

I wish this letter a fortunate journey, until in your hands.

Translated by Ruth Scott Oct. 2023

№ 7

Hohendorf January 25, 1928

Page 1 (53)

¹ Dear children Johannes and Renate Dyck and you nine dear grandchildren. Be greeted by us all first of all, with a kiss of heartfelt love, from all of us. Yes, our dear heavenly Father grant that these lines find you alive and in good health, as we depend (on Him) for the same, because we are thank God all quite well. What will I write to you loved ones, many things are deeply covered with much snow and my head and pen do not want to work like in former times, like those 30 years ago. (There) is too much besides, which forces down an old person, so that one becomes at times so tired of life and one wants to know nothing more of the world. Nothing helps – only (going) forward:

I want to strive for a life

Where I am blessed.

I will struggle to force myself through

Until I win it.

If they hold me, I run away,

If I am weary, then the Word calls me:

"I've gone on, I've forced myself through,

Until I reach the jewel. - ²

We received letter № 8, with the picture of the house and car, on December 31 in the evening. The next one had my birthday card and the congratulations for my birthday, and it arrived January 23, I do not know the number. Peter took it today to Helene, who is still sitting at home, is also curious, (she) had also not come on my birthday. A breast (of hers) was pulled / torn together, (she) has had to endure much from it, now it is broken open (opened), which afforded her relief. Katharina³ and Heinrich Isaak⁴, Anna and Katharina Horn⁵, Gerhard Wall wife and daughter Helene, Schmidt aunts, neighbor Jakob Schmidt and wife⁶ of brother-in-law were at the birthday (celebration).

Page 2 (54 left)

Franz Wall, David Wall⁷ and wife⁸, Franz Mathies, whose wife is ill, Nikolai Wall with wife, Heinrich Schmidt with wife, Jacob Esau⁹, Gerhard Esau¹⁰, Renate¹¹, Wilhelm Philipsen, Johann Franz Wall Orloff's son Heinrich, Gustav Wall and wife. They were all pretty much represented, only from Johannes Dyck¹² was no one and the dear children with their poems were very much missed.

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

² Willi Risto. 2 verses from a song

³ Willi Frese. Katharina Mathies (1883-1953) (GRANDMA #1196403)

⁴ Willi Frese. Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

⁵ Alex Wiens. presumably sisters Anna (*ca. 1873) and Katharina (*ca. 1878), daughters of Heinrich Horn (GRANDMA #1467944)

⁶ Willi Risto. Helene Dyck (1867-1943) (GRANDMA #109012)

⁷ Willi Risto. possibly David Wall (1893-1966) (GRANDMA #109013)

⁸ Willi Frese. Maria Töws (1896-1975) (GRANDMA #190017)

⁹ Alex Wiens. Jakob Esau (1857-1932) (GRANDMA #346669)

¹⁰ Alex Wiens. Gerhard Esau (1886-1933) (GRANDMA #347042)

¹¹ Alex Wiens. Renate Esau (1882-1938) (GRANDMA #346680)

¹² Willi Frese. Johannes Dyck (1885-1948) (GRANDMA #168774)

Helene said, the Dycks were mentioned a lot, this was my first [birthday] where you dear ones were not there. Perhaps it is also the last, because the time is approaching. The 77 years are full, perhaps the last year of grace for me, because our life lasts seventy years and if it is high, it will be eighty years. And when it has been precious, it has been effort and work.

On January 7 Peter Dyck¹³, teacher in Lysanderhöh died, was laid to rest on January 14 in Lysanderhöh churchyard and awaits the joyful resurrection morning. On 9 January Johann Schmidt's¹⁴ wife¹⁵ Hohendorf, daughter of the late Aron Fröse Orloff, died after much suffering and was buried on 14 January. On the day of the funeral, in the morning, (her daughter) a girl¹⁶ of two and a half years died, was put with the mother the next day in the coffin and buried together in a grave and await the resurrection morning. Before Christmas was a brotherhood (meeting?) in the church in Orloff, it was decided to elect an elder and deacon, because Ohm Peter Wiens¹⁷ is old and can no longer do everything. And the dear elder Cornelius Nickel died years (ago?), also to elect four new preachers. Julius Siebert¹⁸ in Ostenfeld is elected elder and Abraham P. Bergmann¹⁹ is elected third, both are already appointed as preacher by elder Wiens. Many candidates were elected (nominated), votes very scattered, voted for the second time. Alexander Quiring²⁰ Köppenthal, with 109 votes is preacher, but has not yet given his consent. Jonas Quiring Medemthal²¹,

