Veldhuis, Zwiertje Rutgers to her father and mother

U.S.A. - the Netherlands
Letter, 1848

Dearly beloved father and mother,

We hope everything is well with you and that you are in good health. The wish and desire of my heart is that the Lord is your shepherd and provider. Yes, my beloved ones, if we could not go to the Lord with the desires of our heart and if we daily could not give our troubles to Him and trust Him with them, what sorrow and woe that would be. I am writing to let you know that our Natje died and that she had an easy, peaceful death, of which I am pleased to say as the Lord's man Job said, I still can and may say and do say "The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Yes, my dear ones, if we do not continually have the Lord in our hearts and if misfortune befalls us, then there is trouble and sorrow, yes, if I did not have the Lord in my heart then I would surely die of sorrow. Now I am thankful because the Lord says in His word that to those who are born again in Him, he gives courage and comfort in trials. Oh, my dear people, I must also write that the Lord is keeping watch over me and strengthens me through His word and spirit. Yes, beloved ones, I cannot tell you how good the Lord is to me, yes, that I also through this trial call upon the name of the Lord, and in return He blessed me. When the wicked multiply, perhaps they will say, "If she believes that way, then ____________." Yes, dearly beloved, that I accomplish by His word and spirit.

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Also, loved ones, that the Lord may change your hearts by the working of His word and spirit, if He has not yet already done so, yes, that is the wish and prayer of my heart and also that the Lord also ____________ and also that the Lord says "amen" upon his actions. Dearly beloved, my wish is that I could see the Lord's face immediately - the Lord compares us to a flower in the field, that today is here and tomorrow is gone. The Lord says in His word that we should be ready at all times to go to our heavenly home, because we are all going to die. Oh, my dear parents and friends, that we together might meet at the feet of the Lord, He calls us in His word to come to Him. He says in His word that He still is standing with outstretched arms to welcome us to Him and that whosoever will may come and drink of the water of life freely. Dear friends, everything is not perfect on earth, but the heavenly city will be perfect, the city which the Lord Himself built will be without imperfections.

[Now concerning] The letter which the Dominee wrote for me telling that the Lord took my beloved and dear husband from me and the cross which I had to bear in the death of our little Willemema (because of weakness). At that time I could not write myself, because they were ill for a long time and sometimes a little better, and then again a little worse. My
husband had a fever at first, and then he was very sick, also when He got a little better (when his conditions improved) then the doctor always said, "Veldhuis, you must not eat much." But he didn't quite agree with that advice. He felt that if the food tasted so good, then it surely wouldn't harm him. Yes, often I pleaded with him concerning this, but all to no avail. At the end he had a diarrhea of which there was no end. Our Natje and our Mietje also had this same condition. The doctor said the liver of our Natje was nearly ruined, then we consulted another doctor. He agreed, but said she could get better (regain her health). Yet ______ and our Mietje they said it came from her teeth, so that we had to pay more than one hundred and fifty.

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I have received your letter which you sent to me with Peters. In it I read that you were all healthy and well, which makes me happy and thankful. Also that this letter will find you in good health. You wrote asking if we have already purchased land and if we are settled. I can write a little. We have purchased 160 acres ___________. My husband was very happy and he also was very happy in the way of the Lord. He would have preferred to have accomplished more things here on earth, but the Bible says, "My ways are not your ways and your ways are not my ways." We can clearly see this. We are now in our house that the Lord allowed us to build, which we could not do of our own strength. When it was ready, we moved in. Then they were in reasonably good health. The doctor said we should move there into the new house - our Mietje was the worst then. My husband went outside with the carpenter in the daytime and was then thankful for the Lord's blessings. Our Natje was also feeling reasonably well then. At that time she even went to Plasmons a time or two.

Dearly beloved and highly respected father and mother, brothers and sisters, we hope this finds you in good health ......

Through the blessing of the Lord we are still well. Our Mannes and our Gerdina are also very healthy. Our Mannes goes to school, he's beginning to read the Bible. Also I'll write more about our living conditions here. We are working further on our house. Our hired man with the oxen and three extra men gather the fallen trees together to burn them. Because planting and sowing time was more urgent, we could not complete the burning. We planted an acre or five of corn, which people in Holland call Tuerkse Uitwijte. An an acre of oats, one of grass, two of buckwheat, and two of potatoes, all of which are even beautiful, splendid crops. And now we plan to plant an acre or six of witweidte. If the Lord in his graciousness allows us to burn more trees for cropland ......

