

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 1

Wildervank, July 1882

Dearly beloved Son and little Daughter

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of physical health both your letters, and we have noted with joy that you and your children are well.

I thought that I should write you a short letter first of all, because the pay-out of the inheritance has not taken place yet. The situation often does not improve when it is in the hands of that type of people. The part of Uncle Berend will now go to both sides, but on the side of Aunt Derkie there is an heir whose part of the money has been seized. In general, those people cannot get along with each other, and they say now that the estate is ready, but as long as that matter has not been resolved, they cannot sign the closing bill. The entire estate has to wait because of that. There are so many people who have to wait because of this.

They were told that the estate of Uncle Hendrik will be settled on Wednesday, July 26. No news about this yet, but when that happens, Grandfather will see to it that the money will be sent to you. I hope this will not take long anymore. Often nothing can be done about it, but the Notary has said that they will work on it as much as possible, but there was something wrong in court, namely the business of Uncle Berend.

Well, Beloved, I hope you will soon receive something; the Lord willing, you will soon receive the notice.

Dominie and his wife have not yet arrived in Wildervank; we are expecting them on the 20th or 21st according to the newspaper. But I think we will get word from them one of these days. I hope they will arrive safe and sound.

Well, Beloved, you have also told us of your intentions. You write: "It will surprise you that I have made this quick decision." Well, Beloved, you're right. Although people who are in such circumstances tend to seek solutions which will make life a bit easier, you have to remember that we here are still in mourning over your

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dear wife. Even though we had never met her, I do feel an inner bond with her.

I think the time to consider all this is a bit short. Oh, Beloved, so much can happen in a marriage, especially when there are children. I would rather not make your troubles any worse; they are bad enough as it is.

I would think that your wife's family is aware of this; they too will have been surprised, because it is exceptionally soon.

Well, Beloved, I do not wish to stand in the way of your intentions, but it grieves me that I am so far away from you while you experience this. I would not have to think long if it would be easier to come to you.

But the Lord reigns; also in this I wish to submit to Him, even though at times I feel a different command in my body, the one that fights against the law of my belief and takes me prisoner under sin.

Oh, Beloved, may the Lord work with His Spirit in both of us, so that we bring all our needs and cares to Him. He Himself says in His Word: "Counsel and soul are mine; I am the knowledge and strength."

Well, Beloved, give our regards to the old folks who you are with. I am pleased that you can be with them together with your little Mettje; she should write us again. Give the little Mettje a kiss from me. I hope we can write you again soon, but first of all that you can get some money. Some time ago I have written you about how much it might be, and that it would not be all that much. I will not know until it arrives here, because there are many reductions; we'll see.

I have to finish now.

Well, Beloved, may the Lord be our Counsel and Guide on all our ways. I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing, and call myself your loving Mother

M.J. Boer

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Kind regards from our Heichiena.
As far as I know all the other relatives are well.
Please write back soon.

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Folder #2, Letter 2

Wildervank, August 2, 1882

Dearly Beloved Son and little Daughter

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable physical state of health your letter of July 11, and we have noted with joy that all of you are well.

We also noted the sad feeling that you are very disappointed. As you wrote, I can imagine that you cannot have a strange maid (housekeeper?), and this would be too expensive too. I can understand all that. Oh, this is such a difficult situation, and all of us often share in your lot.

Oh, Beloved, sometimes one has to go through ways which seem dark all around. I sometimes think: "The Lord creates light out of darkness." Oh, Beloved, may you turn to the Lord with all your needs, the way He asks of us. But, alas, this He has to grant first of all.

We must ask Him all the time if He will grant us what we need according to body and soul. But we also have to use reason; I trust that you know all that too; we also have to use our own brains and I know that when our business is so difficult, we have to be reasonable. I know all about it.

How are your wife's relatives? Do they help you in any way at all, or are you left to yourself?

Oh, I would very much like to be with you, but in (the month of) July I became 69 years of age, and I would be afraid that I could not be of service to you for very long. If I would be the way I am at the present time, than it would be possible. During the last little while the Lord has given me good health, but that still does not make me strong. At times I still feel the strong urge to come to you, but you know what all would have to be done.

How is it with your property? Do you have it encumbered to quite a degree? If it is quite a bit, than you have to pay a lot and if the percentages are high, 8%, there will not be much left over.

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Did your wife have brothers? Are they married too? We do not hear much about that. When possible, please write us a few things.

I hope you do not feel too despondent. Would you feel like coming here together with your children, if you could sell your property there? It is pretty crowded here, but one who wants to work can still make a living. The freight business by ship is not doing all that well; in case they cannot make it, they often become traders and often it goes like this: if one cannot become a farmer, one can start with stores.

Oh, Beloved, one would have to find something; may the Lord grant us His counsel and wisdom in this.

Dominie has only been here once for a little while. He first went to his relatives. He will come again in the Wildervank.

We have received a letter from our Griet and Hendrik. They are in good health; we had to send you their best regards.

