

In the gathering together of papers, records and books of a historical nature, a booklet of 95 pages in a size of 4 3/4 by 6 5/8 inches came into my possession.

It was printed in german in the Mennonite Publishing House, Elkhart, Ind., in 1897.

Having remembered reading this record some years ago it was again hunted up and reread early this winter, and the interest it again aroused made me desirous to make it available in the most common present day language, english, for folks who can not read or understand the german. Therefore entirely in my own way, faulty as I confess it is, due to limited abilities, it has been translated and a number of mimeographed copies made both because of my own interest and for the benefit of others.

This work, mingled with other duties meant no small amount of effort and some expense as well as considerable time.

Therefore it is suggested that any one who reads this report, and desires to keep the copy, would contribute fifty cents toward reimbursement for the labor and expense involved.

Sincerely submitted.

Elmer G. Swartzendruber.
March 19, 1948.

The following description is on the
outside of the booklet.

EINE
DEPUTATIONSREISE
von
RUSSLAND nach AMERICA
ausgegeben von
LEONHARD SUDERMANN

(Translation)
A Deputationsjourney
from
Russia to America
written by
Leonhard Sudermann

FOREWORD.

For a number of years I have been asked to write up the journey which over 24 years ago was made, from Russia and Prussia to the United States and Canada. This meant a change of home for many and will long be remembered as a weighty and important happening in the history of our Church.

At that time it was intended that this be publicized through one of our church papers, or else to submit it to an almanac. Both these views seemed to me to be unsuitable, since to many it was not deemed of any particular importance to preserve the church papers, while where a number of issues would be needed to contain the complete report this also would hardly be feasible. To resort to an almanac would be entirely too voluminous if it was to be given quite complete. To me it seemed best that it be published in a separate form in order to preserve it for and make it available to future generations.

I would wish that more able writers than myself had taken up the task but for this there was little prospect since Bro. Will Ewert of Bruderthal, one of the deputation was already no more among the living. He has already entered into a more important change of abode. And Brother Jacob Buller, New Alexanderwohl was so unlucky on the homeward trip that someone took his note book out of his overcoat pocket while on the train. The conclusion therefore, was that if anything was ever to be done in the matter I would need to do it and so I set about the task.

My quite comprehensive notes came in very handy in presenting the following work even though it is far from being perfect.

Therefore, to those of the household of faith I present this publication with the request that it be judged with christian forbearance. May it serve to the members of our churches as a means of strengthening in the profession of hope, in the riches of our God and the worthy Prince of Peace Jesus Christ.

The Author.

A DEPUTATION'S JOURNEY from RUSSIA TO AMERICA.

It was a real question that confronted those of our churches in Russia and Prussia, and which brought them to the decision to send a deputation to America, and to the U S, in order to find a place where we might hope to maintain our profession and faith both for ourselves and for our children.

Our fathers were accustomed to look upon this life on earth as a pilgrimage, in that the particular trials of life continually reminded them of this fact. Nevertheless our true Shepherd has in all of these trials a real purpose in this that amidst it all the truth has become the more confirmed.

Saueranschen, Schelten und Schmähren
Pflügt nur die Spren von dem Weizen zu wehen;
Treibet zu Jesu und mehret den Mut,
Unserm inwendigen ist es sehr gut.

It can, and often did mean more than sourness, scolding and abuse as they often despaired of life, and many were the martyrs following the reformation period who were offered on the funeral pyre, thus testifying to the word of truth. Others of our brethern often suffered many restrictions at the hands of the oft changing powers that be, although in general much patience was frequently shown. In Russia we had thought a promise made in 1800 by Caesar Paul would save us from further suffering. Then 26 years ago a new military law entered in that made no exceptions, not even among the german colonists, but all were obliged to serve, which gave occasion for several brethern to be sent to Petersburg

(now Moscow) to ascertain if this promise was no longer to be respected. The answer received there was not satisfactory.

The most agreeable possible was an exemption from direct military service but not from the so-called sanitary service. Since in this sanitary service we were supporting the military machine, and since our chief concern was to avoid the dangers which naturally accompanied such associations with such a life, the results from such contacts could not be at all satisfactory.

We foresaw our existence in Russia for the future to be in jeopardy and therefore harbored serious thoughts toward making a change in our church home. This became a real concern and caused no small amount of counselling in numerous gatherings on the matter.

America seemed to be the only answer to the question "where" altho at first it was thought to be so very far, especially since in South Russia about fifty or sixty thousand souls needed to be reckoned with. Many were the battles within in order to fully yield to the thought that America was the place to go. America in our conception was a part of the world of interest to the adventurer, a refuge for lawbreakers; how could a person among such inhabitants hope to find a home in peace? This might be anticipated by someone having his baggage full of loaded revolvers, upon which he depended, and therefore in the most adverse circumstances to risk his life, but for a non-resistant people to obtain there a home seemed impossible; while added to this was the long toilsome journey across the Atlantic Ocean.

How expensive this would be for a people who would have to leave everything, and for the greater part poor, and thus to leave their own home could hardly be imagined. Such and similar thoughts needed first to be conquered before a conclusion could be reached that America was to be taken into our consideration. This critical condition in which we found ourselves called for the most solemn consideration in order to come to a conclusion and ever remained considerably limited. Many who read this will not be able to understand how we were able to render such a judgment over America but how could we from so far away formulate a better opinion?

Very little opportunity did we have to picture to ourselves a better sight in view of what the public press brought to us, and this same type of information to be obtained in Russia today is that which experience teaches us yet. However, a dire necessity crowded us to a decision to investigate without delay the possibilities in America, and this opinion was shared by the churches at Molotschna and Mariapol together with a number of our brethren in West Prussia. This determination was expressed in a common desire to a faithful maintaining of the faith.

The officers at Petersburg had hardly expected that we in our thinking and conclusions would come to this decision, and were often reminded by the Counts and the Senators of the seriousness of such a move who said, "Where will you go?" America is far and Australia is even farther yet. Our answer to them was this, "Australia may be far but with the help of God not so far", if we there could entertain the hope to maintain our faith. But they at Petersburg did not expect that we would move to America as later proved to be the case. This conclusion was reached in the spring of 1873, and next in order came to make the choice of men within the churches to undertake a journey of investigation in order to learn more about the land and the people and to ascertain if and where in Canada and the United States a desirable settlement could be made by so large a group of people. The writer of this was one of the two appointed in an open meeting of our particular group. The first to be appointed was Brother Jacob Buller a bishop of the Alexanderwohler church after which the call for this weighty trip of investigation trip came to the author of this writing. This was not a trip for self-satisfaction which we were about to undertake, but one of great responsibility in the carrying out of a particular work.

The following statement of authority for the mission was given to us;

"To the church Elders Jacob Buller from Alexanderwohl and Leonard Sudermann from Berdjansk.

Worthy Elders and Brethern.

In weighing the difficult position and the farther implications of the new defense laws, and upon the basis of promises of the past ten years by those in authority to permit us to emigrate, you have been chosen as Deputies to North America, there for us and ours to seek and secure a new home.

We commit to your judgment the choice as well as any special demands of security with this definite request that every possible agreement with any government be carefully stated;

(a) Authoritive assurance of complete freedom of religion, and that which is so closely related with this, entire exemption from every phase of military service.

(b) Land of such quality and quantity for our requirements, of which you are well informed, either gratis or at a moderate price and under easy terms in regard to payment thereof.

(c) Assurance of a similar exclusive method of church service; with the use of the german language according to our own choice, similar to what we have had here until now.

(d) Not absolutely required but yet to be desired, a substantial reduction in transportation fees for the journey ~~from~~ as has been heretofore customary from Russia to Germany, by the Canadian government.

Whatever you may see fit to accept or obligate yourself in this matter for us we hereby agree to make ourselves responsible for in the contemplated trip of omigration.

With a heartfelt wish for the guidance of the Lord and rich blessings upon the work we append our names hereto.

Signed by many names.

Amidst the blessings and well-wishes of our families and the churches, who also had given us full authority to act, we found ourselves on the way the latter part of April 1873, journeying first to West Prussia where we arrived on May 3rd, spending a week in the church of Heubuden near Marienburg where also Brother Will Ewert of the Thorner Church united with us. On May 10th, we came to Berlin and on the 11th, in the "Domkirche" we heard the resident minister Koegel, and in the same evening left on our trip to Hamburg where we arrived on the morning of the 12th. Here we had some labor in connection with the exchange of money and the obtaining of tickets.

On the 14th, at 7.30 o'clock we went to the harbour and boarded a small steamboat which in several hours delivered us to Strade where our steamer, the Frisia, which should take us to America, lay in anchor.

