

Letter F 1

Translated by Ruth Dyck Scott, May 2023

¹No. 6, 1927 Hohendorf the 24th of December

Dear children Johannes and Renate Dyck and you dear grandchildren so far away, we greet you all very cordially, and wish from the heart that you dear ones so far away receive these lines all healthy and alive. We too, in our own way, thank God, (we) are all, as far as I know, pretty lively, except for the cough that often torments Mom² and also me at night. Pulled out of the Ziehkästchen³: O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways. For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen Romans 11: 33-36.

In my last letter of December 14, I had written that I would rather leave the letter-writing to the youth, because with an old man like me thoughts are not as agile as those of the youth, and my writing is already rather imperfect, nevertheless, my love for you compels me to chat with you a bit, and also to wait patiently for the answer coming from you. After I sent off the last letter to you, (have) still not received any from you. I just remembered⁴

Letter F 2

I wanted to ask you, the letters you wrote from the big ship on your voyage, were they delivered on the way⁵ or did they remain until you were on board? In my opinion, the letters are delivered here, but how? Even if a ship comes from America, they can't pass so close to each other, that would cause destruction, and on a barge with big waves it wouldn't go well, on the big sea⁶. At least I would not want to be on it. Dear Renate⁷, you write (ask) in your letter what our work⁸ (is). There is enough work. Marie does not have much work with sewing because we cannot buy. We are always lacking the best, but from 14 October to 26 November we had no maid, Marie did everything alone. During that time she could not stand and think much⁹, there was enough to do with everything, milking the 8 cows, seeing how she would deal with the food, because during this time mom¹⁰ was quite schobig¹¹; we do want to hire us a maid, but they don't come (have a way here) and we do not want to fetch¹² them. They did not know here how much pay they wanted and driving them there would

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

² Willi Frese. Anna Wall (1864-1929) (GRANDMA #109036)

³ Willi Risto. Ziehkästchen= A small box in which little cards are found. On each card there are one or more verses from the Bible. One randomly chooses a card and reads it out loud. This was the Bible verse for the day.

⁴ Willi Frese. mir fällt eben bei= I just thought of

⁵ Willi Risto. Hinterwegs= on the way

⁶ Die Theory: To throw the sacks of mail onto the ship coming towards you on the ocean.

⁷ Willi Frese. Renate Mathies (1885-1963) (GRANDMA #168775)

⁸ Elena Klassen – was die machen= what their work was

⁹ Willi Risto. Means she had no time to relax or be lazy

¹⁰ Willi Frese. Anna Wall (1864-1929) (GRANDMA #109036)

¹¹ Elena Klassen – feels sickly

Willi Risto. From Low German schaubich= sickly

¹² Willi Frese. Holen=suchen = go and get

even be worse. At that time Marie¹³ showed that she can work, she had just acquired something for it, but there is not (never) enough, because when we have paid at one place, so (then) again a note with (more) demands arrives, and so it continues. December 26, our maid's month is over, who knows if she will stay longer, she is still young, 16 years old, but she is hardworking, we are completely satisfied with her, she gets 6 rubles a month. Yes, my loved ones, I often have to write it is not enough;

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that you have to think (maybe realize) that, worries me enough (really nags at me). Earlier, in the young years, there was an abundance of everything, and now, in advanced age there is such a shortage, one hopes that from one time to the next it will get better, but it remains like this, whereas son-in-law Heinrich Isaak¹⁴ can now do much better than we can. It is probably my fault, I do not understand how to manage in these times. I believe it myself, but there is a big mistake in me, the right desire is missing. I often think: what is the point to continue working like this, how easy it will be for them to do to you in a short time what they have already done: pull the sleds forward, take the best horses and harness out of the stable, and hejda¹⁵ - drive (off) as if nothing extraordinary has happened. They presume that everything appeared in the house on its own, and how much effort and work it took (us) to get to this point, capped with drops of (our) sweat. Food and drink we have in abundance, I should be more satisfied, but how gladly, if the children work well, one would like to also give them a joy and we cannot do that. Dear Helene¹⁶ has worked well at home, and so far she has not received anything in return, which saddens me. If I could give her¹⁷ five thousand rubles, like Catharina¹⁸ and you¹⁹, it would be a great weight off my mind, but nothing is too little²⁰. We want to sell 2 horses and 2 cows. If we get rid of them and if we do, then cheaply. Last week a Warenburger was here, wanted to buy a mare, allowed her already (to be sold) for 175 rubles. 5 years old, was offered 168 rubles, afterwards regretted not selling, but too late, was gone. Last year I could have had 200 rubles for her several times and so it goes. I am no longer fit for anything, neither for trade, nor for business, nor for writing letters. The other day we were at Esau's, they told us that Cornelius Peter Wiens²¹ (Lysanderhöh) had been there with a cow buyer, but the cows were not good enough. And Esaus have pretty cows. They should give not less than 250 Puds of milk a year