Page 3 (54 right)

son of the late Cornelius Quiring from here, with 67 votes, has consented. Artur Dietrich Töws²² Lysanderhöh, with 70 votes, has not immediately consented in the church. Now from Heinrich Schmidt²³ (we) learned, (he) has accepted. Gustav Gustav Töws²⁴ Hohendorf, neighbor Gustav Töws' son, with 125 votes, immediately accepted in the church. The rest, Herbert Penner²⁵ Fresenheim had 63 votes, Abraham Philipsen 49 votes, Julius Wiens²⁶ 45, Yes. Siebert²⁷ Ostenfeld, 61 votes, has just celebrated (his) wedding with Joh. Fröse's²⁸ daughter Lieschen²⁹. Of the four elected, (there are some) very young men and it is a very difficult position. In general, at the present time, when un-belief is taking deeper and deeper root and dragging everything with it into ruin. I have often heard talk about your Gustav Fröse's³⁰ letters from America, which must not be (speaking) of the best, namely a piece that strikes me so. He is said to have written that on a daily wage, he had to lie on the barn floor in the hay at night, in 20 degree cold, while threshing. All night his feet did not get warm. (Had to) walk around in the deep snow during the day and

¹³ Alex Wiens. Peter Dyck (ca. 1864-1928) (GRANDMA #984961)

¹⁴ Willi Frese. Johann Schmidt (1886-1937) (GRANDMA #415633), or #415642

¹⁵ Alex Wiens. Anna Fröse (1886-1928) (GRANDMA #415638, or #415704)

¹⁶ Alex Wiens. Ella Schmidt (1925-1928), no GM

¹⁷ Alex Wiens. Peter Wiens (1853-1931) (GRANDMA #1253826)

¹⁸ Willi Frese. Julius Siebert (1887-1943) (GRANDMA #1015425)

¹⁹ Alex Wiens. Abraham P. Bergmann (1877-1961) (GRANDMA #1157799)

²⁰ Willi Frese. Alexander Quiring (1888-1942) (GRANDMA #665091)

²¹ Alex Wiens. Jonas Quiring (ca. 1890-????) Nr. 57 under: <https://amtrakt.de/bewohner-von-medemtal-1921-22/>

²² Willi Frese. Artur Töws (1900-1938) (GRANDMA #132298)

²³ Willi Frese. possibly Heinrich Schmidt (1884-1937) (GRANDMA #415634)

²⁴ Willi Frese. possibly Gustav Töws (1904-?) (GRANDMA #1310367)

²⁵ Willi Frese. possibly Herbert Penner (1899-1937) (GRANDMA #1196381)

²⁶ Willi Frese. possibly Julius Wiens (1889-1939) (GRANDMA #1254898)

²⁷ Willi Frese. Jacob Siebert (1905-1976) (GRANDMA #1254548)

²⁸ Willi Frese. Johannes Fröse (1878-1933) (GRANDMA #1254487)

²⁹ Willi Frese. Louise Fröse (1908-1972) (GRANDMA #1254337)

³⁰ Alex Wiens Gustav Fröse (1896-1970) (GRANDMA #461873)

no warm room at night, seems to me almost unbelievable, would not happen here in the Soviet Russia, the Cosein³¹ would be put out soon and with you in America the workers must be treated nevertheless like a raw egg. Your climate is also cold. How is it, do the people, like here, wear everything with felt shoes and felt boots in winter and furs, or not?

