

This is the third letter in the series of correspondence taken from Dutch ships during the Anglo-Dutch wars in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In this correspondence, Gertruid Weckmans writes to her former employer, also a Gertruid, back in the Netherlands. The letter is dated in August before the English takeover but was not sent until October. It was written in response to a letter received from her former employer and friend. The arrival of 45 English soldiers created an atmosphere of uncertainty that caused her to consider returning to the Netherlands. Her August letter turned from small talk about life at Fort Orange and mutual acquaintances back home to an October letter about whether there might be an opening at her former place of employment for her and her husband. The August letter was folded and tucked inside the October letter, which was folded and cut with a sealing flap to serve as an envelope, which carries the address and wax seal.

Praise God above all, the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 1664.  
Honored and beloved woman, I'm writing to let you know that we are all still sound and healthy, as long as it pleases God. And we hope it is the same with you. Were it otherwise, it would be painful to hear. Moreover, I wanted to let you know that the English have taken our city of New Amsterdam in New Netherland, with the agreement that the people here may keep their possessions, house, and property. And, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September, the English seized Fort Orange where we live, and they have also made such an agreement, so that we don't know how it will go here.  
My Lady Gertruid, as a friend, I ask if you would please write me if there might be an opportunity there for us, for we are growing tired of New Netherland, and I would like to live there. My husband is a carpenter by trade and can also do farmwork. It doesn't matter to him what he does.  
No more about this than to commend you to the Lord.

Kijrtrutt<sup>1</sup> Weckmans

[Marginal notes]

My Lady, if you write a letter, post it to Leider Dorp in the Lane of the *Huis ter Does* to Arijaentgen Heinderick, widow of Dirck Janse Donck, who is my husband's mother, then it shall be posted to New Netherland to Pieter Meesz Vrooman at Fort Orange.

And my husband's mother lives in *Leider Dorp* in the lane of the *Huis ter Does* and his name is Pieter Meesz Vrooman.

[Enclosure]

*Laus Deo Semper* in the colony of Rensselaerswijck in N. Netherland on this date the 6<sup>th</sup> of August 1664. Dear and beloved, My Lady, Salutations! After heartfelt greetings, these few lines inform that I, praise be to God, with my husband and three children, am still sound and healthy. Having received and read your letter, I respond that I have already lived in the country for eleven years. I lived in Leyden at the house of a gentleman who left for this place, and I've been married now already nine years to a carpenter named Pieter Meeussen Vrooman. We are doing reasonably well, and can make a living, praise be to God. However, the trade is depressed here on account of the bad times caused by the wars between the Indians.<sup>2</sup> I understand that your oldest son and one of your daughters have died, which is very painful for me to hear. I hope that the Lord God shall console you. Please write us sometime about how it is there, and how *Juffr.* Anna Catharina is doing. Give her my greetings, and kiss your youngest son four times for me. Should it happen that I return to the fatherland, I'll come by. I am very saddened that *Juffr.* Josijntie has died. It is said here that she was poisoned. Hereby closing this, I wish you, My Lady, and your family to remain in God's protection and safety and remain,

Your Honor's dutiful  
friend

If your honor writes again, please post the letter to my brother Philippus Weckmans, residing in Leyden in the *Backers Steeg* in the *Roode Handt*.

Kijrtrutt Weckmans

This letter was written so long ago that I could not have sent it without adding to it.

[Addressed:]

To My Lady

My Lady Geertruyt

Boetselaer at the house

at Gellekom<sup>3</sup>

By a friend, may God guide

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<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that she uses a capital /K/ instead of a /G in her given name/. The /K/ is similar to the same letter in the German Fraktur letter inventory. It may signal that the pronunciation of her given name began with a voiceless velar stop as opposed to a voiced velar spirant, indicating a dialectal variation.

<sup>2</sup> Wars between the Senecas and the Susquehannocks and between the Mohawks and the Abenaki seriously disrupted the fur trade.

<sup>3</sup> Weckmans was employed at the estate called Gellecum. It was located in the province of Gelderland, in the municipality of West Betuwe just west of Beesd.