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and they did not. I do not know the price for such cow. Esaus had asked, who has cows like that, Wiens immediately said: I myself have 4 head, which (each) give 250 pud. What do we want to say to that then? Last year 2 of our cows gave more than 200 pud, but this year

¹³ Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

¹⁴ Willi Frese. Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

¹⁵ Willi Risto. Hejda=russisch айда, aus dem tatarischen - komm

¹⁶ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

¹⁷ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

¹⁸ Willi Frese. Katharina Mathies (1883-1953) (GRANDMA #1196403)

¹⁹ Willi Frese. Renate Mathies (1885-1963) (GRANDMA #168775)

²⁰ Willi Frese. aber nichts ist, zu wenig= nothing will come of it, because he hardly has any money for that

²¹ Willi Frese. Cornelius Wiens (1882-1938) (GRANDMA #1254331)

significantly less, due to so much driving and poor pasture on the bad land, where not even weeds grow, the Schitnak²² is quickly²³ dry and then there is nothing. Our cow pleased him, just gave too little milk, 160 pud, not taken, not bought²⁴.

The Association²⁵ wants to buy 70 dairy cows for Moscow, they should also not give less than 175 Pud of milk a year. If you were still in Lysanderh, for you the most important things were the cows and feeding the cows, in order to do good sales/business, but for us it is not. Even if our cows are not worse, but feeding makes the difference, and the way it should be, we cannot feed. Chaff is not for the cows, and buying hay and clover would maybe pay off, but buying everything at great expense and commuting is also like this. Butter costs 65 kopeks in Cossack City. Clover from the Association (costs) 55 kopecks and then still (we have to) fetch from Cossack City. We have registered with 2 cows in the Association, but it will not help. And it is like this: to sell the best cows and to keep the lesser ones for oneself, does not amount to anything, and to sell the lesser ones here, even if a little cheaper, seems to me to be better. The 17th of December was the meeting of the Association - invoice, Peter²⁶ was also here. Johannes Thiessen²⁷ remained again as chairman, before it was often said, he doesn't do much anymore, but he remains, but instead of 93 rubles per month, he now gets 100 rubles per month. His assistants are (newly) elected, who have voting rights. I think Abraham Philipsen²⁸ Hohendorf, Abraham Froese Köppenthal, Jacob Bestvater²⁹, I think also Cornelius P. Wiens³⁰. If what one hears is correct, the Association must be loaded down with considerably large debts. They are approaching this matter in too grand a fashion, with nothing but strangers' money and it should be

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that the largest part comes from own means. It is better to emphasize / prefer something than to move in blindly; this can sometimes lead to a crash, as was the case in Köppenthal, and afterwards things went well even without all the money that had been previously wasted, and the people lost money. I myself lost 215 rubles, which were Mitro Ivanovich's purchases, and after that it went well. How did that happen?

I heard that they do not want to leave us stallions for breeding. It is a pity that none of the 3 mares I had with your black one is pregnant. Spoke to Johannes Philipsen the other day, both mares are pregnant. Cornelius Neumann his black also, asked Heinrich Isaak³¹, if Penner's were pregnant, he said 2 of them yes. How Penner has *brought that from the cross* (managed), to buy 3 such mares for over thousand rubles, is and remains a mystery to me. I would have liked to have one of them, but I couldn't, and he all three? The stallion was a nice horse. Now I want to ask again: is your house geschort (plastered) or like Gustav Toews' the outside clad and with what is it covered? Also, the stable, are the posts clad, with what are they covered? Peter saw your house on (and?) posts on the Association invoice. Cornelius Isaak Orloff is said to have had Patre (portraits) ;

²² Willi Risto. Schitnak=Житняк (Russisch) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agropyron>

²³ Willi Risto. Hurtig=. fast

²⁴ Elena Klassen – page 4 on the side

²⁵ Elena Klassen – the Mennonites in Russia founded in the twenties an All-Russian Mennonite Agricultural Association (Allrussischen Mennonitischen Landwirtschaftlichen Verein (AMLV)) and had published the newspaper; see scans of the newspaper "The Practical Farmer"... [Scans der Zeitschrift "Der Praktische Landwirt" 1925-26.](#)

²⁶ Willi Frese. Presumably Peter Mathies (1902-1943) (GRANDMA #1196411)

²⁷ Alex Wiens. Johannes Thiessen (1884-1935), #415967. Also look under: <https://amtrakt.de/johannes-thiessen-1884-1935/>

²⁸ Alex Wiens. Abraham Philipsen (26.09.1897 - 14.11.1962), keine GM.