We have here also a more severe winter than has been for a few years. The frost has eased a little for 8 days, so it is bearable in our warm room, but it is snowing a lot, there is no proper path any more. So narrow, the horses, when two are driving, want to push each other and for one (horse) the way is too difficult, but they have to be driven now, they want to have the last wheat from the barns³² and attics. The farmer is supposed to weigh out the seed, which he

Page 4 (55)

he needs. As to grinding, I do not know exactly yet, they say à Seele, à month 1 pud wheat only may be ground. The flour trade is stumpf³³ eingestellt³⁴. Whoever still has some, the rest is all supposed to be taken away. Not much more will remain here with us, we had a weak harvest, now we have to return 126 poods from 1922, when we received seed³⁵, and on top of that we have to return 50 puds of wheat from the previous harvest. In the Sowjet they still need forebearance / indulgence, otherwise we would have had to give sowed wheat, 5 pud from each desjatine sown with wheat. 10 kulaks in lower villages were supposed to give everything, they wanted to take (their) last pants off. In some respects, those who sowed less are better off than those of us who sowed and produced more. The local Soviet (attempting to meet the quotas set by the Moscow government) cancelled its demands for grain from those who produced little, while transferring their obligations for grain to us who produced more. Is it not difficult for us when this happens?

E.g. friend Wilhelm Philipsen and his son Johannes have voting rights, no kulak, sold a bull for 180 rubles. 2 cows going to Moscow are to [bring] 500 rubles, a black 3-year-old gelding sold for 260 rubles, they are doing very much better in the Taurian³⁶ than us, and earlier they had borrowed money from me and now wird auf uns immer geritten (we are always being ridden). As one hears, they have bought 42 cows, which are to go to Moscow. Heinrich Isaac³⁷ also sold 2 cows for 450 rubles, he is also lucky. He also has his guilt, we would have also gladly sold a few, had given too little milk, he also can not feed, not like this and still in the summer, if it comes, the far tread through the country divide, bad pasture, Schitnak (harvested acres) becomes hard, it cannot (be) that our cows are so much worse than those of the others, I do not believe. And when inscribing the milk, a lot can also be done (fudged), but silence and thinking do not offend anyone. Yesterday, January 23, I sent two letters through the mail to Aliata, to Cornelius and Peter Wall, they also wanted to have your address from America and quite encouraged (by me), they should write as soon as possible to you dear and also often. Now let's wait and see how it will turn out, then you will receive so many

Page 5 (57)

letters that you will say at last, already another letter. Well, I have no time to read, because the American is busy and keeps on working, time is money, because if I count together all your friends here, dear ones, and everyone writes as much as I do, a lot of letters should reach you, right? I am only getting too indifferent about writing badly and putting together incomplete (sentences), caused by my 77 years, which I have

³¹ Willi Risto. Cosein=хозяин, Chef, Arbeitgeber, Wirt = boss, employer

³² Willi Risto. Ambar=Getreidespeicher = granary

³³ Willi Risto. stumpf=einfach = simply

³⁴ Ruth Scott. eingestellt= set , posted

³⁵ Willi Risto. schütten=liefen = dump, deliver

³⁶ Willi Risto. im Taurischen. Molotscha lag im Taurischen Gouvernement = Taurischen refers to the area that Molotscha was in

³⁷ Willi Frese. Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

wandered through. Yes one more thing, the other day I had written about daughter Helene's³⁸ prince³⁹, still without

