



Collection Information:

Folder: English language translations of correspondence, August 10, 1918-March 14, 1919.

Collection: Botman, Gustave A., 1890-1958. Gustave Albert Botman Papers.

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The World War I Letters Of Gustave Botman

Gustave Albert Botman was born in Wasa, Finland June 9, 1890. He immigrated to the United States in 1908 and settled in Deer River, Minnesota where his grandfather lived and farmed. He enlisted in the army in August of 1918 and served as a private in the 7th Infantry during World War I. He was sent to the Western Front in France to participate in attacks on German forces. He was honorably discharged in March, 1919.

Gustave Botman married Anna Elvira Backlund (1897-1988) in Deer River, Minn. in August, 1917. After the war, Botman worked for his father-in-law as a farmer and carpenter. The Botman's settled permanently in Deer River, where they were active congregants of Clara Lutheran Church. Gustave was also a founding charter member of the VFW Post 2720 in Deer River. Gustave Albert Botman died on April 14, 1958 at the veteran's hospital in Minneapolis at 67 years of age. His body was interred in the Pine Ridge cemetery.

TRANSLATOR COMMENTS; These letters are in Swedish although the author was from Vasa (in Finnish Vaasa) Finland, his language was Swedish. Vasa is a city on the west coast of Finland. It received its charter in 1606, during the reign of Charles IX of Sweden and is named after the Royal House of Vasa.¹

Throughout the 15th, 16th, 17th 18th and up to the early 19th Century, Finland was a province of Sweden and especially along the coastal regions and in the larger cities, Swedish was the principal language of government, commerce and culture. Finland became a part of Russia following its defeat in the War of 1809-1810. As a result of the war, the eastern third of Sweden was established as the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire. Other notable effects were the Swedish parliament's adoption of a new constitution and the establishment of the House of Bernadotte, the new Swedish royal house, in 1818.

At the time the Botman family emigrated, they were Russian citizens, as the nation of Finland was not established until it gained its independence following World War I and the Russian Revolution.

Finland to this day has two official languages – Finnish and Swedish although the number of Swedish speaking Finns has been steadily decreasing in numbers.

Where I add text or change the text to make it more colloquial in English, I shall enclose the same in []. English words and phrases in the text shall be followed by (sic). I wish to note here that like all immigrants, they have begun to import English words into their everyday language, and so many of the words followed by a (sic) are borrowed words.

¹ Source: Wikipedia.

The translation follows herewith.

The source for the un-sourced footnotes is the translator's fund of "incidental intelligence".

Charles John LaVine, Translator

Letters between Albert and Anna Botman August - September 1918

Postcard of August 10, 1918

Mrs. Albert Botman
Deer River, Minn.

Cedar Rapids,

Hello Anna,

We are now at breakfast (sic). Feel well but lonely.

A. B.

Letter of September 15, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
September 15, 1918

My dear beloved Albert,

My dear own Albert,

How have you felt today when it was Sunday? [How] I have thought of you today, my dear Albert. [It] is the first Sunday I have been to any neighbor since you left me. I have [spent Sundays with the Herrgards. Mamma has been there also. I did not wish to go anywhere, but she asked me finally that I should come there and write away the time.

Oh beloved Albert, I wonder where you now are, if you have moved (sic) or not.

Oh beloved my own Albert, I do not know where to go if you soon do not come.

Oh beloved dear Albert, if you knew how lonely and how I long for that you shall come home to you home again [such] that you cannot imagine.

Oh dear Albert, I miss you so horribly. Oh your warm love for me was the best in the world.

Beloved Albert, thanks and thanks for all your love and all of your goodness towards you're Anna, both for when she was your lover/drear one and your wife.
Yes sweet, dear Albert, it suffers now on the 6th week since you left your home and me.
Oh may the Lord release you home otherwise I die from this sorrow.

Oh beloved Albert, do not forget me where you are although you are among all types of humans. I know that there are many types of people there, some, who try only to seduce and lead astray and those, who listen to God.

Yes, I think that you have gotten to see much of sin and the evil already. .

Oh dear Albert mine, how long shall this quickly go and if you knew how tired I am.

Oh dearest my Albert, I cannot help it. Oh Albert, may I let you know that everything is all right on the farm and with your home. Everything here is as when you left. Everything awaits upon you, but perhaps waits in vain, for it seems of course to be no more hope. It only becomes darker and darker before my eyes.

Oh beloved Albert, I am healthy enough although so weak and tired as well and downcast every moment and day with sorrow. Yes, all happiness in the world has disappeared for me.

Dear and beloved my husband, I now gets to go to bed at 10 o'clock. Yes dear, without you for every evening I get to go. Can you remember how it was when you were with your dear Anna?

Oh dear Albert, come, yes come to rest with your Anna tonight.

Oh my Albert, how heavy and difficult life is.

Yes, good night (sic), good night with XXXXX and melting sweet kisses from your own sorrowing and lonely wife.

May the good Lord protect you in this night and in all your future; [this] is my wish.

I hope you get all of the letters I send. This week, which has gone, I have sent off 4 letters.

Letter of September 19, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
Sept. 19, 1918

My beloved Albert,

Oh my dear Albert, how are you today? How your Anna thinks about you and has such longing for you.

There is only winter weather here today and how depressing it is when it becomes cold and you are not home dear Albert.

Oh Albert, it is now six weeks since you left your home and it is six weeks tomorrow since we saw each other last.

My dear Albert, how long this time has been. Oh when shall you come, or shall I never see you [again].

