

Januari 31, 1850

Dear Brother and Sister,

I hope you will receive this letters in good health. We all are in good health. Some time ago I wrote a letter to Mr. Minderhout, telling him about our situation, and I asked him to show this letter to you and other people, thus saving costs of postage, and now again I send a letter to the Rev. Snijder, again with the same request, I hope you have read them both, so I need not repeat the same, I requested in those letters for your reply. Please, do me the favor of an answer as soon as possible, because I am in want of information about you.

From my letters you certainly read about Milwaukee, a big and busy city, however there is no starch-factory, so starch is very costly over here, namely 30 cents Dutch money per American pound and this is only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  Dutch ounces, and the best flour costs 5 Dutch cents, so, after my thoughts one could make some very good profit out of it. So I am requested to establish such a factory. In this country one can act freely, therefore I am thinking to start this business in behalf of David, to set him on the track, but my knowledge of these affairs is not satisfactory, so my kindly request is, as soon as possible, to forward the exact processing rules. It would be an excellent business for David, and even when I should stay outside the town, I could daily visit and teach him, using my horsecart. One sees no flour here, wheat is brought to the mills, is grinded and unbranned, and the flour is put into barrels. The waste is kept at the mill, but when you have your wheat grinded you can keep the waste yourself. A barrel with flour weights 196 American pounds (88 kilograms) and costs at the moment  $9\frac{1}{2}$  to 10 guilders, the very best quality, which enables you to calculate the possibility of big profit. In Buffalo was a person coming from Arnemuiden. This was a Brabander (Sic! because Arnemuiden is located in Zealand), who had been a starch-maker at Arnemuiden. In order that he should not make starch, his principals offered him a job as a foreman, earning 50 dollars a month, only for looking around.

I must finish now. My adress I gave to the Rev. Snijder and to Minderhout.

My sincere greetings and name me your affectionate,

signed

P. Lankester.

*Economic opportunities*

*Starch Factory*

P. Lankester to J.M. Kuiler  
in Vere  
Oct. 10, 1850  
Franklin, Milwaukee County, Wis.

Dear Brother, Sister, and Children:

In the hope that you will receive these words in good health, which great privilege we have also enjoyed up to this moment, so that we are as healthy as we ever were in the Netherlands. We enjoy great beneficence, because here we are released from earthly difficulties and , we live without the burden of suffering, and we are not tormented or oppressed by anyone, and these are great privileges in life. Thus we live more freely and restfully here, just as the richest people in the Netherlands. And anyone who has a little money here, can live so pleasantly that he will lack nothing. I have (aside from my farm, which you know I have rented), for my familys use 4 or 5 milk cows which give so much milk and butter that we can hardly use it all. All kinds of garden products, much more than we can use, the same kinds of spice. (pot herbs) as you have, potatoes and all winter vegetables from the cabbage family we have in over supply. People eat bacon and meat three times daily - so much as a person wishes. Bread is made from the purest wheat flour, the finest kind which you can buy at (\$4 or 10 f) for 196#. I bake my own bread from this flour and anything else I wish to make such as my necessary biscuits and sweet breads. For that purpose I have set up a brick oven with two openings so I can bake whatever I desire. I have also learned to make a good yeast which I make every week. It is as good as that which they have in the Netherlands. So my biscuits are as good as those in Muldleburg. For the rest, I have nothing to do with the farm. This summer I had a nice house built for the farmer next to my own farm yard. There is also a new farm yard built next to my farm for a man from Velp, near Arnhem. This man is a painter and is married to F. Remeens, a daughter of Karel Remeens - they lived at the end of the city hall street. This man was in America two years

before I was here and lived 80 miles north of here. When I heard of that I wrote to him, and he came to visit me, and he liked it so well here that he sold his property and bought land next to mine. At this moment he is busy building his house. We enjoy each other's company, and that is true of all the Zeelanders who live here. I also have one of the finest horses and two small wagons for traveling, with these we drive everywhere we please. In good weather I drive to Milwaukee two times per week - where it is so busy there that you hardly know how to get around in the streets. Milwaukee is about 15 miles away (and it takes ) We have many plank roads here and on such roads I can ride 10 miles in one hour. Generally, people here have horses and (carriages) especially in the cities, nearly every shopkeeper has a horse and wagon, because the distances are so great. And you don't have to pay to use the street, except the plank roads which you pay 1¢ per mile for the upkeep of the roads. There is still so much that I could write, but I'm not sure what value it would have, because I don't want to provoke anyone, everyone must know for himself what he does. I only want to give you a change - we at last have no remorse over our choice. All this pertains to our external life, that you may know from us our good circumstances.

But above all the materials given us the privilege to worship Him without obstruction according to His word - so that no one here is misjudged as a result of his confession or religious convictions. Thus people have freedom of worship here. In fact, the state itself offers (encourages) the to worship and pray on the day of the Lord - for that purpose there are sign boards on houses indicating where worship is available. We, along with the congregation in the city of , have called Rev. Klijn as our pastor and preacher, who, we trust, will come over to serve our church. The Americans offer us everything presently - a parcel of land, and more in order to build a parsonage for him. So it is very different in the Netherlands: where they do such things as a form of coercion (and if it were possible) (such people should be banned from the earth, yet there they



are the religious leaders for a sinful land and church). Dear brother,  
I esteem it a privilege, to bow down so low (and humble myself by writing to

Truly I have no hate for you, but you seem to manifest hatred to me - I wish always to pray for you while I have breath, now broken read Psalm 37 time and again. It is often a soul food for me - really it is so glorious to be connected with the Lord. Now I will write a little more about the foregoing matter. It is a quotation from my will which was prepared by a Lawyer from Steenwijk, who now lives in Milwaukee. The quotation concerns specifically the money that David has coming to him from his Grandmother, and about which you were so restless because of my emigration. From this you can see (that I have taken care of him and he is protected by the law) (also I have asked my neighbor and friend to serve as an executor, and have established an upright and wise man as the guardian of the children.) Our children are doing especially well, they are growing, and especially David who is as tall as I am. He has great pleasure in his work here, and when he is finished with his apprenticeship, he will be very capable. He is doing well with the language, both with understanding and speaking - also he handles the horses well, just like the Americans. The farmers here are all gentlemen - all dressed in wool with pleated white shirts, and they live like gentlemen. (great friends).