At 12 noon another small steamship brought the mail and while we were eating dinner the anchor was weighed and the monstrous ship the like of which we had never before seen, guided by a pilot, steamed toward the mouth of the Elbe river. At quarter of six in the evening the ship stopped once more and the pilot turned over the helm to the ship's captain, and boarded a small boat; his responsibility at an end. All that we beheld was now and important to us.

Next we came in sight of Hellgoland, which lately came from english into gorman hands; then we came very close to the coast of Holland near Rotterdam where many ships were travelling in the water; then we lost all connections with points of land and found ourselves in the openness of the North Sea.

The occupation of the sailors and the ship's officers was to us now as well as very interesting. They sounded the depth with a lead weight, which end was painted with tallow. They drew the reflections of the sun's rays upon the water of the sea and thereby made their reconings. Then the French coast came into sight and we sailed through the narrow passage between Dover and Calais.

On May 16 at 2 o'clock in the morning, we reached the harbour of Havre, but had to wait for the tide and then entered the coast harbour and drew up to the pier. In the afternoon we took a journey over french soil and into a french city. Havre is a beautiful place, set upon a terrace of the mountain reached by a stairway of 250 steps, and here we beheld a most beautiful of flowers on trees shrubs and plants. Chestnut trees in full bloom with red and white flowers, roses, tulips and for-get-me-nots as nature alone is able to unfold them and portray to us the goodness of God and His many wonders. Apricots were about the size of a hazelnut.

Astonishing to us upon the clean streets of the city were the enormous horses and the huge wagons to which they were hitched. Great bales of cotton lay on the coast of the ships harbour with its deep bay plainly visible to us from the terrace. All these observations were made with a great amount of appreciation.

At 12 noon our ship again went out to sea with the tide and we went through the channel between England and France and then out into the great Atlantic Ocean. From Havre there were about 1200 people on board ship. Truly a small world of people within the bounds of a floating building playing about upon the waters like a ball, subject to the treacherous elements, which in the past have overtaken and destroyed unnumerable numbers of such craft. But "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust." Psa 91:1,2.

Our ship daily travelled from 264 to 324 nautical miles.

Wednesday May 21 very little progress was made because in the afternoon a thick fog made visibility impossible but toward evening it cleared and then on the western horizon a small narrow streak was seen which looked as though it was land. We soon found out that in this we were not mistaken. Upon the part of all passengers the hope that soon the perilous sea voyage was to come to an end caused no small amount of joy. Many were the fishing boats to be seen both far and near and one of these in a very imprudent manner came directly toward our ship so that we had grave concern if or not it may have suffered some grave misfortune. Among others a fine white boat neared to us with which our captain exchanged signals upon which a harbour pilot boarded our ship and steered us into the New York harbour.

This caused high spirits among all of us and we now hoped within the day to enter the harbour. The american coast drew ever nearer which created a great deal of curiosity among us all. Beautiful landscape unfolded before our eyes with ever now and changing scenes before us. On the left we beheld the coast of New Jersey which afforded a surprisingly beautiful sight and the various odors that accompany the different agricultural pursuits around the point of 'upper tenthousand'. All passengers were on the upper deck to view this most interesting sight. Finally in the distance we beheld the city of New York and soon the ship came to a stop and the anchor was cast. The sun had already set but our eyes were yet straining to continue beholding the beautiful sight which the new world disclosed. As the night gradually set in the glorious illumination both near and far continued to be a sight to behold.

Then with heartfelt gratitude to our Father in heaven for His protection from danger and harm, and the safe arrival at our destination we lay down to rest. Thursday May 22 at the break of day I arose and went up on the deck. With me stood several ladies who also desired in the morning air to see the sight that the break of another day unfolded to view. Breakfast now being ready, as we sat down to eat the ship again began to move and soon it rested at its pier.

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Many new and interesting things were to be seen at the pier with the various and peculiar ships in sight. Immediately when the ship came to rest they began unloading packets and chests. The inspection of our baggage went well. A friend from the mission greeted us and remained to arrange for a team to take our baggage. Arriving at the mission we were met by representatives of the Northern Pacific railroad, who took us to Mr Hiebert an agent of the road. On the way from there to our quarters we met Rudolph Riesons who had made the trip with us; who with two others of our party, while we were engaged with our own affairs, had already made arrangements for their further journey and so were ready to bid farewell to us and go on to Summerfield Illinois. With this their sudden decision we were somewhat surprised but hoped with God's help to again see them later on.

X Arriving at our quarters we were met by another agent, a Mr Hespler. Since the Northern Pacific railroad men wanted to introduce us to a man in Philadelphia who also was one of their officials, and Mr Hespler expected to go with us to Manitoba after Pentecost, and we had definitely planned to be with the brethren in Canada over Pentecost, therefore it was decided that the brethren with Ewert and Andr Schrag go to Philadelphia and we, Bro. Jacob Buller, Bro. Tob Unruh and I go to Canada.

So the following day, May 30 we parted as the brethren left for Philadelphia in the afternoon and the following morning evening we took the train for Canada with the understanding that after Pentecost we again meet at Elkhart Ind and from there to again travel together. Before we separated we became acquainted with Bro. Fobbe who invited us to his home and offered us a friendly lodging for the night, which invitation Bro. Buller, Bro. Ewert and I accepted. In this family we found a hearty welcome and also a love for the Word of God and for our non-resistant profession. Also before we left New York we became acquainted with a Mr Hiller who showed us a very nice open park in which we also ate supper.

May 30 we went to the Depot and took the train on the Erie railroad. We were advised to take a bed in the sleeper. On the way to the Niagara Falls we crossed from Warsaw over the Genesee river where we saw a beautiful waterfall; over this river we crossed the highest bridge in the world, so they told us. At 12 o'clock noon we came to the large city Buffalo and almost immediately to the Canada coast where at Clifton we stopped for several hours, and then the majestic greatness of the spectacle that lay before us, Niagara Falls. Here immediately below the falls is the bridge for teams and pedestriains which is 450 steps long. Great O God are thy wonders, he who takes notice thereof finds pleasure therein.

About three english miles below the falls is the railroad bridge over this stream over which we crossed to enter Canada. At 9 PM we left the train that brought us to Preston and here one of the Canadian brethren, Bro. Joe Y Schantz met and took us to Bro Jos Erb with which family we spent the night.

June 1, after we had breakfast here we went with Bro Schantz to church nearby and for the first time we observed Pentecost in America, here with those of like faith. O, how glad we were, so soon after landing in this new country, on this journey of so great a responsibility, to meet with such a large group of people who had a real sympathy for us in our needy circumstances in our own homeland.

We felt encouraged in facing our problem, as we found those with whom we basically had the same faith even though we never had any correspondence with them and in fact hardly knew of each other before.

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Ja, wenn Seelen sich zusammen finden
In denen Du Herr Jesus lebst,
Die sich auf deinen Tod verbinden
Und die Du selber trägst und hebst;
Da öffnen sich die Herzen gleich
Da redet man vom Himmelreich
Wo Christanseelen sich begegnen
Da gilt's nur Liebe, Bitten, Segnen.

We, Bro. Tob Unrug and I, gladly accepted the invitation to preach and rejoiced that the Bishops and ministers present gave testimony to it as being the Word in its truth. In the afternoon we were taken to the Dunkard brother Philip Halm in whose house a meeting was called. Here were also several guests from a distance who belonged to this fellowship. Here also we were called upon to speak and all three of us preached.

At Bro. Elias Weber, a deacon, Bro. and sister Schantz and we ate our dinner. The latter took us to one of his new farms on which lived one of his sons-in-law. Here also a gathering was announced where we were also asked to bring the message. Here we remained for the night.

June 2, our friendly host took us to Martin's church where learned to know old Bishop Abraham Martin who made us feel welcome and who also later when our brethren went to Manitoba gave much for the poor as well as assisting in other ways. This man also encouraged his sons in a fatherly way to do the same which they did as an expression in a material way.

In 1874 when a goodly number of our people landed in Canada on an English line ship, on their way to Manitoba these Canadian brethren came to the landing to welcome them and with them was old Brother Martin who also made the trip to the port of entry. He had a desire in spite of old age and its weaknesses to be present in person when these folks landed. Nine hundred ninety seven souls left the ship at that time and were quartered in the town for the night and the next morning there were a thousand. Even though these newcomers never had any correspondence with their Canadian brethren yet they were heartily received, and the poor among them assisted and later in the expensive colonization in the province of Manitoba were supplied with substantial sums of money as well. May the Lord and Bishop of our souls who promised that even a cup of cold water shall not go unrewarded abundantly bless them for it.

Brother Martin took me to Berlin (now Kitchener) where we all three preached. After services Bro. Baumann took me to his home which is several miles from the city. He desired that I might visit his 87 year old father who earlier came from Russia. At this place Brother Dettweiler were also guests. Others also gathered here and again I was asked to preach which, though in great weakness, I was glad to do. In the evening we were at Bro. Schantz's home where my two companions were used in a period of edification.

