg

Jan 7, 1892.

Dear Daughter. Yesterday I received your letter, and enclosed I found a short letter from Otto, but he forgot to sign it. I have read both with interest.

I wish we could get the same good prices here that you get at home. The wages for workers are high and farmers don't get much for what they sell. I just slaughtered another fat cow and sold the back parts for four cts per lb. We can raise hardly any fruit at all in Wis. The trees all die, but we have good soil for wheat. There are fields that have been bearing good crops for 20 years without any fertilizer.

My farm is quite hilly, but I have good spring water, enough fire wood, and also enough land. What I need is more workers. I am still well, but my strength is decreasing. My wife is always unwell too, but with Dora's help she manages the household. Carl is 27 years old, but he can only do light work; and August who is 24 was sick all <T324> summer long. He was not confined to his bed, but he was unable to work. At harvest time I had to pay \$1.50 = six Mk wages per day.

You have Otto and Frieda still at home and I conclude from your letters that they are both good workers. I also got a letter just now from Anna. She says she is well and has found a good job with a German doctor. I also had a letter from Schlomanns. They are all well.

We have had only a few cold days so far and only a few inches of snow, not enough to make good sledding tracks. Greetings to all.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

Mr. August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg in Prussia.

Jan 12, 1892.

Please send the seeds listed below at once as samples without value. You will have to make several parcels. The No. and prices are from your seed list of last year, 1891. I received it too late to order anything. Send it as soon as possible. Address: F.A.M.; Cashton, M.C. Wis. U.S.A.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

Mr. August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg in Prussia.

Jan 20, 1892.

I mailed you a letter containing an order list and a bill of exchange for 18 Mk on Jan 12. Afterwards I could no longer remember whether I endorsed the bill correctly so that you can collect it. I am therefore sending you a duplicate bill, endorsed correctly, together with a copy of the list of seeds, so that you can send me the seeds right away even if my first letter has been lost.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Hartse.

Ernst hartse, Care of Hermann Ostermann, Big Sandy, Montana.

Jan 20, 1892.

This morning I received your letter addressed to my daughter's son, Ernest G., and I see from it that you know as little about him as we do. The last time we heard from him was in Dec 1887 [Mar 1888?—LPM] from Eldred, Cass Co, D[akota]. Since that time we tried in vain to get an answer or a letter from him. He has not written to his mother either, nor to his brother-in-law Aug. Schlomann in W[est]H[oboken], N.J. We are therefore very much afraid that he was killed in the big snowstorm that was in Dakota during the winter of 1887-1888.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner ?.

<Written in English.> To: ?

Jan 1892.

[Ernest's oldest boy has gone to Utah. (Ernest Richard MEISSNER b: 24 Jul 1884 in Beaver, Beaver, UT)]

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner ?.

<Written in English.> To: ?

Jan 1892.

[Ernest's little boy has died in Utah. (Franklin Joram MEISSNER b: 12 Mar 1890 in Kerby, Josephine, OR d: 10 Dec 1891 in UT)]

From: F.A.M.; To: Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.>

6 Mar 1892. To: Martha Meissner c/o Jerome H. Bradshaw, Beaver, Utah [Martha's brother?]

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry H. Cremer.

<T325> Henry H. Cremer, Sparta, Wis.

[1892]

Dear friend. The enclosed Application is to be signed by two county officers. I therefore ask you to complete it with your signature, and maybe the Treasurer's, and then to deliver it. I oblige myself to any friendly service for you. Your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Casper Bedenk.

Mr. Casper Bedenk, Sparta.

June 23, 1892.

My note is due today. But as you probably don't need the money, I will send you the interest for another three months. If the weather and the roads had not been so terrible, I would have come down personally. Give my regards to your wife and daughters. Your devoted F.A.M.

P.S. Be so kind as to acknowledge the arrival of this letter.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, 149 W 12 Street, N.Y.

July 17, 1892.

Dear Anna. I received your letter of June 20, and I see from it that you are still alive and doing well, and that you have not completely forgotten about me. We all had the influenza this spring and were sick for three weeks, but now we are quite well. May was cold and wet, June very warm with thunderstorms every day, so that the farmers could hardly ever go to work in the fields. Apples and plums bloomed—a true joy for the eye—but too much rain destroyed the blossoms, so there will be no fruit. Everything is very late and the grass is growing well. We have had good weather for the past week and our hay is already in the barn.

I have not received any letter from Kum. since New Year, but I just read in the papers that Anna Brinkmann, a 20 year old girl from Kum. was condemned to death by a jury in Altona, because she murdered her child and set her house on fire to hide the deed.

We would be glad to hear from you again soon. Give our regards to the pretty Swiss girl, and tell her that many Swiss live around here and all of them own big farms.

Harvest time has not started yet, but the wheat is standing well.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T326> Karoline Gerstenberg

July 17, 1892.

Dear daughter. Since I have not heard from you again since New Year, I can only hope and wish that all of you are still alive and well. Anna wrote me that she has not received another letter from you since her birthday. This spring we all had influenza and were very sick in bed for three weeks. But now we are quite well again, only still weak. May was cold and wet, June hot with thunderstorms every day and a lot of rain, so that the farmers could hardly ever go to work in the fields. Apples and plums blossomed wonderfully, but too much rain destroyed the blossoms. That means we will have no fruit this year. Everything is very late,

but the grass is growing very well. We have had good weather for the past week and our hay is in the barn. Harvest time has not started yet, but the wheat is standing quite well. Today we had our first peas, three weeks later than in other years.

I just read in the papers that Anna Brinkmann, a 20 year old girl from Kummerfeld, was condemned to death by a jury in Altona, because she murdered her child and set her house on fire to hide the deed.

My regards to all. Your father, F.A.M.

P.S. July 18. It's raining again today.

From: F.A.M.; To: North Western Post.

North Western Post, 84 Mason Str., Milwaukee, Wis.

Dec. 6, 1892.

Please send me a sample issue of the NW Post, for which I want to thank you in advance. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Mrs. Karoline Gerstenb., Kumm. n. P. n. Hamburg, Ger.

[Dec. 1892.]

Dear daughter. I received a letter from you during the summer and from it I saw that all of you were well at that time. But since then there has been a lot of disease in Hamburg, from which your children living in Hamburg and Altona might have suffered.

We are quite well at present, but times are hard, because prices are low for everything we have to sell. However, we have elected a Democrat president and we hope that things will get better. With you the <T327> army costs a lot of money, but here the pensions cost still much more. There are many people who murdered and robbed during the last war in the South who now receive \$75 (or 10 Mk Engl.) monthly pension.

As you now have quite a lot of land, you surely won't be able to store all of your crops in the house. Have you built a barn? Do you still thresh your rye by hand or do you have a machine? How big was your crop? How many cows do you have? How much milk do you sell every day, and how much do you get paid for it? Let Otto write me a long letter and answer all these questions. It will be good for him to learn to write letters.

We are having an unusually early winter, and for several weeks already we have sledding tracks, and today quite a snowstorm.

From: F.A.M.; To: Casper Bedenk.

Mr. Casper Bedenk, Sparta.

Dec. 27 [1892].

Dear friend. As I know you don't need the money, I am sending you in advance the interest for another three months. Around New Year I will slaughter four fat young pigs from last spring. They each weigh about 100 lb. Let us know if you happen to want one, and the price. Greeting your wife and daughters, I remain your F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: North Western Post.

North Western Post, 84 Mason Str., Milwaukee, Wis.

Dec. 27, 1892.

To the Editor. Enclosed you will find a money order for \$2.00, for which I ask you to send me the NW Post and the Sunday Journal for a year, beginning today. As a premium, I would like you to send me the great "Germania. F.A.M., Cashton, M.C., Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, W.H., Corner of Sp. and Elm Str., N.J.

Dec. 31, 1892

Dear Children. From your letter of the 25th, I see that you have not completely forgotten about us. Every morning while we drink our coffee we are reminded of you by the pretty teaspoons, Emma's gift. We are glad that you are all well and doing fine. We are also quite well. Last spring we all had influenza and lay sick in bed for nearly four weeks, and we did not fully recover our strength until fall.

The wheat, barley, and corn crops are good, about 3/4 of the [expected] yield. Potatoes and onions are completely spoiled. <T328> May was cold and wet, June hot with thunderstorms and rain every day, so that our field work was delayed considerably. The farmers are suffering very much from low prices, but pork, butter, and eggs are quite good.

I hope we will get some better laws under a Democrat government. Nowadays the pensioners are eating us alive. We have to feed so many lazy bums, just because they murdered and robbed in the South during the last war.

Dora, Carl, and August are still at home, but August is not working at home. Mother's leg still troubles her.

For the past three weeks we have had nice sledding tracks, and for the last 8 days it has been very cold..

Wishing you much success for the New Year, I remain Your grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda Gerstenberg.

Frieda Gerstenberg, Kum.

Jan 9, 1893

Dear Frieda! Your welcome letter, stamped Dec. 20, arrived here on Jan. 4, '93. You signed as my niece, but you are my granddaughter. [Born about 1871: see T210] I was happy that you took time to write a letter to your 88 year old grandfather. Didn't you receive a letter from me in Dec.? You did not answer any of the questions that I asked in my letter.

We are having a hard, cold winter; lots of snow and sledding tracks. As we have good horses, the two boys, Carl and August (who are still at home) often have a nice sled drive with Dora.

On Christmas we got a letter from Emma and Schlomann; they were well and doing fine. Last summer I got a letter from Anna; she was well and doing fine. I also have a picture of her. And now I would also like very much to have one of you.

Thank you for Lina's address. I will write to her soon. Why is it, though, that you do not mention a word about your parents? I believe that your brother Ernst is still alive—at any rate, we have not heard anything about his death.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Karol. Gerstenberg, Kum.

[Jan 9, 1893?].

Dear Daughter. I wrote a letter to you last Dec. Didn't you get it? I had surely hoped that you would write to me for my birthday. I am now 88 years old and can still get around. It is strange: my father and mother both died so early, and I have to get in the way myself for such a long time. <T329> You must be quite an old lady, too [66 — LPM]. How are you and your husband? Is he still active?

My two oldest sons, Ernest and Adolph, are in Oregon on the Pacific Coast, almost as far from here as Kummerfeld is, but the train takes [only] 6 days to get there. They are both married; Adolph has three children [Thalia, Albert, Adolph] and is expecting a fourth [Louis, b 13 Feb 1893]. Ernest has had five children but two of them died [still living 1893: Ernest, Frederick, George]. They each have a farm and are doing well. The climate in Oregon is a little warmer than in Wisconsin, and the best apples, pears, plums, cherries, peaches, and apricots grow there. We raise good wheat, but hardly any fruit. Over the past few years many people have switched to raising strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, and red currants, but they all have to be covered up during the winter.

Carl, August, and Dora are still at home. If it weren't for my wife's bad leg, I would say we are all healthy, except for little colds now and then.

Your daughter Lina, with whom I was once having a very friendly correspondence, has been neglecting me sadly. She did not even write to tell me that she is married, but now that Frieda has sent me her address, I will try writing her a letter.

Wishing you lots of good luck, I remain F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Gebhardt.

Mr. August Gebhardt, Quedlinburg in the Harz.

[Jan., 1893].

I had some trouble at the NY custom house with your seeds that I ordered last year. Most of the seeds were good except a few that were probably old. ... The cauliflower was good and I hope you will send me more of the same seeds. Enclosed you will find \$1 for the following seeds: Address as usual: F.A.M. C. M.C. Wis. U.S.A.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

Hague & Schmidt in Erfurt.

[Jan., 1893].

Enclosed you will find \$1 for which I ask you to send me by mail the seeds listed below as samples without value. [Seeds: ...]