I would like to have Poppe and Adamse come here. There are still good opportunities in my neighborhood. Thousands of acres on (gemeten) still lie uncultivated. The whole of the Netherlands could be transported within in this one state of Wisconsin.

Now, the Lord Reigns, and He does what is good in His eyes.

You are heartily greeted by all of us.

Your brother,

D. Lancaster



Town Franklin      County Milwaukee      15 February 1855

Dear Brother and Sister and Children!

We have had the privilege of receiving your valued letter brought to us by Westveer and Remeens in good health. We hope that you and your dear family also share in this very high privilege. We and our children enjoy great benefactions from the Lord. This past summer I had an attack of cholera which was quickly quelled by the indirect intervention of the unusual blessing of the Lord. Our children all look very healthy. David is taller than I. We hope that the Lord will make things pleasant for you and your wife and children, and above all, give you grace to be properly prepared for eternity, for Death beckons every hour, and wouldn't it be tragic to enter eternity without a portion in Christ, and we do not receive a portion in Christ except through a new creation, but once that is granted, we can understand something of the Apostle Paul when he says in the entire fifth chapter of Corinthians but especially in the application of verse 15. If you have not learned to understand that in relation to the covenant you will make a wrong application of it. O brother, it is a blessed privilege to be able to testify with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 14:15.

I will leave it at that because I have so many letters to answer, but very likely you already know that Westveer, by peculiar circumstances, didn't get here but stayed in Buffalo so that he is more than nine hundred miles distant ( 3 miles per hour), but Remeens got here with his family. His brother-in-law is my neighbor. I myself picked up Remeens in the city of Milwaukee for a few days of rest from travel and after fourteen days he ~~was~~ departed for the city and immediately

got a job. He did his first work in America with me. You cannot imagine how much work there is here especially for carpenters and masons. If masons are skillful in their trade they can sometimes make two dollars per day, more or less. The same with blacksmiths, yes, with almost all the trades. Conditions are also good here for farm hands. If they can do their work well in this country they can earn up to two hundred dollars per year, including board and laundry, and if they go out to work by the month in the busiest part of the summer, they can get from 20 to 30 dollars, but that is only for a few months.

Brother, you ask me to tell you about means for leavening, as you call it. This is not as much to be used in the baking of bread as for other things, for example, the best kind of sponge cake or prime pigs in blanket such as I baked so many of in Middelburg. Doughnuts or pancakes baked with it are unusually good, but it can also be used for bread, but I think that would turn out to be too expensive. I will tell you that I make my own yeast, for here there is no yeast except in places where many Europeans are living. In those places there are many beer breweries and thus also yeast, but it is always liquid. I have not yet seen dry yeast. So everyone makes his own yeast, and I do too, and the bread I bake is much nicer than when I was in Middelburg. The wheat which I grow on my farm is of the same quality as the Polish wheat which I used in Middelburg, and of that wheat we use only the best flour. I have baked bread as good as the best with this flour, \*very light when divided into loaves. I bake it with my own yeast. If I could have ~~done~~ that

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\*From here to the end of the sentence I have guessed at the translation of ". . . in het afbreken al vliezig. . . ." Tr.

while I was in the Netherlands I would have been able to make a lot of money. The flour is ground unusually fine. If you saw the whole process of how the milling of flour is done here you would be astonished. Sometimes we bring a load of unsorted wheat to the mill (they are all water or steam mills here). When we arrive it is dumped into a bin and seems to fall into the cellar. From there it is conveyed upward by machinery and there it is separated, so that all the bad wheat falls out by means of an iron \_\_\_\_\_.\* Then it runs through an iron drum to crush the hard pellets which are sometimes there and to get rid of the dust and chaff, so that the wheat in a few minutes runs down very pure and clean into the bin that stands on the millstones. Then it is ground, and the meal is again conveyed upward, by machinery, where it is cooled and then dumped into the sifter, all by machine. Then the miller attaches bags to three separate places, the one for flour, another for very fine middling (as it is called here) and the third for bran, and that all goes so rapidly that if we come to the mill with a load of wheat and there is no one ahead of us, we can be served in two or three hours. And the flour is so choice and the bran and middling so clean that it is unbelievable. The millers are not paid in money. They pay themselves and they do that according to the market price of the grain this way: an eighth part for the miller, but that is merely according to average

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\*The word in the original appears to be aspel, for which I can find no English meaning. Tr.

\*\* "Hard pellets" translates poppen, for which I cannot find an authoritative English meaning. Tr.



market price. The more expensive, the less he takes. And the millers haven't anything to do. Sometimes the mill is operated by one man. Wheat meal is hardly known here because everyone from the President to the day laborer eat the same kind of bread. Coming here is a great change for indigent people although presently because of the war everything is more expensive than before. Pork remains cheap. Since autumn I have butchered as many as twenty-four hogs of which I brought five to the city, among them two for T. Remeens who couldn't believe that one could buy a hog for so little money. Hogs come to the city daily by the thousands. These are all butchered by the farmers and brought to the city by the wagon load. They are sold with the head on. The present price was four dollars per hundred pounds for the best. The hogs are bought by anyone in the city who has money. They are salted down and sold by the barrel. It is a country with great emphasis on trade. From the least to the greatest, all are intent only on making money. The Western states are developing with incredible rapidity, and that is caused by the railroads of which many are being laid so that the farmers who live two or three hundred miles from Milwaukee and for some time could not get to market with their produce, now can, and in the future will be able to get to the market of their choice with all they have to sell, vegetables or cattle of whatever sort. It is possible to get from here to New York by train with the exception of one small ford which can be crossed by steamboat, so that everything is being connected. I must close; my paper is almost full. If I have time I will prepare another letter to enclose with this. Then you can pay the postage on the two together.