²⁹ Alex Wiens. This could be Jakob des Franz Bestvater (ca.1891-????), keine GM. Nr. 95 unter: <https://amtrakt.de/bewohner-von-lysanderhoeh-1921-22/>

³⁰ Willi Frese. Cornelius Wiens (1882-1938) (GRANDMA #1254331)

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

(they) are in America. Have been driving around a lot and have also seen buildings with roof tiles, always looks very nice to me, better than with wood and sheet metal. Do you have brickworks in your settlements? You, dear Johannes, write that 120 desjatin have been fenced. That's a lot, is it barbed wire? What kind of stakes, probably far from each other, because for each Faden³² a stake would rob the American of too much time, would also become expensive. Is your wood also as expensive as ours is now, can almost not pay (those costs). We haven't bought any yet, but have heard from others who have.

Letter F 6

Your dear son Johannes writes to me in his letter that while threshing, you have something like Fruchthäuser³³, where the grain is poured in or perhaps runs in itself. He has also mentioned, and sled runs are underneath it, and were carried home for the winter. Seems very dark³⁴ to me. I suppose like our past night. Bibat is a small ambarche³⁵, maybe it holds 1500 Pud. If the (sled)runs³⁶ were underneath, and one wanted to drive on, I said already, all Hohendorfer horses pulled it into rigid place, how do you do that with it? At Gerhard Wall's³⁷ and his daughter Helene's³⁸ birthday, widow Catharine Dau of Medemthal asked me, whether you have written anything about the Nikels. I said no, they should also be in the area, formerly Heinrich Nickel³⁹ his daughters of Hohendorf, but America is also a large village, like the colonists once believed of Germany. I'm alone at home tonight, I'm quite busy writing letters. Peter⁴⁰ is at school for reading circle, Mama⁴¹ drove or was driven to Esaus' this afternoon, and Maria⁴² baked for Santa Claus this afternoon, and when she was finished, she also drove to bring Mother home. As I am writing this, a note has come that December 23 at 9 a.m. there will be a general citizens meeting for the purpose of electing three candidates as people's court assessors, two male and one female to be elected and so on. Yes, it is at times humourous to see how the right to vote actually works. Last year our neighbor Jacob Schmidt was a representative from Hohendorf to the association year, (he) is not allowed to be this year, he is a Kulak⁴³, has no right to vote. Johann Philipshen also his

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Father Wilhelm Philipshen⁴⁴ have retained the right to vote. Johannes Philipshen is now appointed to Jacob Schmidt's place. Wonderful, Cornelius Peter Wiens⁴⁵ Lysandehöh, Johannes

Penner⁴⁶ Fresenheim, nee... Toews Köppenthal have voting rights. And such a Johann David Wall⁴⁷ Fresenheim, who has a few nags(horses), and cannot put a roof on the stable, is a kulak, has no voting rights. And the

³² Willi Risto. Faden=1,8 Meter

³³ Ruth Scott. Fruchthäuser = possibly sheds that were used for storing fruit

³⁴ Elena Klassen – seltsam

Willi Risto. I cannot imagine this very well.

³⁵ Elena Klassen - Ambarche (Russisch). Ambar= small barn

³⁶ Willi Risto. Läufe= rolls

³⁷ Lilli Banucu. Gerhard Wall: son of Peter Wall und Anna Mathies (Sister to Peter Mathies (1851-1934/ GM #109037) Born in Hohendorf 30.11.1873 - 3.11.1932. Quote from the notebook of Peter Mathies.

³⁸ Lilli Banucu. Helene Wall (30.11.1897-?) (GRANDMA #109023?)