June 3rd, in the morning we went to see Bro. Schantz's sawmill after which we went to the Latcher Church house. On the way we were privileged to see the machine with which the largest stumps were pulled out in order to make the soil tillable. When we arrived at the church house the services had already begun. Bro. David Scharg spoke on the text Jno 8:31, 32 after which all three of us were privileged to add testimony. Bro. Moses Baumann, a minister, took us to his home for dinner. Here we had opportunity to see his cheese factory as well as a very interesting water pump. In the afternoon we again went to church at Dettweilers who among the ministers was the first one we had learned to know but now for the first time became acquainted with his family. In the evening we went back to Berlin and had church at Bro. Schneiders and from there were taken to Bro. Jac Schantz by Bro. David Sherg and wife. I rode with this aged brother since this forenoon which gave a good deal of opportunity for us to talk about many things and to learn from each other. These were for me three momentous days in which I had opportunity both in their homes and in their church services to become acquainted with many dear Canadian brethren.

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In the services there were many new and interesting and unaccustomed things both in song and preaching although in no way offensive, but we became very closely knit together in this intercourse with them. Here we found complete and satisfactory answers to many of the questions which naturally attended our mission here. Here we could ascertain how churches which also held our position were able to live in peace and so far as earthly matters were concerned found them generally prosperous.

With the peaceful assurance we left on the morning of June 4, having first viewed a number of factories in company with Bro. Schantz, and then went farther inland and next landed at Elkhart, Ind. Mr. Hesplor again joined with us as our plans were now to visit Manitoba next. From Berlin we left in the morning at 10 o'clock and at 3 PM we left Canada crossing over the Huron lake into the state of Michigan. Here we beheld how great a damage the timber fires had done, and here also saw occasional farms of fruit orchards. At 7 o'clock we came to Detroit and a half hour later into a nice little town, Ypsilanti; the next morning came to three rivers. Not being able to leave here immediately we used the time to see some of the factories; one in which pumps are made; 30,000 of them yearly; here also saw a paper factory in which the paper is made from poplar wood, and besides this there were large shops where machinery and grinding mills were made.

Marvelous were the mineral wells, one of which we visited and drank magnetized water. Water for health and in which men bathe and at this particular time 350 people resort to the cure, and besides the inhabitants of the town continually come and go. This water was discovered in the following manner; the owner had a sick wife who had doctored much but to no avail and miraculously after living here a half year she became well which made them take notice to the well upon their place and so the water was analyzed and they became convinced of its healing powers. A piece of iron or an open knife held in the stream of water as it flows out of the pipe will then hold up a needle.

Among the guests we met here were some mennonites from Indiana with whom we had the opportunity to become acquainted. This town is but 8 years old and has 4000 inhabitants. Our somewhat lengthy, involuntary, yet for us quite educational stay in this place resulted in a belated arrival at Elkhart on June 6 at 2 AM and a missing of those our fellow journeymen whom we expected to again meet here; they were already on their way to St Paul where other Russian brethren whose mission was similar to ours, who had crossed the ocean before us, and who expected to go with us to Manitoba, were awaiting us. This caused us without a waste of time to take a train for Chicago. Arriving there we met our brethren Wilh Ewert and And Schrag conducted by Mr Hiller. In our short stay in this city of 400,000 inhabitants we viewed a 300 step long tunnel which connects two streets together. The community through which our train travelled through Wisconsin was much more pleasing to us than was that from Elkhart to Chicago. First we came through a very fruitful level country followed by a more varied topography. At noon we stopped in Milwaukee; in the evening ate supper in Portage; for the night we took a sleeper and in the morning at about 6 o'clock as we arose we landed at St Paul. There we met the Bergthaler brethren, first Bro. Peters at the depot and the rest at the magnificent hotel, where we had breakfast. We immediately needed to continue our journey to the north as Bro. John F Funk of Elkhart with the deputation of the so-called "Kleine Gemeinde" was already before us on the way and if at all possible we wished to overtake them.

Our route led us from St Paul directly north to Duluth, a harbor city on Lake Superior. The scenery along the way was very changeable, the farther north we came the more interesting it was. Presently our attention was drawn to a stream that lay deeply imbedded in the rocks and travelled over a large fall. The rock were black in color, and the falling water looked black too, similar to a dark eye which then changed to red and sparkled. Finally we again came close to this same stream which lay so far below that it made us dizzy as we looked out of the car windows. Literally the railroad is built on ledges cut into the rock.

The temperature also changed considerably on this part of the trip. In St Paul it was uncomfortably warm and towards evening as we neared Duluth we were glad to put on our overcoats. Saturday evening June 5 at 5 o'clock we arrived there and immediately went to the large spacious emigrant building nearby which was very well arranged to welcome and take care of the emigrants who come in search of land. In the lower story are long tables and benches and beside this the kitchen. In the upper story are beds and mattresses and woold covers ready to be used. Four buildings like this were stretched along this railroad right of way where a person could leave his family and receive lodging entirely gratis, and where they could cook their own meals which they themselves needed to supply.

Since we did not wish to cook our own meals we went on to the hotel where board and lodging was to be had for 24 hrs for \$2.00. Our intention was to spend the Sunday here in quietness. From the hotel where we had a good view of the lake we saw, because of the sudden change of temperature, a similar sight to what we had seen at the sea coast, a piling up of a large mass of ice. Sunday morning June 8 we went to the new Lutheran church which had been finished but a short time ago. The young minister was a Pommeranian who in the past year had come from Europe. He had a good edifying sermon. After the service we were invited to his home aside of which stood the school house. He told us that Duluth was founded but four years ago and now has 5500 inhabitants.

Last night we had a severe storm and today it was foggy and rainy. This caused our spirits to be depressed and we thought of those at home, where according to the eastern customs Pentecost is commemorated. No doubt they also are thinking of us. We are now already 1600 miles west of New York. The city here is built on land from which the timber has lately been cut and among some of the more distant houses may yet be seen the stumps and roots of fallen trees. In general the northern part of Minnesota is heavily wooded with numerous changes of different needle shrubs and birch. In the hotel we saw pictures of the ravines and bridges that the day before we had seen along the way.

June 9 in very rainy weather we started westward taking the train at 7 AM toward Dakota. With Brother Schantz and Mr Hiller there were ten of us. We now again came close to the same stream which we had followed day before yesterday, it is called the St Louis river. The route now travelled gave a variety of scenes, some deep places covered with water, flats and then again hills with the ground copper colored and heavily wooded.

Continuous rain depresses the spirit; makes us think of home and calls on God for courage; we have yet far to go and a weighty mission to carry out. At about noon a great scare came over all on the train, as repeated heavy jolts made us afraid. The engineer gave a signal and in the twink of an eye all cars were apart. The train stopped; but why? In three places the rains had washed out gullies one and one-half feet deep. Some rails were bent and one even broken. Thanks be to God that nothing serious happened since the train follows here a five foot grade. They soon decided how to repair the damage but in another half hour we are again in the same situation. Workmen sought to obtain help and the passengers went a distance on foot but they soon found a way to bring the train across. For a long stretch we travelled through an uninhabited region then signs of settlers attempting to establish homes were to be seen. These accidents caused us to reach our days destination rather late. We passed Moorhead and crossed the Red River this evening and remained for the night on the Dakota side at Fargo at the New Headquarters hotel, a very convenient and roomy building lately erected by the Pacific railway organization. Here we met Bro. Funk with the others of the deputation. Their number was the same as that of the ones from the wilderness sent to investigate the promised land.

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Here follow the names of the group as we were after our coming together: Wilhelm Ewert, Jacob Buller, Tobias Unruh, Andreas Schrag, Jacob Peters, Heinrich Wiebe, Cornal Bour, Cornelius Toews, David Classen, Paul Tschotter, Lorenz Tschetter, Leonhard Sudermann.

The first was authorized from the West Prussian Mennonites, the second and last from Molotschna, South Russia, the third and fourth from our brethren in Wolkynien, West Russia, the fifth sixth and seventh from Bergthal, Mariapol, South Russia, the eighth and ninth from the so-called Kleine Gemeinde, South Russia, the tenth and eleventh from the Hutterite Brethren in the Taurischen Government, South Russia. Besides these, others in the group were, Bro Jacob Schantz, Bro. J.F. Funk and N N Leathermann.

June 10 and 11 we took a trip westward into Dakota under the guidance of a Mr. Power, a representative of the railroad. We found open prairie, very appropriate for settlement, in a general way suitable for our needs and similar to what we had in Russia. A large prairie although largely under water, and noticing that the water level in the river beds was very low we came to the conclusion that the subsoil was not pervious. In but a few cases were there any signs of colonization. A number of lakes of no mean importance with salt water were also to be seen and farther west the terrain was more broken. We found hills very similar to the Mokillon of South Russia.