I cannot frank them from here any farther than New York. Now, brother, greet all your relatives and children from us as well as Cornelis and his wife and our friends in Veere, and when you can, write to let us know how you are getting along. That is always very pleasant for us. Now, brother, kindly give my regards to those who know me and accept our cordial greetings and the Lord be good and gracious to you and bless you with temporal and above all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus.

Your well-meaning brother,

P. Lankester.

Franklin, County Milwaukee, 26 December 1855

Highly Esteemed Brother and Sister and Children!

Your letter of June '55 found us in good health through the goodness of the Lord. Kooman has sent the ... \* by mail. He has also written to me and asked for some advice. He lives about 60 miles from us. I wrote him that if he intended to live among us he should let me know and then come to Milwaukee and that I would pick him up there with my horses and wagon, but at this moment I haven't heard any more from him. Very likely he was working. That is usual, for people in all the trades are so busy that I can't describe it. In a word, all tradesmen are so busy here in the West that carpenters who do good work earn two dollars per day. Masons also easily that much, and that's the way it is with everyone who can work. I had long intended to write you but was constantly prevented partly because I knew that our son David was to be married, which occurred on Tuesday, the 18th of December, 1855. He married a Dutch girl from Zeist, near Utrecht, by the name of Magrieta Smidt, 21 years of age. They live near us, in fact, in a house that I had newly built two or three rods from my own house, and David and his wife speak English as well as their native language, and the other children are also beginning to speak the language pretty well for their age, and this is an absolute necessity in America. Whoever knows the language well can succeed in all trades. I really can't explain to you how everything goes here. This past summer we received many blessings from the Lord. We had a

\* The omitted word appears to be zelice, not entered in any of my dictionaries. Tr.



temperate summer, not so hot as other years, and we had a very good harvest. There were no set-backs, except perhaps the potatoes, among which there was some spoilage. Because of the European war all grain is very expensive. As long as the Western states have existed, grain has never<sup>e</sup> been so high. Hay also is very expensive. The price of hay at this time is from 14 to 20 dollars per ton depending on the quality. This year we have laid in about 100 ton. A ton here weighs 2,000 pounds, and a pound is as large as the old Netherlands pound used to be. All foodstuffs are almost once again as expensive as when we came here, and all other necessities are also much more expensive, but since that time earnings and profits are also once again as high. When we were first here the price of a bushel of wheat was 50 cents, and at the moment it is \$1.50 to almost two dollars for the best kind. The same with hay. It used to be 3 and 4 dollars and now it is three or four times as expensive, and there are no complaints about that because earnings and profits are so great. It is impossible for you folks to believe the rapid progress in this country. It progresses with giant strides. When we first came, the first railroad was being built, and now there are already, as far as I can tell, more than six, so that goods can be sent from all sections of the country. Railroads are the key to progress in this country. The price of farms is rising; in our area some land is once again as expensive as it was six years ago.

Our children are all very glad that they are here. When we speak of Holland they all say that they would not like to go back, and this is not because there is so much so-called joy and pleasure

here for the young people to enjoy, such as young and undisciplined people seek. No, there is nothing of that kind here -- no celebrations or so-called holidays. On all holidays we hold religious services and then all who can, come to church, and the rest are all busy at their jobs.

Brother, you write that you have used the baking powder but that it didn't satisfy you. That's your fault. Thousands of people here use it and it is sold as a main article in all the best stores in packages of one-half pound. But I never bought any that was as good as what I make myself. I bake all kinds of tasty little snacks with it whenever we want something delicious and fresh to eat. It can be done quickly. As far as yeast goes, I bake everything with it just as well as I ever did in Holland. If I had known about it when I still had my bakery, I would have saved hundreds of guilders by using it. All the bakers in America use such yeast, which they make themselves, although there are many breweries here. And so they don't bother to make dry yeast. I haven't seen that here yet. They consider it too unimportant a commodity. Sometimes they sell liquid yeast to private people, but not to bakers. They make it themselves. They would laugh and jeer at such an unimportant thing here. No, brother, you can't imagine on what an unusually large scale everything is here. In Buffalo I was in a hardware store that was three stories high and each story was a store of at least a hundred feet long, and in each store there was more goods than in three stores in Middelburg. On every floor there was an office with three or four clerks, and so it is with the other employees, and those store employees earn easily as

much as twenty to forty dollars per month. It's this way in all the trades. This is an enterprising people who do gigantic deeds. It's the same with farming. The invention of all kinds of machinery is a great thing. Even our crops are harvested by machinery, fourteen acres per day and much more neatly than when mowed by hand. Hay is mowed in the same way.

I would be able to end now except that I noticed that I have made a mistake. When I reviewed the . . .\*, I saw that the ship of which I spoke on page two is really a steamship. It is an unusually large steamship. The keel is . . .\* and more than 500 feet long. The beam is 80 and the height 60 feet. The first /class?/ cabin will be so . . .\*, with conveniences for three thousand passengers. There will be sixteen steam engines with 14 thousand horsepower, and in the state of Ohio they are busy building such vessels that will be driven by heat. They also have the invention of central heating in the houses of the rich and in churches which are being newly built. The furnace is in the basement and it heats the entire house or church, and you can see nothing of pipes or that sort of thing. Only in the floor or the walls of the rooms there is <sup>a</sup> ventilating turning damper. The same is true of the newly developed vessels. If I have a chance to send Weems a portrait or drawing of a fine steamship, I will be happy to do so. They are very nice for framing. And they are such gigantic vessels that you can't believe it, everything equally beautiful. If our niece Betje comes over to us, she will necessarily come on such a ship. Have Betje write us a note sometime, or Kornelis. That

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\*Illegible word or words. Tr.



would please us very much. And I also expect a letter from you, brother, when you have a chance to write. Just put it in the mail and it will get here fine. I have written you a pretty long letter which I very likely won't do again. This was because I was sick and could not leave my room. When I am healthy I don't have so much patience and I have my work to do. I mean I shall not write so much.