From: F.A.M.; To: Karl Gottlieb Wünsche.

<T330> Mr. Karl Gottlieb Wünsche in Schönbach near Löbau in Saxony.

Jan. 13, 1893.

Dear Sir! When we move into a new year, our thoughts often seem to go back, not only over the year just past, but also over our whole life. So my mind has been wandering back to Schönbach, where I suppose nobody remembers would remember me if I could not call you friend in honor of your father. As leaves fall from the trees in the fall, my former friends and acquaintances have fallen left and right and have gone to their graves. Your father is in heaven now, enjoying all the happiness that was promised to him. I don't expect to meet him there, as I don't know the way to this place. Like a leafless tree, I stand alone in life. All of my relatives (except for my children and grandchildren) are dead too.

When I read the papers, everywhere there is snow and coldness, hunger and need, anarchy, socialism, religious persecution, dynamite, stupidity, and superstition. Professor Briggs, who teaches at a university in New York and who dared to teach his students that Love [Bible? — LPM] is not God's word (not dictated by God!) had to answer for his behavior to a Christian court; and instead of doing like Luther and defending his views, he lied his way out because he did not want to lose his fat salary. It seems to me that in the present times enlightenment is going backward.

During our last presidential election the Democrats won, but the president who was nominated [Cleveland] was smuggled in by the financial big-wigs. He is a lawyer who makes nice speeches and wears his coat on both shoulders, but the Democrast have a majority in both houses and the Populist party has some good representatives [in the legislature]. So it won't be too easy for Mr. Cleveland to fulfill his secret promises. But the Democrats have just won a big victory in Wis.—I just read in today's paper that the [state] Supreme Court decided that the two Republican State Treasurers who collected interest on state money and put it into their own pockets have to give back one million dollars (four million Mk).

Since early Dec. we have had sledding tracks, and severe <T331> cold for the past four weeks. Last year was not too bad, but not too good either. Altogether we had about 3/4 of our expected yield. Potatoes, onions, and fruits were entirely spoiled; wheat and cattle prices are very low, but the price for pigs is good. Thousands of bu. of potatoes have been imported from Hamburg, but we have to pay 25 cts. custom duty per bu.

I am sending you today a German newspaper, and it would please an old man very much if you would trouble yourself to tell me something about Schönbach and the old homeland.

Greeting your family, I remain your devoted ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph at Merlin

Jan 1893 [excerpt].

... We have heard Will Haskins wife [Anna Larson] ran away with another man. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby

13 Feb 1893 [excerpt].

... Henry Crouse ... got a divorce from his wife.

From: F.A.M.; To: Sam Firth.

<Written in English.> To: Sam Firth [husband of granddaughter Lina Gerstenberg; see Jan 1893], Shipley, Yorkshire, England

13 Feb 1893

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

<T331>, cont. Karoline Gerstenberg.

Febr. 17 [1893].

Dear Daughter. Your letter, postmarked Jan. 28, arrived here on Febr. 15. It was not a birthday greeting, which Frieda took care of quite well, but it was a letter in your own hand, which I had missed very much. But I can see by your letters how hard it is for you to write, so I will be satisfied from now on with Frieda's letters.

I don't know anything, or only a little, that I could add since my last letter. Winter and cold weather are still going on. We are all pretty well and looking forward to a good summer. Greetings from all of us to all of you. Your father.

From: F.A.M.; To: North Western Post.

North Western Post, 84 Mason Str., Milwaukee, Wis.

Mar. 11, 1893.

Please be so kind as to answer the following questions in your paper:

What value does black rye have for the farmet? Is it also good for malt?

What is the reason that the German papers are more expensive than the English?

Is there an inexpensive edition of Schiller's and Goethe's works, and where are they sold?

Is there a book store in Milwaukee, preferably one that sells German books?

From: F.A.M.; To: (Granddaughter) Karoline (Gerstenberg).

<T332> [March, 1893]

Dear Lina! Your letter and your husband's pleased us all very much, especially since we see that you are well.

Emma, who visited us five years ago for three weeks with her husband and four children, is fat and heavy like your mother. Annie seems to be the same (or will be!), according to her picture. But you seem to be slim, and I always imagine that you look like your grandmother [Elise Henriette Sophie Von Mithofen]. She was a beautiful woman when she was young. I would like very much to have you visit us with your

husband and child, but I have little hope for it. The distance is too great, unless you decide to emigrate to America.

My daughter Dora, who lives with us is a nice pretty girl, and our joy and her mother's help. She is delicately built and she does not look like a farm girl. She will be 30 years old on the 21st of this month, but she still looks like she is 18. She could have been married long ago if she were not so particular. We would not like to lose her either, and could hardly manage without her, as my wife's health is not good.

I think and hope that you won't keep us waiting so long for your next letter. You must consider that my time will soon run out—in fact, it is a miracle that I still have any time left at all. Any moment could be my last. As long as I can make my wishes known, one of my first will be for your happiness. Your grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Caspar Bedenk.

Caspar Bedenk, Sparta, Wisc.

April 20, 1893.

I was greatly surprised when I read your letter of April 12, as it is so much different from our agreement. I have agreed with you as follows: my old note has been replaced by a new one that is co-signed by my wife; thus the old note is paid. I will be coming to Sparta in about 2 weeks, and we will discuss it some more. With my friendly greetings ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: O. Kozlowsky.

<T333> (no page with this number) <T334> Mr. O Koslowsky, 51 W. Van Buren Str. Ch[icago], Ill.

April 23 [1893].

Dear Sir! A snow storm that lasting for several days has covered fields and gardens with a foot of snow, and this has kept me from all outdoor work, so I have had time to study the sample issue of your "Rundschau" that you were so kind as to send me.

I regret having to say that I consider the politics and religion expressed in the "Rundschau" hardly any different from, and no better than, what is in the N W Post, which is published in Milwaukee and instead of enlightening their countrymen tries to keep them in their state of German stupidity. As I cannot believe this happens due to lack of knowledge, I must believe that both papers are owned by financial big-wigs, to the shame of their German heritage. So far I have been unable to find a free thinking German paper in America. If you could recommend one to me, I would be very pleased.

Your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda Gerstenberg.

Frieda Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld.

April 23, 1893

Dear Frieda! I received your little letter of May 17, and I was happy that you answered so soon. I can no longer remember old Mrs. Richter who died.

We were having very nice weather and had just started to plow and sow, when suddenly three days ago a violent snowstorm arrived. It snowed for three days, and now the ground is all covered with a foot of snow. This has thrown us far behind in our work.

As you know how to write such nice letters, please answer the following questions for me:

How much rye do you thresh in a year?

Have you built another barn?

Do you still thresh your rye with a flail, or by a machine—pulled by horses or steam?

How much buckwheat do you raise in a year?

How many cows do you have?

How much do you have to pay per year in taxes?

How much interest do you have to pay per year?

<T335> If you don't know the answers yourself, you can find out from your mother or father. And I want them to send me a picture of you at your next opportunity. Give my regards to your father, mother, and brother. Your grandfather.

P.S. Is anyone from the Bruchmann family still living?

From: F.A.M.; To: Caspar Bedenk.

Caspar Bedenk, Sparta, Wisc.

July 3, 1893.

Friend Bedenk. In response to your request that I should be sure to pay up, through June 23, the note that I gave to your wife, I have the money here since that date and you can have it—the sooner the better. But your wife will have to sign the note, and you will have to return the old note to me.

You can take a morning [train?] car to Cashton. From there it is a short walk to my house, and in the evening you can return to Sparta by car.

Greetings to your wife. I remain, your devoted

From: F.A.M.; To: Caspar Bedenk.

Caspar Bedenk, Sparta, Wisc.

July 8, 1893.

Friend Bedenk. I received your letter of the eighth of this month. In reply I must tell you: Since you wanted the money for my note up to June 23 so badly, I was forced to borrow it, and I will have to pay double interest if I keep your money longer. It is here, ready for you against your bill. If you will send me my note, receipted, I will get a Post Office or Express money order for your bill and mail it to you. With friendly wishes ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Caspar Bedenk.

Caspar Bedenk, Sparta, Wisc.

July 13, 1893.

Dear friend! I received your post card and the registered letter with my note—a few days late, as we cannot go to pick up our mail every day. I am sending you today a money order for \$25.50 interest for three months, from which I spent 15 cts. for the money order; that leaves \$25.35.

<T336> The last rain pleased us very much, as it was starting to get very dry. We have our hay in the barn, and on Monday the wheat harvest will start. We have so much to do now that I probably won't come to Sparta before fall. Greeting your wife and daughters, I remain, your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Caspar Bedenk.

Caspar Bedenk, Sparta, Wisc.

July 16 [1893].

Dear friend. I received your post card of the 13th of this month. Did you completely forget that there is a heavy fine for sending a request for payment openly on a post card by mail? Are you so terribly stingy that you don't want to spend two cents for postage? Respectfully, F.A.M.

You have surely received the money by now, and you can now sleep in peace.

From: F.A.M.; To: Karoline Gerstenberg.

Lina Gerstenberg, Kummerfeld n. P. near Altona, Hamburg.

Aug 26, 1893.

Dear Daughter. Yesterday I received your letter of Aug. 4th, and I see that you are still alive but unfortunately very ill. This worries me greatly. I hope that you will be feeling better when this letter reaches

you. Frieda still owes me an answer to my other letter of April 23. It seems that the drought that I have been reading about in the papers has caused damage to you too.

We certainly had quite a dry summer, but every two or three weeks, when everything seemed to be burning up, a god rain came. Over all, we have not had better crops for many years, but that has not been true everywhere. There are regions where everything dried out, but there are now railroads running through the whole country, so the good regions can easily provide for the bad ones.

People say I am not getting any older and I still look the same as I did 10 or 20 years ago, but my strength is lacking and if one is unable to work any more, life is no longer interesting. Work makes life sweet. The older one gets, the more troubles arise until finally death releases us from all evils.

<T337> Dora got a letter a few days ago from Schlomann's children. They were all well. Since last March I have heard nothing from Anna in N.Y. nor from Lina in England.

We now have a great shortage of money; many banks have gone bankrupt and many big factories and mines have shut down. This caused thousands of workers to lose their jobs while the rich people are counting their money by the millions.

We are quite well; we have enough to eat and drink, but times are hard and business has almost completely stopped. A bu. of wheat (60 lb.) costs only 50 cts. or 2 Mk in your currency.

With gretings from us all, and hoping soon to hear of an improvement in your health, I remain your father and grandfather F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, W.H., Corner of Oakland West Str.

[Aug. or Sep., 1893]

Dear Emma. A few days ago I received a letter from your mother, which I enclose. She writes that she is very sick, and that she wrote you a letter but you did not answer. Please write to her right away. We have not heard from Anna for a long time. Is she married? Last spring I got a letter from Lina in England, which I answered right away, but I have not heard any more from her.

==

Dear August. You are now getting so rich that you won't recognize your poor relations any more. But we are not so poor either—we have enough to eat and drink.

The summer was a little dry, but we always had rain at the right time. The garden and field crops are better than they have been for many years. August is working as a carpenter, and Carl manages the farm. Naturally, he feels a little bit lonely. He is a great friend of children, and I wish you could let him have your Hans for company, or do you want to make a doctor or a [?] out of him? How is your business? Hard times are everywhere. Let us hear from you again soon.

From: F.A.M.; To: Georg Gerstenberg

<T338> Cashton, Oct 31, 1893.

Dear Son-in-Law Gerstenberg. Yesterday I received your letter of Oct. 18, with the announcement that death has rid my daughter, your wife, of all worry and pain. [She would have been 67 years old in Nov.—LPM] I had already observed from my daughter's last letter how much difficulty she was having with writing it. I am still not sure when death will take me, as I am still enjoying pretty good health except that my strength is gone. Greeting you all, Your old Father and Grandfather F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann, Corner of Oakland, W. Str., Hoboken, N.J.