At the moment I don't know about Detmer.

Our Marchie is at home here. Sometimes she wants to write, but then she is too busy again and it does not get done. I have to send you her regards.

Last Friday we sent you a letter; I hope you will have received it.

Well, Beloved, Grandfather has received your part of the inheritance of Uncle Hendrik Rubingh. The sum of three hundred and Fifty Five guilders. You had written him that I should get 60 guilders. This part, however is only from Uncle Hendrik. I will write you now what we have done.

We have sent you a draft for 285.36 guilders. The expenses at the telegraph office amounted to 4.25 guilders, and this leaves for me 27 guilders and 59½¢. I am writing you this so you can check everything.

Our Heichiena took all this to the postoffice; Grandfather had said that she could do this for him.

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However, she has remitted the money in my name. He is not being mentioned, although he needs proof that he has sent it to you.

He would appreciate receiving a note from you, indicating that you have received the money from him.

No signature

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Folder #2, Letter 3

Wildervank, August 23, 1882

Dearly Beloved Son and little Daughter

Presently I take up the pen to write you a short letter again. I hope that you and your children will receive it in good health.

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we are in reasonably good physical health at the present.

You might have received other letters recently, including the money, I hope, and also our last letter in which we asked you to write us back soon. This letter we could not have received yet on account of the time element. It was sent on Wednesday, August 2. I hope to receive word that it has arrived safely. And I also hope that the inheritance of Uncle Berend Rubingh can be sent to you soon. It is expected that it will be paid out on Friday, August 25. They had told us that it might easily take another one or two months, because there is a person on the side of Aunt Dirkie whose money was seized; I have written you this before. But maybe this has been solved now and that is why it goes quicker now; but how much it will be is still a question mark for us. Will it be more or less? I'm afraid that there will be many deductions; we will know in time.

Dominie Kuipers and his wife have left the Wildervank again. They were here for about four or five days, but not with us; they stayed at the house of Meester (teacher). We can hardly understand how it came about this way, because you had written that they were planning to stay with us. Was that their idea? We were satisfied with that and had counted on it, but upon arrival they went to Derk Joosten. Now, these people have problems with some in our congregation, but they are good friends with the Meester (teacher). After having been there for about three hours, Dominie came to our house, but Joosten came along. You can imagine that this was not to our liking. We would have really liked to talk about a few things and would have liked to be alone with him.

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Later on Dominie and his wife have been over for coffee again and at that time we talked a bit with Dominie. It was a good thing that we had not mentioned marriage; that was better. However, I think that Dominie is also in favour of marriage, because he said that it was difficult to get someone in who will be good for the situation. But I think it is just as difficult to find a wife who will be good for your situation.

Oh, Beloved, may the Lord grant the right direction for you. If my strength would allow me, I should like to come over to you, but for now, Beloved, I hope that you will write how you and your little children are, and if you receive any support from the family of your wife. And how are the old people with whom you live? You can see, Beloved, that not often you are far out of my thoughts. In case you decide, Beloved, to come over to us with your children, we will have to look for something, and that may be quite well possible. Often times we do not know what would be best, and often times our ways are clouded with darkness. May the Lord be Counsel and Guide for both of us on all our ways.

We are having a thunderstorm at present, but Detmer has arrived. Last week we heard that Hendrik and Griet are in good health, but their youngest boy was quite ill. I had to send you their regards.

Does the Dominie sometimes tell you about how things are in the congregation here? I believe he has received a letter in America from people in de Wildervank. I wonder if he will ever say something to you. They are now in Zwolle. When they were in de Wildervank, they only visited a little bit in this village; that was a disappointment; they were way too busy. The Lord willing, we hope to write you some more again sometimes.

I have to finish with the pen.

I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing according to body and soul, and I call myself your loving Mother,

M.J. Boer 3

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Folder #2, Letter 3

Kind regards from our Heichiena.
If you are able, please write us how you are.
Again: greetings! You might have to read this over again,
because I cannot do it any better.

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Folder #2, Letter 4

Wildervank, February 7, 1885

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of physical health your letter of January 6, and we have noted with joy that all of you are healthy.

May the Lord grant us, Beloved, that we gratefully acknowledge these blessings.

It surprises me often that we have entered a new period in time again, Beloved, and that the Lord continues to guard us in His long-suffering and merciful way. At times I have to admit that the earth, although mired in sin, is filled with the loving-kindness of the Lord. And even more wonderful is the fact that in grace to His people He overlooks their rebellious state and their enmity, and changes them into a willing people. He consoles them in adversity and strengthens them when they are weak. Yes, He promises not to leave them or forsake them. How happy they are who can leave everything to Him; those who see His hand in all encounters and who believe that He can make better choices for them than they could possibly do for themselves. May the Lord grant that we pray a lot for each other, and that His good Spirit will guide our ways. Oh Beloved, I wished that I could talk with you verbally once again. Sometimes I wished I was not so old, because I would make a decision, but oh well, it won't happen.