What you have written me about F.F.M. I can't change at the moment because Mr. van Steenwijk is presently in New York since his honor has a temporary appointment there for a year or two as agent or Commissioner of this state for immigration to New York, with an income of thirty-eight hundred dollars per year. When he returns I will speak to him about this matter. Don't worry about it. He has exactly the same character as Mr. Snijder over there with you. Greet the latter heartily for us. Now I must end because I am constantly thinking of new things to write. I would rather be able to tell you these things by word of mouth because I would be able to relate many unusual things, for example, how the large cities here are supplied with constant fresh water. Here in Milwaukee they are also busy with such a project. They are building a large masonry reservoir, four or five acres in size, outside the city beside the lake. Water from the lake (which is especially good) is brought into the reservoir by a machine. There it is purified and filtered. The same machine forces the water through pipes into the city. Then on all the street corners there are hydrants which one merely turns open to get the most delicious water without any trouble. If you don't hold on tight to the glass or whatever else you want to catch the water in, you will lose it because of the great force behind the water. I was scared by that kind

of hydrant when I was in New York.

In our country we also have springs which produce water summer and winter and which never freeze over. In the summer they are always cold and healthful. Even though you are in a sweat when you drink of them, it does no harm, and no matter how dry it is, they constantly run over. In the same way there are different kinds of springs, such as sulphur springs and silver springs which are very healthful. Not long ago I spoke with one of our countymen who was reliable. He told me that he came from the state of Virginia\* and that he had seen a fountain or spring of oil. The oil was scooped into barrels and sent all over. From that oil many other kinds of oil were made for druggists. It was green in color and had to be purified. While I was writing this a neighbor of mine dropped in who said that he had received a letter from the Netherlands which said that they were told in the Netherlands that we suffered a great deal from wild animals and Indians. How do they get ahold of these lies? It's true that there are bears in our state, but certainly not where we are. We would be willing to walk a good piece to see one. There are a few wolves. Once by chance when I was observing our cattle in the pasture with my binoculars I saw one walking among the cows. That wolf killed a number of sheep of mine and my neighbors, but a few days later he was killed too. I saw him fall. And those Indians, we see them very seldom and those unlucky people do no one any harm, except perhaps in the wild country. But here with us, as in the Netherlands: very

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\*Spelled versiene in the original. Tr.

peaceful. We\* are having very cold weather presently. Conditions are such that one must be careful that his nose or ears don't freeze. During the winter we have two months, sometimes three, when everything is done with sleighs which are very useful here. Dear brother, in accordance with the promise made me when I left, namely, that when my son David arrived at his majority or came to marry, that his grandmother's inheritance would be settled on him, the enclosed receipt will serve as evidence, and I hope with all my heart that it will be satisfactory to you. You can rest assured that you will never be asked about it again. We heartily hope that you will receive this letter in good health and that the Lord's blessing may rest upon you and your children, and above all that you may all be the Lord's, to be bound to him, soul and body, for time and eternity. Although the times in which we live may be sorrowful and the Lord's benefits and afflictions, for the sake of our sins, many and great, we will have no fear, having Jesus as our portion. Then finally we will carry our souls out of this world like a treasure, for the world passes away and all its attractiveness, but those who do God's will live forever.

Cordial greetings from all of us to your wife and children, and it will always please us to receive letters from you. I hope that you will write me soon about the receipt of this letter. Greet everyone who asks after us.

Your ever-affectionate Brother,

P. Lankester

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\*This word begins a new page also dated 22 Dec. 1855. Tr.



March 10, 1863

... (p. 2)

Dear Uncle, Aunt, and Family,

We would love to visit you some time in Holland and speak face to face with you. I would like to travel with my friend, and am a little jealous of him, but it is best that I don't think about that too much because there is no possibility for me to go with him, but but not only because of family obligations, but rather because of the war being waged at this moment makes travel by ocean more dangerous every day, due to the piracy that lies in wait for us. Yes, beloved, I can understand that you desire to do something about this affair, and I will gladly say as much as my (limited) ability permits. Still, I don't know when to begin or end because this war is so big, bloody, and destructive, that no pen exists to adequately describe it. If God does not intervene and is pleased to give a salvation, we are afraid that the suffering will go on until there is total destruction and ruin on both sides, because both sides seemed determined to hold out to the very last, and both sides fight on hopelessly. Whenever a new report comes about another battle, then the question is not how many hundreds, but how many thousands remain dead on the field of battle. Thus as you can well imagine, the death rate passes a human capacity for grief. I don't know if you know how this war started, but I will write about that as briefly as possible. It begins actually in connection with the election of a new President in Nov. 1860, now that is usually a significant matter here as there are always two and sometimes more striving for the office. In the last election the striving parties consisted of Democrats and Republicans, and the Republicans won. As soon as the South understood, since they are all Democrats there, that this choice of a new President would work against slavery, they began a rebellion and separated themselves. The U.S. had at that time, the old President (Buchanan) who continued to be intrusted with power from Nov. - March, and that gave the South a chance to be prepared (for war) because he (Buchanan) did not interfere. Thus when Lincoln became President on March 4, the rebellion was