³⁹ Willi Frese. Eventuell Heinrich Nickel (1858-1937) (GRANDMA #275606)

⁴⁰ Willi Frese. Eventuell Peter Mathies (1902-1943) (GRANDMA #1196411)

⁴¹ Willi Frese. Anna Wall (1864-1929) (GRANDMA #109036)

⁴² Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

⁴³ Elena Klassen - [Kulak – Wikipedia](#)

⁴⁴ Alex Wiens. Wilhelm Philipshen (ca. 1842-????), keine GM. Second husband of Aganetha Klaaßen #991220

⁴⁵ Willi Frese. Cornelius Wiens (1882-1938) (GRANDMA #1254331)

⁴⁶ Alex Wiens. Johannes Penner (1889-1942), (GRANDMA #1196380)

⁴⁷ Alex Wiens. Probably Johannes Dav. Wall (15.07.1892- 27.11.1933), keine GM. Nr. 100 unter:

<https://amtrakt.de/bewohner-von-fresenheim-1921-22/>

aforementioned, I think, are some of the best landlords, the others I don't know exactly, but the Philipses, according to the present time, they are just fine, have money, nice cattle and also well, at least as much as the others, who have been deprived of the right to vote. I wanted to ask you how far away the nearest neighbor lives from you. An Englishman, or German? You wrote that you drive to church. Where are the churchyards in your country, or have they not been measured off (planned?) yet, or like the churches in Germany? When you were looking for a farm, you also came to Sawatjawan⁴⁸, which Peter Regier called Tiefengrund. There, if they still live there, quite a few people known to me have moved there: Peter⁴⁹, Cornelius⁵⁰, Abraham⁵¹ Regier three brothers, Isaak Klassen, Abraham Friesen, Wiellers etc. from Alte Babke. How often I think in the silence, if Johannes Dyks⁵², Gustav Froese⁵³, Cornelius Froese⁵⁴ were still in Lysanderhöh and Johannes Isaac⁵⁵ in Orloff, perhaps it would have worked out anyway, would have had sufficient of everything, would go really well at this time. And now in a foreign country, foreign customs, assets very very much forfeited, difficult start, and on top of that homesickness, because parting hurts, from the place where one was born, that hurts for a long time.

Letter F 8

Also I'm still here, but when the second day of Christmas comes, Dycks⁵⁶ and my dear grandchildren are missing, it hurts, you won't be reciting a poem to me on Christmas, New Year, on my birthday⁵⁷. It's hard, when you left from Saratov and we continued on to the Cossack City⁵⁸ to our quarters; cousin Johann Wall, aunt Wall⁵⁹ from the church were also there, asked me how are you? **I told them with teary eyes, I feel as if we had carried eleven⁶⁰ very beloved relatives to the churchyard and buried them all at once.** Oh no, what is the use of lamenting? Just keep going towards the goal, where all difficulties will end. Tonight the Jamschtschik Penner comes to our place before lighting⁶¹, he brings an American letter, (I) dart outside. There is no letter, but a box⁶² weighing about a Pud. Well, what's in it? I had to pay 98 kopecks. When Penner left. Peter⁶³ and Marichen⁶⁴ already very busy with opening, very nice dried Apfelschnitz⁶⁵ and in the middle 45 large and also medium-sized apples wrapped in paper, not frozen, but with some soft spots. Will soon have to be eaten. Therefore, dear children Helene⁶⁶, Clara⁶⁷, Cornelius⁶⁸, Renate⁶⁹, come quickly here, then you also can have some of them. At

⁴⁸ Willi Risto. Sawatjawan=Saskatchewan

⁴⁹ Willi Frese. Possibly Peter Regier (1851-1925) (GRANDMA #64061)

⁵⁰ Willi Frese. Possibly Cornelius Regier (1853-1915) (GRANDMA #168566)

⁵¹ Willi Frese. Possibly Abraham Regier (1863-1935) (GRANDMA #168569)

⁵² Willi Frese. Johannes Dyck (1885-1948) (GRANDMA #168774)

⁵³ Alex Wiens. Gustav Fröse (1896-1971) (GRANDMA #461873)

⁵⁴ Alex Wiens. Cornelius Fröse (1868-1929), (GRANDMA #454720)

⁵⁵ Alex Wiens. Johann Isaak (1889-1971), (GRANDMA #173328)

⁵⁶ Willi Frese. Johannes Dyck (1885-1948) (GRANDMA #168774) and Renate Mathies (1885-1963) (GRANDMA #168775)