name, now he has one, but not the right one. I wanted him to be called Jacob, but the old Esau⁴⁰ was crazy that he should be called Peter Gerhardowisch and it has become so. The other day on my birthday Katharina⁴¹ and Heinrich Isaak⁴² stayed with us for the night. Tine had visited Helene and the other day they were at Aunt Horn's⁴³ for lunch, Heinrich had gone to Philipsen, arrived shortly before noon. His mother is also sickly, so I went with Heinrich to Horn's, and Aunt Horn told me that she remembered very well when a Peter⁴⁴ was born at Mathiesen's in Kriefkohl. I said to her, just don't be so altnasig⁴⁵, they are both old already, 77 years. We counted however, and it's correct that she is still 8 years older, can well imagine⁴⁶ from my birth. Aunt Horn will soon be 86 years, very lively. She can still converse very well, only a pity that she is so hard of hearing and cannot walk. (They) have also had bad luck: a cow was sick, vet said - will not get better, lung disease. Slaughtered it, meat could not be used at all, had insured higher, 85 rubles. Leather, I think, 14 rubles. The day I was there with the Isaacs, a beautiful cow calf (born in) spring, was sick, also died, beautiful big calf. We already have 3 cows fresh milk and the 4th showed the uterus⁴⁷ and pushed out the bladder. The veterinarian had to take the calf from her, (it) has attacked her nevertheless very well (nursing)

Page 6 (56)

in spite of the feed gives very little milk, will become good only for the butcher, is well fed, (will) look at it again, was lucky, (had) 3 cow calves from it. 2 pretty weißbles⁴⁸, ears and around the eyes black. A black mare, 5 years old, we sold to Voskresensk Russians, for cheap, 160 rubles, but one must have money, February 1 is coming soon. There are again a bride and groom, deceased D. Wall's son David⁴⁹ Fresenheim is marrying Johann Unger's daughter⁵⁰ in Ostefeld. Gerhard Wallen⁵¹'s son Heinrich⁵² Medemthal is marrying Johann Fröse's⁵³ daughter⁵⁴ from Lindenau who has been landlady with Johannes Neufeld for seven years. The elder Cornelius Nickel's son is said to marry Heinrich Fröse's daughter from there. It must not be very difficult for Hermann Nickel, (to mourn) his father, otherwise he would still be waiting, must be a light bird.

Renate, you write in your letter, the wife of the elder D. Töws⁵⁵ is the Abraham Friesen's⁵⁶ daughter⁵⁷, (that) was interesting to me. Hopefully from Friesen his second wife Regieren (family Regier?)

³⁸ Willi Frese. Helene Mathies (1897-1931) (GRANDMA #347043)

³⁹ Willi Frese. The newborn child of Helene. Peter Esau (1927-1931) (GRANDMA #982315)

⁴⁰ Willi Frese. Jakob Esau (1857-1932) (GRANDMA #346669)

⁴¹ Willi Frese. Katharina Mathies (1883-1953) (GRANDMA #1196403)

⁴² Willi Frese. Heinrich Isaak (1877-1934) (GRANDMA #1196412)

⁴³ Alex Wiens. Anna Horn, nee Franz Wall (ca. 25.04.1842 - 12.11.1930) (GRANDMA #1467943), Birth date calculated from the age. Widow Heinrich Horn, also see letter #107 Hermann Bartsch. S.077 on the right

⁴⁴ Willi Frese. He means himself, Peter Mathies (1851-1934) (GRANDMA #109037)

⁴⁵ Willi Frese. altnasig= Plattdeutsch (ölnesech), Klugschwätzer, Schlauberger, Schlaumeier, Wichtigtuer
= in English a know-it-all

⁴⁶ Willi Frese. Vorstellen=sich erinnern. = to remember

⁴⁷ Willi Risto. Leib=Gebärmutter = uterus

⁴⁸ Willi Frese. weißbles=weiser Stirn. Low German = a white forehead

⁴⁹ Willi Frese. David Wall (1902-?) (GRANDMA #416004)

⁵⁰ Willi Frese. Anna Unger (1905-1979) (GRANDMA #416003)

⁵¹ Willi Frese. Gerhard Wall (1856-1936) (GRANDMA #426078)

⁵² Willi Frese. Heinrich Wall (1897-1943) (GRANDMA #1006967)

⁵³ Willi Frese. Johann Fröse (1867-1937) (GRANDMA #1502448)

⁵⁴ Willi Frese. Elisa Fröse (1897-1968) (GRANDMA #1006966)

⁵⁵ Willi Frese. David Toews (1870-1947) (GRANDMA #4996)