already strong. He had to begin with the preparation of troops from the ground up. He began this then, with volunteers, and they came by the thousands, so that an army of about 600,000 was organized. Then people thought the rebellion would quickly be put down. I thought so, too. But the opposite view quickly became apparent, because very quickly we experienced a defeat. ... But people still took hope (comfort) from the fact that the army was not yet well organized, and people hoped that things would go better as the military (art) training improved. Well it did actually go a little better, shortly thereafter, however, our army was diminished quickly due to sickness, death, and casualties in battle, that the President was forced to call for man troops up to 600,000. Thus, in total, over 100,000. This last draft occurred last summer in July, and that didn't go so easily as the first call. At first they got many volunteers by offering large premiums which were promised by both the government and leading citizens because every city and town knew how many had to be delivered (the greatest number went because of the promise). Still no matter how much they tried the total number required could not be acquired in this state, so that our governor finally had to resort to the lottery because Wisconsin was still 4000 short of the total required. Our town was required to provide 53. 53 from a total of 330 eligible men. On that day I was in Milwaukee; it was for me and thousands of other men a more fearful day that I can describe. I will never forget to praise the Lord for allowing me to escape - (He alone was responsible.) Perhaps you are thinking that I was more frightened than I should have been, but you must reflect a bit and remember that at the present it is quite different to be a soldier in time of war. It took a lot of effort to carry out this lottery, because when they first attempted to apply it in Milwaukee the people chased the lottery commissioners and their helpers out of town, and for ten days they were not able to operate i.e. until Nov. 20

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The governor threatened (the people) that the first person who claimed to resist would immediately be transported to the army to serve for the duration of

the war. Yet in another place the people chased the officials away and dragged some of them through the mud and set a few of their houses on fire. Then the governor sent a regiment of soldiers there...

(The people) They positioned a few cannons where they could sink an oncoming steamboat, but the soldiers outsmarted the people and came unexpectedly over land, and so from that side they caught the troublemaker. So now, they have a lottery here as they do in Holland. For here the papers with names on them are put in a box which is turned often. Then another blindfolded person takes the papers out until they have the needed number. Then the chosen person are given notice to appear before the commissar within five days, and they bring you directly to the camp. Thus, you can easily imagine how anyone with a wife and child feels; he must leave everything in a few days and present himself at the camp to be trained and then sent immediately to the battlefield with hardly any hope of returning. I don't want to write too much about this, but I know of several regiments that were sent out with 1000 men in Sept. which now have less than 300 strong men. We have a Dutch helper who lived with us a few years and he volunteered with the 263 Wisc. Regiment and he writes to us saying that of the 100 men in his company only 40 remained and that without any battle losses, and all this occurred since last October (6 months). The loss of so many people came from fatigue and privation which these are so great that you would hardly believe it (without the evidence from those who experienced it.) Many times they have to march for weeks and even months through the woods, the wilderness and impassable roads, and then sleep unprotected in the open air. In addition, they don't get half enough to eat, and what they get is most often a kind of dry biscuit and some poor excuse for coffee, and that is all that they get; except when they are regularly garrisoned, then it is a little better. Although in general, they are treated like animals. Thus it's no wonder that people have begun to oppose this situation. And still more - of the 4000 who were conscripted by lottery, there remain only 3 or 400 in actual military service. Most did not appear at the required time, and many deserted from the camp (and the balance that remained were sent to the South without their knowledge and



without an opportunity to say goodbye to their relatives. We have a neighbor here, a poor man and the father of 6 children, who was also caught in the lottery. He had a few days home leave with his wife a short time ago. Then he became sick and was too weak to travel back to camp, it seemed to be a blessing in retrospect, because if he had gone back to camp, they would have sent him off to battle without any opportunity to say farewell to his wife and family.

Now I will tell you about the financial effects of this war in Amerika. In short, there is no gold or silver coin in circulation - not even a copper cent - nothing but paper money. First people tried to use postage stamps for small change and then the government came up with the plan to place paper money in circulation for small change also, so that presently all our money consists of these paper notes and bank bills, just as it was earlier in the Netherlands. Whenever you wish to change this paper money for , you must at present pay from 40-60 per cent to the banks. This as you will rightly imagine, increases enormously the cost of all goods from foreign trade because the (purchaser) businessman must pay in , and in return get paper money of far less value. Many articles presently are (200 times more expensive)...

Yes, dear Uncle, only the Lord knows what will happen to this land. From our viewpoint, the future looks very dark, for recently the Congress passed another law, a so-called conscription law under which almost no one will be free from military service. The Congress has also give the President authority to call up another 800,000 men. The general feeling is that he will act on this quickly if the war does not end, and there is not the least hope of that. In America, they carry on war as they do all other things, that is Americans like things in giant sizes. At first people say that such enormous plans, are impossible but they know how to carry it . If I should write about the growth of trade and other affairs, and about the way this is done here, many people in Holland would not believe me, but this time I will not expand on that because the paper will quickly be full.

I prefer to end with information about our family. The most important news



that I know at this moment concerns our intentions (if the Lord wills and we live) to give up our farm and to move to Milwaukee in the fall. We have already bought property there and we intend to build a house on it this summer before moving. From this you will understand that I have totally changed the operation of my business, but, that is rather common here in America. People who are farmers one day become shopkeepers the following day, still something else, because if one thing doesn't work, people quickly run to something else. Here, there is not the least difference between ~~farmers~~<sup>city</sup> farmers, ~~farm~~ dwellers, or gentlemen. People are addressed Mr. from the poorest day laborer to the President. It is the same with respect to clothing, house maids, if they can afford it, wear clothes as good as their employers... Thus on the street you can't distinguish one from the other. And the most peculiar is...

And this is true among most Hollanders in Amerika. Also, for people in general are inclined (to jump, rush to consumption)

And that is the reason that so few from this servant class make much progress. I could write more of this, but for this time I'll stop...

Hearty Greetings from all of us and also from father and his household.

P. Lankester

D

Town Franklin      County Milwaukee      2 April 1863

Our leaving  
this place  
causes much  
sorrow.

Dear Brother and Sister, Children and Children's Children!  
That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may be a  
saving and redeeming God for you in Christ Jesus for now  
and above all for an approaching eternity is our heart's  
desire and prayer.