The night was spent on the Cheyenne river, 66 miles from Fargo and the next day we went yet 40 miles farther on and entered in with some colonists feeling that possibly here was the beginning of the answer to our problem for later consideration. We ate dinner with a number of railroad workers in a hotel on a freight car and then returned on the 12th, at 2.36 AM.

All was new and undeveloped, with large trees along the streams, Ash, Oak, Elm and many others with leaves with which we were unacquainted, and also the Blackberry and Raspberry bushes and wild roses which indicated to us this has long been native to ~~us~~ them. In the morning we decided to continue our trip to Manitoba. The steamboat we were to take, came this morning from Fort Garry and was ready to sail with us tomorrow along the Red River to Winnipeg. In the interim we made use of the time in various ways, short trips to the country in wagons, seeing the town Farmon and writing letters to our loved ones at home.

We were told that not far north from the railroad at Glendon a group of 1000 families were located. We were also told that in the winter it comes to 30 below and more, although since there is no wind it does not seem so cold.

June 13 at 7.15 we boarded the steamboat International for Manitoba. Besides us 12 we were accompanied by Bro. J Y Schantz, Bro. J.F. Funk, Mr Hiller, Mr Hespler and his nephew. Lord our God give courage, endurance and success to our work.

Trains as yet go no further north but a number are being planned for, among them one to connect Fort Garry with the Lake Superior. The ship on which we are belongs to the Hudson Bay Company but sails under the American ~~flag~~ flag because one of its agents is an american citizen. In its middle it has a space of 33 steps long which serves as an eating hall. On both sides are the cabins for passengers, 18 for men and 6 for women. On the side of the cabins is another narrow passageway on both sides of the ship. Nine railroad cars that brought the cargo for our ship were unloaded onto our boat. The agent told us that several weeks ago about 70 Indianans came to Fort Garry to look for a place of settlement under the canadian government. The government promised each family of five 80 acres of land. This made the Indianans feel so lucky that they publicly gave vent to their exultation. In this manner they made friends with these early settlers who were not entirely intolerant to such measures.

Not until 2 PM did we sail. The river makes many severe turns and demands the guidance of an experienced helmsman. Often we went directly south when our general course was north.

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The river shore is wooded with heavy timber, great elms playing the leading role, but also Linn and Willows are there, and blackberries and raspberries without number, and these promise to be of real value in their season. At points where the vessel stops wood is stored for the furnaces and during the time this is being loaded the passengers have opportunity to make short trips in the surrounding territory gathering nice flowers, red okulci and white vetch.

The Canadian government bought from the Hudson Bay Company a vast scope of land and paid 300,000 pounds sterling for it. This voyage along the richly wooded shores is very interesting and could even serve as a pleasure trip. Soon we met a boat similar to ours going in the opposite direction and we halted knowing that if it should happen to be towing a barge loaded with lumber at its side it would cover almost the entire river bed and make it dangerous in passing each other. Once the boat was stranded in shallow water and much effort and time was spent in floating it again.

June 15. This was Sunday. My thoughts, as I awoke, were with my home and family and church. If we awoke here early in the morning it is already after noon at our home, therefore our prayers for blessings upon family and church were already offered yesterday evening. Brother Funk had asked the ship's captain for the privilege to hold services which he cheerfully granted. The most appropriate time, we felt, was in the afternoon. Mr Hespler took the responsibility to make it known to the people on the ship and a large number gathered together. An english song was sung and Brother Funk read Psa 91 and called the audience to kneel for prayer and with but a few exceptions all responded.

After a short preliminary speech he then spoke on the text 1 Tim 1:15 in an earnest and loud voice. All were attentive listeners even though the services were rather lengthy. I then spoke on the same text in the german language following which Bro. Ewert also spoke using Mat 13:45,46. After singing of several verses in english the last speaker led in the closing prayer. Bro. Funk and I sang the german song, "Was kann es schöneres geben". When the services began the engines were stopped and not started again until just as Bro Ewert was about to close.

On the morning of the 16th we came to Pembino where we unloaded freight at three places, flour barrels and flour sacks and few sewing machines. Soon after dinner we crossed the border into Canada, to the province of Manitoba. At one stop we went into a log house whose inhabitants were half-breeds and they belonged to the Roman Catholic church. Their priest lived nearby. An old grandmother, reported to be 100 years old had raven black hair. Her Grandfather was a frenchman and her grand-daughters were of middle age already. A small field of wheat and an insignificant plot of corn showed us signs of local activities.

Early on the 17th, we passed Fort Garry and soon came to Winnipeg. We put up at the Davis hotel and after we had breakfast we went to view this new city. I went to a tailor and gave him my much worn coat for repairing. We also saw several sawmills and in the meanwhile Mr Hespler came with a wagon and asked Bro. Schantz and myself to go and see the Governor. Mr. Hespler introduced us to him and told him of our journey and mission. When we left him he expressed a desire to again meet us after we complete our trip and view the country. The home of this official was under repair since they were putting another story on top of the two already there.

In the garden grow plum and peach trees, raspberries and currant bushes and various other garden vegetables, and the courtyard is grown up with other luxuriant shrubs. Returning from this trip we were called before State Attorney Clark who is next in position of office from the Governor as President of the Province. With him were numerous other men and we were cordially received and treated with cake and wine. These men informed us that north west of Manitoba about 30 miles from the border there lie favourable veins of coal that look very promising.

Iron ore is also to be found not far off; and a nice fine sand in the vicinity which together with the coal would be favourable for a porcelain and glass factory. For this product there are indications of a good outlet since it is planned to build a railroad to lake "Wilder" 90 miles away, from where a water outlet is had with lake Superior.

This man promised to bring the immigrants free of charge from Toronto to their choice of place of settlement. We were to pay for our own food, however at the places stopped enroute special authorized persons were to see to it that such ~~xxxxxx~~ food was supplied to us at cost. In the afternoon we made a trip north west of the city where we came through a nice level region, where we also saw a field of summer wheat in luxuriant growth. We drove till to the assiniboa river which flows into the red river not far from this city, and followed along this stream on our return, and here as we neared the city we saw nice farms that looked to us to have a promising future. We reached our quarters in the evening having made our first trip through the land in Manitoba.

For the 18th there was a trip planned for us by the authorities. Five vehicles with three and four seats each were made ready. Our tour was toward the east, over the red river, through St Boniface, a catholic cloister. As we started at eight in the morning a photograph was presented showing the route of the expedition. The company was composed of 24 people. After we came about ten miles there was a township post. The land is evidently all surveyed and here we stopped for noon. We encountered a nice rain on this trip and would have been soaked had we not had plenty of cover and buffalo robes for protection. As we journeyed farther, due to the lack of experienced guides we got on the wrong road and practically all afternoon till near sundown went through water covered land, so swampy that the horses almost sank in the mud, and we were compelled for long stretches at a time go afoot which became very tiring to us at last. Luckily amidst all this we came at last to a place where there were houses and people.

In the immigrant hotel, in which there was room sufficient for our large company, they refused to give us accommodations, since they were instructed to do so only for such folks that had their legitimate papers, which our leaders had neglected to bring along. We were fortunate however, that there was nearby another place belonging to the Hudson Bay company where the keeper was friendly and willing to care for us providing we were satisfied with the lodging arrangements as he had them. We were very well satisfied with this offer since it would have been very inconvenient to erect tents here in this swampy marshy place. Our nights lodging was very well arranged and the supper under existing conditions left nothing to be wished for either. Tea, bread, butter and eggs were present in sufficient amounts.

June 19th, we felt ourselves rested well after the march of the day before. This called for an expression of thanksgiving to which we all agreed. The 91 Psalm made a fine preliminary to the expression of this feeling. When we thought over the experiences of yesterday and the fact that we were seeking to find a place to settle, then however we felt somewhat depressed. In the second half of June in south Russia the fields are already white to harvest but here as yet the fields are such as to give little promise for the summers crop. We recognized the necessity in line with our commission to investigate and evaluate yet more. We cannot continue our trip tomorrow morning since we need to first wait for the two supply wagons which as yet had not been with us.

Very few birds are to be seen here; only now and then a few ducks, snipe and prairie chickens were to be seen. On the wooded banks of the red river many wild pigeons were seen. In the afternoon we continued our journey; making a complete caravan and well supplied with all necessities; twelve buffalo robes, a great number

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of wool covers, plates, knives, forks and spoons etc; the two supply wagons now also with us. At about sundown we came near the north east corner of the land reserved for us and erected five tents and started a fire on which to cook our supper. When the tea was finished we cast grass into the fire to, if possible keep the mosquitos away which gave to us our horses and mules no rest. After we had satisfied our stomach's needs we agreed to praise our God in song, and thus sounded forth the praises to Him, of love from poor sinners lips in the wilderness of Manitoba.

