

Schmidt  
to

## SCHMIDT LETTER

(Submitted by Martha Behr Miller)

This is the last of the letters written in German by Julie Müller Schmidt and her brother, Gustav Müller after coming to the United States. The others were printed in earlier quarterlies.

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Samsonville 12 September 1853

Heartily Beloved Parents and Dear Brother Hermann,

With the sincere love of a child, I send you all a thousand greetings and I ask at the same time you not be angry with me that I didn't answer your letter for such a long time, since I know very well how much our good parents would worry, but I still had too little knowledge of all I would have liked to write.

The 12<sup>th</sup> of June, Beloved Parents, I wrote you the last letter, now exactly three months. I wanted to travel to my husband as soon as he wrote but barely six days had passed before he had already come to get me and we traveled on the 20<sup>th</sup> on the beautiful steamboat to Rondout, approximately 100 English miles from New York and from there we traveled with coach [literally, wagon with two horses] to our place of destination, where we traveled over high mountains through beautiful cultivated valleys – not cultivated as much as at your place but very nice. I was astonished that most of the farmhouses are out of wood and so beautiful and gracious that I wouldn't wish a better goal for myself. I have to add too, the beautiful journey on the steamship, the Hudson River is approximately double as wide as from your place up to the Hopfenberg and on both sides the most beautiful farms with wooded hills that make a beautiful view.

Late in the evening of the 21<sup>st</sup> we arrived where we found a very friendly reception and they prepared a late dinner for us. I already found in New York that the person who doesn't know English is not allowed to make big demands and least of all open a business, so I prefer, since my beloved husband also does not yet master the language to stay here, particularly since I am so well taken care of, as well as my husband and Gustav, from whom you quite possibly had a letter about four weeks ago.

The master, where I am living, is as you say in Germany, the foreman. They treated me up to now like a member of the family and nobody calls me differently than Aunt. I have received until now, every Sunday, according to your money, -----, for which I don't have to work much. Here I now have the best opportunity to learn English for I hear not one other word all day long. This makes me attentive, but I can say it is not only the language, it is the different arrangement of everything. Many a German woman would be astonished how far advanced the American woman is, especially in baking and washing. This goes all so quickly. Before you turn around, a couple of bowls full of cookies are ready, for sweet baking goods are on the table and also at the laborer's table. But I found myself very well adjusting to everything. I can also say that the language is not difficult for me. I am speaking with everybody so that they are astonished and say that in such a short time, a woman has learned it.

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So we want to stay here over the winter, Dear Parents, though it is not a big place and one must not think of entertainment. There are approximately 30-40 houses, two churches, two stores, two beautiful inns, 1 flour mill, 1 lumber mill and 1 important tannery, which has a circumference as big as the whole suburb (where you live) but all the buildings are made of wood. The valley where we live is part of a range of mountains called the Blue Mountains and is very beautiful, but terrible rocks are stacked one on top of the other in many places, but on top of them grow the most beautiful and strongest trees. The most beautiful trees and all kinds of nuts and so many kinds of berries, all that we have in Germany, in unlimited numbers, beautiful fruits of all kinds as you have it. We don't miss anything of this, but according to German calculation, it is always too expensive for us. For 1 shilling is here as it is with you ----- (One shilling is 5 ½ ?)

The ladies dress up here on Sundays too and I have already been to several houses where I was very friendly received. There are not many married Germans, only four families, but I prefer to go and see the Americans, for, as everywhere, the Germans grudge you everything.

In the American rooms you find very little of the fancy furniture as in Germany, very clean and nice but very simple. Some have 2-3 rooms with women workers. One pretty clean double bed, but without comforters, for those are not modern all over America. They have beautiful woolen ones, also very dainty ones with tiny colorful embroidery, but without comforters except for those that were brought from Germany. One table, one chair, a wardrobe for linens, a wall clock, also two rocking chairs which are very pretty, I use instead of a cradle for little children, and a nice heater which I like very much. They are small and nice like the kind of tin ovens you have, but much better and everybody who moves into a room has to bring such an oven for himself and an old one costs 6-7 (?) in your money of course double as much.

