Brühl, 13 Jan. 1850

[Königslutter lies between Braunschweig and Helmstedt doesn't it. I myself have travelled not far from there.]

Dear Brother!

After much longing, I finally received your letter on the 12th of this month. It is nearly a year since we have written to each other. I always felt that you were angry at me because I did not frank [stamp] the letter to Aldesleben, but I could not believe that, now, the purpose of our writing is something from America, but it takes too much time to write about this, and careful investigation, and because you wanted to know how things went for me until now, so it was necessary to write a letter especially, which will tie you over until I can write more in detail, because I will travel for Carnival to Köln for a visit, and there I will inquire about everybody, therefore I must ask you if you must go away during Carnival, because of your affair at home you do not have to be at home on Carnival because things do not move as fast as you think, or I would have to write to you at Wiese. I must confess that they misunderstood me at home because of my departure, because in March I cannot, because I have no papers, these are in Köln with the police and if I pick them up, they will jail me for 4 or 5 years. I must try to bluff my way through, because the jam, dear brother, in which I am, you cannot imagine. I will now tell you my situation from the beginning.

[In margin of page]: Dear Brother, when you write to me, tell me the date of my letter to you at Aldesleben. I have a record of letters, but forgot to enter yours.

Last Spring, as you know, when the revolution began in Elberfeld, Düsseldorf, in the Palatinate, in Dresden, and in Baden, the Prussian National Guard (Landwehr) was ordered out, including me, but we invoked the Law of 1813, 14 & 15 which says that the Ntl. Guard shall be called out only when an enemy invades the land from outside Germany, and we got together before the order came (the order came on 15 March and on the 28th we were to report, but only 100 men at one time so that there would be no ruckus) and decided that no one should report, then came only 30 [?] men but I without gear because I did not want to, and imagine what scared sheeps heads they have in Köln, the first 100 men reported except for 10, and in Köln the Ntl. Guard is 10,000 men strong, if they all came as agreed, and said we do not want to--we invoked the Law--then it would have had results, but not so, later our 100 men reported with the others. I hoped that Baden would win, but unfortunately the other side was too strong, 4 weeks later a warrant of arrest went out after me. I left the house to find work, but had to stay out of sight, then the boss (Meister) sent me work for 6 weeks. I earned little, because I had to wait until some was sent to me. I would like to have gone to the Palatinate first, but the Meister held me back and said that he could not get a journeyman (Geselle) and was this my thanks for working 6 weeks for him away from home, and he could hire journeymen, and he thought that I had absconded with the work, and he did not give me any more work, then what could I do because I had no papers, and every boss asks for them. I helped an

[In margin of page]: Dear Brother, should you come home before I write again, and you pass through Nordhausen, please visit my brother and tell him my situation.

acquaintance some and wrote home for 5 dollars so that I could perhaps travel on a false passport to Ballenstädt (where I had worked once, and the police is good), but before the $5 arrived, I found work again, unfortunately only 4 weeks, but he did not ask for my papers because one of his journeymen had gotten sick, the boss had loaned him money on his belongings. I could have stayed a long time, but the man came back after 4 weeks and I had to leave, and I could not complain. In the meantime I received the money, loafed a few weeks, started drinking in my anger, paid my debts, and there was not much left after Ballenstädt, and I wrote home once more for 2 or 3 dollars, then got a job again in Brühl, between Köln and Bonn, where I still am. I told the boss that I had sent my papers home for an extension, and started working. In the meantime the letter from home arrived, it was addressed to an acquaintance, but I went to Köln only after 14 days and found the letter with 1 dollar, and for 10 dollars I was maligned, and Mother did not believe a single word on all I had said, just think how that hurt me, for this I had spent & eaten up 10 dollars, and paid $5 for the letter both ways, thus had left only $9[?]. I went home again and did some work, but had to remain very quiet, but finally the boss lost his patience waiting for my papers and said that he had to register me with the burgomeister, then I became scared, explained to him my situation. He is a good man and said, as long I do not get into a fight, he would keep me as long as he could, no one was happier than I. The man did most beautiful work for counts and aristocrats, and no children, only an angry wife, but I cannot complain and the wage is nearly the same as in Köln, however I have not done much etching (aufgestocken), but it is Winter, and one cannot earn very much, but now a new act, I received from Köln a fellow journeyman, a good friend of mine by name of Brassel, when he was working there a short while, he became alienated because of too much French leave, and the woman could not stand that, he was badly beaten with a stick, and when he left he asked me to loan him my jacket for a few days until he found work again. He was going to return it via the messenger woman, I would not have given it to him even if he had been my best friend, but he knew my whole story and he would have betrayed me, if I did not do it, but what now. I have not heard from him in 10 weeks. I had someone look him up and wrote to him that he was doing me wrong, and that he used my predicament and did not return my belongings, then 8 days before Christmas I finally received a letter from him, he apologized, and did not have a chance, because he did not work in Köln, but in Aachen, and during Carnival I should come to Köln, and he would come and will repay me for everything. I am only waiting to see if he will keep his word. I cannot sue him, or he will become a traitor, and now, dear brother, you can see how I have fared. I wrote the same story home, but I think that they believe I am lying. If you were here you could convince yourself. I will say nothing about all this until some other time, then I will tell you more. Now, I will wise