May all hearts, if later it pleases the Lord that we or our brethren shall live here confirm this; the one needful thing is that we are partakers of Christ, and that man yield to him body, soul and limb, then is his going safe. We went to our tents and before we laid down to rest we bowed our knees before Him to offer thanksgiving and prayer both for ourselves and for those at home.

June 20. At six o'clock we already had breakfast and at seven were ready to set forth, taking a tour along the east side of our reservation. After we came a distance we met an english farmer who had a german wife. Near his home was a spring and also some timber, while over a deep ravine there was a bridge. The small house was clean as was also the lady of the house. He had lumber ready to build a larger house. At the place where we ate dinner there was also a spring, also some trees and in the distance we could see some pine trees. In the afternoon we had to cross a small stream that had very swampy banks. With a scythe some long grass was cut and cast along the edges to make crossing easier, but this took much time and work. [At the stopping place for the next night we were not to be envied for the mosquitos gave us no rest in our tents. Their determination surpasses all bounds of modesty and moderation, and their number was too great for all of them to be satisfied. Completely clothed with hats on our heads and nets over our faces it was yet impossible to protect self against them, therefore we greeted the dawn of another day with joy.]

June 21. Of the eight townships scheduled on our itinerary we have as yet only touched four, yet we now came to the conclusion to return to Winnipeg which will take the entire day. At the next station we laid plans how we intended to operate the following monday. Bro. Ewert, the two brethren Tschetter and Unruh are agreed to conclude the investigation here in Manitoba and return to Dakota. The rest ceded to the desires of the government officials to make a tour west of Winnipeg yet. The decision needed to be made since preparation for the following was also dependent upon it. As we arrived at Winnipeg in the evening we learned that a steamboat was to leave for Fargo that night, so the brethren made ready to avail themselves of this opportunity. We decided that while we look over the territory west of here the brethren make further investigation in Dakota and we later unite again for more work together.

June 22. This is Sunday and we are well rested from the night before, and even though our quarters are quite incomplete, yet we have reason to be contented. I read for myself the 12th chap of John and within my spirit transferred myself to my home. Bro Schantz and Bro Hein Wiebe visited an english service, but I considered it sort of a pleasure trip for me since I understand nothing of an english sermon. Around Winnipeg at a distance there is timber on every side, poplar, ash and oak as well as pastures among the trees and shrubs. Many roses grow wild on the prairies. All work ceased in the city on the Lord's day and the billiard tables in our quarters and in the neighborhood were unused. In the afternoon I went with Brother Schantz to a Methodist church. They were friendly and had a good attendance, men and women sit mingled together and besides me was a lady from Indiana. The songs were accompanied by a small organ and two prayers were offered in the kneeling posture. The preacher spoke on the Nicodemus scripture. To a simple pulpit led five steps. On a raised part of two steps stood a table with a red cover. This raised part is surrounded by a railing and covered with a carpet. The windows of Gothic style are of colored glass. The services made a good impression on us.

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June 23 Arrangements for the journey completed with rainy weather meant a real sacrifice when we wished to be moving and were thinking of them at home. In the afternoon with four people and two supply wagons we started out. Our route followed the Assiniboia for about a mile and till evening we came only eleven miles. The ground is good and not much broken. The grass grows well and our russian quilting needle is found there.

June 24. Started out at six o'clock but waited another two hours for the rest to catch up with us. A very nice morning and with the expectant hope that our journey will be well. We came some 30 miles from Winnipeg and found a large level scope and according to our driver there is a timber region to the right about twelve miles.

The Assiniboia along which we came is grown up with timber and on the opposite side are large thick trees where Winnipeg gets its oak wood. The grass on the prairie is outstanding. We came to Long lake aside of which a herd of cattle were grazing. Forty three miles from the city we stopped for the night at Poplar Point. Fifty three miles farther we put up with a farmer; he has things handy, has a good house and cattle barn, but also a tavern. Four of us decided to accept the offer to sleep in the house instead of in our tents and here we had a good night.

June 25. Not before 8 o'clock did we get going; two horses were gone and these must be found first. We cut out across the prairie and looked up Mr Hesplers and Bro Schantz's land and met a farmer that came here in the past year and who with his brother broke up enough land to enable them to sow 100 bushels of wheat. The well beside his home is 12 ft deep and has good water. Next we met a settler dwelling in a tent; his log house is put up but has no roof yet. His wife's father also lives in the neighborhood. They came from Neu Brounschweig and are slowly building up. We drove for a distance through high 'Schmalee' (?) that reached to the wagon axles, and came to a farmer who had things very handy, having a log house and has the lumber at hand for the other farm buildings. His friendly wife arranged chairs and asked us to be seated. We have time to accept this hospitality while the horses are fed and we also satisfied the demands of our stomachs with bread butter, cheese and a fresh drink.

The land is level and the soil black. Back of this man's house is a thicket with trees of oak, ash, wild cherry and white thorn. After leaving here we first came to Mr Hesplers and then to Bro Schantz's section of land. We made some investigation and found the black earth only one foot deep in a low place and on one higher up there were two feet of humus and below this a sandy loam. Then we again came to the main road which we had left before and followed the rat river. Then we came to a farmer who has already a good house, and here we found a surveyor who we had already learned to know at Winnipeg. A covered well from which we took the lid had ice around the edges yet. From here the landscape was more changeable. A farmer who has lived in this community for 12 years and earlier had been engaged by the Hudson Bay company but now for two years started his own home, plows with a team of horses and near him is a young man who uses a yoke of oxen. We halt here and view the action of american plows in american soil. Our way now leads among trees and stumps past many farms, and we pass by a great river, the Whitemouth. The bridge over this river is under construction, but we drive through water to the wagon axles but the river bottom is firm. At night we make a stop at a shop of the Hudson Bay Company.

Across the river we see a church that belongs to the english mission that has a station here among the half-breeds. At a distance we see the tents of twelve indians, colonists. Close by us there are seated or standing a half-dozen half indians while a bit farther away can be seen their children at play. The fire on which our tea is being made at least drives away the mosquitos from our bodies.

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While I write my notes others are erecting the tents for the night and now we take our supper and commit ourselves into the care of God and lay ourselves down for the night. With our hearts we are with our loved ones at home. The rain accompanied by the storm drove us to our tents for we are better protected from this than we are from the fatal mosquitos.

June 26. The break of another nice day and hopefully we start upon our way for another day. We are ready to start at six and by eleven o'clock again came to the Whitemouth river. At this river we make station for noon. To the west about 15 miles the ridge of a mountain can be seen. A young swiss whom we met here, who has been in Iowa and Minnesota gives this region the preeminence; and he is plowing his land here. He says the winter is of course colder here but proportionately mild. Today we saw much timber many blooming roses and many kinds of other known flowers. After we had gone 15 miles in the afternoon we came to a high level area probably 20 miles long bordered on the one side by poplars and on the other side by the Whitemouth river, whose bed lies some 50 ft deep. The mountain ridge, so far as its distance is concerned has greatly deceived us as it is yet about 16 miles before we come to it, and it appears to be no small range.

We, Brother Buller and I, came to the conclusion today that the 14 townships designated for us were insignificant and that we had better start back tomorrow morning, so that be all means we do not miss our meeting again with the other brethren who had gone on to Dakota. We were joyed to know that Bro. Schantz is to go with us.

June 27. We now, after a good nights rest in tents without being molested by mosquitos, separate ourselves from our present companions of the trip, and only the brethren from the Bergthaler church remain for farther investigation. It appears they may decide to settle here in Manitoba. This evening after traveling 32 miles we stopped for the night at the same spot where we were yesterday morning.

June 28. After dressing and committing ourselves to the Lord for the day it is six o'clock. Our driver is still sleeping, and is not in any hurry, in fact he never seems to be as could be seen before and this spirit especially manifested itself yesterday. But such desires were not shared by the rest of us, for today, as we would gladly have started the days journey much earlier already, for to us time was valuable and we feared we might be late for the meeting with the others. He however, reasons with an entirely different rule, thinking if he does not hasten he will have an extra days wage and his horses will have it easier as well. At last to our satisfaction we see him coming with his team, leading them out and putting the collars on. Now something else enters his mind. He goes to the wagon and hunts for something, finds the wagon hammer and proceeds to grease the wagon axles. This could according to our judgment have been done long ago for he sat for a long time before the door with nothing to do. Now he thinks of something else. He has taken off one wheel when this comes to his mind. He leaves his work, goes to Bro Schantz who is not far from the wagon and evidently has some important matter to talk about, which after having received the answer caused him to pause a bit and then he resumed his work, although not in any hurry at all. At last the four wheels are greased, the hitching is finished and we are on our way.