Oct 31 [1893]

Dear August. Last evening I received your letter of Oct 25, as well as a letter from [Georg] Gerstenberg from Kum., both with the news that death has rid my dear daughter Karoline from all worry and pain, while I—an old man—am still puttering around here in this world.

Mother is having a lot of trouble with her leg, Dora is still with us but sick right now, Carl is now very healthy and he takes care of all the chores. August worked as a carpenter this summer and has earned well but also spent well. Now he has gone to the woods with three boys to cut 500 cords of wood. We would be very happy if Hans could spend next summer with us. We now have four beautiful horses, and we can spare two.

Your letters are very welcome to us, but they come so rarely.

==

Dear Emma. I can well imagine how much you would have liked to see your mother again. I also thought of it often, but it was impossible for me. You can be consoled by the fact that death rid her of all trouble and worry.

Anna has not written for a long time either. Is she married? I hope you can get Frieda come over. Dora is sick a lot nowadays, but Carl and August are well. I am feeling my age and Mother's leg pains her so much that she often cannot sleep.

Don't make us wait so long for a letter from you. We have not heard from Ernst.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

<T339> Aug. Schlomann, W.H., N.J.

Dec. 5, 1893.

Dear Aug., Emma, and Anna. Last evening I received your letters of Dec. 1. I also received your letters of Oct 25 and answered them on Oct. 31, enclosing a letter to Frieda. You don't seem to have received my answer. In August Dora received a letter from Louise [Schlomann], which she also answered right away.

I cannot regret [Georg] Gerstenberg's death very much. I feel that it is best for him and for you as well.

I would be happy if Kummerfeld could stay in the family. The beautiful house cost some hard sweat, but Otto could not exist unless all the others give up any inheritance claim. For example, suppose that the place is worth 900 Mk. There are 9 children, so they would each get 100 Mk. Otto's share would also be only 100 Mk, so he would have to pay 800 Mk [in order to own the property]. This is impossible for him.

If Emma and Anna want to take a trip there, I can't understand what good it would do. Not only is the voyage very dangerous in winter, but also this would entail unnecessary expense. It might be better for you to use the trip money to support Otto and Frieda, who have had a lot of expense with the illness and the funerals.

It seems that Anna is with you now. I am enclosing a copy of my last letter, along with the letter from Frieda to you.

We have been having very cold weather and good sledding tracks, but we are all quite well.

== Frieda's letter:

Dear sister and brother-in-law. Although Father and Mother made their whole lives so bitter for each other, Mother by so many worries and sorrows, and Father by many troubles, but being so much accustomed to their life together, Father cannot get over it. He complains that he cannot breathe, and says that he will soon follow Mother. And then the Lord took our Father from us on Friday morning, Nov 17 [1893]. <T340> The funeral will be on Tuesday. We greet you in sorrow and despair. Your brother Otto and your sister Frieda.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda and Otto Gerstenberg.

Frieda and Otto Gerstenberg, Kum. near P. near Altona, Germ.

Dec. 5, 1893.

Dear Frieda and Otto! I learned from Schlomann's of the death of my dear daughter, your mother, and yesterday of your father's death as well. I hope that your sorrow over the death of your parents will be softened when these lines reach you. Death is sad for those who remain behind. It rids us of all the sorrow and worry of earthly life.

I hope and wish that you lose neither your health nor your courage. You probably have to expect a lot of trouble. I am still quite well and will be 89 years old this Christmas [season].

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann

Sunday, Dec. 17, 1893.

Dear children. Yesterday I received your card. I now know that you received my letter. I cannot understand what happened to my previous letter—I thought perhaps the address was wrong. Now I also want to give you a Christmas gift—you will never guess what it is.

I wrote you in my earlier letter that August went to the woods to chop cord wood. A few days ago, Dora received a letter from him, saying:

“Last week, somebody knocked at the door of my cabin. I opened the door and said, ‘Come in.’ A man came in, and I thought I should know him. I looked at him and he looked at me. Then he said, ‘August, don’t you know me?’ “

Who was it? Ernst Gerstenberg, all alive and well. He is working near here on the railroad. That’s all I know so far. I think perhaps the boys will be coming home for Christmas and will bring Ernst along. I am only sorry that your mother could not have known about it. This would have made it easier for her to die.

I don’t know how much longer I will last. It can happen very quickly. Life has nothing more to <T341> offer.

That’s all for now. We are having rain one day and sharp frost the next, but still good sledding tracks.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda and Otto Gerstenberg.

Frieda and Otto Gerstenberg

Dec. 18, 1893.

Dear children. I want to give you a beautiful Christmas surprise—sorrow can be followed by joy. Your brother Ernst is alive and well. I am only sorry that your mother couldn’t have known about it; it would have made dying easier for her. Your grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Otto Gerstenberg.

Otto Gerstenberg, Kum. near P. near Altona, Germ.

Dec. 29, 1893.

Dear Grandson. I received your letter of Dec. 1, and you will have received my letter of Dec. 5 at about the same time. You will also have received my letter of Dec. 18 by now, with the good news that your brother Ernst is alive and well and has been found again.

Now, dear Otto, I would like to know what you are planning to do. Do you think that you could manage the business with the help of your sister Frieda, or do you perhaps want to get married? Can’t you get a rich wife? How much is the mortgage on the place, and what is the interest rate?

What do your brothers and sisters say? Are they also claiming a share of the inheritance?

Please answer these questions clearly for me.

We have had good sledding tracks for the past several weeks, but for several days there has been a thaw so that we have to use the wagon again.

Answer soon. Your grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schlomann.

Aug. Schlomann. W.H. N.J. Corner of Oak and West Str.

Jan 1, 1894.

Dear Emma. I will address my letter to you because I hope to receive an answer from you first. I got your letter of Dec. 20 which I think you wrote in reply to my registered letter of Dec. 6. But I still don’t know whether you have received my letter of Dec. 17. Please write and tell me how it happens that <T342> don’t get letters or answer them regularly. In her last letter, your mother complained about this as well. I sent you this last letter of hers in my August letter. I would like very much to have it back, to save it in memory of

your mother. I don't even know whether you received my letter with your mother's letter enclosed, because you never answered it. All of you need to be more diligent about writing letters. Ernst G. [Emma's brother—LPM] is living here in this state, just a couple hundred miles from here, but he never writes a letter to me or to you, nor to his mother who worried about him so much.

It seems that Anna is with you now. She still owes me a reply to my last letter. What is she doing with you? Is she sick? Is she married? Or is she a clerk in your store?

You ask me how things are in Kummersfeld. I asked Otto and Frieda the same question in several letters before their parents' death, but I have not found out anything. Why don't you send an inquiry to Kum. yourself?

I don't even know whether you are rich or poor. I hope that little Fritz feels better again, and that Anna will write to me soon and tell me how she is doing, and that you will soon send me a complete answer to this letter. I excuse Schломann; he surely has enough to do in his store. These wishes and requests from your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

Hague & Schmidt in Erfurt.

Jan. 12, 1894.

Dear Sirs. Here is my usual request that you send me, for the enclosed dollar, the following seeds as samples without value. Respectfully F.A.M.

Around here we had a dry but very good summer, and had a good crop of clover seed that was sold in the fall for \$5 per bu. Wheat costs 50 cts. per bu.

From: F.A.M.; To: Pinneberg Guardianship Office.

<T343> S.T. [?] To the Superior Vormundschaftliche [Guardianship] Office in Pinneberg near Altona in Holstein.

Jan. 12, 1894.

The undersigned F.A.M. formerly lived in Kummerfeld where he owned a small farm. When he emigrated to America, he signed over his property to his daughter Karoline Meissner, charging her with the care of her mother. Karoline later married one Gerstenberg. Then her mother died, and the farm was freed from that obligation.

On the night of Oct. 11-12, 1893, my daughter Karol. Meissner (m. Gerstenberg) died, and soon afterward on Nov. 17 of the same year Gerstenberg followed her.

This is the situation. Now I want to know: Does the property revert to me, her father? Or are Gerstenberg's children the heirs? There are eight or nine of them.

Please send me this information soon. Signed, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August and Emma Schломann.

Aug. Schломann. W.H. N.J. Corner of Oak and West Str.

Jan 15 [1894].

Now I have to answer two letters for the long one of Dec. 30.

Neither August nor Ernst G. visited us at Christmas nor at New Year's. What I said in my letter before last is all that I know so far.

The Democrats surely cannot be held responsible for the bad times, which have resulted from the laws that have been made to the advantage of the big-wigs.

We here in the country cannot complain much. The summer was very dry, but the crop was quite good. Wheat, to be sure, is very cheap, but many thousand bu. of clover seed was threshed in Wis. and sold for \$5 per bu. Pigs, butter, eggs, and potatoes brought good prices. Here on the Ridge, almost every farmer has an Artesian well, which costs \$300 to \$500, and a new house or a big new barn. Nobody goes anywhere by foot any more—the farmers all ride in buggies or road carts.

<T344> Cashton is booming; the Milling Co. has built a big roller mill and has good business. The Creamery Co. has a creamery in which the machinery alone cost \$1500. There is a saw mill and wood factory, three blacksmiths, two harness shops, two holds [?], two tooters [?], two watchmakers, two picture galleries, seven saloons, two hardware stores, four groceries and drug stores, one barber. The streets there are paved now and new houses have been built, five Artesian wells, a water system for all of the streets, and good sidewalks. [Everything's Up to Date in Cashton City ?? -LPM]

There is nobody without work or bread—it is even hard to find a helper if you ever need one.

Now to answer your last letter, I addressed my last letter to Emma, and in that letter I excused you because I thought you might not have time to write. I am glad to hear that Fritz is well again, and the rest of you are too. Greetings to all. Your Grandfather.

== Anna Gerstenberg:

I was glad to hear that you are well. Please ask Emma whether she still has the last letter that your mother wrote to me and I forwarded to her. I would like to keep it to remember your mother.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Gerstenberg.

Ernst Gerstenberg, Barron Wis.

Febr. 9, 1894.

Dear Ernst. Yesterday we received your letter of the 4th. We had already heard from August that you are still alive. Your mother died during the night of 11-12 Oct. 1893. It was very unkind of you never to write to her. She was so worried about you. On Nov. 17 your father died. Otto and Frieda arranged their burial, and are still living in Kummerfeld. Otto wrote to me that your parents had made a will, but it has not yet been unsealed. Your brother from Berlin and your sister Lina from England went to Kummerfeld before your mother's death, and Emma and Anna were considering going there when they <T345> heard that their mother had died. Anna left her job at that time, and has been living with Schlomanns since then. They were still well according to their latest letter. Some time when you have nothing else to do, come down and visit us.

My wife, Carl, and Dora send their regards. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda and Otto Gerstenberg.

Frieda and Otto Gerstenberg, Kum. near P.

Feb. 12, '94.

Dear Frieda and Otto. I received your letter of Jan 17 and was glad that you replied so soon and that you answered my questions carefully.

I think and hope that the two of you will be named as heirs in the will; you are the ones who stood by your parents. However, you will also have to assume the debts along with the inheritance, and that is a hard nut. But both of you are young and strong—maybe you can work hard and pay them off.

I will let you know as soon as I hear from Ernst again.

Please let me know the terms of the will.

We have been having very unsettled weather, a long stretch of mild weather is followed by snow and severe cold.

Wishing you lots of luck. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

Aug. Breitenfeld, Bruce, Brocking Co., Da.

April 22, 1894.

Dear friend. I see from your letter that arrived yesterday that you lost your best friend, your wife. Although it is sad for you, death has released your dear wife from all her pain. I am certainly still quite healthy, but as one lives longer one has nothing but worries. My wife still has her bad leg. She limps around during the day, but often at night she has so much pain that she cannot sleep. Dora is still at home, but

always ailing. Carl does most of the work, as I can only work a little. August is working elsewhere. Your cousin Wilhelm Breitenfeld worked here last year, and this year on another farm, but he is always ailing.

<T346> W. Henka is Assessor and Albert Jones our Chairman; Cashton is constantly growing. Today is the first sunny we have had, following a long rainy spell. Tomorrow I want to sow barley. Give my regards to Wilhelmine, and write to me again soon.

Your friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Friederich Breitenfeld.

Portland Center, M.C. Wis.

May 21, 1894.

Dear friend. I have to pay a note next week, so I would like for you to pay me by this week the \$3 for the plow. You must have heard from August [Breitenfeld] by now that his wife died.

Greeting you I remain your friend F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

Aug. Breitenfeld.

June 7, 1894.

Dear friend. I received your letter of May 22, and read with great interest about your experience while looking for land. Early in May we had very nice warm weather here, and enough rain, but now it is dry and cold and frost continues at night. My corn is entirely frozen, but I hope it will grow out again. We are just starting to make hay, and we hope that the rain will come soon and bring better times. Nobody has any money. Everything we have for sale is cheap, and we can only exchange it for store goods.

We will be glad to hear from you again. It seems that you are staying with your daughter Julie, who I hope you will greet for me. Your friend, F.A.M.

August Breitenfeld, Care of Mrs. John Woodard, Brookings C. Dakota

From: F.A.M.; To: ?

<Written in English.> To: ?

Jul 1894 [excerpt].

... Henry Crouse got married again.

END OF BOOK 6 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 7: Aug. 1894 to Nov. 1898

From: F.A.M.; To: Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg.

<T347> Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg, Kum. near P. near Altona, Germ.

Aug 27, 1894.

Dear children. I just received your short letter. You certainly got lots of work and trouble along with your inheritance. I hope and wish that both of you are in better health by now.

You are suffering from too much rain, while we are having too little. Since early June we have had no rain and constant high temperatures. There is no longer a single stalk of grass in the meadow or pasture. Everything is burned up. Winter wheat was good, but all of the summer fruit has dried up.

I have not heard any more from Ernst or Schlomann since spring. If it is not too much trouble and expense, please send me your pictures. I would still like to see them before I die.

200 lb. of wheat cost 6 Mk in your currency; 100 lb live pigs 16 Mk; a 4 week old pig costs 8 Mk.

From: F.A.M.; To: New York Stadt Zeitung.

New York Stadt Zeitung [NY City News] German Newspaper, New York.

Nov 25, 1894.

Please send me a sample issue of your paper. I am tired of reading Methodist doctrine in the N.W. Post, and I wish to subscribe to a different paper for the New Year.

Address: F.A.M. Cashton, M.C. Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

August Breitenfeld, Bruce, Brookings Co. S.Dak

Dec 18, 1894.

Dear friend. I received your letter of the 8th and was pleased to hear that you have not completely forgotten me. I will send you the seeds that you ask for, and hope you will have good results with them. Our summer was also very dry, but the freeze harmed us even more. I was unable to harvest potatoes or corn. Winter wheat, rye, and barley are very good everywhere; so is corn at some places on the Ridge where the freeze did not hit. The weather this fall was still very good for crops, so my horses and cows are still on the pasture today. We had a little snow a few times, but it always melted away again.

My wife's leg is still bad, <T348> Dora is quite well and still at home, August and Carl are also still at home but August works out.

Give my regards to your daughter. I remain your friend F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg.

Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg, Kum. n. P. n. Altona, Germany.

Dec 24, 1894.

Dear Frieda. On the 19th I got your short letter of the 3rd. I am glad you still think of your old grandfather, and also that you are still well. We here are also still alive and quite well, if it weren't for a troublesome cold. Dora would sure like to write to you, but she does not know how to write German and you don't understand English. Your sister Lina does not write any more; also we have not had a letter from Emma or Otto all summer long, but Dora received a very short letter from Louise Schломann. She writes that they are all well. A few days ago we received a letter from August who is in Oregon. He writes that Ernst G. has arrived there.

Our weather here is as mild as yours; my cows are still on the pasture. Summer was very dry, but the wheat, rye, and barley crops were good; the potatoes and corn however were very poor. To keep up the interest payments is hard work. I also have to pay about 84 Mk a year, and then I still have about 40 or 50 Mk taxes.

I would be glad if you could send your picture. Give my regards to Otto, and write again soon to your Grandf.

P.S. I will be 90 years old the day after tomorrow.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, 491 Wythe Ave, South 11 Str., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Jan 1, 1895.

Dear Anna. I received your good wishes for my birthday, and was pleased that you thought of me once again. I am now 90 years old and I am still quite well, as are all the others. Your brother Ernst went to Oregon and has visited my son Adolph. Why don't you write to Kum. to Otto and Frieda? They are both trying to work hard to pay the interest on the mortgages that they have inherited. I would be happy to hear from you again soon, and I wish you a rich husband for the New Year (if you don't already have one). We all send our regards. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

<T349> Hague & Schmidt in Erfurt, Germany.

[1895].

Dear Sirs. Enclosed you will find \$1 (my annual contribution!) for which please send me ...

Last year my cauliflower was an actual forest, but only about half of it had flowers, nice big ones. I think it was not the earliest kind; maybe it was No. 9. Greetings ... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Peter Arends.

Mr. Peter Arends, Postmaster at Middle Ridge L. [?] & Cty.

[1895].

I am sending you a seed list herewith. For every item note how many packets you want and send it back to me so that I can order any articles that I don't have in stock.

Sending my regards to your dear wife I remain ...

My address is: Cashton, M.C. Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: Farmer Seed Co.

Farmer Seed Co., Faribault, Minn.

March 14, 1895.

In order to maintain our relationship, I am sending you a small order herewith, which I would like you to send me by mail. Perhaps it would be good if you could send your catalog to John Kompenschroes, Cashton, Wis. and to William Hauke, Portland Ctr, Wis. (M.C.)

Greetings to you and hopes for a better summer.

I am not sending any money order. Everyone always sends such small amounts of seeds free, and your prices are no lower than anywhere else.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby

26 Mar 1895 [excerpt].

... Martha has got a little girl now [Eva Alice MEISSNER b: 16 Mar 1895 in Kerby, Josephine, OR]. ... One time this spring I thought I should have a chance to sell out and go to Oregon, but you ought to have seen what a storm I raised when I came home with the news. Ma said nobody would get her out of the old house alive, so we have to keep on paying interest as long as we can, but what then? August is engaged to get married this fall ... [to] a daughter of Adam Heintz and August is going to be a Catholic like his girl. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Postmaster at Richland Center.

<Written in English.> To: Postmaster at Richland Center [WI?]

Feb 1896. [Inquiring about Henry Meissner, Civil War veteran]

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernst Gerstenberg.

<T349>, cont. Ernst Gerstenberg, Merlin, Oregon.

[1894].

If you had been here during our cold winter you certainly would not be longing for this region. Last summer not a single stalk of green grass could be seen for a long time and our cows would have starved if we had not fed them cornstalks. Besides, we cannot raise any fruit here. I have almost forgotten what a cherry looks like. If I could, I would trade at once for Oregon.

You said you are planning to visit us soon. You did not come when you were living close by, so I don't expect that you will come from as far away as you are now. Haven't you visited Ernest Meissner <T350> yet? I think he owns a pretty good farm. In the fall I got a letter from Frieda. She complains that you never write to her.

We are holding to the hope that you will visit us as you promise before my death; and we return your greetings.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda Gerstenberg.

Frieda Gerstenberg, Kum. n. P. n. Altona, Ger.

April 18, 1894.

Dear Frieda. Yesterday I got your dear letter and picture. Both made me very happy. Judging from your picture, you are not only a pretty girl, but also a good one. Your picture reminds me of my mother, the way she still exists in my memory.

I had a letter from Ernst recently. He is still in Oregon, staying with my son Adolph. I scolded him thoroughly for not writing to you. From here to Oregon it is 6,000 English miles [! Just over 2000 miles—LPM] but it takes no more than six days to go there [by train?]. A woman from there came with her little daughter for a visit a little while ago. So if you want to come out here you must not be afraid of farm life [?]. Steamboats and rails [?] shorten the miles. All of us would be very happy to see you here with us. Schломann and Emma visited us for three weeks a few years ago.

We are now having very nice spring weather; the grass has just started to turn green, but the trees are still bare. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain your Grandfather F.A.M., who wishes you lots of luck.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

August Breitenfeld, Bruce, Brookings Co. S.Dak

[Nov, 1895].

Dear friend. I received your letter of Auug. 29, as well as the stamps for the seeds. I see from your letter that you are still alive but feeling happy. But since you have good health, you should be satisfied. My poor wife is unable to sleep peacefully at night on account of her leg.

Around here the winter wheat all got frozen. Barley, oats, and corn, however, did very well; also all the garden vegetables. We have not had any hail. Since Oct. 1 we have had very dry rough weather with frost at night, which makes everything dry out.

Cashton has become a small town and grows day by day. <T351> Next week, Nov. 12, my August is going to marry Adam Heintz's daughter, Lina.

How is Wilhelmine? Is she well? Do you live with Wilhelmine or with your daughter? Give my regards to everyone who knows me. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda Gerstenberg.

Nov 15, 1895.

Dear Frieda. A few days ago I received your letter dated Nov. 5, and I see from it that you are still alive. I would have liked to know more about your home life.

I am still alive and quite healthy for my age. August, my youngest son, got married two days ago [Nov 12 — LPM] to a German girl, a neighbor's daughter. He was only 28 years old [but had his 29th birthday on 14 Nov—LPM]. Dora is now already 32 years old and still unmarried. She still lives with us and is a great help to her mother, who still suffers with her sore leg. Carl is also still at home and 31 years old. Adolph and Ernest both live in Oregon; they each have a farm and four or five children. They are doing well. Oregon is 3000 English miles [2100? — LPM] from here. The last time I heard from your brother Ernst, he was still living with Adolph. I wrote to him and asked for your mother's picture, but he was gone when my letter arrived and nobody knows where he went; and he has not written since then either.

We had a very good summer, but the fall was too dry, which made it hard for the cows on the pasture. We have not had any snow yet, but there has been some light frost.

Give my regards to Otto, and I wish you both a happy New Year. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Der Seebote.

“Der Seebote” [The Lake Messenger], Milwaukee, Wis.

Dec. 14 [1895].

Please send me a sample issue of your paper, and include your enclosure, “An häuslichen Herd” (“At the Fireplace”). I want to subscribe to a German newspaper next year. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Der Seebote.

“Der Seebote,” Milwaukee, Wis.

Dec. 24 [1895].

I received your sample issue of the “Seeboten” and I would like to subscribe to it for the coming year, except that I am short of cash at the moment. Our County Board built a new <T352> \$50,000 court house (including several new barns and homes for its members.) This has made our taxes very high. If you can wait for payment until summer, you could send me your paper and list me as a yearly subscriber. If not, I will have to be satisfied with a cheap English paper: the Weekly Wis. and N.Y. Tribune are offered together for one dollar.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: O. Kozlowski.

Mr. O. Kozlowski, Faribault, Minn.

[1896?].

Dear Fellow Countryman. It must be of interest to you to learn how your seeds paid off last summer. I will therefore take the trouble upon myself to review the seeds that I got from you. ...

We are having rain today, which we need very badly. I wish you a happy New Year and remain hopeful of better times. Your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: ?

