

Translation Letter A – English

¹No 28th letter

Dear children Renate and Johannes Dyck and you nine dear grandchildren,

First of all, a warm greeting from all of us from far away. May the dear faithful heavenly God grant that these written lines find you dear ones in good health. We thank that same God that we are all in good health. We are in Solikamsk² with Heinrich³. I, Maria⁴, Katharina⁵ and their girls⁶ also came here earlier. Only God knows how we will fare here. I don't think it will be good, everything is so extremely expensive and we have spent our little money traveling second class, which was very nice, we had our own room. We could sleep peacefully, but it cost a lot. We have become too poor for that. From Samara I sent a postcard to you dear ones, which told you that our dear daughter Helene's⁷ little Anna⁸ died on the journey underway to Kazakhstan, and the little corpse had to be handed out the window. Was a very cute girl, always cheerful. I and Tina took care of her a lot in Ostenfeld⁹, we enjoyed it very much. She is well taken care of (in heaven), better than it was¹⁰. In one day her Johannes died in the morning and in the evening Hermann Esau's¹¹ Jacob¹², and later still when we were still at home came a telegram from Gerhard¹³, which said that the dear, dear daughter Helene¹⁴ has died. Probably due to meager food and grief and heartache, such as I experienced¹⁵. It was very hard for me, almost wanted to break my heart, but when I think about it, I am glad that she is finally released from this misery. I hope she has blessedly gone home having endured this school of suffering and is no longer tormented. I no longer have to wonder how dear Helene will fare with her little children, who are now in good hands. From Joh. Franzen's¹⁶ letter I know Peter¹⁷ is also said to be ill, whether he is still alive I do not know. Waiting for a letter from Gerhard¹⁸, about when dear Helene departed.

¹ Willi Frese. This letter Peter Mathies (1851-1934) (GRANDMA #109037) writes to the family of his daughter Renate Mathies (1885-1963) (GRANDMA #168775) and her husband Johannes Dyck (1885-1948) (GRANDMA #168774)

² Willi Frese.

<https://www.google.de/maps/place/Solikamsk,+Region+Perm,+Russland/@59.6575778,52.24785,6z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x43edc3988d771dd7:0x1def8cd3dcb39af4!8m2!3d59.6720331!4d56.7557669>

³ Willi Frese. Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

⁴ Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

⁵ Willi Frese. Katharina Mathies (1883-1953) (GRANDMA #1196403)

⁶ Willi Frese. Her daughters = Daughters of Katharina Anna (1906-1937) (GRANDMA #1196413) und Käthe (1910-1985) (GRANDMA #1196414)

⁷ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

⁸ Willi Frese. Anna Mathies (1930-1931) (GRANDMA #982317)

⁹ Willi Risto. waited a lot = took care of them

¹⁰ Willi Risto. als sie gut dort waren= besser als es ihnen da gut ging/ besser als es ihnen dort (in der alten Heimat) gut ging
When they were well there = better than it was there for them / better than it was for them there (in their old homeland)

¹¹ Willi Frese. Hermann Esau (1884-1932) (GRANDMA #346672)

¹² Willi Frese. Jacob Esau (1928-1931) (GRANDMA #982314)

¹³ Willi Frese. Probably Gerhard Esau (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347042)

¹⁴ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

¹⁵ Willi Risto. so hingesiecht= expression that means he got progressively sicker

¹⁶ Alex Wiens. Probably Johannes Franzen (22.04.1897-12.01.1958), there is no GM. Nr. 99 in the Karaganda list:

<https://amtrakt.de/karagandaliste/>

¹⁷ Willi Risto. Peter Esau (20.12.1927 - 27.09.1931), (GRANDMA #982315) he was the oldest child of Gerhard und Helene Esau; he died a few days after falling ill. When Helene died he was still alive

¹⁸ Willi Risto. Willi Frese. Gerhard Esau (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347042)

Received a letter from Khiva [Uzbekistan] from P¹⁹. who writes from there that 12 children were buried in one day in Kazakhstan. Of those that died I know: Big Jakob D. Fröse²⁰, Joh. Penner, Hein. Neufeld²¹, Aunt Gerhard Wall²², Mrs. Jakob Neufeld²³. Aunt Gerhard Wall was still so spry in Ostenfeld, told me, she might perhaps celebrate her golden wedding anniversary - and is now also above.