Not far from the camp of the night the way leads through a stream and our driver decides to water the horses before going through the stream since in this way it can be done while he himself is sitting quietly. As we journeyed we debated when we would likely reach Winnipeg knowing that from where we broke camp we yet need to travel 84 miles. Our driver planned that it would take two and one half days.

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We bargained with him, through Bro. Schantz as our interpreter, if it could possibly be accomplished in two days but he felt that would be impossible. We have 24 miles to the next station and after having come five miles we entered the open prairie, leaving the timber area and for about 18 miles until we reached Portage we went through an entirely unsettled area. To the right we can see the timber along the assiniboia in the distance which they tell us is about seven miles wide. To the left the open prairie upon which so far as the eye can reach no settler is to be seen. This area we did not cross on our way out because of the excursion into Hesplers and Schantz's land, and it is an area that might be considered for settlement and yet they say in some spots is not available while in others that which is obtained is bitter. In places there are natural depressions where surplus rains and water from melting snow gathers. In Portage, another inimportant place, we stopped at one o'clock for dinner, and here our driver is determined to stay for the night. Bro. Buller thought we should go on afoot but after thoughtful consideration we decide to accept the unavoidable. Together with this forced rest we have opportunity to think over the ways and leadings of the Lord.

Gottes Führung fordert Stille;
Wo der eig'ne Fusz noch rauscht
Wird des guten Gottes Wille,
Leicht mit eigner Wahl vertauscht.

In this journey the Lord has in many ways taken us through His school. We learn to know the land and its inhabitants, but that the Lord may bring about His desired end in our souls, that we be equal to the task set before us, our families and the church at home not excepted, and that His gracious purpose in His leading be reached is my wish and prayer. The long separation from our loved ones, oh how it serves to teach self-denial, although fundamentally it is thus well so. I have need to guard against, at the expense of duty, being too much in a hurry in our mission. This would be detrimental to our cause and for me unpardonable, and then also in this manner the purpose of God in my heart could not be attained. If I consider how, on the entire journey, far beyond our prayers and understanding, the Lord has so graciously helped and prospered our work, should I become impatient? Lord Jesus give grace that thy name may be glorified in and through us on this trip. To this and similar meditations this afternoon lent opportunity.

Two small steam mills are found at this place and we arrive at the conclusion that since both of these are busy at work there must also be some grain nearby. One windmill, Holland style, however stands idle. At the rear of one of these mills we counted 35 indian tents. We are made to wonder that our host, who also has a store, has so little preparation made to protect his doors and windows from these unwelcome guests.

June 29. We are still here at Portage and have our quarters here over Sunday. Before breakfast we read John 16 and offered up a prayer. Afterwards we visited an Episcopal church about an english mile away. When we arrive it is not yet time for services and so we sat down upon the grass under a tree and wait. The church house is not new and has no especially pleasing exterior view. The clock is on a roofless towerlike elevation. Opposite the church on the other side of the street stood a house unlike others in architecture which is the home of the minister. Two gateways open to his place, the one is made of stakes, and the yard is filled with shade trees, while in contrast to this the church stands out in the open. At a distance is a sawmill on the assiniboia. The singing at the church was accompanied by an organ. The minister came forward dressed in a white choir cape which on each side had a broad black band. After the song a ritual was followed in which the minister alternated with the congregation. A number of chapters were read out of the Bible, the ten commandments with song recited and at last a sermon given over the words of Solomon; "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting". Returning to our quarters from the services our dinner was already waiting for us.

The afternoon afforded opportunity for various investigations. Bro. Schantz talked with a man who felt the texture of the soil was not especially rich, estimating it to yield about 24 bushels of wheat per acre. Another declared that since he has lived here he has known yields as high as 39 bushels. A grayhaired 78 year old man said the territory lying along the red river was more fertile than this lying close by; once 400 bushels was harvested from 10 bushels. Our host had two racoons chained which had been caught at the red river where also deer are to be found. The Indians say that earlier multitudes of buffalo were here also. A friendly young man who invited us in, recounted how in 1858 the grass hoppers were a real plague here. That time potatoes were planted the middle of July and yielded a good crop yet. Watermellons and tomatoes are said to do well here. Another contended that he was making out well on his 160 acres of land.

June 30. Today noon as we stopped to feed at Poplar Point we saw a field of timothy with heads four and a half inches long. We stopped for the night 24 miles from Winnipeg where quarters were good and a horse barn for 23 teams was also there, as well as a store and a hotel, all showing signs of prosperity. At 6 o'clock we have supper; 3 eggs, a potatoe bread and butter, pickled meat, 2 cups tea, and fresh strawberries for dessert. A half-Indian served the tea and another one could be seen in the kitchen. A quite large garden was planted to cabbage, beets, peas and onions which are growing well, although according to our judgment for the time of year were rather late. No fruit trees are seen except cherries and plums in the thickets, but the grass in the fields is luxuriant and the cattle have plenty of pasture and look well. Cows have full udders. Our host tells us he was the first to experiment with watermelons and says they did well for him last year. Currants grow in the thickets.

July 1. As an exception we are already eating breakfast at 6 o'clock. The half-Indian women have kept everything good and clean but the one smoked the pipe while pouring tea for me. Our driver seems to have for once outdid himself in that he was ready to move quite early. On the way again as yesterday we meet people who are entering the land. Transports, two wheeled carts with half Indians, bringing furs from the east as far as 600 miles they say. Then also some are settlers from Canada who went to Fargo and are returning with ox teams for which they gave \$150.00 and wagons at \$75.00 and here with all necessary equipment for settlement are well supplied. At 11 o'clock at noon we arrive at Winnipeg. Today is a holiday and all is astir; horse racing, foot racing and jumping. Many from the country coming to town, and on the way many drive at our side while others pass us by. Luckily we learn that a steamboat leaves for Fargo this evening which fact brings us joy and we prepare for the trip. We leave Manitoba as the roses are in their most beautiful bloom smiling upon us everywhere from the roadside the timber and the thickets. The earliest seeding is heading out but most of it is not so far along yet. The ship is to leave at 9 P.M. but an excursion trip taken on this holiday makes the sailing time late, and we do not leave until 11.30 at night. It is raining and very dark as we bid farewell to our friendly host and go to the boat. Boarding the ship we hunt our cabins and before we go to sleep we notice that we are moving and are on our way.

July 2. In the night we passed Pembino and again on the soil of the United States. Bro. Schantz and Bro. Buller were present when the customs officials looked through the trunks but I slept well through it all. A telegram from Winnipeg informed us that our remaining fellow journeymen were seriously molested at one of the stations by some half breeds. One of the drivers became involved with a drunken man so that it could have become really dangerous for all, and they requested help from Winnipeg to free some tourists in a hotel. This took place not far from the main city and from this information we drew the conclusion that the rest of our brethren would also soon return after our departure.

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The captain of our boat was greatly interested in our mission, of which he learned through Bro. Schantz; it seems he is part owner of the shipping organization, and has saw mills along this river and offers lumber for buildings to new settlers.

July 4. The mosquitos drove us out of our beds already at four o'clock this morning. The journey is a pleasant one, the weather favourable, the large poplars, oaks, elms, ash and linns offer the careful observer considerable satisfaction, especially when we came from the treeless regions of south Russia. At 8 o'clock we came to a place called Grand Forks. The houses are incomplete but there is a store and a hotel here. As the boat stopped here an hour we went to a farmer nearby and saw an oat field and were surprised and overjoyed at the wonderful growth. The oats stands like a reed, but in places is ready to lodge. A potatoe field nearby planted but four weeks ago is ready to bloom and looks wonderful too. Corn, cabbage and cucumbers and melons are all doing well. Unusually rich is also the growth of grass. The red lake river is a beautiful stream and navigable for small boats. A ferry crosses the red river which connects the state of Minnesota with Canada. At Winnepeg the river is 330 steps wide. From Winnepeg to Fargo is 224 miles and to New York 2053 miles. The ships began moving here this year on Apr 25 and discontinue here this fall about the middle of November.

July 6. Sunday. At three in the morning the ships whistle announces our arrival at Fargo. I was up for over an hour already because the mosquitos gave us no rest on our beds. So under the protection of the Almighty and with His gracious help we have arrived and united with the brethren who had gone on before, and with their fellowship we can together observe the Lord's day. Some 30 persons came together in the large room of the hotel for service, which hotel is the property of the Railway Company. A young man led the service in the English language. The afternoon was spent in writing letters to the loved ones at home.