you up about Wilhelm Meyer, at home they have told you wrong, he is only a fellow journeyman and has curly hair just like Schmid [?], because I cannot trust to have a letter addressed to me, and the name Witschgasse No. 37 must not be shown, because that refers to Köln, Mr. Gar Witschgasse No. 37, there one can ask for me or write to me, but indirect. Concerning Friedrich at home that makes me happy if it is true. I wish I could arrive like that, then I would not have to go to America. Do you know something, dear brother, let us make pregnant a girl with 10,000 dollars, that would help us. I only wish that both of us could work together in a city, and you would see how much fun we would have. Perhaps, this may become possible soon. I only hope for (amnesty or pardon by the King for all escapees) so that I could get my papers, and I would immediately come to you. The new revolution which will surely come in February or March will bring all this about, then I will get back my 1/2 acre land on the Sauborn [?] which the police confiscated, or better took from me, until I give myself up and that I will not do. I hope for revenge [?] when I do not get my acre back and if there is no amnesty or pardon, then what will I do, then I would have only $20, with that I can do little, because I have few clothes and the voyage to America costs at least $40 including food & service. Let's not break out heads over this, when the time comes there will be a solution, but I give you the assurance that if things do not change by the end of March in our favor, we will have to arrange to be in Rotterdam or in Le Havre from where the principal liners sail for America, we'll have to take along plenty of canvas and brushes [?] because they are expensive over there. Well, all will fall into place upon the departure--more of this at Carnival.

As regards the receipt from home, they should have it by then, but I think that just as I have to trust to receipt the money without having it in hand, they have to trust me that I will not demand the $6 twice; for keeping my word I have proven to Mother and Christel when I was home 1/2 year ago; enough, I will do it, but I am thinking that I may come home early Summer. I read much the papers & everything leads to the conclusion that the new and complete revolution is standing outside the door, and I will be in it with whole heart; also I must comment on what you write, that I am afraid of the big water, don't believe it, because its immaterial to me if I drown in the water or perish in the revolution, or freeze to death in the snow when I am drunk, once I am sick & tired of everything I don't care, but I hope for the best. I don't know what to write home, you can spell it out for them how I'm doing. You can rely on that I will go to Köln for Carnival, and that I will advise you immediately, also I am very sorry that cousin Hilpert will be jailed, he may be as he wants to be, he is a man of the people, a democrat, and if they lock up half of humanity, the sooner things will blow up, because everybody feels keenly the loss of one of his family.

Now then, dear brother, I have to close in the hope that you will be satisfied for the time being with these lines, until I write again, but if you wish you can answer me in 8 days, otherwise 8 days after Carnival you'll have another letter from me.

Many greetings, remain healthy until an early "Wiedersehen." I remain your faithful Brother August Hilpert.

The address is at the shoemaker Mr. Hoffmann, to be delivered to Wilhelm Meyer, Brühl, County Köln.

[In margin of page]: I gave this letter to the post office on 20 January.

A few verses to freedom

Melody: Auf zum frohlichen Jagen (On to happy hunting)

(The day of revenge will come
Ref. -(Truly it will come for the just cause
(For our suffering and pain
Then truth will tell who was for and with us,
And all the scoundrels will become apparent
Then we did not suffer in vain for freedom
And not fought in vain the battle for right & light

Refrain

Summer matures the seeds of Spring
Hence June follows March and June came and brings us action.

(Melody: Marseillaise)

The heart longs for fresh deeds
May your clouds pile up black
May the storm bring us lightning on lightning
May thunderbolts of revenge strike the unrevenged disgrace
The new rebellion! the total rebellion!
March, march, march, march
March and even to the death!
And our flag is red!

Translated by Werner Hahne,
Olympia, Washington, 2 March 1977