As I learn here, help is to be brought from Germany to the dear suffering brothers and sisters there. Yes, God should have mercy on them, that it may be true, otherwise they will all perish. One sooner, the other later. Heinrich Wall²⁴, Gerhard Wall²⁵ went there, wanted to bring his parents back. There is a certain Holzer here in town, his daughter was brought here from there. A girl of 18 years, very ill, so emaciated, lies here in the hospital, seriously ill.

I want to tell you something more about the trip. Went quite well at first, just slow. Peter Fröse, who accompanied us to Saratov, took us on something like a steamboat. Cargo at each station. Half of Russia wanted to load (cargo), and thus lost a lot of time. In Wolsk²⁶ it stopped for almost one day. A thousand tons of cement were loaded. The ship went only to Samara, there we had to change.

Letter A Page 2

On another ship from Monday evening to Thursday morning we were taken to Samara. On the second ship it went faster, also on the third ship it went well, we went up to Perm, from there up the Kama²⁷, on the 4th ship km we only had 3rd class. In Perm²⁸ we also had to wait one day, no ship was there. Finally, one came and we finally arrived at Solikamsk, the city is 6 versts²⁹ away from Kontor³⁰. In the evening, when we were already on the ship in Saratov, Fröse was supposed to send a telegram to Heinrich that we were coming. Whether he did or not, we contributed the money for it, nothing more is known about it. Only so much: Heinrich had remained without news and not at the cantor and we had to go through a lot of sad experiences. We had to spend the night in the cantor, and Maria's sandals were lost.

In the morning there was no cart to be had, so Maria wanted to go to town to rent one from there. I did not give my consent. Everything is foreign, the whole area there is unknown. But she went anyway and I stayed with

¹⁹ Willi Frese. Peter Mathies (1902-1943) (GRANDMA #1196411)

²⁰ Alex Wiens. Jakob Fröse (1870-1931) (GRANDMA #464093)

²¹ Alex Wiens. Heinrich Neufeld (1905-1931), (GRANDMA #1409612). Nr. 199 in the Karaganda list:

<https://amtrakt.de/karagandaliste/>

²² Willi Frese. Tante Gerhard Wall=Anna Penner (1862-1931) (GRANDMA #4911)

²³ Alex Wiens. Probably Witwe Jakob Neufeld - Katharina Neufeld, nee Janzen (1871-1931), (GRANDMA #1398264). Mother of Heinrich Neufeld. Nr. 200 in the Karaganda list

²⁴ Willi Frese. Heinrich Wall (1901-1942) (GRANDMA #1006967)

Alex Wiens. In the family chronicle of Gerhard Wall it's written this: Heinrich Wall (13.10.1897-1943). I believe that these are the more exact dates.

²⁵ Willi Risto. Gerhard Wall (1856-1936) (GRANDMA #426078)

²⁶ Willi Risto. Wolsk.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Wolsk,+Oblast+Saratow,+Russland/@52.0477288,47.3069076,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x416b9ec616833bab:0xa4254097fba204ca!8m2!3d52.0497458!4d47.3692703>

²⁷ Willi Risto. Kama=a river

²⁸ Willi Frese. Perm.

<https://www.google.de/maps/place/Perm,+Region+Perm,+Russland/@58.0192548,55.9540411,10z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x43e8c6e1d886f20b:0x9b4aca02b87a8a0e!8m2!3d58.0091683!4d56.2269674>

²⁹ Willi Risto. Werst= old Russian length measurement. Werst [верста]. 1 верста is approximately 1066,9 Meter.