We have several families here who are planning to go to America. There is Kiel (?), whose both boys have been there for a year and a half already; maybe not close to where you live. The one arrived here this Fall to pick up his parents; they are presently living in de Dalle on the farm of Jan van Borg.

And Lu de Vries in de Dalle has his farm for sale and together with his children her husband is the son of Jakob Pieten (?) and Jaziena Hazewinkel. Together with her husband and Uncle Rad Pronkis Klaas (?) she is planning to go with them. Maybe even more people.

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This is certainly because it's pretty bad here and the farmer does not have it easy either. It is here just about the way you write how it is where you live: the grain is cheap, the factories are idle and some of them burnt down, and at the present time the land is cheap, at least compared to the way it has been here.

From this we see, Beloved, that everything here changes and is unsettled. People seek change and improvement on the short term, but he often loses sight of his eternal interests, and experience has taught that it can be over so quickly. During the last little while quite a few people have died. Lourens Kraan died a few years ago and this week his wife passed away. They were still young and you might still remember them. Also Kristi van Eeren, the father of Albert who went with you, and Jan Meijer, de labourer of van Kuik. We had heard that during the last while he had been quite mixed up. He will be buried tomorrow.

Hendrik Joosten and our Griet have not been home this winter. They were on the other side of Amsterdam, close to Leiden. That is where they stayed over the winter. Hendrik has been quite ill. The doctor had said that it was pleurisy in the lungs. At the same time their youngest child was also very sick. That is Catriena, one year of age and she has been sick a lot. Our Griet was having a; we received a letter from her this morning. Hendrik is better again, but still weak; he was on deck again and they are planning to sail further inland Holland tomorrow. The little girl is a bit better again as well.

Oh Beloved, this way we cannot support each other a lot, they are always away and that is because the freight business is not very good. They send you their regards. We are happy, Beloved, that your children can attend school. I hope they can learn well and we should pray a lot that the Lord will convert them.

And dear Mettje, you should write us soon too. The little Bettje cannot write yet.

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Well Beloved, May the Lord grant us through the merits of His Son, that in case He will not allow us to see each others faces here, we will all meet in Heaven, where there will be no more separations and where we will praise God in eternity.

May the Lord be our counsel and guide on all our ways and I hope that you will receive this letter in good health. You might have to read this letter twice, because mistakes are not lacking. The writing is not getting any better either, and sometimes I dread having to write. I at all possible, please write again, Beloved, how you are doing.

Kind regards from Heichiena.

I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing according to body and soul, and I call myself you loving Mother,

M.J. Boer

Boer, Mettle Jabs
Folder #2, Letter 5

Wildervank, July 6, 1886 (?)¹

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we may at this moment find ourselves in a reasonable physical state and I sincerely wish that you too may receive this letter in good health.

Oh Beloved, our separation is still a burden for the flesh; at times my desire to see you all can be reaching out to you. Oh, may the Lord grant grace to all of us to submit to His ways, and that we may always bring to Him our temporal and eternal interests. And may we pray for each other continually, that He may lead and direct us through His Holy Spirit, because sometimes time is so short here and the hour of our death is uncertain.

I also have to inform you that Uncle Berend Rubingh has died. It happened about 4 weeks ago. It was the Friday before Pentecost. I would have written you earlier, but now I can give you some of the details, but you will be disappointed. I had written you earlier that Aunt Derkie and Eiko have died, and that there was a nice sum of money from Aunt Derkie, but that was part of the entire estate. I had heard that after everything was deducted, there would be almost ten thousand guilders left and that would have to go to each side, as they say.

Eefke received from Aunt and Uncle each one thousand guilders and all the belongings of Aunt. You know that that must have been double, as well as a set of bed linens. If you figure it that way, there must have been over fifty thousand guilders. Notary Larallie (?) is handling it and the secretary is and yet another person, van de Meiden, that is Eefke's Uncle. You can imagine that there will be lots of deductions, but there is a chance that this one is excluded.

¹This might have to be 1881, as
"Uncle Berend" died in 1881 according
to previous letters.

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On Monday, on July 4th, there was an auction of the furniture and the animals, and on Tuesday the leasing of the house and garden till next May, and the leasing of the land and crops till December.

There is almost 7 of land; the rest had been sold earlier, but here and there other things are left over. One cannot be too precise. The house and the land will be sold in December, and it was said that the final settlement of the estate will take place a year from next May. But I have heard that the settlement will be done next May. Some of them were not satisfied with this. The family has little say when it is in such hands.

Well Beloved, I have told you about several things. Our Marchie is on board. She will make a trip with them. We read in the newspaper that they had arrived in We received a letter this morning from Hendrik and Griet; they were in Enkhuizen.

We had expected to receive a letter from you. We would like to know how you and the children are. However, I thought maybe you are busy and this will have kept you from writing, since several people from Wildervank have been at your place.

How are your relatives doing? Give them our regards, please.

Grandfather would like to know if Dominie Kuipers has received his letter of about a year ago.