<Written in English.> To: ?

28 Feb 1896 [excerpt].

... George Haskins, Loretta’s father, is in Osakis, Minn. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda Gerstenberg.

<T352>, cont. March 17, 1896.

Dear Frieda! Yesterday I received your welcome letter of March 2, 1896, and I don’t want to make you wait a long time for an answer. I also have plenty of time for it, as I am unable to do hard work any more. In response to your belated birthday greeting, I want to congratulate you ahead of time on your birthday as well as on the impending wedding.

We have had a rather mild winter too; no spring weather so far.

I am glad to hear that Lina [Frieda’s sister—LPM] is doing well. We have not heard from Schlomanns or Anna for a long time. The last address (probably still correct) is: A. Schlomann, Corner of Oak and West Str., West Hoboken, N.J.

It would please me to hear from you again soon! Who is this lucky guy who will lead you to the altar? We all are quite well except for colds, and we send our best regards to you and Otto. Your Grandfather.

I have not heard any more from Ernst.

From: F.A.M.; To: La Crosse "Folkesfreund".

<T353> La Crosse "Folkesfreund" [Friend of the People], L., Wis.

March 25, 1896.

I got a back issue of the "Folkesfreund" in my hands, but I cannot find the price listed. Please send me a sample issue and the price for the daily and Sunday paper. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Der Seebote.

"Der Seebote," Milwaukee, Wis.

March 31, 1896.

According to your letter of the 28th, it seems that I insulted your delicate feelings. This may be caused by my imperfect command of the English language, which made me use an ambiguous word. [But he wrote in German?? — LPM.] I was only trying to point out that the "Seebote" was rewarded for its beautiful sermons and excellent proofs, for keeping the farmers in ignorance of financial matters.

With regard to religious matters, the reward should come in heaven where there is nothing but silver. But if the "Seebote" should end up in hell along with all the rich people, it will be paid in gold.

Furthermore, I was not aware that there is a law in America, just as in Germany, prohibiting insults to majesties, and as I do not have time—with my spring work approaching—to spend several months in jail, I will retract everything that I said in this letter and in my previous one, and I will humbly ask the stern Lord "Seebote" for forgiveness.

From: F.A.M.; To: La Crosse "Volkesfreund".

La Crosse "Volkesfreund," L., Wis.

March 31, [1896].

You can send me your daily and Sunday Volkesfreund if you wish, but I do not yet know the price for the two papers. Judging from the sample issue, the paper does not seem to be completely to my taste—I am particularly interested in German and European politics—but I have paid off the Seebote, which was too opinionated for me, and so I will try the Volkesfreund. Respectfully, ...

From: F.A.M.; To: La Crosse "Herald and Volkesfreund".

"Herald and Volkesfreund," La Crosse, Wis.

April 13, [1896].

You sent me a lot of old newspapers that have no value, as pages in the middle are missing and consequently all the stories are incomplete. I cannot make any use of your offer to send <T354> you \$2 in exchange for \$3 worth of goods (namely the three papers) and seeds for \$1; my silver is not coined that way either [?]. Three newspapers would be too many for me, and I have all the seeds I need. Please do not send any more papers. Respectfully.

From: F.A.M.; To: North Western Post.

North Western Post, Milwaukee, Wis.

April 13, 1896.

I received the sample issue of the N.W. Post that you so kindly sent me, and I will take your paper if you will send me Special Premium No. 7, the big Thermometer, with the next paper, and you will let me wait until next fall to pay.

In any case, I don't want the paper without the Thermometer, as I can get English papers of the same size for half the price.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Der Seebote.

Milwaukee Seebote.

April 13, [1896].

I received your letter of the 9th, and as you probably take only honest money (gold) in payment for your paper and we have only dishonest money (silver) here, I have to give up the pleasure of being further taught by the Seebote. Besides, I am much too old to learn anything more. Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: La Crosse "Herald and Volkesfreund".

"Herald and Volkesfreund," La Crosse, Wis.

April 22, 1896.

I wrote to you on April 13, asking you not to send me your paper. You seem not to have understood me. If you keep sending them to me I will refuse to pick them up at the Post Office. If you want to be paid for the sample issue, send me a bill and I will pay it. Respectfully... F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Hague & Schmidt.

Hague & Schmidt, Erfurt.

[1896].

You will find enclosed a small sample of a wonderful pretty spring flower that my children discovered here in the primeval forests (most of which have almost completely disappeared by now). It grew next to a big stone, surrounded by moss and next to a spring that forms a small creek, and it can only be found at this particular stone. The plant is as big as a <T355> strawberry plant; the leaves lie on the ground and the flowers stand above them in the air. They bloom early with the Hepaticus, which also grow wild here. The root is a bush with many small bulbs or onions, as big as the seeds of Luthimus or Ratus, and the leaves die off after it blooms.

It seems to me that the plant has something in common with Dielytria, but in miniature. We planted some of them in the garden three years ago and these bloomed there, despite the last two very dry years, as nicely as on the rock. Perhaps it is nothing new—who knows—but it is a very pretty thing and I would like very much to know the name of the plant.

[Seeds ...]

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

August Breitenfeld, Brookings, S.Dak

July 23, 1896.

Dear friend. I received your letter of June 14. I was happy that you think of me once in a while. Also I am glad that you are with Wilhelmine. I always liked her. How many children does she have? I hope she is doing fine. Give her my regards.

We had plenty of rain this summer; everything is doing fine. We are all quite well too, except for my wife's sore leg. Kamperschnör built himself a big stone house. Hanke and his sun-in-law built a new store. Wilhelm Breitenfeld is still Town Treasurer, Persow is Clerk, and Hanke Assessor. I would be happy to hear from you again soon.

Greetings—your friend F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby

30 Oct 1896 [excerpt].

... August had till now all time steady carpenter work for \$1.35 a day, then he boarded at home, had no rent to pay, no wood to buy, milk and vegetables free from us, so he is getting pretty well out of debt. His little girl is Grandma's pet [Eva Mary MEISSNER b: 15 Apr 1896 d: 17 Feb 1995]. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Chicago Freie Presse.

<T355>, cont. Chicago, Freie Presse (Free Press).

Nov. 11, 1896.

If you will send me your weekly edition from now until the end of next year for \$1, I will send you the money at once. If you send the paper I will conclude that you agree to this proposal.

We have lost the battle this time [election of Mc Kinley—LPM], but there are too many people and too little brains. My newspaper, the NW Post, says that the German people of Wis. contributed a lot to this result; they should have attributed it to German stupidity and to the wickedness of German papers that seduced their readers.

<T356> But Cleveland drove the wagon too deep into the mud, also.

Respectfully ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Chicago Freie Presse.

Freie Presse, 94 Fifth Ave, Chicago, Ill.

Nov. 20, 1896.

I have your kind answer to my proposal in front of me. I am sending you herewith \$1 for your weekly paper, that is, 75 cts. silver; 5 cts. nickel; 20 cts Rabatt [discount?]; total \$1.00. I will do whatever lies within my strength to promote your paper. Respectfully

From: F.A.M.; To: Clara Schломann.

Clara Schломann. W.H. N.J. Corner of Oak and West Str.

Nov 29, 1896.

Dear Granddaughter. We finally got some news from you. Your welcome letter is in front of me, and I would have already written sooner if I had not been afraid that I didn't have your correct address.

But what have I done to your father, mother, and Anna, to prevent my hearing anything from them? You write German quite well, but if it is easier for you you may write to me in English. You must be 13 years old by now, and you must have become a pretty girl. Write again soon and tell us about yourself.

We are still alive, Dora and Carl are still at home, August has been married for a year and has a little daughter, Ernest and Adolph live in Oregon and they each have five or six children. Wishing Merry Christmas to all of you I remain Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Frieda Gerstenberg.

Dec. 29, 1896.

Dear Frieda! My hope of receiving a letter from you for Christmas was not disappointed. Your letter of the 14th arrived here on the 26th, the day before my birthday. I am happy that you have not completely forgotten your old grandfather, and that you and Otto are healthy.

It seems that you had a bad crop. Here in America, everything grew in abundance, but money is scarce and it is nearly impossible to sell anything. I still feel as well as at this time last year, and so do Dora, Carl, and Grandmother.

<T357> For about the past two years we have not had any mail from Schломanns nor from Anna. We don't know what we have done to offend them. Clara, Schломann's 13 year old daughter, wrote to Carl a little while ago, but she didn't even mention her parents or Anna. She only wrote that she is going to school. We have not received a line from Lina or Ernst either.

My youngest son August lives near by. He is married and they have an eight month old girl. Ernest and Adolph, who live 2500 miles to the West near the Pacific Ocean, and their families, are well. Since we do not have any small children, we didn't put up a Christmas tree, but most people here have a big Christmas tree in the churches.

It must be that nobody still living in Kum. remembers me. Are any of the Brühmanns still alive? One daughter went to South America with a gardener from Altona. I wish you good health and good crops for

the New Year. The newspapers keep writing about preparations for war, and nothing else. The rich people live in luxury while the poor people have to do the work.

Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Abend Post Publishing Co.

Abend Post (Evening Post) Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis.

Jan. 15 [1897].

I received your letter of Jan. 8. If you had waited to bill me until today, I would have taken the N.W.P. until the end of the year, April 15, and then I would owe you \$2; thus I would save 50 cts. Accordingly, I am sending you herewith a money order for \$1.50, and I ask you not to send me the paper any more, as I have already been provided with another paper for several months. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph at Merlin

23 Feb 1897 [excerpt].

... Oschen Bray [Ossian Brey] ... told us already that Mr. Haskins had died [Loretta's father, George Alburn Haskins b: 6 Jul 1838 in Wilton, Monroe, WI d: 6 Jan 1897 in Osakis, Douglas, MN]. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph at Merlin

15 Mar 1897 [excerpt].

... The joyful news that Loretta has given you another boy [Manly Meissner b: 2 Mar 1897] and that Mother and child are well. ... I am not in the seed business any more. I had to give it up a couple of years ago on account of health.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. W.S. Rice.

<T357>, cont. Dr. W.S. Rice, Box 17, Smithville, Jefferson Co., N.Y.

[1897].

I saw your ad in the Chigo Free Press. Please send me your book.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. Robt. Wolfertz.

Dr. Robert Wolfertz, 60 Fifth Ave. Chicago, Ill.

[1897].

I saw your ad in the Chigo Free Press. Please send me your price list.

<T358> P.S. The attempt by the Free Press to put silver back into its old position is an attempt to rid us from the yoke of the money lenders. In many other respects, however, the Free Press does not seem to be on the side of liberty—in fact, one might even suggest that it has been corrupted concerning the matter of the German Kaiser [Emperor]. In my opinion, the Kaiser is trying to reduce the few liberties enjoyed by his subjects. All of the kings and emperors seem to have joined together for this purpose. I could add a lot more to prove this, but it would not help anything. The newspapers publish only what they are paid for. The above.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest at Kerby

20 Aug 1897 [excerpt].

... It is a pity Ma has inherited from her mother such a large scolding vine. When she gets started she cannot stop again. All I can do is to leave the room or the house. When married folks don't sleep more

together in one bed but sleep in different rooms then love has vanished. Ma hates a kiss worse than beer or whisky. But after all she is a very good woman—she has nursed me through many a sickness. I probably should have died 40 years ago and there would be today no Meissners in Oregon. ... Carl wears a mustache and foot-long hair and looks like a vagrant or rather like a fool.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: A.F.M at Merlin

4 Nov 1897 [excerpt].

... Loretta tells us that you have paid for your land and all your debts so it seems you have made out very well this last summer.

From: F.A.M.; To: La Crosse Abendstern.

<T358>, cont. La Crosse Abendstern [Evening Star], La., Wis.