Oh dear, dear Albert, I got your letter yesterday , and the Farewell Banquet (sic), which you sent me, I saw your name among so many soldiers. Oh dear my beloved husband, shall it now carry [you] away to the battle field.

Oh God, allow my husband to come home.

Dear Albert, do you not know that your heart is not good and anyhow to be taken as physically fit (sic). Oh what all this means, I do not understand. I think that if there is any doctor, who shall understand anything, so shall they see that something is [wrong] with your heart. Oh dear Albert, where shall I go if you soon do not come [home]. And myself, I shall be without understanding if this shall continue any longer. And if you saw and knew how your Anna sits and thinks about you throughout the days.

It is your love and you, dear Albert, that can only make life easier for me.

Beloved Albert, how faithful you have been towards me and have had such an innermost love for me so I can never fulfill enough thanks for it.

Dear Albert, I am healthy enough, but as you know, so depressed from sorrow that I am so indifferent as to how I am and where I go. As one, who is completely rejected.

Dear Albert, how long time is, the days are weeks and weeks like months. Oh dear, sweet Albert, how I wait and long for that you shall come, and Albert, you must come soon otherwise I cannot go on longer.

Beloved Albert, it is so hard to sit at home [and] for the parents to look at me and see how I sit and think, so yesterday mamma said to me [that] she did not know what should become of me if I did not get to be in a better humor. Yes my dear Albert, I am at home with those of mine today when I write this. It is soon 4 o'clock, so we shall have afternoon coffee. Mabel and I shall soon go to your and my home for it is so horribly cold tonight.

Everything is all right with our home and our farm up to this day. Oh dear Albert, what happiness it would be if you were at home when I come home but still so there no one home when I come home.

Everyone is healthy here at home, and papa continues at Normans still, but they shall soon begin to dive for potatoes.

I may now close dear Albert for this time with all my love for you dear, sweet Albert mine. XXXXX. Dear Albert, oh so painful it is in my breast for each day, which goes, to look on all of yours, and now you are gone, perhaps for ever.

May the Lord protect my own husband from all stumbles and temptations.

Letter of September 21, 1918

Deer River, Minnesota
Sept. 21, 1918

My beloved, dearest Albert,

Oh dear, my dear Albert, how do you feel tonight and where are you? Beloved Albert, if you knew how lonesome I have had it for you today and in this evening. My dear Albert, think how I have longed for you this day. . Yes, it has been so lonesome for me, and so terribly have I longed for you that the heart has been able to almost burst. Oh dear [one], my dear [one], why should I be alone, and what have I done when I shall, must carry a so heavy burden every day. Yes, the whole day I have gotten to keep back the tears.

Dear Albert, today I have been in the house the whole day, and today I may tell you that the people there (illegible) and have been here today and [dug] up potatoes. They have taken up all the early Ohio (sic) potatoes and a part of the Carmen today. Dear Albert, we got 50 bushels of the red potatoes. Beloved Albert, think how sad it has made me to look at everything today. Oh why should it be so here, dear Albert, and if you had been at the farm today and gotten to take up your potatoes, so had I gotten to have a much better day to live.

Dearest Albert, it has been an absolutely beautiful day. So dear Albert, if I have gotten to go to the side of the potato [field], should I not [been unable] to cry?

Dear Albert mine, I have not ditched/[dug] any potatoes. I have only ventured to cook for them. Albert today is the first day that I have done anything since you left me. Yes, I was so tired at night, so that it was with great effort for me to get to cook supper for them.

Dear Albert, today for lunch I fried two of our chickens, cocks, but how hard it was to cook and not have my beloved and dearest friend at the table. My dear, sweet Albert, oh how many times I have sighed your name today. Oh, how I long for and wait that you to come. Dear Albert, do you not come? Do I wait in vain?

Oh Albert, where are you now? Or where shall you go when you do not get to write any letter on the train. Oh dear, dear Albert mine, shall to go closer to the battlefield.

Beloved my Albert and how I now get to cry can hardly write.

Dear, my dear Albert, where shall I go? Oh Albert, shall I be alone. Dear Albert, it is nothing for me on the earth to remain living for. Oh dear Albert, if I do not see you again in this world, so [I] have thanks for all the love you have had for me and a thanks for all the goodness you have done for me.

My beloved husband, I have written to you so many times before, but dearly beloved, there appears to be no hope of your returning, rather you go father and farther away from me.

Beloved dear Albert, when you get to meet me on the other side may there be there no crying and no more sorrow. There no tears shall fall. Then it remains as it stands in this [verse]: We are never eternally separated, for we are, of course, one in Him as the kingdom and the right of childhood. And soon may we be met in blessedness and peace. Although the paths separate, however the most powerful God allows us all to the goal to meet.

Dear Albert, I [shall] now close for this time. It is so hard to write when I cry. Oh dear, my own Albert, I feel something terrible shall happen soon, and I believe that it is of to of course soon that I get to hear of your departure to me within this country before to leave for the other side.

Beloved Albert, I feel that something shall happen. [If] it is not so, it is something other.

My dear beloved Albert, now may you have a good night until the next time I write. I do not know at all where you rest your head tonight, but your Anna is in your bedroom every night.

And may the Lord protect you now and for always and allow you to come to your crying and sorrowing wife. [This] is my prayer and sighs.

Goodnight Albert, a sweet goodnight. XXXXX from your faithful wife Anna.

Do not allow the world infatuate your soul. Fly with me to Jesus today. Everything for eternity shall then go well with you. Yes, such is the Father's desire.

