

Appila

November 28, 1901

The love of God as greeting.

Dear Siblings!

I received your letter yesterday. Regarding the income tax form: you have to add your signature, that must be included so that they know where the money taken (income) actually is. That need not concern you: it's just that they have to know that it is actually being shared. There's nothing for you to pay. Simply sign your names where he has indicated and send it back to him so that he (the solicitor) can lodge it soon.

Dear Paul could you maybe tell us the address and what the brandy price is. from the place where you got yours that time. Alfred and I would like one or two gallons: it is now very dear up here.

Otherwise things are quite well with us here, except for dear mother, who is still hardly any better. She just manages to walk from one room to another, or at most from house to garden, but that happens very seldom. Apart from that she lies down the whole time, but till now she hasn't caused any further problems. For she is very patient and time does not seem to drag for her either. We have Miss Lydia Maywald here and Bernhard is still with us too. He will probably be going home next Monday as the Confirmation service is on next Sunday.

Our harvest prospects do not look the best, because the red rust is causing a great deal of harm especially in the late-maturing varieties, which it seems to wipe out almost completely. I have cut about 340 acres to hay because much of it was very oaty and also rust-affected. I have cut all of my late varieties except for 10-12 acres for hay and now wish I had cut the lot. The other areas which I saved for reaping are all early varieties, which I think will yield grain good enough to sell. Some of this is already ripe.

But I only plan to start reaping on Monday and only using two (box stripper) machines. For I still have over 100 tons of hay out in the paddock, so will keep one wagon going out for what is left. The last 4 days we've been going out with 3 wagons, and will probably keep that up the next 2 days as well.

So you can imagine what a rush I am in now. I am up on the haystack almost all day. This week I have 5 men and a lad at work, not counting Bernard and myself, because there is more hay than I had first thought. But it makes so much work, and hay is now fairly cheap. If the rust had not come we would still have had a fairly good harvest, because after the last rains the wheat still made a lot of growth.

Has the rust also caused a lot of damage in your area? And how does the wheat look otherwise? Have you cut a lot of hay? Will you be finished with the haycarting soon and start reaping? I only completed the binding Tuesday week ago, because this year everything is later than usual.

I want to close now in the hope that these few lines reach you in good health. And with many greetings from myself, Alfred and our dear Mother,

to yourselves, parents and siblings.

I remain, as always, your loving brother Richard Becker

PS Please write again soon, because last time you made me wait too long. I was already thinking you had quite forgotten me!

About our dear Mother: For my part I have very little hope that she will be with us much longer. For she had lost a lot of weight and doesn't look like her real self any more.

But we will not yet give up hope completely, for our dear Lord's ways are always surprising. He is still able to help. And if He doesn't do so. we must always remind ourselves 'whatever He does is done well.'

Please excuse the poor writing; for it is already very late.