⁵⁶ Willi Frese. Abraham Friesen (1849-1901) (GRANDMA #64053)

⁵⁷ Willi Frese. Margaretha Friesen. (1881-1941) (GRANDMA #5069)

Margarethe⁵⁸. The first was Katharina Neufeld⁵⁹. Oh, where has the time gone, a short span. I wanted to have Mama⁶⁰ and Mariechen⁶¹ also write. Mama has something and Maria has a lot of work, milking, spinning, calf watering, austereen (making things proper?), patching. She also spins already. I said, put the spinning wheel aside and write instead. We have a maid for 1 month, for 6 rubles, has been here the second month. She is still young, but hardworking, I like her better than (the one) we already had. My paper is coming to an end, will have to close, is also enough. To you, dear Renate⁶², I congratulate very much on your birthday and wish you good luck in the new year and God's rich blessing. Now in conclusion, are cordial greetings from Mama, Peter⁶³, Maria, which I join. I remain at a far distance, your father and grandfather Peter Mathies, who loves you very much. Goodbye, farewell.

⁶⁴ Please greet the Trakters, Johannes Isaaks, Corneluis Fröses, Gustav Fröses.

⁶⁵ note that Hermann Nickel is really engaged, yesterday (they) were as bride and groom at preacher Töws⁶⁶ Fres[enheim]

⁶⁷Mills are soon all to be gestellt (gestellt = put in place / provided; he might mean "eingestellt" = discontinued, stopped), how it will be from here on, God knows, is nevertheless sad

⁶⁸ Today the Esaus received an American letter through the mail. Whether from you, or Eduard Esau⁶⁹, I do not know.

⁷⁰ Our government wants to again pull the breadbasket up and away from us, perhaps to starvation, the

⁷¹ For the congratulations on my birthday, a heartfelt lovely thanks and best wishes. Be all commended to our dear God.

⁷² How big is John Isaac's **Furen?** even with full load? How expensive? Is he still as American as he was on the way when you left? Was

⁵⁸ Willi Frese. Margaretha Regier (1859-1912) (GRANDMA #64055)

⁵⁹ Willi Frese. Neufeld Katharina (1849-1875) (GRANDMA #64054)

⁶⁰ Willi Frese. Anna Wall (1864-1929) (GRANDMA #109036)

⁶¹ Willi Frese. Maria Mathies (1909-1993) (GRANDMA #1196425)

⁶² Willi Frese. Renate Mathies (1885-1963) (GRANDMA #168775)

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

⁶⁴ Willi Frese. Addition to letter, on the side page 1

⁶⁵ Willi Frese. Addition to letter, on the side page 2

⁶⁶ Alex Wiens. Johannes Töws (1869-1937) (GRANDMA #1014885)

⁶⁷ Willi Frese. Addition to letter, on the side page 3

⁶⁸ Willi Frese. Addition to letter, page 3, at the top.

⁶⁹ Willi Frese. Eduard (Edward) Esau (1887-1966) (GRANDMA #288865)

⁷⁰ Willi Frese. Addition to letter, on the side page 4

⁷¹ Willi Frese. Addition to letter, on the side page 6

⁷² Willi Frese. Addition to letter, on the side page 5

From me slow is no wonder when the rye is still growing in the country on the land.

[The rye] had in my opinion, still stood too short a time, this doesn't produce a good crop.

Überhaupt dieses Jahr ist fein im Korn, **aber von solchen wundert einen doch, sind noch recht lebensfroh.**

fein:

I would explain it that way that the grain is a little one, not a nice big one. And the second part of the sentence is just a guess: he could refer to the former probably younger men: Though the rye and the grain is not doing well, they are still cheerful. That makes you wonder.

Überhaupt dieses Jahr ist fein im Korn, **aber von solchen wundert einen doch, sind noch recht lebensfroh.**

fein:

I would explain it that way that the grain is a little one, not a nice big one. And the second part of the sentence is just a guess: he could refer to the former probably younger men: Though the rye and the grain is not doing well, they are still cheerful. That makes you wonder.

DAVID: