

1164 ~~1125~~  
Route 1, Birch Run, Michigan,  
February 11, 1920.

*myself*  
My dear Mr. President:--

Not wishing to rob you of your valuable time, I have hitherto refrained from pleading my case with you myself. But possibly, a few words will not displease you.

Last spring you kindly obtained me a leave of absence for one year with a salary reduced to \$1200. I knew very well that one year would not be sufficient, and both Mr. Cutting and Mr. Freund told me they were under the impression that you regarded this arrangement as purely temporary.

Unfortunately, the beneficial effects of a stay in the country, which I had experienced in former years, did not come, neither the year before last during my summer vacation, nor in the nine months that have passed now. We cannot afford any help whatever for my wife. On the contrary, she has been doing a considerable amount of sewing for others in order to earn a little, not to speak at all of the fact that she herself is making almost every thing both she and her four boys are wearing. Now, also her health is extremely poor and she has always been very delicate. So I have to assist her, continually and to a very large extent, with the housework and the children. In order to save, I made nearly all the wood we have used hitherto from dead or dying limbs and branches which I sawed off from the sorely neglected orchard trees of our neighbor and from pine roots I picked up in his fields. Both of these I got for nothing. In addition, there are a thousand and one jobs to do around the house. For another man all of this might mean very little, apart from the great loss of time. But for me it is suicide. I will be fifty next April, and ~~the~~ fully three decades of an insidious nervous disorder, which has robbed me of more than half of my life and work, together with the many long years of continual and cruel fight with strength-sapping economic conditions, have made of me a man much older than my years. Any physical exertion whatever, let alone such a great amount of it as I am forced to undergo, exhausts and weakens me fearfully. To make matters worse, I cannot have a room to myself, but ~~we~~ must be together all the time with the nerve-racking noise of my four little boys. In short, I am going to pieces, physically and mentally, notwithstanding the obstinate battle I am waging not to go under entirely.

A change in the state of my health can only come with a change in the conditions under which I have to live. Fortunately, both my wife and I are modest in our demands upon life. If you kindly extend my leave of absence indefinitely (say, until the time when I will be entirely strong enough to resume my duties as a teacher), and if you ~~do not allow~~ my salary ~~is not~~ to be reduced below its present size, or, (should you prefer such an arrangement) if you kindly procure me a pension for life yielding the same

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amount, this would lift us out of the worst of the incessant worry about the future which is fearfully detrimental both to my wife and me. Above all, the great apprehension would be mitigated which we naturally will feel in going to Switzerland. And go we must. We intend to leave about the end of March. For some time we could stay with my father-in-law in Pontresina. Then we would live in some cheap place in Switzerland. My wife could, at least, get a woman to do the washing and scrubbing. For real life, even in these changed days, is still cheaper over there than in our country, and the cost of living, in all probability, will continue to decrease in most European countries, while such prospects are small in America. But we may mistake in this matter. One thing is sure, the all-important one for the present:—both my wife and I will get some rest, at least for a time.

On two former occasions you have granted us a helpful sum out of a certain fund at your disposal for such emergencies. Could you kindly assist us to pay our trip to Switzerland, which will cost about \$1000 in these times of high prices? We have sold our furniture in Chicago (here we have little and it is of small value) and scraped together about half of the sum.

Yours respectfully,

J. J. Meyer.

March.

With best wishes to yourself and Mrs. Meyer, I am,

Very truly yours,

Mr. J. J. Meyer,  
Route 1, Birch Run,  
Michigan.

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Dear Mr. Meyer:

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*R. F. Meyer*

ON

February 21, 1920

Dear Mr. Meyer:

Your favor of the 11th instant came while I was away from the city. I regret to hear that you have not made the progress which I had hoped your present arrangements would make possible. It seems to me quite likely that on the whole it would be better for you and your family to be in Switzerland and that you might look forward with more hope to regaining your health there. I will see what arrangements can be made in the way of providing for transportation and will recommend to the Board of Trustees renewal of your allowance. In case of physical disability it is the custom of the Board to make an allowance from year to year while the disability continues. Of course we hope that in your case it may not be permanent. I will communicate with you again when I can get matters arranged. You may expect to hear from me early in March.