³⁰ Willi Risto. Kontor=Administration building, in this case it's probably from the river port

our luggage, it was too heavy to carry for 6 versts. I did not have a watch, it may have been 3 o'clock, there was a driver for a cart and a Russian wanted to rent it. I could also go with him for 10 rubles. And if, as I said, I met my daughter halfway, could load the things on her cart and pay 5 rubles. Asked if there was only one way to the city from here, said yes and so I agreed to this. I would have to meet dear Maria then. We came closer and closer to the city and nothing and nobody was to be found. I was already getting warm and cold. We entered the city. Where to?

From the German people (person) Holzer I knew nothing, he was supposed to drive me somewhere in the (to a) farmhouse. Didn't know either, I wanted to leave my stuff somewhere with someone. But the people here are very unfriendly to their fellow man, one sent me upstairs, the other downstairs and no small spot for my things. Asked in several houses, at last I was so tired, I put the things down by the gate, carried them into the yard and paid them off. It was the farm where Heinrich had been for a while. I told them(this), thinking they would take pity on me. All the pleas were in vain. I could not leave the luggage, then everything would be stolen from me. By chance a cart driver came into the yard. I asked him what he would take to drive me there and back to the counting house (Kontor) with the things and then back to the city. I said that I had lost my daughter. It was unnecessary to drive the stuff back and forth, but nothing could be done. He agreed and drove, came to the Kontor, but no trace, but on the way back it had already become dark. Where to stay now? Squeezed out many a sigh. Oh, if you were again in Waluyewka with your suffering brothers and sisters, even if in the cold shed there would be compassion was among us. And here nothing of it. Nothing could be done. At last, we found such a farmhouse. Large room where many sleep. Iron bed, pad and pillow for 40 kopeks ; put the things next to my bed. The trip there and back cost me 10 rubles, I think I can thank Fröse for that. With all that I was very tired, I could not sleep. Where is dear Maria? In the morning I wanted to give my things to the landlord for safekeeping. It can stay here, but we won't take good care of it. What should I do? I took a chance. I wanted to go to the market to see if I could meet Maria or German people,

Letter A page 3

3. and really it also succeeded soon. A German man came up to me and said that he had already seen my daughter. Heinrich³¹ had gone away to town and was with Maria³² at the woodcutter's. Heinrich lives 3 versts behind the town in the Russian village of Garatishva³³. Garatishwa, a pretty name, but not a pretty village, a real Russian nest. The German man went ahead of me and showed me dear Maria and Heinrich. You can imagine how great the joy was, and I was especially happy to have found them again. Dear Maria thanked my gracious God for the speedy and miraculous help, then all three of us went to the farmhouse and fetched our stuff; it was still all there, and carried it to the German people Holzer. Heinrich and Maria went to town to visit the Isaac girls, they work here in town. Monthly wage for Anna³⁴ is 35 and Käthe³⁵ 30 rubles. I stayed in the quarters at the Holzer. Towards evening we set out on the way to the village. At first there were paths, but when we went through the forest, there were many swamps and instead of boards, 2-3-4 round uneven logs (Knüppel) over it, so that it was almost not possible to get over it. Especially for an old (fellow like me). We arrived happily at Tina³⁶. She was alone at home, knew nothing about our coming, nothing at all. It was a joy, but at night, when we slept, I thought a lot about our homeland which has become dear to us. We have been there for over 61 years. Have experienced joy and sorrow there and here? Even though I have only

³¹ Willi Risto. Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

³² Willi Risto. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

³³ Willi Risto. Gorodischtsche

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Gorodishche,+Region+Perm,+Russland,+618502/@59.6691335,56.8489896,1583m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x43edc10d65d2f6e7:0x1beb126c5aebb593!8m2!3d59.669645!4d56.8560398>

³⁴ Willi Risto. Anna Isaak (1906-1937) (GRANDMA #1196413)

³⁵ Willi Risto. Käthe Isaak (1910-1985) (GRANDMA #1196414)