Dec. 16, [1897].

I would like to subscribe to a good German newspaper next year. Please send me a sample issue. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Nordstern Association.

Nordstern [North Star] Association, La Crosse, Wis.

Dec. 23, [1897].

I finally received the sample issue of Abendstern. The stupid guy (I mean the postal clerk) did not want to give it to me because "Dr." was written in front of my name. When I sent for it, I was not aware that Abendstern is an English paper, but I live two miles from the Post Office and I only go there once a week. Also, I am not a doctor, but only a simple farmer, and all I need is a weekly paper. I understand that you also publish the Nordstern which comes twice a week. I would certainly like to have it if it is not too expensive. The best English papers can be purchased nowadays for \$1 [per year] — in fact, the Weekly Wisc. with the Monthly Newspaper Library is advertised for 75 cts.

The Nordstern is an old friend of mine. I read it for many years when Mr. Ulrich was still alive. Please send me a sample issue and let me know what you can do about the price. Respectfully F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Chicago Freie Presse.

Freie Presse, Chicago, Ill.

Dec. 25, 1897.

You will find enclosed \$1 as prepayment for the Weekly Paper of the Free Press, from and for F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Nordstern.

<T359> Nordstern, La Crosse, Wis.

Dec. 25, [1897].

I am sorry that I troubled you so much about sending sample issues. The price of the Nordstern is not too high, but the reading material is mixed with too many advertisements in which I have no interest, so I cannot afford to subscribe to it. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Martha.

12 Jan 1898 [excerpt].

... [Age 93] I cannot walk; my legs are stricken with paralysis, otherwise I have no pains, it seems not as if it would kill me, but to live as a cripple is almost worse. I always had some hope that we should be able to sell out and go to Oregon but that hope is gone. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph at Merlin

3 Feb 1898 [excerpt].

... I have seen by Loretta's letter that she and the children live in the city [Grant's Pass?] in plenty and comfort. How will they like it when they come back in the spring? I think you made a mistake to let another man take care of your family [a "rich merchant" in Merlin]. You, poor fellow, lived all alone on the farm and fed the pigs.

From: F.A.M.; To: Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg.

<T359>, cont. Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg, Kum. n. P. n. Altona, Germany.

Febr. 17, 1898.

Dear Grandchildren, You don't seem to care very much whether your old Grandfather is still alive, or else you would have sent a letter—at least for Christmas or New Year's. But I would like very much to know how you are doing. You must be having very good times now; prices for you [crops that you sell] are so high, while everything here is so cheap. But we are having pretty good prices now, and when silver regains its former position things will be even better. Have your crops been good, and what have you been raising to sell? What prices do you get?

Lina has completely forgotten me, and Schlomanns don't write. We hear nothing from Ernst; perhaps he is no longer alive. I, my wife, Dora, and Carl still live on our farm. August lives near by with his wife and two children. Ernest and Adolph are in Oregon and they each have 5 or 6 children. Are you still living with Otto, or are you both perhaps married? If so, I wish you much good fortune.

Farewell now, and write soon. You once promised me Otto's picture, but it has not yet arrived. Your Grandfather.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. T. Fahrney.

Dr. T. Fahrney, Chicago, Ill., 112-114 So. Hoyne Ave.

[1898].

In yesterday's mail I received an issue of the "Krankenboten" (Messenger to the Sick). That was not unusual, as some medical pamphlet arrives almost every day. The Bote seems to have plenty of advertisements, but it remains unproven whether the medicines are as good as their praises would imply. I always thought that Germans would be more honest about these matters, but I was recently convinced to the contrary.

<T360> If you really believe that the medicine is good, you can send me a sample box. I have a good opportunity to test it on my family; and then as your agent I could recommend the Alpine herbs to other people. There are plenty of people who would like to be healthy. If the blode [? improvement] from Alpine herbs is good, I will pay \$2 for the sample box. Send it by U.S. Express Co. to Cashton, Wis. You must believe that Germans are tremendously stupid, as you write so many detailed instructions on the back of your envelope.

Respectfully F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: S.B. Hartman.

S.B.Hartman, M.D., Columbus Ohio.

[Feb or Mar 1898].

Dear Sir, For the past several years, as long as I have been acquainted with you and your medicines, I have been in quite good health. Sometimes when I felt sick, a bottle of Peruna and some jars of rhubarb made me well again, but this winter it is no longer effective; I have already used two bottles of Peruna.

A little after Christmas, where in accordance with German custom we ate more than usual, I vomited a lot of thick mucus through my mouth, not my nose. I took Peruna, gargled as prescribed, drank hot water instead of coffee, and lived according to the rules. I have been doing this for two months now. I am not vomiting so much of that stuff any more, but my mouth is always full of water and my stomach won't

digest my food. It turns sour and causes heartburn, and Peruna just seems to make it worse. Would you advise me to take Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets? While I am using your medicine I don't want to try anything else without your advice. Maybe for 25 cts. or 50 cts. you can send something else that is good.

My eyes also water a lot and are getting weaker, and I don't hear so well any more.

From: F.A.M.; To: Rev. P Schwitzler.

Rev. P. Schwitzler, Pine Hollow, [Wis.].

[1898].

When you favored me with your visit on my last birthday, as you left you told me to be careful not to fall. But the warning did not help. Two days later I was sitting in my bedroom and <T361> writing a letter to my children in Oregon, telling them that I was well. When this letter was finished I stood up, but felt a little bit dizzy. I took one or two steps toward the bed, when suddenly my legs gave way and I fell to the floor like a wooden log. Carl, who was in the other room, heard the noise and came to see what was the matter. He picked me up and put me on my bed. My wife and daughter also came running. But I soon recovered enough so that I can now tell you that I suffered no harm and felt no pain, only my legs were weak. I have recovered enough now so that I can stagger from one room to another like a drunk man. I do not feel pain in my legs. What bothers me most is my stomach, which has been indisposed since Christmas and is still not well.

I am returning herewith the books that I borrowed, and I would like to have a few of the travel novels. I cannot yet keep my mind on anything serious. Respectfully F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. C.J. Schoep.

Dr. C.J. Schoep. 248 Second Street, W Racine, Wis.

March 8, 98.

By chance, I saw your ad in a number of the Jan 20 La Crosse Patriot, and as it is written in German I assume that you understand German. Or perhaps you are a German. So I will write to you in this language.

I am an old man, but I had still enjoyed quite good health. However, since last Christmas my stomach has been in such a bad condition that I am truly sick. When I try to eat anything, my stomach won't digest it or transport it farther down. It seems that everything dissolves into slime and comes up my throat, and I have to spit it out. The food in my stomach turns sour and I get heartburn. My mouth is always watery and if I am not careful it goes into my windpipe and makes me cough.

The papers are so full of infallible medicines that I am having difficulty making a selection. My money is not so plentiful either. But I would like to try your Nerves Theory once. So I <T362> am enclosing \$1, and ask you to send me a bottle of your Restorative by U.S. Express, if you think that is the right medicine for my case.

Address: F.A.M. Cashton, M.C. Wis.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mrs. John Woodard.

Mrs. John Woodard, Brookings Co., [S.] Dak.

March 10, 1898.

Dear Madam. Two summers ago I received a letter from your father. I answered it at once, but my letter was returned. So I would like to know whether your father is still alive, and how he is doing. I am also still alive, but my health has been quite bad this winter. How are you? Did you have good crops last year, and good prices?

I would like to hear from you, and if your father is still alive, give him my regards. Your friend F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Ernest and Martha Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Ernest and Martha at Kerby.

21 Mar 1898 [excerpt].

... August has ... moved away. Lena's father, Adam Heintz, has bought Erastus Barth's farm ... there is a pretty good house on it into which August has moved. ... August is not going to work the farm, he only occupies the house. ...

From: F.A.M.; To: Chicago Freie Presse.

<T362>, cont. Freie Presse, Chicago, Ill., Mail-box for Legal Matters.

[March, 1898].

Does a marriage contract have enough effect, so that after her husband's death the wife will receive the whole inheritance as her own property, if this is stated in the contract?

When adult children remain in their parents' home and work there, receive board and lodging and are all necessary care when they are sick, can they demand payment after the parents' death for their labor as a servant or maid?

From: F.A.M.; To: Dr. C.J. Schoep.

Dr. C.J. Schoep. 248 Second Street, W Racine, Wis.

[1898].

Dear Sir. About two weeks ago I received your Restorative Medicine. I used it all according to prescription, and I took great care with my eating and drinking, but I cannot say that I feel any better. I am more [upset?] and the medicine seems to make my stomach burn more rather than less. It tastes exactly like Vermouth Bitters, with a lot of sweetener added and the sourness removed.

A few days ago I also received your letter with samples of pills and tablets. I took two tablets the first evening and <T363> the next morning I had a stomach ache but no bowel movement. The next evening I took three pills and finally the following morning I had a bowel movement.

Dr. Metz, our pharmacist, won't have anything to do with your medicine. He says if everyone got healthy his business would be ruined.

Some time ago I received a letter from Dr. T. Fahrney of Chicago whose claims for his "Alpine herbs blood restorer" are even stronger than yours for your Restorative. Dr. Fahrney offered me the medicine and wanted to send me a box of 12 bottles for \$12.00 free [of shipping charges?] to my house. This at least had a price advantage, but I put it aside as nonsense.

If you wish, you can send me by mail 25 cts. worth of pills. I think my \$1 already covers the payment for them. A druggist would not pay you more than 50 cts. for a bottle.

Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg.

Otto and Frieda Gerstenberg, Kum. n. P. n. Altona, Germany.

March 28, 1898.

Dear Frieda. Yesterday I received your letter of March 11. We are glad to hear that you are well. A little while ago we got a letter from Schlomann's daughter Clara. She wrote that they all are well, but business is not very good. For the past few days the snow has been gone, but we are still having such hard frosts at night that we cannot work in the garden or the field.

It almost looks as though we are going to have war with Spain, on account of Cuba. That is an island that is close by, belonging to Spain up till now but wanting to break away.

Wheat costs 4 Mk per bu. now, butter 80 [?] per kilogr, eggs 32 [?] per dozen. Apples are very expensive and hard to find. Oranges are plentiful and cheap. In the big cities there are already strawberries on the market. They come from the South.

You and Otto are apparently getting along together, as you are still living together. You seem to be like Aunt Dora, who will be 35 years old on March 21. Like you, she can't find a good enough husband.

Most of the young men here are Democrats. We live about <T364> as far from Cashton as you are from Pinneberg. In the summer Dora goes to Cashton with vegetables twice a week. The first ones, which will

soon be ready, are asparagus and lettuce; then radishes and other vegetables. Last year we had quite a good market. Here it depends greatly on the weather. Last year we had a hard night frost on June 1.

If you want your next letter to reach me while I am still alive, don't wait too long to write it. I am 93 years old now, and it seems that I am going to die soon. Greetings to you and Otto. Your grandfather, F.A.M.

French Revolution.

[1898].

On Oct. 6, 1793 the present era began. On Nov. 10, the [...] commune installed the rule of logic; on May 7 1794 the National Convent decreed that there is no longer a God and on the 24th of the same month this Convent ordered everybody to stop believing in the immortality of the soul. All Christian religious orders were abolished and all priests were required to swear a citizen's oath under penalty of death.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

August Breitenfeld, Bruce, S.Dak

April 20, 1898.

Dear friend. Finally I have received another letter from you and I am happy to hear that you are still alive and quite well. I am also still alive, but my health is very bad. My legs are paralyzed and I can only limp around a little bit. Also my stomach is so bad that I can digest only small amounts of food. My wife is still having trouble with her leg, which is sometimes better and sometimes worse. Carl and Dora are still with us and they do the work. August married one of Adam Heintz' daughters; he has two children and is working as a carpenter in and around Cashton. Ernest and Adolph are both in Oregon; they each have a farm and five or six children.