With best wishes to yourself and Mrs. Meyer, I am,

Very truly yours,

Mr. J. J. Meyer,  
Route 1, Birch Run,  
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With best wishes to yourself and Mrs. Meyer, I am,

Very truly yours,

Mr. J. J. Meyer,  
Route 1, Birch Run,  
Michigan.

attach to Meyer letter

The University of Chicago Law School

ERNST FREUND

PROFESSOR OF LAW

CHICAGO

Febr 23 1920

Matter of J. J. Meyer

Dear President Judson,

I have seen Mr. Holmger. He is no longer Swiss Consul, but is interested in the Meyers and knows them. He advises their return strongly, & does not foresee any difficulties regarding food.

I understand the Meyers propose to go about the beginning of April.

Yours very truly

Ernst Freund

10

1890

Hand-drawn sketches of a circle and a curve.

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March 16, 1920

Dear Mr. Meyer:

I shall recommend to the Board of Trustees that they continue your disability allowance for another year. The Auditor will send you a check for \$1000 which will cover, I think, your traveling expenses to Switzerland. I hope you may find the change advantageous to yourself.

Very truly yours,

Mr. J. J. Meyer,  
Route 1, Birch Run,  
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HPJ:JN

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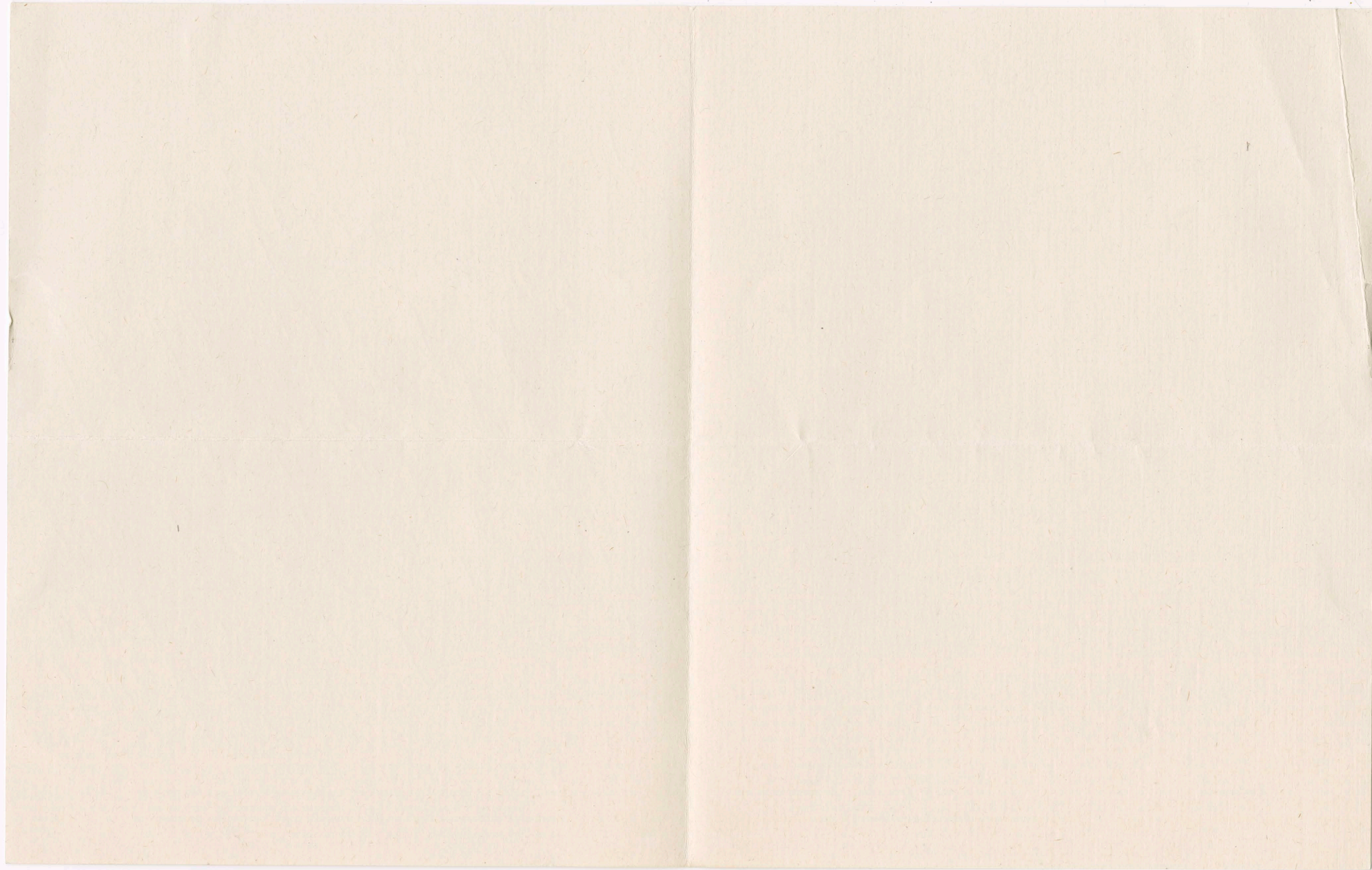
Route 1, Birch Run, Mich.; March 23, 1920