Letter of September 24, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
Sept. 24, 1918

Well deer Albert, I have gotten your letter from N[ew] J[ersey]. And it has gone just as I thought that you should go closer towards the direction [where for you] it shall carry. Yes, dear Albert, now you shall never get to see your wife any more. Now dear Albert, I know that you shall never [again] come home. Dearest Albert, now all hope is given up about your returning. You are now at the place, which shall soon take you over to the other side. Dear Albert, my heart breaks tonight. Oh Albert, I wish to die from this

sorrow. It does not become any better before I separate from this world. All hope is ended for eternity. Oh m oh my (sic) how shall everything [ends]? I cannot write any more.

Oh Albert, how your wife cries. Oh Albert, Albert, dear sweet Albert, my heart, and how bad it is to cry.

Good night

From your crying Anna.

Letter of September 27, 1918

Deer River, Minnesota
Sept. 27, 1918

Oh dear, my dear, departed husband,

I shall try if I venture to write some lines to you still once again.

Oh dearest, my only friend, I have read your letter tonight, which you had written to my father. Yes Albert, I knew what was in the letter before I had read it. Before I was able to understand where you had written to him.

Oh dear, dear Albert, oh why. Oh Albert, if I had once more had gotten to see you before you went overseas (sic).

Oh Albert, my Albert, oh now I cannot other than cry. This shall soon now, dear Albert, take the life from your wife.

Oh for once to have gotten to see you before I die. Beloved Albert, I can hardly write. I shall need to have someone write for me.

Dear, beloved sweet Albert, oh why have you been taken from your Anna and [your] wife, who also goes and carries your child. Beloved Albert, I may now tell you that it has now become obvious, so that those of mine know about it. But my Albert, I can no longer live. Oh dear Albert mine, perhaps I may die before you die on the battlefield.

Beloved husband of mine, I ask you still again to forgive all of my hard words against you, you, who are gone for ever from me. Oh thanks for all the good you have done me since you learned to know me.

Albert, Albert, oh your Anna tonight is in the deepest sorrow, which could afflict her. Oh my, my (sic) I cannot write and my head and my heart and I feel that something is catching a hold and perhaps in the morning I am sick.

Oh dear, dear mine Albert and beloved Albert may you now have a goodnight. Oh Albert, I may never be together any more in your dear home.

Goodnight, goodnight my dear, my beloved husband.

From your sorrowing and alone wife Anna.

Oh Albert, dear Albert, oh your Anna, who stands alone, oh, perhaps I can no longer venture to write.

Beloved Albert, oh write as often as you possibly can, so that I know if you live.

Letter from Anna to Albert October 1918 – November 1918

Letter of October 2, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
Oct. 2, 1918

Beloved, dear, my Albert,

Dearly beloved Albert, I shall now in this evening try to write a little to you in my deep sorrow. I do, of course, not at all know where you are or if you live or not.

Beloved my Albert, it is eight weeks this evening since your were alone with your wife for the last time. Yes, your Anna sits here now in the same room (sic) of your dear home tonight also and thinks and only cries. Yes my dear, departed husband, I cannot write and describe for you how hard and heavy this sorrow has been me since the last letter came, but Albert, I stood it better than what I have been able to do. The wish therefore was that I knew and wide within me the whole time that that it should go so. My dear Albert, I have allowed you to know that I have been in your and my dear home every night until this evening. So dear Albert, your home is as you left it, besides there are 200 bushels of potatoes in the cellar.

Oh Albert, Albert my dear Albert, it is so hard for me to write so I can hardly do it, and you know why, Albert, it is my heart, which is full of deep wounds, which shall never heal more here in this world before I get to go to the home, which is there above, dear, but the only friend I have. Oh how I long to get to you before down here on this earth becomes no home for me any more. Everything of mine is taken away, which I knew as dear here upon the earth for my lifetime.

Yes dear Albert, I still hang with life of course, but I have a bad cold [and] also a sharp cough. Oh Albert, my beloved Albert, oh your Anna and wife, who is now alone for ever, and you dear Albert, oh how I think of you both night and day.

I may now close. I cannot write any more and may the Lord bless you and protect your in all your days of life.

Goodbye and good night dear, sweet, my beloved Albert XXXXXXXXXXXX.

I have been able to sing and play this verse:

With God is ideal happiness before, but here think many needs.
Now here I am able to often sigh and get the bread of tears.
Here is mixed happiness and pain for the Lord Jesus' bride
But there shall so no be, for happiness lives with God.

Farewell Albert.

Letter of November 10, 1918

Beloved Albert,

I shall try to write to you a little [on this] Sabbath day. I do not of course know if you live or not this day so it is of course so terribly [a heavy burden].

Oh beloved Albert, shall there never be better and easier days? Or does it become only worse?

Oh Albert, you are so far off from me, but you are still so dear in my own breast and how I long to get to press you to me. My beloved Albert, shall we never again be united? Oh if I could write to you how worrisome, heavy and difficult it is for me to think that every day that goes [that] perhaps today I am without a man.

Dear, oh dear Albert, if this letter comes to your hand, then write as often as you can to your own and alone wife.

Oh may the Lord protect you for me otherwise then I perish. And Albert, pray to God that He helps me until your return. For Albert, I wish to be for your sake and only for you as long as I know that you live.