Regards from Grandfather and Grandmother. Give special greetings from us to Dominie Kuipers and his family when you see him. I would like to write him sometimes, but I dread writing letters. After this letter I have to write another three letters today.

Your brothers and sisters send you greetings; all of them are in good health.

Well Beloved, may the Lord be our counsel and guide on all our ways. When you can, please write us soon how you are. The Lord willing I will write you again soon.

Boer, Mettle Jabs
Folder #2, Letter 5

I wish you His indispensable blessings according to body
and soul, and call myself your loving Mother,

M.J. Boer

Kind regards from our Heichiena.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 6

Wildervank, January 25, 1887

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of physical health your letter of December, and we have noted with joy that all of you are in good health.

Since that time we have exchanged the one year with another. Beloved, during the past year so many of our friends and acquaintances were snatched away by death. Among others also a few weeks ago your cousin Jan van der Borg; he was busy with boiling potatoes for the livestock and wanted to get a few pales of water out of the canal behind his house; he fell forward and drowned. Nobody had noticed it. It was over an hour afterwards when they (found him) and pulled him dead out of the water. We see the truth in the saying: Death beckons every hour.

And Kriene (?) wanders around in de Dalle; he does not have a real home. Kier Bos gives him some work and keeps him going straight. They do not live on the farm anymore and have also lived in Groningen, where his son Remmelt (?) was a clerk in an office where he stole so much money that he is in prison for a long time. And Jantje and her daughter are wandering around in Groningen.

Oh Beloved, I would write you about many transformations and changes, but I am not always aware of them and I cannot do this anymore.

Okke Pronk has also died. He was buried last week.

It has been very cold here for a few days, but it is a bit milder right now. Everything is pretty cheap here, just like where you live and the freight business is not earning much either, and that is why the land and the houses are much cheaper.

Hendrik and Griet are frozen in in Amsterdam. They have a load of grain, but receive daily anchorage dues. During the day the children go to school there; they are all healthy except for our Griet who has a cold. We hope she will feel better soon. She asked us to give you her

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regards when we were writing you.

The rest of our people here at home are healthy. They will write you.

Your beloved Mettje wrote us that she would like to see all of us sometime; that would make her happy.

Yes Beloved, when I sit here writing to you, I just hope that the Lord will keep me from thinking about it too much, because then the distance is so great; the Lord reigns.

I wish you the Lord's blessing according to body and soul in this New Year. May He grant that we will seek comfort at His throne of grace, and ask Him for everything that we need for our temporal and eternal well-being. He says in His word: If you ask Me, I will grant you everything you need in love and abundance.

May the Lord grant that we recognize our dependence on Him; may He grant that your children early on will grow up to His honour.

When you write us again you should tell us how it is there during the winter. Can you keep warm when it is so cold there, the way we burn the peat-blocks? I just cannot imagine that.

Does Harm Vonk live close to where you are? Do you have neighbours close by? The old people you had so much to do with in the past, are they still alive?

We have heard that the wife of Dominie Kuipers has lost her speech; is that right?

Well Beloved, I am asking many questions and I hope it's not too much to ask; it's all right if you cannot answer all this right a way.

I hope, Beloved, that you will receive our letter in the best of health.

If you can manage it, please write us back soon. And you, dear Mettje, please enclose a short letter as well. Give your children a kiss from us. May the Lord be our counsel and guide on all our ways.

I wish you His indispensable blessing according to body

Boer, Mettje Jans
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and soul, and I call myself your loving Mother,
M.J. Boer

Once again, greetings from me and our Heichiena.
Please overlook my poor writing.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 7

Wildervank, August 24, 1887

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received your letter of the 6th with the enclosed money in a reasonable state of physical health; we also received the previous letter.

Oh Beloved, I sometimes have excuses, the same as you write in your letter, but that does not matter. But still, sometimes the circumstances bring us to this. Sometimes I also dread the thought of having to write you a letter, because I cannot always get the things straight(in my mind) the way I want it to be. I have to do this by myself. On July 17 I became 74 years of age, as you might know. And yet, the Lord makes it well with me, the way I still am as I am. There are not many of my age who look on the outside as well as I do, but I do feel the shortcomings very well myself.

Heichiena is at the present time not with us.

Our Marchie and Detmer live in the house of Willem Pronk. That is almost across from our church, you will remember that. So, it is close by, but oh, Beloved, I cannot write you pleasant things about them.

About 14 days ago Detmer lost his ship in the North Sea. A great disaster for them. At the time there was a severe thunderstorm, and they had a load of railway-steel on board. That is such a dangerous cargo in such weather. Most people don't like it, but because the freight business is so poor, they sometimes have to take whatever is available.

They were tired out of the pumping and could not keep it going any longer. Thanks to the Lord there came first a steamship to save their lives; those people looked after them well, but they were not aware of what happened with their ship, because this steamer had to be keep a schedule, so he had to leave quickly.

