[Letter, J. B. Lancamp [sp.?] to Christoph Sawall, Dec. 25, 1863, translated by Werner Hahne]

Pleasant Hill, Cedar Co.
Iowa, Dec. 25, 1863

Mr. Christoph Sawall

Dear Friend!

For a long time I was willing to write, but when one once comes to write, it goes as the preacher says as with the conversion, nothing comes of it. Today is Christmas and in case you are with Wm Krüger or John Leidig and drink a 1/4 lagerbeer, I would like to be there. Here almost everything is religious, and praying a craft, and thus one has to do likewise. Here, on a Sunday when one goes on a hunt or into a beerhouse, then one would be considered 1/2 way to Hell. Abstainers there are none, they all like to drink lagerbeer, but Sunday is holy. My neighbor Wm Smith has a crock usually hidden [page 2] in a hollow tree. He must not take it into the house. The ladies cannot stand the odor, and when we are thirsty all we have to do is watch him and find the crock. The nearest and best beerhouse is in Rochester at the German John[s] 6 miles from here; but the whole village is ceseeh [cesesh] and Copperheads and us Black Republicans must not go into it without weapons. But we are much afraid. The Copperheads give us here much grief and trouble. On the 1st of January I will begin my office and will have numerous difficulties; but no fear.

Last summer was very dry and almost no rain. However the harvest was quite good. I harvested a total of 1,200 bushels of corn, wheat was not very good, oats good. Potatoes good. Everything here is expensive. Oats 60 to 65 cents. Potatoes 60 to 80 cents. [page 3] I have in my fence 38 pigs, all of which (with the exception of 4 pigs) weight 300 lbs and over, and 3 will hold 400 lbs. I have 2 horses, one Daniel and the other Jenny, a mare with filly. My wife's sister from Ohio sold out over there and will come and stay with us next summer.

I received your money through Mr. Tripp and say many thanks for it. Tell Wilhelm Krüger that he should pay us more interest and no further monies to Mr. Tripp. He is no longer my agent and will likely leave Sauk City soon. I do not need the money now and do not know what to start with it. Here it would bring 10 percent. But I would rather have it in Wisconsin. I would rather have preferred if you had kept yours. Now, one more request; to write to me a long letter very soon and with much news.

[page 4] Where is August Schweizberger, is he dead? How is Mrs. Kelly, the Irishwoman? Where lives Franz Haas in Iowa [?]. How is the

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Vetterman? C. Buche, Fritz Schulz, Wm Krüger? How is Andreas and the wooden cannons? Fredrich and the old Sawall [?].

Many greetings to old acquaintances and, especially to you and wife and children, these wishes from his heart.

Your old friend,

J. B. Lancamp

[Postscript] Excuse my bad writing because I have not written a word of German in almost 2 years, and spoken very little. There lives a Hoffman here 3 miles away. I will visit him on New Years. I wish that he is similar to our Hoffman.