My dear beloved Albert, I am now at home with [your] parents today when I write, but otherwise I live in your and my dear home still. Oh Albert, I cannot leave it as long as I know that your are alive, and I have everything precisely as when you were home. I try to take as good care (sic) of it as I can for your sake. Dear Albert, I continue to go here at home every day still, but oh how tired and lonely it is. Oh may God help me soon.

Well Albert, do you continue to train now or are you ready. Perhaps you are in the trenches (sic)

Beloved Albert, it was yesterday on that date 3 months since you saw and I saw [each other] last. Oh what a long time.

Well dear Albert, I now get to let you know that I am healthy enough up until this day, and I hope that you are also. Yes, you well have heard about this terrible plague, which is around the whole world [and] which strikes so terribly human life. It is around here in Deer River as well.

All of my people are healthy and all right. And all the neighbors and friends are healthy, but it is in the city that this plague continues. Oh Albert, think how much evil [there is] in this world.

Oh dear Albert, how much I know that you have seen and learned these 3 months [that] you have been away from home. It was first on Monday I got those there cards that you wrote when you left the boat [and] that you had come over whole.

Yes dear Albert, I can, of course, get to write all that I wish, but if God allows you to come home soon, so then shall I be thrilled with it.

Beloved my dear Albert, it is now only 3 months until you know what shall happen with your Anna and may you then be home. Oh Albert, my Albert, how I long for you, and perhaps that I never more get to see you.

Well, I now must close for this time, and dearly beloved Albert, do not forget your God.

It is now time for me to go to your own home for the night.

Goodbye (sic) dear, my beloved Albert from your alone and crying wife Anna.

I have written a letter to you before since you came over. I hope that you get it.

Letter of November 11, 1918

This letter is in English

Deer River, Minn.
Nov. 11, 1918

My Dearest Albert,

Dear Albert, I received your letter tonight, and you don't know how glad I was.

Dear Albert, I hope that you are all right when I am writing this and when you receive this letter.

Only you know, dearest husband, how I am thinking and worrying over you Oh Albert, how lonely and lonesome you wife is, sometimes my heart almost breaks of grief.

Dear Albert, I am well up to this day, but you know otherwise Albert how I feel. Dear Albert, I am in your own home tonight when I am writing this to you and have been here ever since you left me, and I now close for this time and prepare for another night's rest in your own dear home.

Oh Albert, how my thoughts are of you both day and night. Goodnight dear husband, goodnight. And may the Lord help you and guide you in all of your doings and bring you back to your sad and lonely wife once more.

Mrs. Albert Botman

Deer River, Minnesota
Box 288
Itasca Co. USA

Letter of November 18, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
Nov. 18, 1918

My beloved Albert,

My dear Albert, I shall write some lined to you this afternoon in my loneliness. It is so depressing outside and nasty weather. I am now in our own, dear home today [for] the whole day and think dear Albert how I [long] for you and wonder and think so terribly where you now can be. Perhaps, you shall never live any more.

My brother Oscar was here today and split wood for me from the pile that was there away in the woods [as] you know.

Well dear Albert, it is now a week since the war is ended and you well know that I am happy over this both as all other humans are.

Yes Albert, if I could only write everything that I wished, but that of course I may not.

Well my dear, sweet Albert, if you now are alive, so do I also know how you feel. Oh Albert, the time is so long and so sad for me now so it is terrible.

Dear Albert, I should so willingly send on the way a Christmas gift if you are not home at Christmas [but] such you do not know, but dear Albert, I have so little money so that it impossible. Yes, you shall well get to know everything about it some time beloved Albert if you get home.

But beloved Albert, you get all my love, which is of course better than any Christmas gift together. My love for you is more and more every day.

Oh dear, my dear Albert, oh how I pray to the All-knowing God that He shall protect you and soon send you home soon, for He is the only one, who can do it. For Albert, sometimes then I do not know how I shall take the path. He is the only one I can go to for help.

And beloved, dear Albert, I hope that you do not forget Him.

Dear Albert, may I let you know that your farm and home are all right until this day that I write. I try as well as I can to take care of it for your part and only for your part.

Albert, oh my beloved husband, shall you never come to here, [your] own home and your wife?

Well, I get now well to close for this time, and I hope that you get this letter.

Dear, dear Albert, I am quite healthy until this moment although this terrible plague goes around the whole world, but Albert, so heavy is my heart for your return.

Goodbye dear, beloved Albert, my goodbye.

From your alone and faithful wife Anna.

Think how often I get to cry over you, my own, my dear Albert.

Letter of November 21, 1918

Deer River, Minnesota
Nov. 21, 1918

Dear, beloved Albert,

I shall now write a little to you and let you know that I still hang on to life. It is so difficult and lonely for me, [and I long] after you dear Albert in this evening, so that I do not know what to do.

I have not gotten any letter from you for soon two weeks, so it is so difficult.

Oh dear, beloved, my Albert, I am in our own home this evening when I write to you, and can you remember how everything was here?

Oh dear, my dear, do you not soon come home to your home and your sorrowing wife Anna. Beloved, how I think about you and am fearful over you. Yes, I do not of course know if you are alive in this day when I sit and write to you.

Beloved, my dear husband, it is today 15 weeks since you left this home. Oh what a long time. It seems a whole year.

Well dear Albert, I am so sad over that I cannot send you a Christmas gift for Christmas, but Albert, do not think that I have forgotten you or that I worry myself about it, for dear Albert, I have all of my love for you so that you do not know. But beloved, I cannot on the basis of circumstances.

If I only could write everything to you, which I wished to.

