

DorleLettersA L0002 (English)

Mt. Baker, Washington Vancouver May 20, '59

Dear Mother and siblings! I wish you a very happy Easter! Do you also have spring weather like we have here in Vancouver? Everything is already in bloom, although today we are on Mt. Baker. Here we have 3-4 meters of snow. We are sitting in our cottage now, reading and writing. Wilma, a nice Austrian woman, is just telling us about Australia, about sharks and kangaroos. Because of the hot summer (summer there is in December, of course), the snakes have multiplied so much that they are quite a plague. In some areas of Australia, you always have to check your bed in the evening to see if there are any snakes in it. It can happen that they crawl up to you at night; you find them often. Well, I don't know if we would complain about that. The entire ocean around Australia is full of sharks. The beach is usually separated by a fence underneath, which the sharks cannot get through. Sometimes, however, during a storm, one breaks through. In the surf, you can see the sharks when they come, and then a siren blows, and everyone runs out of the water. Wilma has turned her sights from Australia to Germany and inquired there whether she could work as a domestic help. And of all places, she wrote to Konstanz. She will go there next year. I will give her your address then, and she will surely visit you sometime. Or maybe you'll need a domestic help then. In Australia, in Melbourne, she has many German friends, also speaks some German, and would like to get to know Germany and its people sooner by living with a family. Three other Australian women are already going to Europe this summer; they might visit you too, hopefully you don't mind. But I know how nice it is when you go somewhere foreign and have an address in your pocket. If I ever go to Australia, I'll also have many addresses there where I can go, and they will know me from pictures. In England, too, I now have so many people I can visit. At the end of April, a few of us want to climb to the peak of Mt. Baker. It is 10,800 feet high. We'll have to spend one night up there below the summit in an ice cave. The person leading it is a German; he gave ski instruction for 12 years in the Wehrmacht. Dear Mutti, when I received your letter, I knew right away that this was it, without even opening it. I was very happy about it. I am always very happy when a letter comes from you. I am sending you a few pictures. I hope they are good. The one of the factory is not so good. The factory is located in a residential area, surrounded by a large park. The work is very factory-like and mechanized. One from our group is a good amateur photographer; he has now given me a lot of pictures. Now I am making paper prints from slides and, conversely, slides from negatives. If only one had more time. We finally climbed Mt. Baker last Sunday. The weather was glorious and also very warm in the sun. The last stretch below the summit is not so easy, a rather steep ice wall. At the top, we had to cut steps with an ice axe. The view from the summit (4000 meters high) was one of a kind. On the descent, we then slid down with the rope. I acted as the guinea pig and let myself fall, and the others had to catch me. One of our group is one of the best climbers in B.C. He has made many first ascents, also in the Alps. Very warm greetings, Greetings to Christel from Doph.