⁵⁷ Willi Frese. 18 Januar

⁵⁸ Elena Klassen - [Engels \(Stadt\) - Wikipedia](#)

⁵⁹ Willi Frese. Katharina Wall (1854-1932) (GRANDMA #1455363)

⁶⁰ Willi Risto. Elf= Johannes and Renata Dyck with 9 Children

⁶¹ Willi Risto. vor Licht anstecken= before dark

⁶² Elena Klassen - Kasten (Posilki)=Postpaket = package in the mail

⁶³ Willi Frese. Peter Mathies (1902-1943) (GRANDMA #1196411)

⁶⁴ Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

⁶⁵ Elena Klassen – from the Low German Apfel Dörrobst = dried apple slices

⁶⁶ Willi Frese. Helene Dyck (1916-2003) (GRANDMA #168984), die Mutter von Ray F.

⁶⁷ Willi Frese. Clara Dyck (1918-2018) (GRANDMA #701434)

⁶⁸ Willi Frese. Cornelius Dyck (1921-2014) (GRANDMA #168968)

⁶⁹ Willi Frese. Renata Dyck (1923-2015) (GRANDMA #910869)

the top was a paper from Cornelius⁷⁰ and Anna⁷¹ Wall (Aulie - Ata) a Christmas gift and many good wishes for Christmas and New Year. So, we also have dear good friends (over) there, (we) ask very much for a letter, must write shortly to the loved ones (Walls?). Today Mariechen⁷² is again very busy baking for Christmas. Yesterday for Santa Claus and today for us and the guests, but unfortunately who will come? In the evening she went to Johann Bergmann, was the last singing lesson, and tomorrow it will be fullthroated.

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It is going well for them in Khiva, because according to Heinrich Schmidt and Gerhard Lepp it must have gone well, while in autumn two young men came here to the visit, from there one Joh. Töews, the other Gerhard Hamm. I did not get to see them at all, Töws was related to the Töwsen, Hamm to Nik. Hamm⁷³ Medemthal. They liked it in our midst, would have liked to stay here for the winter, but they got a telegram and had to go back to their family / relatives. As Franz Wallen was slaughtering pigs, I had gone for the Repsper⁷⁴ dinner in the evening. P. Wiensen⁷⁵ was also helping there, from your (agricultural) business, I asked Wiens whether he was not afraid in the big house. Two people in the mighty house and whether it would not spook⁷⁶, because Dycks will be here in their home with their thoughts, more than in America. No, he said to me. He is just a beginner, has enough of everything, does not have to struggle as you must there in America. You dear Johannes⁷⁷ write whether we got good earnings with our threshing. I think the expenses we had on the tractor and the 25 rubles machinist's wages, and could have earned more (on the) rye. The shaker shaft broke on the threshing box and the cost of making (a new one) 55 rbl. in Cossack City, it is not possible to buy it. If we can get through without any further damage, we have to pay 600 rbl., 400 rbl. we have already (paid), in February we have to pay another 200 rbl. and then maybe they will confiscate it. In total 863 Puds, from that half of it. You can calculate it yourself: nothing remains. Rye 70 kopecks per Pud, 30 desjatin plowed (pieced) together. We always hope that it will be get better, but it remains the same. Always gently slowly downwards and to the extent (so far) that we get our grain threshed. Fresenheimer Johann Dyck has bought himself two large engines, one from widow Marie Dyck⁷⁸ Medemthal, another in Woskresenki, wants

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to expand his mill, Walsstuhl⁷⁹ in for wheat milling. This should have good earnings; so far (he) has only ground and milled rye, and Hein Isaak said Dyck has already gone several times with rye flour to Cossack City. (I) have not harvested any rye, not sown and still had 1500 rye lying. So there you can see what income a mill like that

⁷⁰ Willi Frese. Cornelius Wall (1860-1939) (GRANDMA #426348)

⁷¹ Willi Frese. Anna Janzen (1863-1934) (GRANDMA #1414967)

⁷² Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

⁷³ Alex Wiens. Presumably Nikolaj Hamm (ca. 1856-????), keine GM. Nr. 254 unter: <https://amtrakt.de/bewohner-von-medemtal-1921-22/>. It would also be possible that this is Nikolaus Hamm (25.10.1857_????), (GRANDMA #4915) .That would mean that it's one and the same person.