Dear brother, it made us deeply happy that we and all our family might  
receive your letter of March 6 in good health on the first of April  
and be informed of your physical well-being, although it also told us  
of the loss of your son, concerning which we had yet heard nothing. Yes,  
brother, thus the Lord constantly knocks at our door and wishes to make  
us constantly aware of that word, "It is appointed unto man once to die,  
and after death the judgment." For it is the great purpose of God to  
~~place us under the Gospel here on earth so that we might be prepared~~  
for eternity. O, what a happy privilege if, by regenerating grace,  
we can witness to the truth and that the fruits are immediately evident  
in being able to say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ, to die is  
gain." Then it need not be difficult to endure for a time in this  
vale of tears, but we can be assured that when we put off this earth-  
ly tabernacle we shall receive a building made by God in heaven.

Dear brother, let us examine ourselves narrowly before the Lord that  
we may never be found among those builders of whom we read in Matt. 7:  
26, 27. Brother, we must learn to understand that dear chapter  
especially from the thirteenth to and including the twenty-third  
verse, for we live only once in the time of preparation. As the  
tree falls, so will it lie. O brother, I can't tell you with what  
sympathy my soul is touched at times when on Sundays I preach the

beloved gospel of salvation from the pulpit and see so many before me who by eloquent deeds say, "Depart from us, for we have no desire to know your ways." O, what has man become through sin! Through grace it is my heart-felt desire constantly to make my fellow travellers to eternity aware of the great purpose of God for poor sinners. Presently God's judgment ~~on this nation~~ has come to rest on this nation. There is much religion, also many pious and godly people as well as many godly ministers among the Americans. The result is that times of prayer are held daily in many places at which various private persons are invited to pray. Some years ago I was the representative of the great many American and pious Dutch ministers. I was nominated as delegate from our Classis to attend the General Synod that is held annually. It was 500 hours, or 1600 miles, from my home, in the state of New Jersey, in the beautiful city of Newark. It was a pleasant trip. We travelled through New York. I was gone four weeks, all at the expense of the Synod. There also there were daily hours of prayer. In New York there are daily prayer meetings at noon. It is a place where great events often occur. It is an exceptional commercial city. There is one street where 700 omnibuses per hour pass regularly to transport passengers from one end to the other. You will have been aware from the newspapers of the sad circumstances related to the all-destructive war. It is a war that has no equal in world history. Two of my hired men have volunteered. They are both in the South fighting the enemy, or rebels. I get letters from them daily. There are three young men of our congregation who have been drafted. They are also in the South. There is much talk of a second conscription, which may include our David because married men are not exempt. It

is a dreadful judgment on this nation. A few years ago we talked here as though no war was possible in the United States, but the Lord knows how to visit a people when the measure of iniquity is full. In this war, too, the Lord has a definite purpose. It is a wonderful country and people. However wicked, they always have impressions of religion, although mostly on mistaken principles. With almost every regiment there is a chaplain. The soldiers are supplied with religious newspapers and tracts which are very good and moral, especially emphasizing preparation for eternity. They have sent us a few of them. In some regiments no work may be done on Sunday if it is not absolutely necessary. Others are completely irreligious. That depends entirely on the commander of the troops. There are many English newspapers in this country which are completely religious. In these papers we often read of unusual deaths in the hospitals and how the Lord converts many sinners there. These hospitals are often visited by important ladies who help there. Even the wife of the President of the United States goes there. No one here is too important to offer services of this kind. They even send crates with all sorts of refreshments from the North to hospitals in the South, hundreds of miles away, and these are distributed by those women. We have also read in these religious papers of the depraved condition of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands. A certain minister from Leyden, while serving holy communion, expressed his astonishment, saying that he could not understand that after 1800 years that ceremony still existed, since it was merely the memorial of the death of a friend. We read in this paper that at a later celebration he expressed his astonishment again concerning the



mystical ideas that people in the church held regarding it. A second matter came to our attention of a certain minister at Fiel who compared the Lord Jesus with Santa Claus in that the good deeds of both are remembered long after their deaths. O Brother, who will not shudder and shake in the face of such wickedness. And that it is tolerated without punishment causes us to shake and fear that the Lord, when his longsuffering and firm patience come to an end, will visit such a country and people with his fearful judgments. Is that defending the faith for which our forefathers offered their blood and property against its enemies? On the other hand, we also hear that the Lord has converted many and set several on the right path in that same church, I mean ministers, and the Lord has continued to save many and to cast out those wolves in sheep's clothing or turn them to him. O Brother, it has appeared at all times that a country and people or a person that does not recognize God, but mocks him and tramples on his truth and lives and conducts himself according to the desires of his heart -- such a country or people or person, when the measure of iniquity is full, will be visited by the Lord in a most fearful way. We have at hand too many examples of this to enumerate, in sacred and profane writings, given for our admonition. Brother! because of the war and the resulting scarcity of workmen and farmhands I have decided, the Lord willing and we live, to move from our farm to the city of Milwaukee next autumn after the harvest is in. David and his family too. To that end we have bought property in the city. I bought two lots next to each other. On one of those lots there is a house for David. On the second lot I shall have a house built this summer.

So, you see, we are facing a great change. I myself and my wife desire a little more leisure at our time of life, and David and his wife would not be happy living away from us. For that reason we decided to stick with each other in the city. And I have no greater pleasure than to be with my family. The farm on which we ourselves lived we will lease out, which is easy to do here. It touches my heart somewhat because both David and I have nice and convenient houses.