Oh Albert, dear Albert, where are you this evening, and how you Anna thinks and thinks about you.

Dear Albert, I have been [at] your home today again, so that Mabel and I came back to your and my home when the hour was 6 in the evening. Then I milked our cow and fed sic) her and the pig and now the hour is soon nine.

It now begins to be winter here, but up to now it has been fine and warm weather.

Dear Albert, everything is as when you left your home. Oh how difficult it is to look on all the good [you have done] for me. Albert, I cannot thank you enough [for everything]. I have everything in the house just as when you were home besides the heating stove (sic), which I sent for. It is purchased from a part of the money you left me. You, of course, know how much you left me. Well \$25 from it was what I bought the stove (sic) for.

Well Albert, I get to close now for this time. And may the Lord protect you from evil and return you home soon to your waiting wife [and this] is my daily prayer. May He help me soon that I may again see my only and dearest friend Albert.

Goodnight Albert goodnight, XXXXX five from you is your Anna.

Do not allow the world to enchant your soul. No, fly to Jesus today. And then you shall go well for eternity. Yes, such is the Father's wish.

Oh my Albert, my Albert, what you are for me that lies down hidden in my heart although I cannot see or speak with you. And perhaps I shall never again enjoy your love.

Goodnight, dear Albert.

Anna's letters to Albert December 1918 – January 1919

Letter of December 1, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
Dec. 1, 1918

Beloved, dear Albert,

My dear Albert, I shall now this Sunday evening write a little to you again.

I do not know of course if you wander any more on this earth or not. It is so hard for me to think where you can be now.

Beloved Albert, I got your third letter from you yesterday since you left, but it has, of course, been on the way more than a whole month.

Oh dear, my dear Albert, you sent me the coupon (sic) that I should send you a Christmas gift, but Albert, it came completely too late. Oh Albert, how sad it is that I have not been able to send you any, but dear Albert, I have not had the possibility to do it because of the circumstances.

Beloved Albert, if you get this letter, do not be displeased or believe that I have not wished to do it, for Albert, it makes me vexed, so that I do not know what to do, but my dear husband, you anyhow have all of my love for you.

Well, I may let you hear/[know] that I am well healthy until this moment although there is a terrible illness, which now goes around the whole world and strikes so terribly with human life. Yes, there are many here in Deer River, who received death on the basis of the same.

Dear Albert, I am, of course, in your own home when I write this, and you, beloved, if I only could write to you [about] how heavy and difficult it is for me for every day that goes to think and think and cry over you dear, sweet Albert. I, of course, have everything as you left me alone, and I try to take as good care (sic) of all that I can for your part.

Oh when and when shall it be otherwise dear Albert. How tired I am of everything.

Beloved Albert, I take care (sic) of our cow now and sell butter, so there are now 3 animals in our little barn (sic). I still have the pig, and the hens. I can remember any more how everything was.

I have been in our dear home every night too rest since you left, and during the days, so I go to you home.

My sister Mabel is still with me. There is, of course, no school for children when this plague goes around.

Carl and Oscar were here yesterday and sawed wood for me. It has not been cold at all any before the last two days, and today, it has snowed.

Well dear Albert, I get well now to close for this time. It is so hard for me to write tonight. I have so much loneliness for you, so what shall I do?

I shall now go to the night's peace again, and I shall hope that God protect you in this night and for always. Goodnight dear Albert.

Oh you my Albert, everything what you are for me in this world lies in the deepest [part] of my heart. [Should it] never be any more that I get to [embrace] you or [if] I stand alone for ever, by-by (sic) from your wife.

When should all the world's conflicts end? When should my heart get an undisturbed peace should my heart get an undisturbed peace? Yes Albert, I cannot play any more

TRANSLATOR COMMENT; There was an out-of-order page. I believe it goes here.

Stray page

as good as I can until you come

Beloved Albert, it is a terribly fine winter here in Deer River. [The nights] are so warm every day so everyone believes that the snow shall go. Yes, it is an unusually fine winter.

My dear Albert, I have been at your home [place] today, and I continue to do so almost every day. I am then in your own home every day and night that goes with my sister Mabel. But dear Albert, if you shall [never] be home soon so that we may be together in our own dear home? Oh my Albert, you need to come home in order to take care (sic) of your farm, your home and your wife.

Dear Albert, I received your letter the day before yesterday that you had written on the 18th of Dec., and I am happy to hear that you have begun to get my letters

And my dear Albert, when or how soon shall you get to come home, so that I can see you again and fell my beloved husband's arms one more. Oh Albert, sometimes I am so lonesome for you so.

TRANSLATOR COMMENT; There still are or might be missing pages as this letter ends inconclusively here. Perhaps the following is the missing page.

Dear Albert, it is so difficult for me to every day think and worry over you [and] perhaps that you the you never more live. Oh what a world we live in, only sorrow and evil. It will be no wonderful Christmas for me this time. Oh how difficult and lonesome it is.

Well my dear Albert, I get to let you know that there has still not been any cold weather although it is so close to Christmas. Yesterday so it rained.

Dear Albert, I now well get to close for this time and hope that you soon are home. Oh I cannot wait until you come.

Goodbye dear Albert, goodbye (sic). And may the Lord protect you in all of your days of living is my prayer for every day.

From your alone and awaiting wife Anna.

Letter of December 11, 1918

Deer River, Minn.
Dec. 11, 1918

My beloved Albert,

I shall now in this evening write a little to you in my loneliness for you. I am healthy enough up to this moment, but [how] is it with you? Albert, it is so difficult to know. It could be that do not live any more. Oh Albert, how hard it is for me day after day to think and worry over you.