Wilhelm Breitenfeld bought a little farm in the valley, two farms below his former place. Hanke and his son-in-law Thomsen built a new store on the corner where the old one stood. Also a creamery was built, where the farmers bring their milk. <T365> Cashton gets bigger every year, and a lot of cattle, hay, and grain is sold there.

There are four saloons in Cashton. Each of them pays a \$500 license fee, whose source is the farmers and the boys who buy 5 ct. glasses of beer and whiskey.

We had a very mild winter too, with little snow but always enough for good sledding tracks. We are now sowing and the grass is starting to grow.

I would be happy if you would write to me again soon. I feel sorry for your lonely life since your wife's death. One cannot depend upon children. I hope that my wife will close my eyes soon. Now farewell; stay healthy and don't work too hard. Your old friend F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Chicago Freie Presse.

Freie Presse, 94 Fifth Ave., Chicago, Ill.

[1898].

Concerning the ad for Schiller's works in your weekly paper, I would like to know whether the print is not too small, as my eyes are weak; also whether you can send the books postage paid for \$3. Also, what does the black picture in the ad mean? F.A.M.

I would prefer that you mail me a sample book first. I will pay the postage both ways. One does not like to throw \$3 out the window.

From: F.A.M.; To: Anna Gerstenberg.

Anna Gerstenberg, 532 West 142nd Str, N.Y. City.

Aug 9, 1898.

Dear Anna. Your letter and picture gave us an unexpected pleasure. We are happy that you are doing so well and that you are paid so well. Judging from your picture, you look quite healthy and pretty. I am now an old man, 93 and a half years old and quite weak this summer. I think my end will come soon. My wife is only 61 years old, but she has a bad leg that causes her a lot of trouble. Carl and Dora live with us, August

near by and Ernest and Adolph in Oregon. They both have big families. I don't know what I did to Schlomanns, because they never write any more. We are having an especially good summer, but everything is cheap, only flour is expensive.

<T366> I don't know how it can be that such a pretty woman as you does not get married and raise a family. But you will surely become like Dora, who is already becoming an old maid. She is afraid to get married. Most of the young men around here are drunkards, and when they come home they treat their wives badly. Well, as long as we are alive she has a home, but what will happen after that? We would be glad if you would write again soon. My wife, Dora, and Carl send their regards. Your Grandf.

From: F.A.M.; To: Lincoln Freie Presse.

Lincoln Freie Presse, Lincoln, Neb.

Aug. 31, 1898.

I have your sample issue and your letter in front of me. It seems to me that you are promising too much for too little money, but you might send me a few more samples so that I can find out more about the philosophy of your paper.

I have prepaid the Chicago Freie Presse until the end of the year. But Mr. Michaulis is a L[... ?] and is always mad about the Gringos, but I did not come to America to stay a German but to become an American. I have four sons who are born Americans, and 12 grandchildren as well.

One might almost be ashamed of being called a German. In the country where Kant taught and Schiller composed, now a Harlequin and a Pfaffenknecht [one whose mind is hypnotized by a priest!] governs as Kaiser and he is planning a crusade to Jerusalem, not with soldiers but with priests in his retinue. He has been showing off on horseback in an Oriental costume, and he is both admired and ridiculed. (These priests are not Catholics—no, the Lutherans are much worse still.) If I were in Germany, they would put me in prison [as a heretic? — LPM]. But enough for now. I will see whether I cannot recommend your paper to a neighbor. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Lincoln Freie Presse.

<T367> Lincoln Freie Presse.

Sept. 20, [1898].

Enclosed you will find a money order for 85 cts., for which please send me the Freie Presse. Your latest issue convinced me. Respectfully, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. R. Zaegel and Co.

Mr. R. Zaegel and Co., Box 707, Sheboygan, Wis.

[1898].

If what you say in the "Farmer" about your Lebensessenz (Essence of Life) is not all lies, I would like to try a sample of it.

WILL: F.A.M. and E.D.M.

<Written in English.> [not witnessed or dated]

[Oct 1898].

When one of us dies the other longest living shall own the whole property; we hereby will & bequeath all on our death remaining property, real and personal, to our daughter Dorothea Juliana Meissner and our son Carl Friedrich [sic] Meissner to own and hold the same jointly, provided: Our Son Carl and our Daughter Dora continue to live with us, work for us, and take care of us in health and sickness, like they do at present.

From: F.A.M.; To: Mr. R. Zaegel and Co.

<T367>, cont. Mr. R. Zaegel and Co., Sheboygan, Wis.

Nov. 3, 1898]

I received your sample package of your Swedish Life Essence and took it as prescribed. Tuesday, Nov. 1, I took a tablespoonful and went to bed. The next morning at 8 o'clock I felt its effect, which lasted all day until 6 o'clock in the evening, so that I discharged for two or three hours until there was nothing more in me. This morning, Thursday Nov. 3, it is still rumbling in my intestines. By this I know that your Swedish Life Essence is nothing but a strong laxative, consisting mainly of aloe. Being a pharmacist, you should know how dangerous aloe can be as a laxative.

As for me, I was deceived once again by believing in German honesty.

Heine (German poet) is right when he says that Germans are the biggest swindlers.

From: F.A.M.; To: Lincoln Freie Presse.

Law Department, Lincoln Freie Presse. Lincoln, Neb.

Nov. 10, [1898].

Can a farm that is burdened with a mortgage be sold with a "quit claim deed"? Please oblige. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry H. Cremer.

Dr. C. Cremer, Cashton.

Nov. 17, 1898

Dear friend. Please send me your bill. I will try to pay it, if it is not too big, before my death. I don't want to die in debt. Your devoted F.A.M.

END OF BOOK 7 of FAM Letter Copies.

FAM Letter Copies, Book 8: Dec. 1898 to Jan. 1899

From: F.A.M.; To: Henry H. Cremer.

<T368> Dr. C. Cremer, Cashton, Wis.

Dec. 10, 1898

Dear friend. Your bill gave me quite a fright. I cannot earn money that easily. You are the richest man in Cashton, but you never bought anything, even 5 cts. worth, from us, and you even took away our customers by giving vegetables to your neighbors. I have saved \$5 for you. If this will pay my debt, you can have it; otherwise I want to have an itemized bill. I surely would like to know how you arrive at such an amount. But please write the bill more clearly so that I will be able to read it. You were once a school teacher so you should know how to write. Expecting a kind reply I remain your old friend, F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Lincoln Freie Presse.

Lincoln Freie Presse. Lincoln, Neb.

Dec. 27, [1898].

The Christmas edition of the Freie Presse has upset me tremendously. I subscribe to a German newspaper because I am interested in German politics and especially in the workers in the Reichstag, but the negotiations in the Reichstag were mentioned in your last issue only briefly. You fill your paper with little stories, which may be interesting to children or women, but which don't fit the character of a great political newspaper. I had considered giving up the Chicago Freie Presse at the end of the year, but if I want to find out anything directly about Germany it looks like I will have to subscribe to it for another year.

I would also like to propose another improvement to your newspaper, but I cannot see how it might be done. I would rather pay \$1 instead of 85 cts. (and maybe many others would agree!) if the "Hausfreund" (Friend of the Family) would come out every week instead of every other week; and if you would put into it a good historical novel that one might find interesting to read. It would not matter if it was a reprint. <T369> The little original stories seem boring as soon as one starts to read them. What makes Walter Scott's novels so interesting? Only the fact that they are based on a historical background.

== Jan. 4 [1899]

The novel promised in the “Hausfreund” seems to already fulfill my wish. Even though the “Pinkus von Pirk” and the “Amtmann von Rapsuagen” are interesting to read, please a little bit more politics. Wishing you a Happy New Year and many subscribers, I remain your devoted F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: August Breitenfeld.

August Breitenfeld, Bruce, S.Dak

Jan. 18, 1899.

Dear friend. I received your letter and was happy that you still think of me and that you are doing well, as it seems. Everything is still the same with us. Of the 640 acres on which you live, how many do you own? Do you live alone in your big house? We have had freezing weather for a long time, sometimes very cold for a few days with not much snow and some sledding tracks. Now farewell, my dear friend. F.A.M.

From: F.A.M.; To: Adolph Meissner.

<Written in English.> To: Adolph at Merlin

18 Jan 1899 [excerpt].

... I wish you much luck in your mining enterprise. ...

Epilogue

Friedrich Adolph Meissner died 13 April 1899, on his homestead north of Cashton. He had celebrated his 94th birthday on 27 Dec 1898. He was buried in a private plot on the farm.

Appendix 1: Descendants of George Henry Meissner located in Oregon and Texas, 1989:

From Vivian Foley, Dec 1989:

Dear Loren:

I thought you might like to hear about my latest discovery . . . Earl Meissner . . . the grandson of George Henery Meissner who got a leg shot off during the Civil War. He had a peg leg . . . George Henery homesteaded near Webster City IA . . . George decided to put an ad in a San Francisco newspaper to see if he could find his sister Mary Blake [sic: see correction below]. He found her in Petaluma CA. Her daughter wasn't going to let him in, but he barged in anyhow. Sister Mary was ill. To identify himself, he showed her the Medallion which he had taken off the wall as the family had left Florida with G. Grandfather F. A. Meissner . . . GH's sister got the medallion and she willed it to Duane Blake who now has it. For several years Earl had the medallion but he has sent it to Duane. Duane is Edgar Meissner's sister's son. He lives in Texas. The medallion is a portrait of a young man in court dress. It is in a frame.

====.

Dear Vivian,.

I was very pleasantly surprised to hear about your recent contact with some Meissners who were previously unknown to us. As far as I can tell, the last previous contact with George Henry Meissner is hinted in the letter from Friedrich Adolph Meissner to his son Ernest dated January 2, 1879: Ernest "consulted" his "step brother" (which must have been George Henry Meissner) who evidently suggested that he go and join his uncle in Utah; Ernest was living in Tyrone (Monroe County) Iowa at the time (not too close to Webster City.) There is no record of any direct communication between GHM and FAM after 1864, just after GHM returned from the Civil War. [But see references to GHM at <T201> (1882) and <T308>; also in English: 1896.]

You say "George decided . . . to see if he could find his sister Mary Blake." I do not think this is quite right. Mary Blake was his daughter (according to your letter). His sisters were Wilhelmine (b. 1834; m. Ryan) and Leonore (b. 1836); they both left Florida and went to California soon after their mother died in 1853. GH (b. 1838) stayed with FAM. It seems likely that GHM would try to look them up later on, and that he found one or the other of his sisters in California.

I am quite interested in the part about the medallion. Can you get from Earl the address of his cousin Duane Blake in Texas; I would like to contact him and try to get a photo copy of the medallion. "A young man in court dress" would likely be the young FAM; he worked for his uncle at the court in Dresden after his father died when he was 13 (May 1817). [But no photography at that time??].

FAM was some kind of a lover—note that he married his first wife 3 months after daughter Caroline was born. I would bet about 50/50 that George Henry was also his son, born when he took up with Doris Runtzler Sennewald (who already had 3 older children) after he had been married to Elise von Mithofen (Caroline's mother) for 12 years. About the only clue on this subject is the letter FAM wrote to GHM in 1864: "... that you since you was a year old slept in my arm, that I carried you with me to field to work and every where, that it was only because I could not part with you that I took your Mother with me to America." GHM was 7 years old when they went to America, so FAM had been "carrying him around" for about 6 years. Maybe during the first year he was too afraid of his wife to visit the other woman too often? On the other hand, he says later in the same letter [1864], "I hope you will also assume your true name and don't disgrace mine any further": if his true name was not Meissner could he be FAM's son? We will never know, unless GHM's birth record (in Germany) tells: if Doris Sennewald's husband was already dead when George Henry (Georg Heinrich) was born, it might list FAM as father. [Another possibility is that Doris was unwed when GHM was born and FAM took them in.]