³⁶ Willi Risto. Katharina Mathies (1883-1953) (GRANDMA #1196403)

been here a short time, there is nothing for us, everything has to be bought and it is so outrageously expensive. Little money, no income, how will this end and we help the dear children to devour the last of the expensive bread. The bread is bought in the city, but it is not always available for everyone. I think maybe it weighs 5 kilos. It costs 6 rubles now, black bread made of coarse flour. If we would have given such bread to our workers and then not given them Schmieres [butter or lard?], they would have thrown it at us and we are actually very happy when we can get one of these. The schmier...st [spread]. is very, very thin, some lard, the main thing [only] is to sprinkle salt on it and it tastes good. I don't know how I have such an appetite for food when I'm old, when I'm not working. (I do) nothing but go to the forest and fetch firewood. Heinrich often goes to town. Have already bought [firewood] here in the village, for 40 rubles, but haven't used any of it yet. Making fire [firewood] would be difficult here. It would have to be sleds. The Russians here do not give transportation, not even for money. And if we bought one, we have no feed for sale for us. It would perhaps go like with the 3 cows in Joh. Schmid cottage, taken away and done with it. We may just grab ahold of what we want, are always firm. I bought here in the village 7 small buckets of potatoes, at 1 ruble. Nice thick yellow beets, at 5 beets for 10 kopeks. We would have liked to rent quarters in the city, but neither money nor good words will get this for us. It would be much more convenient, in the city Heinrich would not always have to walk so far and our three girls, who have rented quarters there and come home on Saturday evenings and have to go on duty Sunday evenings, would also find it much easier, would not always have to walk so far. Yes, my dears, it is hard for me that my youngest daughter³⁷ and the two grandchildren³⁸ have to earn their bread and help feed us and because everything is so expensive, and will not be enough. Maria has a salary³⁹ of 30 rubles, others still help 15 rubles a month, in total 45 rubles. Today a lot of snow is coming down and then probably frost. Please greet Joh. Isaac⁴⁰ and Froese⁴¹ very much. Have here already good sledding track, frost still little.

Letter A page 4

Anna already in the third month a. 35 rubles and some gifts too and Käthe had lost her job, was there 2 months. Germans from Hanover, (where she works) there is not enough room for a maid to sleep. Could just work there during the day and no quarters for her to be put up. With the quarters it's a bad situation, because fresh immigrants keep arriving here and all are looking for an apartment. As Anna's boss told her, a hundred more families from Germany are coming. They need space. Our quarters are not the best. I don't think I'll make it through here, too cold. Upon arrival, up 7 steps, then it goes down 7 steps and down below not everything is walled, just built of logs, no double windows. Last year in Ostenfeld the Selinki⁴² went down 4 steps, is much warmer, doesn't have such a draft. I am also already very afraid of the cold, but what can I do. I believed at the beginning here still for your letter. Perhaps the good Lord will give you⁴³ another place, or he will do it with you⁴⁴ as he did with dear Helene⁴⁵. I would be old enough already. The Psalmist says: our life lasts 70 years and when it comes up, it is 80 years (and mine is now already 81) and if it has been precious, so also the toil and labor and like in the speed of wind, so time has passed⁴⁶. When I think back to my childhood

³⁷ Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

³⁸ Willi Frese. Anna (1906-1937) (GRANDMA #1196413) und Käthe (1910-1985) (GRANDMA #1196414)

³⁹ Willi Risto. Kosein=хозяин (Russian), Landlord, proprietor, master

⁴⁰ Alex Wiens. John Isaac (1889-1971), (GRANDMA #173328)

⁴¹ Alex Wiens. Presumably David Fröse (1896-1981), (GRANDMA #1079814)

⁴² Willi Risto. Selinki. Eventuell землянки? (Russisch)=Erdhütte

⁴³ Willi Risto. Gives you. Peter Mathies means himself gibt dir.

⁴⁴ Willi Frese. He can die

⁴⁵ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

⁴⁶ Willi Risto. Psalm 90,10: For all our days pass under thy wrath, our years come to an end like a sigh. The years of our life our threescore and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

and youthful years, time passes so quickly that this old (man) stands with his feet in the grave. And that would be best for me, if I were only in it, could blessedly die, what should I still do here, as already mentioned, to help the dear children eat away the expensive bread. They are still hoping, but what should I hope for? Only for death and the grave.