Oh beloved, dear Albert, do you not come home soon or do you never come? Oh how tired I am.

Oh dear Albert, how I long and wait for your return, so sometimes my heart almost breaks. Oh my beloved Albert, are you alive or how? Oh what an evil world.

Yes dear Albert, I am in our own dear home when I write these lines to you. Oh my dear husband, I try to take good care of it as I can for your part/share and for as long as I know you live.

Your house and your farm are all right and are just as you left them.

My sister Mabel is with me still. And my brothers split and saw wood for me. There has been fine weather still up to now, no cold at all.

Dear Albert, it is two weeks until Christmas from today, and you shall not be home [for it], so that I should get a happy Christmas day

Dear, oh dear Albert, oh how difficult it is for me to write when I do not know if you are with life or not. Yes, it is impossible to imagine where you now can be. But your wife Anna is in your home this evening. Dear, dear Albert. Beloved Albert, if this letter comes into your hand and if you are not home soon, so dear friend, I wish you a happy Christmas and a good New Year anyhow, and may the Lord help you in all of your concerns and bring you back soon to your waiting wife. Oh Albert do not forget God where you still are and pray to him that He can help me, otherwise thus I do not have the energy to [live]. My own dear one, you now get to have a goodnight and goodbye (sic) for this time, and may God bless you. Beloved Albert, oh what you are to me cannot be written.

Oh what a moment it should be to again get to embrace you, dear, beloved Albert.

XXXXXX five kisses from you alone wife Anna.

Letter of December 22, 1918

Deer River, Minnesota
Dec. 22, 1918

Beloved Albert,

Oh dear Albert, I shall now on this Sunday write a little and let you hear/[know] that I am alive and healthy up to this moment. But dear Albert, I am lonely and think so terribly [much] about you, so it is so hard. My dear Albert, I wait and long for your homecoming so much for every day that goes. Oh, I hope that you are home before this letter comes into your hands.

My dear Albert, if this letter comes forth to you anyhow, you know that I live in your dear home and have lived there since you left me. I have everything since you left me, and I try to take care of all of this as well as I can. Papa and my brothers split and saw wood for me.

Oh my dear husband, do you not soon come to your home and your wife? Oh how long to get to embrace you in our dear home still once more.

Yes dear Albert, I have it so lonely and sometimes get to cry, so that my heart almost breaks, but the only faith I can get thus is to pray to the Lord that He helps me and brings you back home soon.

Dear Albert, it is, of course, so difficult for me to for every day to think and worry over you [and] that perhaps never you never more [are alive]. Oh what a world we live in, only sorrow and evil. It will not be any wonderful Christmas for me this time, oh so difficult and lonely it is.

Well my dear Albert, I get to let you know that there has still not been any cold weather although it is so close to Christmas. Yesterday it rained.

Dear Albert, I well now get to close for this time and hope that you soon are home. Oh, I cannot wait until you come.

Goodbye (sic) dear Albert, goodbye (sic). And may the Lord protect you in all of the days of your life [that] is my prayer for every day.

From your alone and waiting wife Anna.

Letter of January 7, 1919

Deer River, Minn.
Jan. 7, 1919

Beloved husband,

Dear Albert, I shall write a little to you in this night and let you know that I live and am healthy until this moment.

Dear Albert, I have received one of your letters today, and I am so happy to hear that you are healthy and that you have begun to get the letters that I have written. Beloved Albert, I have written many letters to you and I hope you get them.

Oh dear Albert, now a new year has rolled in, and I am still alone. Oh how I await that you shall come [back] soon. Well, I get to let you know that I live in your dear home still and have been here only since you left. My sister Mabel still continues to e with me. She goes to school during the days and is with me then during the nights. Yes dear Albert, everything is as when you left your dear, own home, and I try to take care of everything as good [as] I can for your interest my dear Albert.

My papa and brother Oscar have been here today to saw wood for me.

Dear Albert, may I let you [know] that I have all [of] the animals or [livestock] and the pig still lives, and I have been able to save him until you come [back].

Oh dear Albert, how soon shall you be home with your Anna, so that we get to begin to live in our dear home again?

Beloved Albert, I think that this sorrow ought to end some time. Oh how I think of you for every day that goes and how often I get to cry when you ever appear to come.

Tomorrow on that date, it is five months since you left your home.

Well my sweet Albert, I now get well get to close for this time and go to rest. The hour is ten.

Oh dear Albert, how long shall I wait, and how I long to get to see you in our own home and feel your arms about me still once more. Goodnight beloved Albert, goodnight.

Oh how heavy the path is that I wander alone day after day.

May the Lord protect you now and in all of your days.

Do not forget your God wherever you are dear, beloved Albert.

XXXXXXXXXXXX kisses from your wife Anna.

Letter of January 20, 1919

Deer River, Minn.
Jan. 20, 1919

Dear beloved Albert,

Dear Albert, I shall now in this evening write a little to you and let you [know] that I live and am healthy until this moment.

Beloved Albert, are you not on the way home yet? Oh how I wait upon you every day.

Dear Albert, I am in your own, dear home where I write these lines and think how my thoughts are on you. I have everything as you left [it] in your own, dear home, and I try to take care [even though] I do not know what to do.

Oh dear Albert, I have so much to tell you when we get to meet again, which cannot be written [about] now, but may the Lord help you and protect you, so that you soon get to come home.