It will cost us just as much as to chop it down. And yet I cannot omit telling you that I am happy in the way of the Lord that brought me here to this country. Thus far I am not in want. This was not true in the Netherlands. America is a land flowing with milk and honey. If our ancestors could see how we burn trees here, it would be unbelievable to them.
To my beloved father and mother,

Written by George Rutgers - 1878

We hope everything is well with you and that you are in good health. The wishes and desires of my heart are that the Lord is your shepherd and provider. Yes, my beloved ones, if we could not go to the Lord with the desires of our heart and if He daily could not give our troubles to Him and trust Him with them, we would be. I am writing to let you know that our Naţās died and that she had an early, peaceful death, of which I am pleased to say as the Lord's servant. I still can and may say and do say, 'The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' Yes, my dearest ones, if we do not continually have the Lord in our hearts and if misfortune befall us, then there is trouble and sorrow; yes, if I did not have the Lord in my heart, I would surely die of sorrow. Now am I thankful because He says in His word that those who are born again in Him, He gives courage in trials, oh, my dear people! I must also write that the Lord is keeping watch over me and strengthens me through His word and spirit. Yes, beloved ones, I cannot tell you how good the Lord is to me, yes, that I also from through this trial call upon the name of the Lord, in return He blesses me! Then the wicked multiply, perhaps they will say, 'Bless one that was, then ye dearly beloved, that I accomplish by His word and spirit.' Also, loved ones, that the Lord may change your hearts by the working of His word and spirit, if He has not yet already done so, yes, that is the wish and prayer of my own heart and also that the Lord also bear upon His actions. Dearest beloved, my wish is that I could see the Lord's face immediately, the Lord compares us to a flower in the field, that today it is and tomorrow is gone. The Lord says in His word that we should be ready at all times to go to our heavenly home, because we are all going to die. Oh, my dear parents and friends, that we together might meet at the feet of the Lord. He calls us in His word to come to Him. He says in His word that He still is standing with outstretched arms to welcome us to Him and that whoever will may come and drink of the water of life freely. Dear friends, everything is not perfect on earth, but the heavenly city will be perfect, the city which the Lord himself built will be. Without imperfections, He letter which the Sovereign wrote for me telling that He and He beloved and dear husband from me, Demina, and the place which I had to bear in the death of our little Demina. At that time I could not write myself (because of weakness), because they were ill for a long time. Sometimes a little better and then again a little worse. My husband had a fever at first and then and he was very sick also when he got a little better (where his condition improved) then the doctor always said, "Veldtman. you must not eat much," but he didn't quite agree with that advice. He felt that if it the food tasted so good, then it surely wouldn't harm him. Yes, often I pleaded with him concerning this, but all to no avail. At the end he had a diarrhea of which there was no end. Our
I have received your letter which you sent to me with Peter's, and I see they were all healthy and well, which makes me happy and thankful. Also that this letter will find you in good health.

You write asking if we have already purchased land. If we are settled, I can write a little. We have purchased 100 acres at 100 dollars an acre. My husband was very happy: he also was very happy in the way of the Lord. He would have preferred to have accomplished other things like an earth, but the Bible says, my ways are not your ways, and your ways are not My ways. We can hardly see this. We are now in our house that the Lord allowed us to build, which we could not do if we were not strong, and when it was ready we moved in. Then they were very nicely done.

The doctor said we should move the soil into the new house. Our Mienje was the worst then; my husband went outside to get the corn planter in the daytime; it was then thankful for the Lord's blessings. Our Nalle was also feeling remarkably well then, the 1st that time she went to Blomfontein a twing or two.

Deeply beloved and highly respected father, mother, brothers, and sisters.

We hope this finds you in good health.

Through the blessing of the Lord we are still well. Our Mamenje and our Sardina are also very healthy. Our Mamenje goes to school; he is beginning to read the Bible. Also I'll write more about our living conditions. Here, we are working further on our gardens. We hired men with the oven and three men with the corn planter to do the work. Because of planting and owing there was more urgent, we could not complete the corn. We planted an acre one year, but five, six of corn, which people in Holland call weet. And we have a cow and a goat, two of sheep and a chicken. Two of potatoes, all of which are very healthy. And now we plan to plant one acre or six of wheat. If the Lord in His graciousness allows us to burn more trees for England.

It will cost us just as much as to chop it down. And yet I cannot omit telling you that I am happy in the way of the Lord that brought me here to this Country. Thus far I have not in want (poverty). This was not true in the Neth. America is a land flowing with milk and honey. If our ancestors could see how we burn trees here, it would be unbelievable to them.