My dear grandfathers - from father's side was Claas Mathies, 77 years, 2 months and 24 days, from mother's side Peter Wall, 80 years, 9 months and 4 days - have already outstripped both and am never like some, for example Otto Töws was strong and young and as P⁴⁷. writes, already buried in Khiva. Peter helped to carry him to the grave. I spent a summer with Franz Mathies helping him (with work). Slept together in one room, ate at one table. He was strong and quite affectionate. I liked this young man. When the news came from there, he first had typhoid fever, but then was getting better. He lay in the bolnice⁴⁸ for a long time. But probably he overexerted himself too early, relapsed and that was his death. He was only 21 years old.

As P. writes, [the] young Gus. Töw⁴⁹'s preacher held a collection⁵⁰ there for our suffering brothers and sisters in Khiva and received 814 rubles. Also (writes) that Johannes Funk⁵¹ has already arrived with his family. They have already married off two daughters⁵² there. They are better off than we are. The Funk's have taken many things with them, even the mangle⁵³(iron press).

Bernhard Wall is said to have moved into the church cottage. He was at first in Johannes Bergmann's. Shortly before we left, these people were exiled⁵⁴ preacher Jacob Penner, Abraham Klassen, formerly Hohendorf, and Cornelius Siebert⁵⁵. Whether to be with the others, or to [another] place, we have not yet learned.

Heinrich Schmidt has resigned from the preaching ministry. Consequently, we are left with (Ältester) Elder Cornelius Nickel and Preacher Johannes Toews⁵⁶ Fresenheim. And with two locations with time it will be too hard for the men. And when the holidays come, too much is required of the good men. [I] believe to have noted that in the postcard.

Letter A page 5

From Khiva, Peter mentions that it is also not so quiet there anymore. The cars⁵⁷ drive through a lot, also one of theirs was arrested, but released again. In the nearby Sarten⁵⁸ villages, once I think 27 men, another time 7 men were shot dead kosein. They, the inhabitants of Khiva also fear that it can happen as it did with us at Am Trackt. I think not so bad. They are wealthy people there now, but they acquired everything themselves, not through others, or with servants, which is our big crime here. Yes dear children, when I think back to the past, I believe I always treated my workers as human beings and [I] also don't think that I not asked too much of them. And also, that the food was good and plentiful. And now something like this comes? We must have sinned, because now we are punished too harshly. When I think of dear old neighbor Heinrich Neumann, who

⁴⁷ Willi Frese. Presumably Peter Mathies (1902-1943) (GRANDMA #1196411)

⁴⁸ Willi Frese. Bolnize=Krankenhaus (Russian)

⁴⁹ Willi Fese. Possibly Gustav Töws (GRANDMA #1310367)

⁵⁰ Willi Risto. Collected for Kaschstan

⁵¹ Willi Risto. (1883-1938) (GRANDMA #1310370)

⁵² Willi Frese. Maria Funk (GRANDMA #1310368) and Anna Funk (GRANDMA #1310320)

⁵³ Willi Risto. Laundry press <https://westfalen.museum-digital.de/object/2007>

⁵⁴ Willi Risto. Exiled = forcibly relocated

⁵⁵ Willi Frese. Possibly Cornelius Siebert (1884-1938) (GRANDMA #1253844)

⁵⁶ Alex Wiens. Johannes Töws (1869-1937), (GRANDMA #1014885)