Oh my Albert, think of how I think about you, and you are the only one, who can ease my heavy burden that I have carried so long. Is there any possibility to say to the officers or commanders (sic) that you need to come home.

Well dear, sweet Albert, I now get to close and go to rest in your own bedroom (sic), which you remember.

Goodnight dear Albert, goodnight. XXXXX kisses.

And may the Lord protect you and again send you home to your awaiting wife Anna.

Letter from Albert to Anna August 1918 - March 1919

Letter of 9 August 1918

St Paul, Minn.
August 9, 1918

Beloved wife Anna,

May I now get to tell you that we came to Superior at half past 8 o'clock in the morning. Waited upon the train some minutes and then entered on to the train to St Paul. We had breakfast (sic) and lunch on the train. Arrived here at half past 2. Are now at the Sherman Hotel where I write this. We may now rest until 8:30 o'clock when we enter upon the journey again, and as it is figured, and then we are arrived in the morning.

[In the] evening beloved Anna, I have prayed to God today that He may help and strengthen in this sorrow and beloved Anna, how I have longed here for you. If the Lord does not help me, so know I know not how it goes. Dear Anna, call upon the Lord about help and do not tire before you get the granting of prayers for He has promised so assuredly that what we ask of Him [then] this He gives us.

Oh beloved, beloved wife, forgive me all my errors and omissions [and] then you are kind.

Oh beloved Anna, what a faithful love you have for me.

The others go out into the city, but I could not go, rather in stead I remain in and write and write this letter. I shall write as [fast] as I am able to [get it] forth, and the time is long before I get to hear anything from you dear Anna.

Yes, may the Lord help you. This shall be my daily prayer and wish.

Your own Albert.

Letter of August 11, 1918

Jefferson Barracks, Mo.
Aug. 11, 1918

Dear Anna,

I may now let you know that I am no [in] the field army. We came here yesterday evening at 10 o'clock, [but] afterwards before we got orders, it was 12 o'clock in the night when we got our blankets (sic), and so we got to go out and rest under the bare

heavens with out knapsacks. As head/principal [guard]², we had a special train (sic) here from St Paul consisting of eleven fellows. We had breakfast in Cedar Rapids and lunch in Burlington. The evening meal we had on the train (sic). I do not know how many men there are here, but there are terribly many.

It is terribly warm here, so I do not know how they can move around. We have heard that we shall [be presented] for examination (sic) in the morning and that it shall take the whole day.

Oh beloved Anna, [I] am so lonely , so I do not know what to do, but we get to leave it in the Lord's hands thus everything shall go well for us that meets us. I should so willingly like hear how you have it now, but I know of no address yet. I wrote a letter to you in St Paul. Tell me if you got it. Pray to God that He helps us from all sorrow and worries, for He has promised that those, who pray to him, may and it as certain find Him.

Goodnight to you for this time. Greet Mrs. Herrgard and all [the others]. I sit on the ground and write this letter. Shall write more in the morning or in the afternoon.

Your Albert XXXXX

Letter of August 12, 1918

Jefferson Barracks
Aug. 12, 1918

Dear Anna,

I again send to you some lines [to say] that I am still alive. . It is so terribly warm here, so the sweat merely runs although we have nothing to do, only eat and lie in the shade. The worst is when we assemble for lunch and the evening meal. Sometimes we get to stand and wait a whole hour before it is our turn to come in. There are a number of large dining halls here, which accommodate several thousand men. Yes, it is a terrible life, and I have not seen much of it yet.

We were not called for examination (sic) today. Previously in the morning today, 18 hundred have been examined (sic). I heard that there were many, who did not pass, and I hope that I am one [of them] in the morning, who do not pass.

Yes, [learn to live as well as you can]. I must hurry [with] this kind letter.

Yes, may the Lord help you.

Your Albert.

² The author writes "gärd", which in Swedish means "a levy of taxes, etc." I think he is writing "guard" with Swedish phonetic spelling.

Letter of September 9, 1918

Waco, Texas Sept. 9, 1918

My dear beloved wife,

I now get to answer your welcome letter, which I received today.

Beloved, little wife, I am so happy to get to hear from you again that you are still with life dear. I am so worried about you since I got your previous letter [saying] that you shall die away from me, but I am happy to hear that you can eat better and that my little, dear wife that I never shall surrender the hope that I shall again see you still my beloved, oh beloved Anna. I pray to the Lord for you and me that He shall help us, and I believe certainly that He shall do this still if I were yet out on the battlefield, for the Lord, He was, He still is dear Anna.

I get to allow you to hear that it is not as warm here now as when we first came here. So we make far [better] now.

On Saturday, there was my turn in the kitchen (sic), but think what work it was. Everything has to answer to the inspector, everything every day. We get plenty (sic) to eat now of everything except butter. We have not had [it] since we came here.

I washed yesterday some of my clothing. We have a mighty time to rush [and get it done]. We have only 3 wash tubs for 250 men, so it is hard to wash our clothes well.

I understand that it is soon the time for taking up the potatoes there at home now. I wish that I could come home and ditch/dig potatoes. How is it? Have you sold any potatoes yet or is there no price for them.

Of course little wife, I long for you so terribly [much]. I have everything of course in [my] memory, all the corners (sic) of the house and on the farm. Oh how I long to come home and take care (sic) of the place I am (illegible). I am also happy that I have an XXXXXX.

This address follows me.

Soon I go good night now, but beloved, sweet, dear my Anna, you are always in my thoughts.

Write often to your Albert dear Anna.