But they say that there are people who look for this sort of thing. They have large pumps and tow those ships to

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port. They do all this at the expense of the skipper. In case such a ship is condemned because it cannot be repaired, then the skipper gets his money. Otherwise it will be his loss. And the merchant of the cargo also suffers a great loss, because old steel is not desirable. The more expensive the cargo is, the better it would be. I have to finish now.

Anyway, Detmer has gone to the ship in Yarmouth, in England. He does not know yet how things will develop. But the ship is too good to be condemned. The Lord knows it all, and time will tell how things will turn out. Maybe they will write you too.

To come back to your letters, Beloved. Your previous letter, Beloved, was such a pleasure for me, Beloved, that your joy and your comfort was so obvious. I also liked to hear that Dominie Kuipers and Schoolmaster Veltkamp paid you a visit, and that you visited Mrs. Strobos and Kasper and Eiboes. When you see them again, please give them my regards.

And Beloved, you wrote that it is your desire to be used by the Lord in His vineyard. Oh Beloved, I could feel that if it is the Lord's will, it will certainly come about. I hope it will be easy for you; the Lord says: My ways are not your ways, and My thoughts are not your thoughts.

How fortunate is the person who can bring all his concerns and needs to Him. And then pray to Him about the things we need according to body and soul. We will receive comfort from this.

I don't believe, Beloved, that I have to remind you that our only comfort in life and death is that I am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. And every thing else that is said in the answer of the 1st Sunday. Oh Beloved, I have to admit that we believe that all things will work together for the good, and that the Lord looks after our interests and directs and guides it all. However, one finds himself taken in by fear, cares and displeasures, as if the opposite were true.

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Oh Beloved, that struggle will

* end of letter *

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Folder #2, Letter 8

Wildervank, January 6, 1888

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of physical health your letter which was written at the end of November. We were happy to hear, Beloved, that all of you are healthy and that you may enjoy the privilege of being warm and dry in your home and that you may have food for yourself and your family. It was also good to hear, Beloved, that you acknowledge the good hand of God in this. May the Lord grant all of us awareness in our hearts, because naturally we only see the things that we miss and not the things that we have.

I wish all of you, Beloved, the Lord's blessing in this new year just started; may the Lord bless your soul and body with blessings temporal, spiritual and for eternity. And may your darling little children grow up to His glory and may He make all of us able to be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity and that we may trust in Him for the future. May the grace of the Lord grant us this, for the sake of Christ.

At the present we have thawing weather, Beloved, and I am happy about that, because I am not worth much when it is cold. Till now it has been wintery, but not very severe. During the last little while we have had some sudden deaths. Often you might not know them, but one of them was the husband of Geesie Veenhoven. You know Geesie. He was not from this area; 45 years of age and he died within a few days because of typhus fever; he died in the Lord.

And a little girl of 13 years died of scarlet fever. We see that the word is realized: Death beckons every hour. Nature is not quite as frightening here as you write it to be where you live; the way so many have died there. Yes Beloved, because of sin everything has taken the wrong direction. You should be here in our church, things look very bad at the moment. I believe the problem has

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arisen mostly because of the school-money and high-mindedness and ambition; I think that often these things are caused because of that. It seems to me that they do not collect sufficient school-money, and often they do not agree with the rules they have about this; you would say that there are enough people in the Committee.

I will give you some names: the young Roelof Vos, Roelf van der Laan, Johannes R. Brouwer, Hendrik Drent, son-in-law of Harm Eerkes, Tjakke Tjapkes (?) Schuurina and Gerardus Kuik. And than another three or so who you do not know as well. At the Classis (they were told) that the Elders should not mind their business; but they do mind. Some are for Teacher Olthof; he and his wife are living it up; they are not good for the congregation. For as long as Dominie van Hoogen is here they have been against him and they are stirring up trouble in the Consistory. I love the sermons of Dominie van Hoogen a lot, and I believe if you should hear him, you would also be satisfied with him. He could make some more visits in the congregation, but there is nothing to say about his behaviour. But some spread so much slander and many lies in the congregation; I would never have thought that things like that would take place here in the congregation. The Elders are Lammert Kuipers, Groenewolt and Teunis van der Veen, both the van Gieterveen (?), Harm Eerkes, Geert Jonker Tj and Derk Veenema.

The Deacons are Jan de Geus, Brouwer, Kier Bos, Tjakke Tjapkes Schuurina and Klaas Pot. Four of them are for the Dominie and eight are for the Teacher. Because of this difficulty we are not voting for Elders or Deacons. Those who were against Dominie, they are Lammert Kuipers, Harm Eerkes, Teunis van der Veen, Geert Jonker, Derk Veenema and Klaas Pot, are stirring up many in the congregation and they chose Elders and Deacons. They did that in the school, and when Dominie had to preach these last Sunday evening, Veenema went to the lectern and read the names of those who were voted in as Elders and

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Folder #2, Letter 8

Deacons. At that point Dominie had not yet pronounced the blessing, and he said that this was not lawful and was not going through. They then brought the matter to the Mayor. Dominie and Veenema had to appear before the Mayor. Veenema was really told off by the Mayor. But Veenema had said that he could have done it after the blessing had been pronounced.