⁷⁴ Willi Risto. Repsper= Ribs fried in fat

⁷⁵ Alex Wiens. In his Autobiography <https://amtrakt.de/autobiografie-jahre-1926-1947/> Johannes Dyck (1885-1948), writes that he sold his (agricultural) business to Cornelius C. Wiens (den Chutor-Wiens) (1880-1951) (GRANDMA #19134) for 9000 Rubel. It would be possible, that Cornelius left this enterprise to his son Peter Wiens (1906-1938) (GRANDMA #132330) who got married in 1927.

⁷⁶ Willi Risto. ob es nicht spucken täte= if it wasn't very spooky, there might be ghosts, para-normal

⁷⁷ Willi Frese. Johannes Dyck (1885-1948) (GRANDMA #168774)

⁷⁸ Willi Frese. Could this be Maria Wall (1886-1974) (GRANDMA #861313)???

⁷⁹ Lilli Banucu. Wahlstuhl= roll mill was installed

can bring. Today, December 14, Gerhard Wall⁸⁰ and his daughter Helene⁸¹ celebrate their birthdays. Whether we will old folk will go, is still undetermined. Mariechen wants to go and Peter is not at home yet. Someone should stay at home, it is also so cold for us old people. In my opinion, this letter is already the fifth letter that has been sent. If it should manage to cross the big water and fall into your hands, and it arrives at mealtime, then satiate yourselves, before you begin to read. Otherwise, you will starve while reading this letter⁸², because it is badly and very imperfectly written, but I can't get my head and also my pen to work like before like 20 years ago; I'll have to leave it to others, who are younger. If I live to see it, January 18, then come for my birthday, and if not personally, then in spirit in our midst. Many ask, how are the Dycks? I always say, they must first sow oats 5 times and then we can ask him, this time (period) is still too short. Johannes Isaak and Cornelius Froese have already bought something, it is a pity that money is so scarce here, even for them. Now, in conclusion, I wish you the Lord's rich blessing, farewell, hope to see you again, if not here on earth, then up there, where there will be no more separation. The warmest greetings from Mama, Peter, Mariechen, whom I join. I remain your father and grandfather Peter Mathies Ade Ade (Farewell, farewell)

Letter F 11

My loved ones, it really seems to be time to stop writing. You will say, when the letter really comes into your hands, father also writes too much, but it is like this, I want to give you one piece of news. On Tuesday, December 20, at 7 a.m., Gerhard Esau⁸³'s daughter Helene⁸⁴ gave birth to a healthy, fat boy⁸⁵. Mother and boy each doing well, the name is still missing. Esau came here on Tuesday morning and brought us the news, he said the boy must be called Peter, they had had an Uncle Peter in their family. No, I said, his name is Jacob. Then everything was quiet. In the evening I went to fetch Mama⁸⁶, they started again about the name, he should be called Peter. I said firmly: he must be called Jacob and that is why he does not have a name yet. Perhaps it was already determined today, none of us was there. At Peter Wiens⁸⁷ Kuter⁸⁸, whose wife is Johann Penner's daughter⁸⁹, the second boy arrived in the past days, his name is Johannes⁹⁰.

At Jacob Hamm's whose wife is the widow Peters' daughter, a little girl immigrated in these past days⁹¹ Medemthal. Because Mrs. Peter Toews⁹² was at both places⁹³ and told Mama⁹⁴ all this.

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⁸⁰ Willi Frese. Gerhard Wall (From the notebook of Peter Mathies 30.11.1873-3.11.1932) no GM. Son of Peter and Anna (Mathies, Sister of Peter Mathies (1851-1934/ GM #109037)) Wall

⁸¹ Willi Frese. Helena Wall (According to notebook of Peter Mathies 30.11.1897-?), daughter of Gerhard Wall (footnote# 78)

⁸² Willi Frese. Peter Mathies wants to say with this, that the letter has gotten so long and it will take a long time to finish reading it all.

⁸³ Willi Frese. Gerhard Esau (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347042)

⁸⁴ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

⁸⁵ Willi Frese. Peter Esau (1927-1931) (GRANDMA #982315)

⁸⁶ Willi Frese. Anna Wall (1864-1929) (GRANDMA #109036)

⁸⁷ Willi Frese. Peter Wiens (1901-1943) (GRANDMA #1254611)

⁸⁸ Elena Klassen – Nickname, presumably comes from Chutor (Russian Farmplace)
Willi Risto. Kutor. Probably lived outside the village, in Chutor

⁸⁹ Willi Frese. Margarethe Penner (1905-1976) (GRANDMA #299230)

⁹⁰ Willi Frese. Johann Wiens (1927-2004) (GRANDMA #718050)

⁹¹ Willi Frese. Immigrated= in this case, born

⁹² Alex Wiens. Possibly Helene Töws, geb. Janzen (1891-????) (GRANDMA #935108) from Hohendorf.