They eat only three times a day. I am eating at the foreman's table and I am eating therefore, very good, so you can imagine, Dear Parents, that I like it. Also don't worry about us. Your children are healthy and lively and are looking forward to a merry future. If we had stayed in the beautiful fatherland where daily the lamentation and the misery is growing, this would never have come to us there. Be patient and have courage you good ones, because you can't imagine what beloved God has done over thousands of miles for industrious hands, because this I see very well, that who is industrious and busy and a little bit thrifty is, in a few years, if not rich, well off and can live quite well. As far as I am concerned, I am very satisfied with my situation.

Oh, dear Parents, if the terrible disaster had not befallen me on the sea voyage, that brought back to my soul every preceding occurrence and doubled the grief. Really, if I had still my only child, my beloved Linchen, I would be the most happiest under the sun, for as soon as the beloved God lets rise the sun, my good husband is already at work and works like a giant until the sun sets, and then he comes as quickly as he can run and smothers me with kisses and caresses as if we were young lovers. If one's tryst hour comes when I come to my room and everything is silent, then my good Wilhelm does not know what to do to cheer me up or to distract me, in order to chase the sorrow away, and I refresh myself then in the free, beautiful nature walking on his arm. Gustav gives us a lot of pleasure. He is loved by everybody. He is so industrious and has such a strong character that the grownups are astonished. In the beginning he didn't like it very much but now is settled. I have

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already twice written to Buschen but not yet an answer. Did she write to the sister? Dear Hermandal. Are you also well? Are you all healthy, beloved parents and relatives and all the other old acquaintances? Are also Marie Kobe, Ernestinchen and Mrs. Bachern still faithful friends of the house?

A thousand greetings from me and Gustav and W. Schmidt. Good parents write to us soon because it weighs heavily on my heart and not yet any word from you. We have too much grief for you. Write to us everything very exactly.

Your loving daughter,

[Literally, Daughter who loves you to the end of her days]

J. [Julie]

## DEATH OF JULIE MÜLLER SCHMIDT

Last evening at about 9 o'clock, Mrs. William Schmidt, with her daughter and daughter-in-law, Mrs. Herman Schmidt, were returning from the chicken show and, when passing the city hall on East street, \* \* \* [Mrs. Schmidt] fell down the area, some five or six feet, striking on her head. She was taken up in an unconscious condition and the patrol wagon took her to her home at No. 707 East Douglass street, where her children and a physician were summoned. \* \* \*

*The Daily Pantagraph*  
January 18, 1895, Page 5, Col. 3

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Yesterday morning at 9 o'clock occurred the death of Mrs. William Schmidt, the result of injuries she received from the fall at the city hall the night previous. She was unconscious most of the night, but rallied at intervals sufficiently to recognize members of the family.

She was the widow of the late Mr. William Schmidt, who died in March, 1892. She was born in Prussia, March 31, 1828, and in 1847 was married to Mr. Schmidt. They resided at her home for about six years, and in 1854 came to America [he came first; she followed] and located in New York, where Mr. Schmidt operated a tannery. In the same year, however, they moved to this city, where they purchased the property on which the Chicago & Alton shops are now located. Later he sold the property and removed to the old Schmidt homestead on Market street, west of the city limits, which was known as "Wilhelm's Heights."

After the death of Mr. Schmidt Mrs. Schmidt removed to this city and resided for a time on West North street, but later removed to East Douglass street, where her death occurred. She was the mother of nine children, four of whom are living. They are Mrs. Gussie A. Summers, of 509 North Mason street; Mr. Herman Schmidt, the superintendent of city water and light; Mr. William Schmidt, the harness dealer, and Miss Emma, who resides at home. One brother, Mr. Gustave Miller, resides at 608 West Chestnut street.

*The Daily Pantagraph*  
January 19, 1895, Page 7, Col. 4

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Yesterday afternoon at 2 o'clock, at the late residence, No. 707 East Douglas street, were held the funeral services of Mrs. William Schmidt. There was a very large crowd of old friends present and the floral offerings were numerous and beautiful. Rev. J. H. Mueller, pastor of the Unitarian church, conducted the services and Dr. H. Schroeder also made a few remarks in German. The bearers were Messrs. Chas. Gmehlin, Henry Gephardt, Fred Behr, William Gerken and Henry Behr.

*The Daily Pantagraph*  
January 21, 1895, Page 7, Col. 3