He has to pay a fine of 25 guilders, because he (the Mayor) is such a 25 guilder man. However, this Sunday when the preaching was finished, he again went up to the lectern and read who had been elected. What will happen now we don't know yet; time will tell.

I will tell you yet who are on the side of Dominie: they are Jans de Geus Brouwer, Kier Bos, Tjakke Tjapkes Schuuringa and Jan Groenewolt. One cannot judge who is right, but we do know: men sees what is in front of him, but the Lord looks in the heart, and one will be judged according to that.

Well Beloved, I should finish. You should write us what kind of fuel you use in the winter. Can this keep you warm, because you will certainly not have peat.

I hope, Beloved, that this letter will be received in good health. If possible, write us back soon, and your children should too.

Do not mind my mistakes.

I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing, according to body and soul, and I call myself your loving Mother,

M.J. Boer.

Regards from Heichiena.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 9

Wildervank, September 14, 1889

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of physical health your letter of August 30, and we have noted with joy that all of you are healthy, even though a cold can be so bad sometimes that one can be ill with it.

Beloved, I hope that the Lord in grace will shield you from this.

We received the money in the letter as well, Beloved, thank you very much for this. I hope that the Lord will richly crown you with His blessings.

At times I was worried that your harvest this year would not be very good, because you had written us that your crops had suffered a lot because of rain. But this the Lord has changed to the good as well.

May the Lord grant that we acknowledge all this with a thankful heart.

Among the children here there is a lot of croup, and some of them are snatched away (by death). The typhoid fever is here too quite a bit. In Veendam, the wife of Tietus Bos died of it about 4 weeks ago. That would be the wife of the brother of Evert Bos; you may have heard about it from him already.

Here we have had a nice and fruitful summer. They are now busy with harvesting potatoes. How are the potatoes there where you are? Are they good to eat too?

And how are things with Mettje and her husband? I can't quite understand his name, and for that reason I cannot very well write to them. I hope to be able to do this a next time if the Lord grants us life and health.

And Beloved Daughter, please write us about how your relatives are doing. Is your Mother still alive and also the rest of the family?

Well Beloved, I would like to ask a lot of you, but sine you are so busy, you were not able to write. I will have to leave it to you.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 9

May the Lord support you and grant you the desire and strength so that your work will not be too difficult for you.

Beloved, I think that where you are it might not be easy to find help; it's the same here, but where you are it may cost even more in hourly wages.

I have to finish now this time. Please overlook my mistakes.

I have not talked to our folks lately, because I wanted to write so soon. As far as I know they are all healthy. I hope to hear from you again soon.

May the Lord grant in grace that we practise to be patient in adversity, thankful in prosperity and for the future trust in Him; and may He be our counsel and guide on all our ways.

I wish you the indispensable blessing according to body and soul, and I call myself your loving Mother,

M.J. Boer

Regards from our Heichiena.

If possible, please write us again soon.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 10

Wildervank, May 5, 1894

Dearly Beloved Son, Daughter and Children

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of physical health your letter of March 4th, and we have noted with joy that all of you are healthy.

May the Lord grant that we acknowledge these blessings thankfully. Imagine, Beloved, how pleasant it is, even if we are separated, to hear the good news that your lovely children are all doing so well and also may go to school to learn. They can even write sometimes in a way as if we are talking to each other.

I can understand that at times, you still cannot forget your beloved Mettje. I feel that loss with you. It is because we have big plans in mind, Beloved, but often we do not remember that the Lord says in His word: My ways are not your ways. We often have disappointments here. Having to miss your father was also very bad for me, but then one time I was focussed on the first question of the Catechism, which is: What is your only comfort in life and death? That I, with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.

This answer guided me and that quieted my down.

To be away from each other during our lifetime is sometimes very difficult, but when death separates us, the burden becomes even heavier. May the Lord be our counsel and guide, Beloved, on all our ways, and may He grant that we accept His deeds.

Presently we are without a Minister, but I have hardly been to church during the last while. During the winter I catch a cold easy and my strength often fails me. Walking is difficult for me and my eye-sight is not much either. But that should not surprise us. Beloved, you know too that on July 17 I will be 81 (?)years of age. However, my health is quite good at the present time.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 10

Dominie van Hoogen gave his farewell sermon on Sunday, April 19; it was based on Acts 21 verse 12 (14!): When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, The Lord's will be done.

He left here on Friday, April 2. I always enjoyed listening to his sermons; he could just preach on and keep the attention. We will probably not get such a preacher again, but he could have visited more often. (His visits) were always brief. In illness, however, or when we needed him, he was always there. A week ago Monday he was here on the yard to say goodbye.