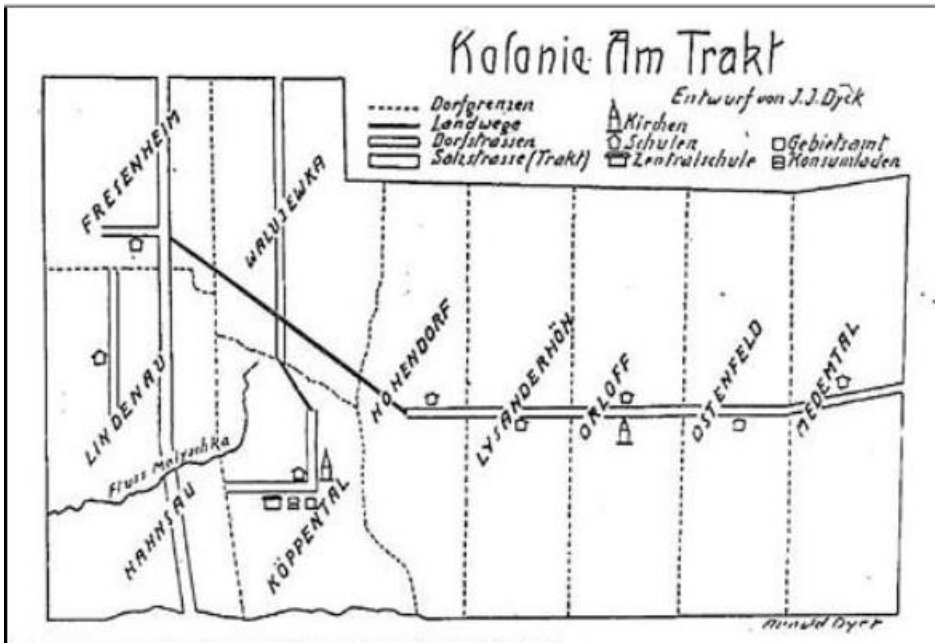
⁵⁷ Willi Risto. The cars = the black cars of the Secret Police NKWD NKWD, the so-called Black Ravens. Besides the NKWD hardly anyone owned a car

⁵⁸ Willi Risto. <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarten>

often said that was the fat quarter in the pig slaughter time, I have sometimes wondered about that expression. We had meat all year round, we also ate, but now my dears, I feel it. I miss the lard and liverwurst, ribs, Klopps (meatballs) and many other things. Last year, in Schmidt's cottage, we slaughtered a fattened piglet. That was something, a small joy, but now nothing at all, meat, butter costs here already from 9 to 12 rubles a pound, lard (there is) none at all, it's out of the question, if we get only bread scraps with enough salt, we can't thank God enough for that. We had enjoyed our good fortunes. When we came from playing and mama brought us some more of the goodies, oh, how nice it tasted, and now? O, one would like to lie in one's grave, that all thinking would come to an end. We must think of nothing, nothing, but that death puts an end to this heavy suffering. Our things 6 (things) Meste⁵⁹ have arrived here, but unfortunately a strange one and the best is missing, in which my Tulup⁶⁰ P.[eters?] Scherpan and 1 pound [?] wheat and 1 pud rye was not in it. Exchanging is so burdensome, because there is no wagon/cart to get. So maybe everything is lost then, we have to bring this back first. Oh, everything is so bad

Letter A page 6

It costs me many a sigh, here in the Garatishva [Gorodian] and I long to be back, even if it were in Waluyewka in the shed and Ambar⁶¹. I hope that they will have received a small warm place.



⁵⁹ Willi Risto. Possibly from the Russian место=6 pieces / places

⁶⁰ ⁶⁰ Willi Risto. Тулуп [Tulup] a long Fur coat with the fur on the inside, without lining.



⁶¹ Willi Frese. Ambar= barn (Russian)

Still no news from home. Waiting for it with pain, but they will write little, who would there be to [write]? They are glad to be rid of us.

I know nothing about the (package) Poszilki⁶², dear Johannes⁶³ to us, to Gerhard Wall. Heinrich⁶⁴ asked for his Poszilki, which you had wanted to send here, but it has not yet arrived. On November 17, Heinrich Isaak brought a letter from Fr. and one from you dear ones there, from the city. It was a great joy in our loneliness, for we are as if abandoned by God and man. I sometimes feel like that. I do not know how? A week before I received a letter from Khiva. In it writes of what I mentioned. Otto Töws is very ill, in the second letter dead and helped to carry him to the grave. And yes. Joh. Bergmann⁶⁵, Töws⁶⁶ son-in-law, should already be in Saratov. November 21 received a postcard from son-in-law Gerhard Esau⁶⁷. He writes that his son Johannes⁶⁸ died on August 27. And the dear, dear Helene⁶⁹ has come to harm and her legs were swollen. However, still hoped for recovery, but the 21 September, 10 o'clock in the evening, according to Fr. his letter, she died. Fell over and died. That was the day of dear Helene's death. The dear child. And on September 27, a week later, Gerhard writes, the very funny Peter⁷⁰ also died. Helene now has all her children with her and Gerhard is on the way back, waiting for the opportunity, but not told from where? He did not mention anything about the (package) Poszilki, that you sent him. God led this, but how difficult.