Closely considered, it is best to lease because the war makes it impossible to get laborers or farm hands. Here a farm hand is paid two hundred dollars per year and in the summer months twenty dollars or more per month. We have recently sold our second farm of 70 acres, and if times improve, I will also sell the large one of 180 acres since David is more inclined toward trade or business by which one can earn a great deal here. You will remember Elias Braam, the brother of my former wife, who lived with /near?/ me in Veere and in Middelburg. He lives near me here and owns a store of all kinds of goods and he is doing so well that you would be surprised. He has more than thirty acres of land, a good house and barn, all free and clear, and besides that a lot of money out at interest. Shopkeeping here and there with you differs like night and day. It is incredible how much shopkeepers make on everything. For example, more than two Dutch cents on a pound of butter, and everything else in proportion. I must stop. Last evening I received your letter and I hasten to write you immediately because David has written you a letter in which he lets you know that the portraits you asked for are on the way to you with a friend of ours. His name is Frans van Driele, son of C. van Driele and Pieterella Sonius. I suppose he will drop off the pictures with our

family in Goes~~/~~and they will take care of them from there. It is possible that he will get to Middelburg. I have sent my picture along, too. If you happen to have something that he can carry along, he will be glad to take it for me. When you write me, tell me something of the deceased saint /?/. How is Gebuct /?/? How is your son getting along in the bakery? Say a special hello to Betje and all the children from all of us. There is also a picture for Betje. We all  
Send you hearty greetings.

Your ever-loving Brother,

P. Lankester

Greet all who know me or ask about me.

Milwaukee, May 27, 1865

Dearly Beloved Brother, Sister, and Children,

I have long intended to write you, but I heard that you were going to write me and so I was waiting for that letter, but up until this moment, I have found nothing from you, so I thought, I won't quibble about that, and decided to write my brother in law anyway - it could well be the last time as my days are hardening to their end. We are all, through God's unending goodness, enjoying good health. Our oldest daughter was married on May 13 to a widower from Madison where he is the foreman of a printing shop which prints the book of the state, because Madison is the capitol of the state and the seat of the government. The man's name is Johannes W. Custcot, and he is the foreman for that works, and earns from 75-80 dollars per month. He was born in Winterwijk (Gelderland). They moved to Madison on the 22nd of May, a busy day for us. Madison is one hundred miles away and can be reached in four hours by (train).

We have had exceptional events here in America. First, with the C. War, which as everyone expected, ended with the defeat of the Southerners (and Richmond, the capitol of the South, was captured with thousands of troops, and because it was the capitol city, the South lost everything. A few of the Southern generals resisted with their followers, but they have also been defeated and many were able to flee, but were caught, by the calvary. He was dressed in women's clothing to escape identification; we have also caught many of his cabinet. I think that they will hang all of them - but you have probably read all of this in the newspapers.

The second great event was the murder of our brave President, Abraham Lincoln, it was a dreadful deed. And everyone was so surprised that the murderer was able to flee, but they hunted him up, and finally found him in another state, hiding in a barn, where he resisted wholeheartedly, he had broken a leg in his flight and was shooting out of the barn. Then, in order to save lives, the authorities set the barn on fire and shot at him - and so they got him. (There was a \$100,000 reward placed on his head, I've heard that the murderer



was supported by 300 people - there are a lot of such people in Washington and they will all be hanged. Our new President, although a Southerner, will not be so long-suffering as Lincoln. Our murdered President had his own grave in Springfield, Ill., but the body was also on view in Washington, but following his wishes, it was transported the following day and it stopped in Chicago - people streamed there by the thousands, and the train did not move for one whole day. The thousands that saw him passed by the casket all night long. Our minister, who happened to be there, saw him that night, too. His casket cost \$2000. I have never seen such a procession. They have burial ceremonies all over, just as if his body was present. ... also mourners.

The procession in our city was so large that it took the official mourners one hour to walk by. All the shops were closed, and everything stood still, all the houses were decked with black, all the churches were in deep mourning, and all the ministers were asked to give a suitable address and to hold prayers on the day of the funeral, which was on Easter Sunday...

We hear that drafted soldiers are all coming home - a half year ago we bought a substitute for our son <sup>Daniel</sup> for \$600. The War power of America became so great in the last years, that almost all powers in the world should take hope. England's sea power is no longer equal to ours.

Wonderful and awesome things occur here, in all matters. They have put up a trade building here which people say is the largest of its kind in the whole world. It stands along side the train station, the cars ride through the building in order to load grain - the top part is for grain, and the bottom is for all other trading goods.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million bu. of wheat ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  bu. = a mud in Zealand)

Things are similar in church affairs. A few weeks ago a preacher arrived here who was chosen by the Synod to be a means in God's hand for the conversion and quickening of his people, to enlarge the Lord's kingdom, and to give witness to the Christian life. There are an enormous number of churches here, and each

church has its own minister, but all these have helped the visiting minister in his work. This visiting minister is Mr. Potter and he's been with us for fourteen days - preaching three times each day, the regular minister does most of the praying; I have never heard a man with such gifts before. He preaches in the largest church in the mornings and afternoons where about 3000 people attend. In the evening at 7:30 he preaches in a rented hall which can easily hold 6000 people - I have never seen so many people at one time....

They have a prayer service before every worship service. Mr. Potter invites all the people to bring to him whatever problems they may have with respect to their own or their families situation, and to offer prayers for these. I have seen and heard many kinds of people; men, women, sons, boys, and daughters standing in line in order to make their wishes known to him. I have been there several times with our minister. Sometimes it was very moving to hear. Some people had husbands and children in the war or on the battlefield... who were unconverted, and their families sought prayer for these people. It brought tears to my eyes.

This minister would accept no money, and they took no collection. The American churches seldom take up collections. Everything here is like a wonderland.

Just today I had another surprising occurrence. You know that much oil has been found here - so that some people have earned thousands and millions. The oil comes out of the ground, people bore into the ground in places where they expect oil to be located - sometimes 50, 100, and up to 600 feet deep. And then the oil rushes out of the ground in amounts from 20-300 barrels or vats per day. Then it is refined. You know that I have some property here and on that land are 8 or 9 springs. These are places from which, as they say here, living water springs. - you can't run out of water. They run day and night - and when you dig a hole around the spring it never freezes. - This is also mineral water - good for your health.