⁹³ Elena Klassen. This wife of Peter Töws was probably a midwife

⁹⁴ Willi Frese. Anna Wall (1864-1929) (GRANDMA #109036)

How else would I know, almost do not get out of the house. Christmas Eve they wanted to celebrate at our place, but I did not feel like it. (We) already had it in our house the past two years, everything is cleaned beforehand and just before Christmas Day everything is made dirty, and our mole is perhaps in the time over wood⁹⁵ and then everything remains for our Marie to do and she already has enough to do. When the maid will leave⁹⁶, I do not know yet, or remains. She said to her brother-in-law Franz Wall⁹⁷, who is the school principal, I will go to Gustav Toewsen's. He always said, as he was still building, when it is finished, it (the celebration) could be held at his place. But this is not now in his wife's Koler⁹⁸ (plans), everything is so pretty, so very pretty, overly correct, hardly lets the guests inside. Last year he was the Hirtvorsteher (head of shepherds). They are never allowed into the house by the owners, but only (talk) in the entrance hallway. Everything can be exaggerated, also there. Always think of Horn's (wife) Sara, she also didn't like to let anyone into the große Stube (formal living room) either, and where is she now? Asleep in her grave.

Now, all my loved ones, accept this imperfect and bad writing with love. Finally, we send our heartfelt greetings to all of you, from Mama, Peter, Maria, Helene and Gerhard Esau, and to whom I add my last greetings. I remain your father and grandfather

Peter Mathies⁹⁹, Goodbye

Live well so far away, good luck in the New Year¹⁰⁰

today was „buying cows“, Johannes Bergmann Orloff, Johannes Peters Fresenheim¹⁰¹

but Cornelius Isaak's Christmas gift was exactly right¹⁰²

Dear grandchildren, wishing all of you a Happy New Year in America, write letters soon¹⁰³

On the side of page 5 - he is now in eternity, let him rest in peace, should not have been mentioned¹⁰⁴

To you dear Renate, I congratulate very much on your birthday. I will not be personally¹⁰⁵

in your midst, but in spirit I am in your midst at the table, Ade Ade¹⁰⁶

begging for a letter soon from you dear ones there in the distance¹⁰⁷

on the side of page 9 – we have a lot of snow, on the street knee-high, there is also no proper

⁹⁵ Ruth Scott. Unsere Mole ist in der Zeit vielleicht über Holz = this expression is unknown to us. It probably refers to her being overworked or very busy.

⁹⁶ Elena Klassen – goes away

⁹⁷ Willi Risto. Willi Frese. Franz Wall (1866-1933) (GRANDMA #109011)

⁹⁸ Willi Risto. Koler. Possibly Direction?

⁹⁹ Willi Frese. Peter Mathies (1851-1934) (GRANDMA #109037)

¹⁰⁰ Elena Klassen – Page 1 below on the head

THIS FOOTNOTE DOES NOT MAKE SENSE, Ruth

¹⁰¹ Elena Klassen – Page 1 on the side

¹⁰² Elena Klassen – Page 2 on the side

¹⁰³ Elena Klassen – Page 3 on the side

¹⁰⁴ Elena Klassen – Page 5 on the side

¹⁰⁵ Elena Klassen – Page 6 on the side

¹⁰⁶ Elena Klassen – Page 7 on the side

¹⁰⁷ Elena Klassen – Page 8 on the side

Now will be held with Gerhard Klaassen, I believe, in the Farbhäuschen¹⁰⁸

On the side:

Johannes Siebert¹⁰⁹ has arrived here again from Moscow, but as he indicates, wants to leave again in the spring, but with what, has others. You are already experiencing

Page with the envelope stamped Köppental

Северная Америка

M. Joh. J. Dyck

Canada, Hawarden

Sask. Box. 129

FromPeter Mathies

grandpapa's friends in Tiefengrund

¹⁰⁸ Elena Klassen – Page 10 on the side. Farbhäuschen could be a brightly painted little shed or a little shed where paints are stored.

¹⁰⁹ Alex Wiens. Johannes Siebert (1896-1942),) (GRANDMA #1157809