I must close now. The [hour] is near 11 and then we must turn out the lights. (sic).

Such a good wife, who takes good care (sic) of the house, well beloved, little wife be in good humor. The Lord shall help us in His time. Have a thanks dear wife for all the love you have [shown] to me. You are, of course, the only friend I have on the earth.

Well beloved, we shall soon move from here. Where we go, we do not know my dear Anna. Now you shall not take this hard, for I am happy to go [away] from Texas.

I shall now send my address

{Private Gustave A. Botman
{Camp Macrthur Co. No. 13 A. R. D.

Don't write to Waco, Texas.

Letter of September 12, 1918

(Undated and without place of origin)

Dear, beloved wife,

I got your letter today, but beloved Anna; how it makes me vexed to hear you suffer so terribly. Oh beloved, it is so hard for me every time I read your letter, so sometimes I cannot keep myself from crying. Oh beloved, how I pray to God that He shall send me home to you beloved, and for you, that He shall protect you until I come home to you, and I am certain that He shall also do it. Oh beloved, be not worried over that you have not done everything that you could for me. You have done as much for me as you could do.

Oh beloved, I am so happy over having a good wife, who waits for me. Oh beloved, you well shall see me still, for this is well the Lord's wish. He shall, of course, reunite us in His time.

I believe that I shall never pass the overseas (sic) examination.

Well, I sent home my shoes yesterday, some handkerchiefs, two under suits (sic), the hymnal and New Testament. We have nothing to pack into now, and I do not wish to throw anything away.

I sent the COD, so you must cash it.

You now get a goodnight. I am so tired [almost to death].

Beloved, the Lord protect you in this night. XXXXXXXXXX.

Address Camp Macarthur
Company 13, A. R. D.

Letter of September 15, 1918

Sept. 15, 1918

Beloved wife,

May I now answer your letter that I received yesterday.

My dear, beloved Anna, I am so terribly lonesome for you. It is so mightily unfortunate to [have] to sit in this tent (sic).

The sand blows today so everything is so dusty (sic). Oh may the Lord God help us all that we may again get freedom.

Oh my beloved, if only I were with you in the beautiful Minnesota. How fun it should be dear Anna. How I long for you now, my little wife.

You ask me to forgive you that you have broken against me. Dear, beloved Anna, you have broken nothing against me, and if you think [so], why should I not forgive you, who is my beloved, little wife and with whom I have always had it so dear?

Since you were a little girl, and you, who is my everything on the earth [no matter] where I still am and come to go. So know you that you are the only one I can love and think upon God's blessing you, my little, dear wife for what you have done for me ever since we have learned to know each other and what you are for me now that [suffices] me. This makes me so terribly pained that you must sorrow so, but at the same time, I am happy that I have such a good wife, which you are Anna. I say to you just the same now as when you recall that I used to say to you that you were or should be the best wife for me. Think how sad if I had had one, who perhaps who should not have written a letter to me now.

Beloved wife, we now got notice today that we may not write any letters on the train (sic) where we go. So perhaps this is the last letter that I write to you from this camp. We do not know to which camp we shall go to, but I shall write to you as soon as I come there dear Anna.

Write often to me. If you write this address, then the letters come to me.

Camp Macarthur
Co. No. 13 A. R. D.

If we do not do so, then I shall write more beloved wife. You now ought to have a goodbye until the next time I write, and may the Lord bless you and help you to carry your heavy burden.

From your faithful husband Albert.

XXXXXXXXXX.

Letter of September 21, 1918

Camp Merritt, N. J. Sept. 20, 18

Dear wife Anna,

May now write some lines to you [about] that I am at Camp Merritt, N. J. We had a fine trip (sic) ere. Were on the way five days. Had plenty (sic) to eat. We came here in the evening at 5 o'clock. It is a fine place here.

Well beloved wife, how are you now. I feel well of course.

Dear wife, I do not have time to write more tonight. It is rather late now. I understand [that] you are lonely.

Beloved, well may to have a good night now beloved wife.

From your dear Albert. XXXXXX.

Address Co. 13, Camp Macarthur Texas
S. A. R. D.
Camp Merritt, N. J.

Letter of March 14, 1919

Camp Merritt, March 14, 1919

Dear wife,

[I] get to now send some lines and let you hear that I am healthy and hope that you are the same. Shall go from here to Camp Dodge in about a couple of days thus I may well have the opportunity to come home from there.

I hope that you are with life and health and many greetings to everyone from me.

G. A. Botman

Letters from Albert to Henry Backlund

Letter of September 21, 1918

Camp Merritt, N. J. Sept. 21, '18

Mr. Henry Backlund,

I now get to write some lines and let you know that I am now in New Jersey. We are equipped for overseas (sic). We got the remainder of our training (sic) when we came here. We still do not know anything still of where we shall go to, but this, of course, soon becomes [known].

I now get to ask you to take a hand with Anna. I understand that she does not ride further when she gets to hear this, but try to console her. I well believe that I shall also come home. Also see if you can that the house is not destroyed by frost in the winter. We are well equipped with clothing and everything other.

So we suffer of course [not] for a lack of anything. It is so hard for me for Anna's part, otherwise I am all right for now.

Close for this time with many greetings to you all, and may God help us all.

Thankfully,

Gustave A. Botman
13 Company Camp Macarthur, Texas
S. A. R. D.
Camp Merritt, New Jersey

Write often to me. Send [any letters] to this address if Anna is unable to. I shall write whenever I have the opportunity.