President Judson  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. President:—

Your kind letter of March 16  
came a few days and the check  
for \$1000.<sup>00</sup> yesterday. Your  
generosity far surpasses our  
fondest expectations. We thank  
you a thousand times.

Yours most respectfully,  
J. J. Meyer.



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
ELLIS AVENUE AND FIFTY-EIGHTH STREET

The University of Chicago

FOUNDED BY JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

The Board of Trustees

January 25,

1923

XIV

*file*

President Harry Pratt Judson,  
University of Chicago.

Dear Mr. President:

*DM*

Mr. Freund has just been in the office making inquiries concerning the disability allowance to Mr. John Jacob Meyer. Mr. Meyer is still in Germany, still incapacitated, unable to earn money and Mr. Freund is hoping that the University will continue the allowance of \$1,200 another year at least. He thinks that eventually the son who is now fifteen or sixteen years of age will be able to support his father, but at present he is unable so to do. I presume that if you approve it you will want to bring the matter to the February Board meeting.

Very truly yours,

*J. H. Drakerson*  
Secretary.

The University of Chicago

FOUNDED BY JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

The Board of Trustees

January 27

1923

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
215 AVENUE AND FORTY-SECOND STREET

President Henry Ford, Dearborn,

University of Chicago,

Dear Mr. President:

Mr. Freund has been in the office making

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Very truly yours,

Secretary.

215 Victoriastrasse, Chur, April 4th, 1924.

My dear Mr. President:

On account of a nerve trouble of long standing, I finally had to give up my position as Assistant Professor of German in the University of Chicago in June 1918, sixteen years before the pension age. But in view of the economic pressure under which I always had to labor, the University granted me a yearly stipend of 1200 and since then has renewed it every year. So, unfortunately, I have to beg you kindly to have it renewed ~~it~~ also this spring or summer. The present allowance expires next September.

I have four boys, the eldest eighteen years old and the youngest ten, all of them in school, the eldest not to be through before five years from next fall. My wife is afflicted with a very serious heart trouble which is getting worse and worse, and suffering from other ailments. So we have to have a servant all the time and pay a lot to doctors and druggists. In addition, eatables and many other things are very expensive in Switzerland since the war. So we find it very hard to make both ends meet. Still if my allowance is continued we can manage to live. Without it we could not.

Regarding myself I am happy to say that three years ago I could again take up my research work as a Sanskritist. For eight years previous to this I had to be completely idle, apart from the eight hours of instruction a week which I dragged on for my four last years in Chicago. A rather voluminous work of mine is now being printed in Leipzig. I hope to finish this and to have others follow although the prospects are cloudy now since I had a nervous breakdown two months ago.

Teaching has always been extremely exhausting for me. Simply to speak is such a fearful strain on my nerves that I am obliged to live as a recluse and can hardly ever go to see a friend even in the day time, let alone evenings. A visit of an hour or two almost invariably is followed by days and days of misery. A limited amount of work, all alone in my study, is the only thing I am capable of, although only by dint of hard fighting. Two years ago I instructed one of my boys together with his cousin in Latin for a few months only two hours a week. ~~But~~ I found that this was entirely too much for me. But I hope that I will be permitted to continue my work as a scholar and in this way be of service also to the University.

Yours most respectfully,

J. J. Meyer.

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Wm. H. ...  
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