The entire Spring here the weather has been fine. It was almost like summer, but now in the month of May it is still cold. The potatoes are visible above the ground. Some farmers plant 20 to 25 Last year they were cheap and they did not do so well; but the quality was really good.

I have no news to tell you which you could understand, other than that Jakob Fokken (?) has died recently; he was 86 years of age already.

I was happy, Dear Daughter, that you too wrote a bit about yourself and your family. It is nice that you have relatives there with you. How is your Mother? Maybe she is not in America? If possible, please write us again a little bit. We can read it quite well. And you too, dear Bettje; when you would write us, maybe we will become ...

* End Of Letter *

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 11

Wildervank, August 17, 1898

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter and Children

Beloved, at long last I took up the pen to write again. My (last) promise to write you ~~you~~ again soon has faltered.

As far as I know all of us are healthy through the undeserved goodness of the Lord, and it is my sincere wish that all of you may share in the same blessing.

Beloved, writing is often a difficult job. I am not always able to get it down the way I want it. My strength and my memory is decreasing. On July 17 I became 80¹ years of age. Daily my thoughts are with you more and more. Beloved, when I am writing you, I often think: Could I only see you all again, and talk with you. May the Lord cause us to give it in His hand, and may we submit to His ways. Our nature is often not able to do this.

We are having a long summer, and quite warm and fruitful. The turkish eating-potatoes taste quite good, but many of them are badly pock-marked. They are growing a lot of potatoes here, because there are a lot of factories here. You may not be able to realize this, but the farmer fares well with this; some of them earn a luxurious living. How is your crop doing?

Is your land there fertile? In your wife's family, are there more than just her one brother? Sometimes I don't quite understand it.

Dominie van Hoogen has been to you as well. How did you like him? Were you able to talk with him a bit? What did you think of him? Sometimes he is very abrupt. People usually like to hear his preaching, but he visits very little.

Last week we received a letter again from our Griet and Hendrik. They asked us to send you their regards. They

¹In letter #10 - 1894, she writes her age as 81.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 11

were healthy, but our Griet has had a pain in her right side all during the Spring. But it was improving a bit then. They are often in Holland, but do not come home often; that's not so nice.

It is very warm here now; it's this hot only a few days in the summer.

The grain harvest is in, except for the tick-beans. Do you have the same broad-beans there as we have here?

The wheat flour is very cheap here. Would that be because a lot of wheat comes from America?

People from here go to America quite frequently. Also a son of Roelf Brouwer. They say that Roelf Brouwer wants to go there as well. In the area where you live there might not be many people from Holland.

Do your neighbours live close by?

Are your darling children still healthy?

Dominie van Hoogen said that they were all fit, but that your house stands a bit alone. He had not stayed with you for very long.

Well, Beloved, often the writing does not go very well. You will have to read this twice in order to understand it.

Write us again soon about how you are doing, and your dear Bettje should write us a letter as well.

Well, Beloved, may the Lord be our counsel and guide on all our ways.

I wish you His indispensable blessing according to body and soul, and call myself your loving Mother and Sister,

M.J. Boer
H.G. Rubing

Again: with our kind regards.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 12

Wildervank, November 18, (?)

Dearly Beloved Son and Daughter

Through the undeserved goodness of the Lord we have received in a reasonable state of health your letter of October 3, and we have noted with joy that through the goodness of the Lord you are well again.

However, Beloved Daughter, we were sorry to hear that you are fighting some problems, and noted from your writing that you also still have the fever.

Oh Beloved, the ups and downs of life are so big at times; we noted this as well from your letter which we received from you.

I thought how deep man has fallen because of sin. He is not even

I was happy to receive your letter. We now know better how things are. You should also write about how that last day went. I had written you a letter in September, but I could notice that you had not received it. That's too bad, because it takes so long. We had also waited a bit, because we had hoped to have a letter from Detmer and Marchien. They had to come from Nerva (?) with a load of flax for Ul. We have received one letter. I will enclose it in our letter for you to read.

They could not have known that we had just written one to you, and thus we could not send you their regards. But once they are home, they themselves will be able to write you.

Oh Beloved, when I sit here writing to you, I wished I could talk with you. This often bothers me a lot. Oh, may the Lord grant a way. His ways are often very deep; when I look back, I could never have thought that my son would go away; and suddenly I am back in the future again.

Beloved, if I was by myself, I would not have thought long to come to you. But you know how much I would have to free up things; and oh, our steps are measured in eternity.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 12

May the Lord grant that we will pray a lot for each other to receive His Spirit, because we need it for teaching, for leading and guidance.

Our Dominie has been here to ask about you. He asked me to send you his regards. If possible, he would appreciate receiving a letter, also about the Dominie.

Beloved, I read in your letter that you have to work hard in order to get ahead. I really hope that you will mind your body, and that the Lord will give you strength.

Do your Mother, Sisters and Brothers live close by, or do you have neighbours living close by?

We could not get to the truth from Hendrik Ruiter. I heard enough from him of which I knew that it was not the truth.