A few days ago we read in the paper that people can almost predict where

they will find oil - when certain conditions exist - and that is in locations where there are springs. So we thought about our land and wondered if there might be oil there since we have conditions needed for finding oil. I didn't mention this to anyone. But then I didn't know that there was a commission to look for oil. Someone told this group about my land. Without my knowledge 3 of the men rode to my land and took samples of my water away to study it. The next day they came to me and asked if I would come to their office on the following day. They wish to make an agreement allowing them to bore for oil and also an agreement for buying the oil if they find it. But we don't yet know, since this has just happened today. In a few days we will go to my property with them and an expert to make a further study. I don't know what will come of that. But you see, brother, wonderful things occur here. Just as I was writing, David took some men from the oil company and an expert from the city to our land to do further research. I don't know if anything will come of this. The oil is called Kerosene out here, it gives an excellant light and is also used as paint for some kinds of work.

(closing)

Your loving brother,

P. Lankester



Milwaukee, 20 February 1867

Cordially Beloved Brother and Sister and Family,

We received your letter on January 8 in good health as we hope you will receive this. We were dreadfully shocked by the death of your son Henderik since we had not received that letter. Yes, Brother, our life is like a vapor, and everyone must experience the trouble and the adversity of sin in this world, and we have a blessed privilege if we have a firm foundation for expecting a better life in eternity. By God's goodness we all still live under His present grace. Our daughter, the widow Putz, was very successfully delivered of a healthy daughter on December 10, 1866. She is again living with us. Our youngest daughter, Pieterella, is also still with us. Maria is still in Madison. They are very prosperous there. Presently her husband makes about thirty dollars per week or a hundred and twenty per month. Everything is also well with David. His wife expects any day to be delivered of her sixth child, all alive and excellently handsome, healthy children. It is because of David's request that I write you so soon, since he has no time at the moment to write you. He had heard from his housemaid who lives with him and has just come from the Netherlands that in Amsterdam a machine for peeling potatoes has been invented and is for sale, which would be very useful here. Although here one can get a terrible lot of machines of all kinds and descriptions, we have noticed that that kind isn't here yet, and for that sort of thing one pays a large patent right here, and David wants very much to get such a thing here since that might have unusual results. So David's request is that



you should write immediately to your son in Amsterdam to investigate thoroughly whether or not such a thing is to be found, successful and efficient, and if so, if it should cost somewhere between 20 and 40 guilders, to pack it well in a small crate and send it over. That is very easy to do by steamship. I will enclose an address so that everything will go right. In New York there is a commission of Hollanders that looks out for their property. Among them is a good friend of mine, Rev. H. Uiterwyk. I will write to him, he will see that it gets on the express train and then it will get to me. There are people here who have made large fortunes with such things. Recently there was a man here who invented a machine for making curved metal spouts which could be made by the thousands per day and shipped by the millions. That man sold his patent rights for just the state of New York for twenty thousand dollars and still retained the rights in the other states. It was a very simple device. I saw them being made because a friend of mine was working with them. So David would very much like to investigate the matter, not to manufacture the thing, but to get the patent rights, and I think it likely that David would be able to get that because the husband of our Maria, who lives in Madison, the capital, and is well acquainted with some important people, could speak with them.

Now, Brother, if you can, do it quickly. He will send you the money as soon as possible, you don't have to be worried about that. I hope to write you again later. Greet my friends and family for us and receive cordial greetings from us all.

Your ever-loving Brother,  
P. Lankester.

P.S. In the meantime I will write to Rev. Uiterwyk, my good friend, and everything will go fine.

Milwaukee, 21 February 1867

Dearly Beloved Brother and Sister and Children!

Yesterday I sent you a letter which very likely you don't have yet. The reason for this letter is that I forgot one thing and another in my letter. In my earlier letter I asked you for a machine for peeling potatoes which is manufactured in Amsterdam. As I wrote in my earlier letter, it was Daniel's request, who at the moment has no time to do such things. He hopes to write you afterwards. David has a house maid and she told him that it might be a very good business for him to apply for what people here call the patent rights as is done very much here and many make large fortunes in this way. As I informed you earlier, after I had sent the letter of 20 February, it occurred to me that I could have some other things sent over in the box. I would very much like to have some pure Haarlem oil for me and my family because we are not sure that what we get here is pure. And also some artist brushes, which are very expensive here. All kinds of brushes are very expensive here because brushes and everything connected with them ~~is~~ are imported from other countries. Here the bristles, or hair, is not removed from the hogs although they are butchered by the thousands. But the hair is mostly thrown out or hauled away by wagons for other purposes. So you would please me a great deal if you would send over in my box with the machine fifty bottles of Haarlem oil and two dozen artist brushes in three sizes, the one somewhat larger than the other.

Now I must close, and I hope that you will be able to send it. In this letter I will also indicate what you must put on the box. There is in New York a Dutch minister with whom I am particularly acquainted, who is a member of the commission to help the Hollanders along.

Be so good as to address the box with paint

Rev. H. Uiterwijk

No. 41 Hammon Street

New York

As soon as David has time he will write you and send some photographs.

Farewell

On the box the address must be painted

Rev. H. Uiterwijk

No. 41, Hammond Street

New York

In my previous letter you will find something more. We send our cordial greetings. Please put the bill in the box or in a letter.

Your ever-loving Brother

P. Lankester

P.S. Our hearty greetings to our family and friends. Meanwhile, I will write to New York. If you /send what I asked for/ before that time, write me the name of the ship and captain together with the bill.

The reason why such a machine could be such a good thing here is that handwork is very expensive here and people are generally too lazy to peel potatoes and so potatoes are served unpeeled. Also, there are such large hotels here. There is one that has 365 rooms or sleeping accommodations. People here like anything that is new. Maids earn three dollars per week.