Letter A Page 7

The postcard from Gerhard is hard to read. According to it, Hermann⁷¹ and Margarethe⁷² Esau went to Aliata and he is waiting for the opportunity, but not from where home and not yet asked (for?) any papers⁷³, just looked up the (tickets) bilete⁷⁴. I almost believe that he is in (Kosakenstadt) Cossack city.

They have grown old, little Annachen⁷⁵ 11 months, 29 days, John⁷⁶ 2 years, 3 months, 22 days. Helene⁷⁷ 34 years, 7 months, 21 days. Peter⁷⁸ 3 years, 9 months and 7 days. The whole family is gone, that's saying something, still (must) stand firm. As experienced here, Mrs. Ja. Neufeld⁷⁹, Ostenfeld and Franz Dyck⁸⁰, Lysanderhöh, also died. Neufeld's business (possibly farm) died out. Dyck won't come to lie in the pretty churchyard and hopefully without a coffin. I am sorry that I, when I was there, I did not write down all tombstones (information) in my notebook, there are many and the names. One finds few such churchyards here and also not in Germany. And dear John, I can't report on who keeps the graves of your parents and grandparents clean. Didn't ask about it and now we are too far away.

Dear children, you write, I don't mention anything about the letter of July 22, 1931 and August 14, 1931 mentions that we received it. But it must have been lost. And in Waluyewka I was eagerly waiting for

⁶² Willi Frese. Parcel, package (Russisch)

⁶³ Willi Frese. Johannes Dyck (1885-1948) (GRANDMA #168774)

⁶⁴ Willi Frese. Possibly Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

⁶⁵ Alex Wiens. Johannes Bergmann (1887- 1938), (GRANDMA #1254544). He was married to Katharina, nee Töws

⁶⁶ Alex Wiens. Aron Töws (1863-1919), (GRANDMA #1253828)

⁶⁷ Willi Frese. Gerhard Esau (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347042)

⁶⁸ Willi Frese. Johannes Esau (1929-1931) (GRANDMA #982316). In GRANDMA is written Jacob. A mistake?

⁶⁹ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

⁷⁰ Willi Frese. Peter Esau (1927-1931) (GRANDMA #982315)

⁷¹ Willi Frese. Hermann Esau (1884-1932) (GRANDMA #346672)

⁷² Willi Frese. Margaretha Janzen (1895-1976) (GRANDMA #346673)

⁷³ Willi Frese. Papers = documents

⁷⁴ Willi Frese. Bilete=Transportation tickets (Russian)

⁷⁵ Willi Frese. Anna Mathies (1930-1931) (GRANDMA #982317)

⁷⁶ Willi Frese. Johannes Esau (1929-1931) (GRANDMA #982316). In GRANDMA steht Jacob. Ein Fehler?

⁷⁷ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

⁷⁸ Willi Frese. Peter Esau (1927-1931) (GRANDMA #982315)

⁷⁹ Alex Wiens. Katharina Neufeld, nee Janzen (1871-1931), (GRANDMA #1254556)

⁸⁰ Willi Frese. Franz Dyck (1873-1931) (GRANDMA #861525)

something, how or where? But not a syllable arrived, who should ask us here in Russia. Therefore, I have already written to my friend Heinrich Wall Beiershort⁸¹, but I have not received any answer yet. I think we have to leave from here, this is no place for us. If I make it through, because of the cold, but I don't think (I will). And where to? That is the difficult question, which should and must be solved by spring. If we could move back into our former home. Even if poor, this would be most preferable to us. Only peace and quiet, but we can no longer count on that. But many believe in it, I do not. The girls can serve here. I don't want to say that they are too good for this. My dear Maria⁸² has taken on a lot, 1 ½ jobs. She gets 45 rubles a month. For a pair of shoes she needs, she should pay 45 rubles. For a pair of felt boots she doesn't have, 80 rubles. Do your own calculations. Yes, many who come here are healthy and fit guys. They work here two or three kilometers from the city in the mine (shaft)⁸³. It's easy for someone to dig 250 to 300 meters under the ground and root around.