Well Beloved, may the Lord steer things in such a way that we may be able to see each other in this life. Nothing is too surprising for Him.

May the Lord grant that you can carry each others needs and weaknesses in patience, and may He grant that we can walk the path which He has ready for us, with patience.

I hope that you may receive this letter in good health.

I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing according to body and soul, and I call myself your loving Mother,

Mettje Jans Boer

You will have to overlook the poor writing, and if you can do it, write us back soon.

Kind regards also from many relatives.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 12

veel voor elkander te bidden om Zijne Geest, want die hebben wij in alles zo nodig tot leering, leiding en besturing.

Onze Dominie heeft ook bij ons geweest, want hij komt soms en vraagt naar u. Ik moest u vooral van hem groeten. Als gij kunt, verwacht hij ook nog graag een briefje, en ook eens over de Dominie.

Geliefden, ik heb ook uit u brief gelezen dat gij hard moet werken, en ook om voortuit te komen. Ik hoop toch dat gij uw lichaam in acht mogt nemen en dat de Heere uw krachten mogt verlenen.

Hebt gij uw Moeder, Zusters en Broeders ook nogal dicht bij u, of dat er ook nogal burenen dicht bij u wonen?

Wij kunnen van Hendrik Ruiter de waarheid toch niet goed gewaar worden. Ik vernam dat daar genoeg bij was, dat ik beter wist dat niet waar was.

Nu geliefden, moogt de Heere de weg nog eens zo ten goeden besturen dat wij elkander nogeens in dit leven mogten aanschouwen. Hem is niets te wonderlijk.

De Heere geve u om elkanders noden en zwakheden met geduld te dragen, en geve ons allen het pad dat Hij ons voorgesteld heeft met leijzaamheid te lopen.

In de hoop dat gij deze brief in gezondheid mogt ontvangen, na u dan des Heeren onmisbare zegen naar ziel en lichaam te hebben toegewenst, noem ik mij uw liefhebbende Moeder

Mettje Jans Boer.

Gij moet het gebrekkige wat overzien en als gij iets kunt, schrijft ons spoedig weder,
Zijt ook van velen familie gegroet.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 13

- - Excerpt - -

..... left from us. Live Harm Vonk and wife still close to where you live, and the old folks where you use to live, do they still live close by?

Do you go to where Dominie Kuipers is. You write that the Dominies there with you are worldly, but it's not any better here either. This is caused by the big salaries, and lately there are a lot of people here who have made a lot of money. Those who sold their land expensive, however, those who bought it during those time are not doing very well, and many of them left the farm again.

Well Beloved, please overlook my long wait and the mistakes and the poor writing. If the Lord grants me life and health I hope to

Well Beloved,

May He be our counsel and guide on all our ways.

I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing according to body and soul, and I call myself your loving Mother

M.J. Boer

Kind Regards from our Heichiena.

If you can, please write back soon. Also each one of the children just a little bit.

Again, kind regards.

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 14

Wildervank, November 6, (?)

Dear Brother and Sister

Also a short letter from me. I rejoice in good health;
received your letter of

..... but it saddened us that your little Mettje
is not well. We hope that the Lord will soon make her
healthy again.

Our Margien and the little Elsiena came home on Monday;
they are healthy. Elsiena is a darling child.

Oh Beloved Brother and Sister, we would like to see you
and your

I do not have much news to write. Last week Geert Groen
was married to a woman of Meidema (?). I do not know any
more news. Oh Beloved, I am sending you my portrait and
hope you will receive it in good health.

If you have the chance

.....

I wish you the Lord's indispensable blessing; my kind
regards to you, your loving sister, Grietje G. Rubingh.

No portrait yet of Mother; she is planning to
not more than one per letter.

Regards from our Heichiena.

Again: greetings from me.

G.G. Rubingh

Dear Brother and Sister

Also a short letter from me to tell you that I am
healthy. It is our sincere wish that you may enjoy a
similar privilege.

Oh Beloved, may you write us a letter real soon about how
things are with you, because we hear daily and we read it

Boer, Mettje Jans
Folder #2, Letter 14

in the newsmagazines, how terrible
..... in your area.

May the Lord keep you.

Our Mother is longing for news from you, may we soon
rejoice in hearing from you.

Regards from Uncle Dekker.

.....

He hoped to soon leave Antwerp with a load of general
cargo for Danzig.

Well, beloved Brother and Sister, we
receive word from you, and will send you a portrait.

Our Griet was planning to send you one, but Mother had
preferred to first receive a letter. I hope to write you
more again the next time.

We have received your letter.

Well beloved, I wish you all possible blessings,
according to body and soul, and I call myself your loving
sister, Mother and Sister and Cousins, Nieces and
Nephews,

M.J. Boer

M.G. Rubingh

G.G. Rubingh

H.G. Rubingh

E.D. Dekker

Beloved, if at all possible, write us back soon.

I wish you again the Lord's indispensable blessing
according to body and soul, and call myself your loving
Mother,

Mettje Jans Boer.
