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9-23-1864

### A Letter of Dirk Van Raalte to His Parents

Dirk Van Raalte

Nella Kennedy

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September 23, 1864, Marieta [sic], Georgia

A letter of Dirk Van Raalte to his parents, asking them not to worry about him even though he has been wounded. His right arm was amputated but he is doing very well. His brother, Ben, is with him and taking care of him. His handwriting is poor because he is learning to write with his left hand.

Translated *Dr* 3

Calvin College Archives, ACVR collection, Box 9, fldr 155.

Marietta, Ga.  
September 23, 1864

Dear Father,

Today I received your letters of Sept [12?]. I was surprised that you did not know yet that I had been wounded. I hope that mother will not worry too much about this. I am healing well, and my wounds look exceptionally good. I walk around a lot, and I look so well that no one would take me for being wounded. The amputation of my arm did not weaken me very much, for I have been walking around all the time, and thus far I have not lost any weight.

Our corps inspector performed the amputation of my arm

[2]

and he did an excellent job. At least, every doctor who looks at it praises him for this able amputation.

Benjamin is still with me, and takes very good care of me. He will stay with me here until I can go home. In October I shall try to get a furlough, and then I will go home.

Excuse my sloppy writing because I wrote it with my left hand and that is not going so well yet. It is raining today.

Greetings to everyone,

Dirk Van Raalte

*[Revised translation: Nella Kennedy,  
March 2009]*

Marieta, Ga  
Sept. 23d-64

Lieve Vader

Vandaag ontvingen wij uw brieven van Sept <sup>[12]</sup> ik was verwonderd dat juiue het nog niet wisten dat ik gewond was, ik hoop dat Moeder het haar maar niet teveel zal aantrekken. Ik beeter goed, en mijn wonden zien er bij uitstek mooi uit. Ik loop veel rond, en zie er zoo goed uit, dat niemand zou zeggen dat ik gewond was, mijn arm afzetten heef mij niet veel verzwakt want ik heb al tijd nog rond geloopt, en ben er tot dus ver ook nog niet mager van geworden. Onze Corps inspector heef mijn arm afgezet

[2]

en heeft het bij uitstek goed gedaan teminste elke Doctor die er naar kijken roemen er op, dat het zoo mooi geemputated is. Benjamin is nog bij mij en past mij zeer goed op, hij blijft hier bij mij tot dat ik naar huis ga. In October zal ik en furlough zien te krijgen en dan kom ik is naar huis. Vergeef mijn slordig schrijven want het is met mijn linker hand en dat gaat nog maar moejelijk. Het regen van daag.

West allen gegroet,

Dirk Van Raalte

*[Transcription: Nella Kennedy,  
March 2009]*

Story van Amputation

Marita Ga  
Sept 23<sup>d</sup> 64

Lieve Vader.

Van ~~daag~~  
Ontvingen wij uw brieven van  
sept ~~ik~~ ik was verwonderd dat  
jullie het nog niet wisten  
dat ik gewond was, ik hoop dat  
moeder het haer maar niet teveel  
zal aantrekken. Ik beet ~~er~~  
goed, en mijn wonden zien  
er bij uitstek mooi uit. Ik  
~~loop~~ loop veel rond, en zie er zoo  
goed uit, dat niemand zou  
zeggen dat ik gewond was, mijn  
arm afzetten heeft mij niet veel  
verhaakt want ik heb al  
tijd nog rond gelopen, en ben  
er tot dus ver ook nog niet ma  
ge van geworden. Onze Gops  
inspecteur heeft mijn arm afgezet.

en heeft het bij uitsterk  
goed gedaan teminste elke  
Doctor die er naar kijken roe  
men er op, dat het zoo mooi  
geamputated is Benjamin  
is ~~nu~~ nog bij my en past my  
hij goed op, hij blijft hier bij  
mij ~~to~~ tot dat ik ~~na~~ naar  
huis ga. In October heb  
ik en fuilough zien te krijgen  
en dan kom ik is maar huis.

Vergeef mijn slordig schrijven  
want het is het mijn linker  
hand en dat gaat nog maar  
moeijelijk. Het regen van  
daag. Weet allen gezout.  
Dirk Van Raalte

Calvin C. Arch  
SCVR coll.  
Box 9, folder 155

Marieta, Ga, Sept. 23rd, 1864.

Dear Father,

Today I received your letters of September 12. I was surprised that you did not know yet that I ~~have~~ been wounded.

I hope that Mother will not worry too much about this.

I am healing very well, and my wounds look very nice. <sup>good</sup>

I walk around <sup>a lot</sup> ~~very~~ much, and I look so well that no one would take me for being wounded. <sup>optimally</sup>

The amputation of my arm did not weaken me very much, for I have been walking around all the time, <sup>the</sup> and ~~so far~~ <sup>able not lose</sup> I did not ~~lose~~ <sup>any</sup> weight yet. [2]

Our Corps Inspector ~~did~~ performed the amputation of my arm, and he did a <sup>excellent</sup> ~~superb~~ job. At least, every doctor who looks at ~~xxxxxx~~ <sup>it</sup> me, praises him for this able amputation.

Benjamin is still with me, and takes <sup>very well good</sup> care of me. He will stay with me <sup>here</sup> until I can go home. In October I shall try to get a furlough, and then I hope to come home.

Excuse my sloppy writing because <sup>it has been written w/</sup> I ~~cannot~~ <sup>cannot</sup> use my left hand and that does not work too well. <sup>is not going to well yet</sup>

It is raining today.

Kind regard to everyone.

*Believe me to everyone*  
Dirk Van Raalte.

Edwin C. Archure  
SCVR call.  
Box 9, folder 155

Marieta, Ga, Sept. 23rd, 1864.

Dear Father,

Today I received your letters of September 12. I was surprised that you did not know yet that I have been wounded.

I hope that Mother will not worry too much about this.

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I walk around very much, and I look so well that no one would take me for being wounded.

The amputation of my arm did not weaken me very much, for I have been walking around all the time. And so far I did not loose weight yet.

Our Corps Inspector ~~did~~ performed the amputation of my arm, and he did a superb job. At least every doctor who looks at ~~xxxxxx~~ me, praises him for this able amputation.

Benjamin is still with me, and takes <sup>very well</sup> care of me. He will stay with me untill I can go home. On October I shall try to get a furlough, and then I hope to come home.

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It is raining today.

Kind regard to everyone.

Dirk Van Raalte.