The older son William (20 years old in 1852) did not go with them from New England to Florida. When the mother Doris died (1853), the girls were 17 and 19. Wilhelmina said "I will never leave you," and he washed her when she was sick [see letter in English to Sallie Stafford Aug 16, 1857]. My guess is that after the mother died, FAM tried to start something with Wilhelmina [or she knew him well enough to fear that he would — at best he would probably have treated them as housemaids]: that is why the girls left soon afterward and went to live with the neighbors and later to California. But the girls left their little brother with him: does that strengthen the case for GHM being his natural son, or was it only because the girls had no choice? They could not get back in contact with him after that, because the lad did not know where his

sisters had gone (but it now seems he must have had some idea it was near San Francisco), and they did not know where he and FAM had gone (Wisconsin) . . .

Loren P. Meissner.

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Note also that in January 1853 William wrote to his mother (shortly before her death) proposing that she and the girls should leave FAM and live with him, and Doris agreed but said, "... we cannot leave Henry behind." This might indicate that William and Henry were only half-brothers. She seemed willing enough to leave FAM and join William, and the girls didn't hang around after their mother died. Henry was 15 when his mother died (1853) and 18 when he went to Wisconsin with FAM (1856). However, after they reached Wisconsin, Henry moved out a few months later (see letters in English to Henry, Mar and Apr 1857).

In letters from FAM to his daughter Karoline Gerstenberg in Kummerfeld he mentions the children by name. One of the latest examples was written 4 Feb 1882: "Heinrich is married, lives in this State, lost a foot in the war and receives a pension; he is doing fine." So his daughter and presumably also his first wife must have known about Mrs. Sennewald and her children before he left Germany in 1845, and he assumes that Karoline would still remember Heinrich and would still be interested in him.

-LPM, 1999.

Appendix 2: The Founding of Johanngeorgenstadt

== EMAIL from Frank Teller: ==

From: F. Teller [Frank.Teller@t-online.de]

Sent: Sunday, April 11, 1999 9:07 AM

To: Loren P Meissner

Subject: Re: More Informations

——Ursprüngliche Nachricht——

Von: Loren P Meissner <LPMeissner@msn.com>

An: F. Teller <Frank.Teller@t-online.de>

Datum: Sonntag, 4. April 1999 02:38

Betreff: RE: More Informations

> I am interested in the reference "erbittet am 24.2.1652 Privileg für sein Haus am Fastenberg" based on Johann Christian Engelschall: *Chronik* (Leipzig, 1723)

This information you can find in the booklet "Die Gründungsgeschichte von Johanngeorgenstadt" ["The History of the Founding of Johanngeorgenstadt"] by Dr. Friedrich Francke (1854).

Ursprünglich nämlich standen schon seit dem 16. Jahrhundert zwei Waldhäuslein auf dem Fastenberge, wie aus einem Gesuche erhellt, das Caspar Clauß(*) und Christoph Meichßner am 24. Februar 1652 an den Churfürsten richteten. Darin heißt es: "ihre Großeltern, Bergleute, hätten sich voriger Zeit nechst an die böhmische Grenze uffn Fastenbergk am Breitenbach gelegen gemacht, ihr Bergkwegk zur selbiger Zeit getrieben und zwei Zechenstüblein zum Aufenthalte bei wehrender Arbeit erbauet, nachmals sich ganz da zu wohnen begeben, auch zu Erhaltung ein wenig Viehes von dem damaligen Oberförster zu Burckhardtsgrün, Haß Günthern, eine gewisse Revier, gegen einen jährlichen Laßzins, auch Entrichtung Geist- und Weltlicher Obrigkeit. Gebürhniß ins Städtlein Eybenstock abgestattet, eingeräumt erhalten." Sie wollten nun in diesen von ihren Eltern ererbten Waldhäuslein wohnen bleiben, müßten sie aber von Neuem aufbauen, und bäten Befehl zu geben, daß ihnen solche Häuslein und Laßräumlein, "weil an solchen ortten ohne daß nichts denn Stöck aus zu rotten, gruben undt hügel eben zu machen seindt, auch kein Körel getreyde alda geseet noch reiff werden kann," gegen einen erträglichen Erbzinß erblich eingeräumt, auch das Bauholz ohne Waldzinß gewährt werde. Übrigens bewilligte ein churf. Befehl d.d. Dreßden 2. Martii 1652 das Erbetene.

(*) Engelschall hat den Namen *Caspar Bernd*.

The granting of the petition of Christoph Meichßner and Caspar Bernd was the mentioned “Privileg”. In the Chronicle of Johann Christian Engelschall we learn more about this. Meichßner und Bernd had to pay their taxes to the county of Schwarzenberg. But after the arrival of the Exulants on the Fastenberg, they acted like Exulants themselves. Both of them signed the petition (2 Dec 1654) of the Exulants to the saxon Elector Johann Georg I, although they didn’t came from Bohemia.

On the 22 nd of September 1654 Christoph Meichßner took the oath of a citizen of Johanngeorgenstadt like the other Exulants. Later he didn’t pay his taxes to the county of Schwarzenberg. Real Exulants were tax-free for 23 years. The county-administrator (Amtsschösser) of Schwarzenberg brought an action against him to the Elector (06/12/1668). But Johann Georg II. dismissed this case. In this way Christoph Meichßner became an Exulant.

[LPM Note: Compare the quotations “ihre Großeltern ... eingeräumt erhalten.” and “weil an solchen ... reiff werden kann” in the German version (above) with the translated quotation from Friedrich Adolph Meissner <T233> which is probably derived from Francke. There are some discrepancies.]

> Freie Presse [1998], “Von Waldhaeuslern auf dem Fastenberg”: I would like to see the text of this story if it is not too long.

The Freie Presse article, “Von Waldhaeuslern auf dem Fastenberg,” discusses the early settlers (Meichsner and Berndt) on the Fastenberg. After the death of Georg Meichsner, his wife and children inherited his house on the Fastenberg. Christoph Meichsner bought this house from the other heirs on 6 May 1644 for 140 gulden. As partial payment for the share of the house that he bought from his brother Elias, on 17 Mar 1647 Christoph gave Elias a small plot of ground on the Fastenberg called “Schallern”. In a petition [also signed by Caspar Berndt] on 24 Feb 1652, Christoph requested a tax exemption for this house from Elector Johann George I, confirmed 2 Mar 1652.

=

Frank Teller adds that there is still a lane at the bottom of the old part of town called Schallergasse. “An old legend tells of a rich mine-owner named Schaller who was beheaded although he was innocent. On foggy nights, you can see him as a headless horseman, carrying his head under his arm.” Actually there was a mine-owner, Wolff Schaller in Platten (which belonged to Saxony before 1546). Schaller protested against a new mining order made by the Elector Johann Friedrich and stirred up trouble, so he was banished from Saxony in 1536.

[Article from Freie Presse, Chemnitz, 1998]

Von Waldhäuslern auf dem Fastenberg

Über die ersten Bewohner einer Gegend, in der man 1654 Johanngeorgenstadt gründete

Von unserem Mitarbeiter Jörg Brückner

Vor nunmehr 344 Jahren wurde Johanngeorgenstadt von böhmischen Exulanten auf dem sächsischen Fastenberg gegründet. Das soll Anlaß sein, aus Chroniken und Archivalien Näheres über die ursprünglichen Bewohner des dichtbewaldeten Berges zu berichten.

Wie Pfarrer Johann Christian Engelschall in seiner 1723 erschienen Chronik von Johanngeorgenstadt schreibt, gab es auf dem Fastenberg nicht mehr als zwei alte Berg- oder Waldhäuslein, deren Besitzer ein Bergwerk bauten. Doch wer waren deren Bewohner?

Aus einem Gesuch, daß Caspar Bernd und Christoph Meichsner am 24. Februar 1652 — also fast zwei Jahre vor der eigentlichen Stadtgründung — an den sächsischen Kurfürsten Johann Georg I. richteten, geht u. a. hervor, daß ihre Großeltern Bergleute gewesen waren. Diese hatten nahe der böhmischen Grenze auf dem Fastenberg ein Bergwerk betrieben und zum Aufenthalt bei der Arbeit dort zwei Zechenstuben errichtet. Später hatten sich die Familien ihrer Großväter ganz dort angesiedelt. Zusätzlich war ihnen vom Oberförster von Burkhardtgrün ein Revier zugewiesen worden, wo sie ihr Vieh halten konnten.

Bernd und Meichsner wollten nun offiziell in den von ihren Eltern ererbten Waldhäusern wohnen bleiben und diese baulich erneuern. Weil aber in der Wildnis viele Baumstümpfe auszuroden, Gruben und Hügel einzuebnen waren und aufgrund des rauen Klimas kein Getreide reifte, baten sie den Kurfürsten um Überlassung von Bauholz ohne den üblichen Waldzins. Am 2. März 1652 gewährte Kurfürst Johann Georg I. diese Bitte.

Es gelang, über die Familien Bernd und Meichsner noch einige weitere Daten zu ermitteln.

Christoph Meichsner gehörte als Schneider der Zunft in Schwarzenberg an und arbeitete auf dem Hammerwerk Breitenbach. Das Waldhaus am Fastenberg hatte er nach dem Tod seines Vaters Georg von der Mutter und den Geschwistern am 6. Mai 164 für 140 Gulden abgekauft. Jedoch war er nicht in der Lage, die volle Kaufsumme auf einmal zu zahlen. So gab er seinem Bruder Elias am 17. März 1647 ein Grundstück, in den Akten heißt es „einen Raum, der Schallern gewest“. Nach dem früheren Grundstücksbesitzer, wohl gleichzusetzen mit dem sagenhaften Fundgrübner Wolf Schaller aus Platten, wurde bei der Gründung Johanngeorgenstadts die heutige Untere Gasse „Schallergassē“ benannt.

Der zweite Bewohner des Fastenberges, Caspar Bernd, lebte von 1591 bis 1679. Er war Holzfäller von Beruf und hatte im Jahre 1625 Barbara Meichsner, die Cousine seines Nachbarn Christoph Meichsner, geheiratet. Das Haus am Fastenberg hatte er 1638 der Schwiegermutter abgekauft, die er sechs Jahre pflegte und versorgte. Seine Frau Barbara betätigte sich fast fünf Jahrzehnte als Hebamme, half etwa 2600 Johanngeorgenstädtern, das Licht der Welt zu erblicken. So hat sie sich einen besonderen Platz in der städtischen Geschichte verdient. Nach arbeitsreichem Leben starb sie im Januar 1692 im greisen Alter von 92 Jahren.

Zu diesen zwei Waldhäusern gesellte sich ab 1651 am Fuße des Fastenberges am Unterlauf des Breitenbaches die Mahlmühle des aus Platten stammenden Exulanten Matthäus Weigel. Oberhalb dieser Mühle errichteten sich die beiden Plattener Bergleute Johann Poppenberger und Melchoir Jorback zwei Häuser. Dazu hatten sie am 12. Mai 1652 vom Sächsischen Kurfürsten die Genehmigung erhalten.

Somit war der Anfang zu einer größeren Siedlung also bereits vor 1654 gemacht worden. Knapp zwei Jahre später ließ sich dann der größte Teil der Exulanten aus dem böhmischen Platten hier auf sächsischer Seite nieder und gründete Johanngeorgenstadt.

>Also the text of the 24 Feb1652 petition if it is quoted anywhere.

Sorry. I don't know the original source of the petition and of the "Privileg".

Frank