July 7. Now we want to learn more about the state of Dakota. At 6 in the morning we go by train 25 miles to the west. Here two wagons are ready to take us out on the prairie in a southerly direction. The soil is investigated and we find two feet of black loam. In another place the soil is more sandy. We drove through numerous low spots but the horses did not sink down into them. At Maple river, 13 miles from the railroad we make station under some elms. Raspberries, blackberries and grapes grow wild. Sweet smelling flowers shrubs, dark, light and part red roses adorn the fields. Mr Power has made arrangement for a good dinner; the cook baked fresh bread and the fried ham sardines and 'annanas' and cucumbers all tasted very good. As we leave after a short noon hour our way follows along the Maple river. The blue, red and white 'luzern' will soon bloom and decorate the prairies. The 'eiskirsha' with their white and red blossoms are crushed and the Russian 'stoppnadol' is also found here. At six in the evening we come to two tents that have been erected for us. We see the cook, a half negro, greeting us with a friendly look out of one of the tents. He is soon finished with his work and has prepared for us a very good evening meal. In the tent he has his cook room, tables and benches arranged in an inviting order with roast beef, potatoes, butter, bread, soaked corn, pudding, meat pie and good coffee. As I at last asked for the third cup it made him very happy but when I took the fourth cup saying he made it so good that a person can't get enough of it he laughed very heartily. A smoke fire drives the mosquitos away from the horses which today have done their duty so well, and of this smoke I also take advantage while I make my notes.

July 8. Tuesday. We leave our tents and travel north to the Rush river; here in a low place we see grass grown as high as a man and also strawberries in places; these so thick that the tramping under foot by the horses makes the ground almost slippery; we stop and eat to our hearts content and also take some along with us in tin pails.

At 12 o'clock we ate dinner and then continue our tour. The grass is outstanding and the roses are so thick that in places it actually looks like a blanket of roses. At 3 P.M. we halted at the railroad station where our wagons and horses were loaded onto freight cars. In the meantime we entered the station and wait on the train on which we are to return to Fargo this evening. Thus we bid good-bye to Dakota for this time. Will we see it again?

July 10. We go with the mail to which four gray horses are hitched driven from the box, leaving at ten in the morning bound for Breckenridge. Since our route follows the red river southward but on the Minnesota side, this gives us opportunity to learn a bit of this state as well. To the east possibly 15 or 20 miles away can be seen the timber along the Buffalo river. The prairie is flush with grass, much blue luzern and much of our steppnadel. Small ravines here and there

break into the nice level areas all of which is yet inviting settlers to come, the only exception to this is that nearer the river the more desirable locations already have their owners.

In one of these places our horses were changed and instead of the grays four brown ones were hitched up with which we drove to Abercrombie a military post about 36 miles from Fargo. After this we drove through a timber where besides oak and ash there are also hazelnuts and wild plums with rich fruit and many different flowers and plants were found and made up the last half of the days journey to Breckenridge on the Dakota side where the prairie seemed to us very desirable with an outstanding field of potatoes that made us look with wonder. The sun had already set when we finished our days journey.

At Breckenridge two streams unite, the Otter tail and the Boisdes Sioux river. At this confluence the Red river begins, which we have now followed, at times by water and again by land, from its beginning till almost to its mouth. This evening we were received by Mr Seeger and Mr Trott, land Commissioners of Minnesota; the latter inviting us into consultation with him in an elegantly furnished railway car. He showed us a suitable plan of settlement of 12 townships some 50 miles away.

We accepted this invitation to his car and three of our brethren together with myself went to his coach for the night, while the rest went to the hotel for the night. This hotel is operated by a german widow and her three sons.

July 11. We had a very good place last night and slept well, got up early in the morning to take breakfast at the inn before starting out on the days trip. We took an extra train that brought us to Douglas, where our car was placed on the siding. Two wagons were ready to take us out on the prairie and after we took to ourselves some provisions we were on our way. This prairie was different from any we had seen before in that there were numerous lakes scattered around. Wild geese and ducks were plentiful, especially the latter which with their young went farther from shore as we neared unto them. Prairie chickens were tramped on by the horses and once they stepped on a hen and her nest of eggs. Here and there we saw stones on the ground and the growth of grass was not as good as had been seen before and the humus in the soil was rather insufficient too. Bro. Ewert called the region marl. We came about 8 miles east and stopped at a lake. The shore was coarse gravel and the water clean and clear. The grass in the hollow was long having long pale heads which seemed to us to be outstanding.

The shore was also thick with reeds. At the home of a settler not far from the station we saw a rye field in heads that reached to our knees, and it was well filled. Good wheat and barley was also seen, but the potatoes were far from well grown as were those at Abercrombie. We returned to the station and in the afternoon took a short tour north of the railroad and here also saw a number of wheat fields headed out. Watermelons were planted and were in bloom. The grass here was better and the region as a whole, appealed to us. The settlers here are from various european areas, finding swedes, norwegians, estonians and finns. The man who led the horses to the wagon was a swede who has been here about 20 years now. He owns a large farm near the next station where he says he can draw a furrow one and one half miles long. He considers himself in the company of us europeans quite in favor. He himself lives in St Paul and

has the responsibility of the overseeing of the planting of trees. The night was cool, the fine woolled blankets could hardly keep our bodies warm. We came to the conclusion to go to Minneapolis next; where Mr Trott offered to reserve for us 300,000 acres of land for four years along this railroad and also promised that as soon as possible he would arrange for lumber for buildings. He is our guide for the journey and from the train we have opportunity to view the country; the grass is better here than on the plain which we had seen before. At two o'clock we stopped at Wilmar, 105 miles from St Paul for dinner where all in the hotel were entertained. According to Mr Seegar we will find Nebraska and Minnesota very much alike, but the school system is here far more preferable and the German settlers are here the far more numerous.

Between Dassel and Colingwood in the midst of the timber a girl has started a farm, her father with her but unable to work. Nice fields and various crops are seen along here besides the farm buildings and the homes. In general the region from Wilmar is already built up. Farms, crops of grain, fields of hay in the swath, and already a binder in a ripe field of wheat is to be seen. Coming out of a wilderness such a scene makes a wonderful impression on a person. By the help of God we arrived at Minneapolis in the evening and remained here over night. Saturday forenoon we planned to visit a number of factories. Next we viewed the wonderful waterfall on the Mississippi which has already been used for power for many factories while at the same time much more is being planned for.

We found two mineral springs that flow out in a stream bubbling forth out of white sand stone; also saw many other ~~very~~ wonderful things. A man came and extended to us a very friendly welcome, and offered to show us the places of interest in the factories, which promise he fulfilled very acceptably. In all this sightseeing we must needs make haste and returning to the hotel we found a number of vehicles ready to show us the sights of the city. Thus we could ride and at the same time see the city and the plan upon which it is laid out. In the afternoon at 2 o'clock we took the train to St Paul. Here we were met by Mr Seeger and he took us to the headquarters of the St Paul and Sioux City R.R. To here we had used the St Paul and Pacific Railroad. Here we were introduced to General Bishop who is chief engineer of the railroad. We counselled over our tour for Monday, after which Mr Seeger took us to see the Governor in the capitol building of St Paul. This official O.K'd our plan of seeing everything carefully before coming to any decision and said we should not undervalue the hard winters of Minnesota.

Following this we went to a German hotel keeper, Bayer; into good and clean quarters.

July 13. Sunday. Having anticipated using this day to write to our loved ones we went to work, but soon Bro. Schantz came and asked us to accompany him to some religious service. A German Methodist church we found closed, so we went to an English service in which a guest preacher preached from the words, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages" Exo 2:9. Bro. Schantz later told us how well he used these words to emphasize the correct bringing up of children. In the afternoon we spent several hours with Mr Seeger on his nice place. In the evening at the depot we bid farewell to Mr Power who had been our guide to here, and then returned to our quarters.

July 14. Monday. Got up early to get ready for our journey. We were taken to the depot at 7 o'clock and again had our own coach. Our route was through Shakopee, St Peter, Mankato, Mountain Lake, to Worthington. Having eaten dinner here, several vehicles stood ready to take us to a number of farmers. For the night we found a fine place in a good hotel.

July 15. Tuesday. For our nice railroad car we had a locomotive which took us back along the route we had yesterday to Wilder which is the central point of nine townships in which the railway corporation

wishes to reserve their holdings for us for a number of years at an approximate price of \$ 6.00 per acre. Aside of this they offer at \$ 12.00 per acre half of the plot of ground reserved for a town which is laid out in lots 150 by 25 feet out of which the corner lots are to be sold for \$ 125.00 and the others for \$ 100.00.

Along the railroad are a number of places set aside for stores while back of that 100 by 50 feet is laid out for homes and at the rear of these are lots for gardens. The entire layout is along a beautiful lake. Two houses, one at the south west corner and the other at the north west corner are the beginning of the hoped for town site. In Wilder stand a number of vehicles in which we go a distance out on the prairie; the nice black soil with its luxuriant grass commends itself, and yet the crops are not in direct comparison to the growth of grass; they are small in spite of the abundant rainfall of last spring. The grass hoppers are claimed to have done damage here. A nice stream flows through the territory shown us. Numerous lakes situated here lend variety to the scene. In the evening the locomotive again returns us to Worthington to our quarters there, and in a lake nearby we have the opportunity to take a cool bath. At noon we ate dinner at Talbort Lake with a farmer under the shade of a green tree.