Letter A page 8

Here, in our apartment building on the other side there are Russian families. And one of them, a young man works over in the mine and when he has his day off, he also comes to our house, and he also always visits with us. He has a lot to tell. Earns 90 rubles a month. Sons of a southern (Südländer) Mennonite also work there. Earn a month, first 160 rubles, second 140 rubles and those in power (Herrschaften) up to 500 rubles. So as Käthe her kosein [boss] has moved closer. Now he does not have enough space for a maid. That is why Käthe is without a job. She now tailors her kosein [boss] at Anna's.

In the shaft two buckets go up and down, just like at the well. So big that six people have room in there to ride up and down. Have seven horses down there to work with, day and night. Brought Stücker (pieces) and gave it to us, it's like crystal, when you smash it, it shines. Tastes salty and sour. Is ground into flour, gives (added to?) the fertilizer to fertilize the land. Just like in Germany. There are about 800 men working here. It's expensive, how it pays for itself I don't understand, too stupid for that. With dynamite they blow it up, first sawing through it and then lifting it up (out).

Yes, dear Renate⁸⁴, you write me about your little room, oh how I would like to be in there, but that wonderful bread, which I love to eat, is also scarce for you loved ones, with the bad harvest. But here bread is too expensive for us.

Heinrich bought me 1 pud grist flour, 30 rubles and no wheat flour and ours is gone. Too bad, my Tulup and P. Scherpan.

You know, dear Renate, I have never had much in the way of clothes. Now two suits is enough for me. If I die, no one will carry my clothes after me, and what should the others do? One on the body, the other on the wall. My bedframe is also assembled boxes. The iron one at Ger. Wall was taken away. No benches remained in Waluyewka. G. Wall was supposed to get them, whether he has done this? In conclusion, may all of you, including you dear children, receive warm greetings from our children and grandchildren, which I join. November 24, 1931. Please answer as soon as possible. Peter Mathies⁸⁵

⁸¹ Willi Frese. Prussia

⁸² Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

⁸³ Willi Frese. шахта= Mining (Russisan)

⁸⁴ Willi Frese. Renate Mathies (1885-1963) (GRANDMA #168775)

⁸⁵ Willi Frese. Peter Mathies (1851-1934) (GRANDMA #109037)

⁸⁶Have also sent to Mrs. Heinrich Wall Beiershort ... still no answer, as how or what (nothing) from you.

⁸⁷Last winter we were in Ostenfeld. This winter in Solikamsk and next winter probably in the grave.

⁸⁸Have also written to Fr. Wall⁸⁹ Aliata and inquired, still no answer how or where.

⁹⁰He [Gerhard Esau?] would have been better to go to Khiva than coming here, but pud flour costs 100 rubles and (we?) have nothing.

⁹¹About our future decision please answer as quickly as possible. How or where to

⁹²Accept my poor writing with love. You must just see the old (man) through the fingers, want with

⁸⁶ Willi Frese. Supplement to letter, on the side Page 1

⁸⁷ Willi Frese. Supplement to letter. On the side, side 4

⁸⁸ Willi Frese. Briefergänzung. Seitlich Seite 5 = Supplement to letter. On the side, side 5

⁸⁹ Willi Frese. Possibly Peter Wall (1872-1938) (GRANDMA #367664)

⁹⁰ Willi Frese. Supplement to letter. On the side, side 6

⁹¹ Willi Frese. Supplement to letter. On the side, side 7

⁹² Willi Frese. Supplement to letter. On the side, side 8