July 16. Wednesday. We again retraced our former course. A locomotive again brought our lone coach till to Heron Lake and there stood the conveyances with which we traveled several days before, and we made a circuitous route north and then east and at Windom again touched the railroad. We found, like the day before, the prairie covered with thick grass; but the crops left much to be wished for. A part of the region was rather broken; but close to the station we came to a settled valley the like of which we had not witnessed before. In Worthington an american organization bought the railroad companys land and has begun a settlement of it. Each one who wishes to unite with them pays twenty five dollars. All strong drink is forbidden, even in the hotel only a drink of good fresh water is to be obtained. With this day the viewing of land in Minnesota is concluded. Until the time of his leaving us at St Paul Mr Bishop had entertained us in a truly hospitable manner. At 3 P.M. with the help of God we crossed the border from Minnesota into Iowa, to the city of Sioux City and on our way to Nebraska.

July 17. Remained at Sioux City over night, and now took the train, going direct south following the Missouri river; having it to our right and soon we see the elevation of Nebraska. To the far left can be seen the higher ridge of ground that borders on the Missouri valley. We already see grain and corn fields, and buckwheat is also here. Herds of cattle are grazing in the lowlands. We go through a town where once the mormons were located. In Council Bluffs we change trains and cross the river to Omaha Nebraska where the California train has already waited an hour to receive the added passengers from Russia, and immediately we board this train and leave for the trip through Nebraska. From the train we behold many good fields of grain, farms with complete buildings and many other prosperous plantings. We eat at Fairmont at dinner time and land at Columbus which is 92 miles from Omaha. As we leave the train to our surprise we are met by a man from the Odessaer region, who with his own and six other families came from Russia last April, and who now has a store in this town. He took us to his store and then we went to the hotel where we made our quarters.

July 18. This day under the guidance of Mr Hansen, who joined our company at Sioux City already, and a Commissioner from the Department of Agriculture, Mr Davis, we made a trip through the land. Near the town we went through the region which is already built up and then we came to a high plain with but scattering farms and here we saw some drilled wells which are over 100 feet deep. This was shown to us as a place for settlement. The growth of grass was not so good;

the grain fields were better but the wheat ~~fixes~~ kernels were damaged and the yellow grains somewhat shrivelled. Striking to us was the change of temperature, in one night the quicksilver dropped from 104 to 62 fahrenheit. In the afternoon at four o'clock we boarded the train which took us 104 miles westward, arriving at Kearney that evening.

July 19. Saturday. Attended by Mr George O Manchester, Prof J.D. Butler, Mr. Farland, and office clerk James R Hood of Plattsmouth we took another train to Lowell and from there we made a tour over the prairie. This region can be likened to southern Russia. For quite a distance the soil was sandy and then we came to the hills with torn off shelves in which there were indications of some settlers with sod houses with roofs of the same material. At a little stream, the Little Blue, under the shade of the trees we ate our dinner. We were some thirty miles from the railroad looking south, and in the afternoon drove 20 miles to Red Cloud on the Republican river near the borders of the state of Kansas. On the way we saw much buffalo grass. In general the grass was scarce. In the distance could be seen buffalo and antelope, the latter with their young, grazing. The train that came in this morning from San Francisco had in one freight car 40 silver bear that weighed 100 # each.

July 20. Sunday. In the morning we went to the school house and attended Sunday school after which Bro. Funk of Elkhart led the services, reading Rom 8 and then preaching on the words of our Lord, "One thing is needful". In the afternoon we first had an exchange of thoughts in respect to our preaching and then visited a farmer close by and then we took a walk to the stream. After supper Mr Butler entertained us and related of his trip to California, of the great cedars there, 250 feet high and 92 feet in circumference. Later he gave an address on Heb 4:15 in German, the opening and close being made with song and prayer.

July 21. Monday. Arose early and by sunrise had already drove quite a distance. Twice we halted and took some nourishment before again landing at Hastings at the railroad, which was about 25 miles east of Lowell. At first the prairie was quite lacking but later was some better; settlers were few, and water, with the exception of a few streams was deep and hard to obtain. Here we took the train to Lincoln another hundred miles away which we reached in the evening at 10 o'clock, having eaten supper at Crete. The country was very level and more thickly settled the nearer we reached our destination. Tuesday morning after we had eaten our breakfast there in front of our hotel stood a spacious covered wagon with four horses hitched to it and we were given a friendly invitation to board. They wanted to show us the city and the surrounding community. The city now has 7000 inhabitants, has a university, and of the 12 churches several are real nice, and asylum, and a number of the houses are real nice, and some are three stories high. Outside the city are nice grain fields, a salt lake with a bathing place, where we took a bath, and a not insignificant salt stream. Also a flowing well in the city out of which comes salt water.

After having expressed our gratitude for this kind hospitality we boarded the train after dinner and continued our journey. For quite a while we drove through nice grain fields then we came nearer to the Platte river which we followed for a time on our left till we came to its mouth into the Missouri river and then followed this for a short distance till we came to Plattsmouth. Here we leave the train and to save 40 miles traveling we board a boat and cross the mile wide river and four miles up the stream to its other side where again a train awaits us. At the next station Mr. Manchester left us also, the others of our company having done so on the other side of the river already, and from now on we travel on our own. The rest of this day we go through a valley with the hilly region plainly to be seen on either side, going through a number of towns. We pass many fine small grain and corn fields. Our brethren Tschetter and Unruh bid us good-bye as we go on southward. They go on direct to Elkhart Ind, and then on to their homes. The rest of us pass the night in

St. Joseph. Here also Bro. John Funk bids us adieu; he wants to visit his brother in Missouri. Our route leads us through Kansas City and St. Louis to Sommerfield Ill where we go to church.

July 24. Thursday. We land at St. Louis in the morning and board a bus which goes to the river and on a large ferry boat we cross the river to East St. Louis where we again take the train. Since this train does not stop at Sommerfield we got off at Lebanon and hire a team for two dollars to take us to Sommerfield. It was noon when we came to Bro. Jac Leisy, and sister Leisy quickly arranged for the guests. In the afternoon we again greeted our old fellow travelers who we had left at New York, brother and sister Rud Riesens and their children, Abr Quirings, and Peters who had already made themselves at home here. Here it is harvest time and the brethren are very busy. Bro. Chr Krehbeil is stacking grain. With those from our own country we have a happy time relating the experiences of the past since we had parted with each other. Services were announced for the evening in the church; Bro. Ewert having charge. He used the theme, "Where peace, there faith, where faith there love, where love there God, where God there no need". After services we find at Bro. Leisys a number of other brethren and we must needs give a report of our trip experiences. It was after midnight when we went to bed. The next morning we again had a bounteous meal.

We now felt that our mission in investigating the various localities to determine the suitability for settlement for our people to be about finished, although Kansas had yet been thought of, but since the eastern part, which is most suitable for farming, is practically all taken up, this was also dismissed. Now however, Bro. Chr Krehbeil called our attention to Texas and suggested a trip there, telling us there has some preparation been made for us to go there and that such a trip is not supposed to cost us any money. Bro. Buller and Bro. Ewert are favourable to this suggestion. I decided for myself to visit churches eastward feeling that such contacts with our brethren in the faith would be of real value to us. The brethren concur in this. Bro. And Schrag decides to go with me and Bro. Jac Schantz is ready to take us which is especially welcome to us.

Another service was announced for the afternoon in which Bro. Buller conducted the opening with some remarks over Luke 12. Following this I took his place and gave a discourse with the help of God on verses 6-8 of Isa 40. We now must needs move on if we expect to be in some of our churches by next Sunday. At Bro. Vogt supper was prepared for us, then Bro. Leisy brought us and the brethren Krehbeil and Warkentin to Lebanon where we took the train to St. Louis and from there to Chicago. The true God whose eyes are ever open, even over the weakest of his children, has, as always blest our journey so that on Saturday July 26 at 10 P.M. we landed hale and hearty in Elkhart Ind. Bro. J F Funk again met us at Chicago, having been away from his family and his church for some weeks, and he found his family all well and the rest of us found a hearty welcome in his home. Here in a strange land and across the sea and land, yea in a strange part of the world with loved ones of like faith brought about for us a peculiar and pleasant feeling. And to think that I was responsible not only for my own feelings but also stood as a representative of our churches in Russia, here amongst our brethren as a testimony to them. In this I had many opportunities in public services as well as between such periods of worship in houses of prayer, and in families and domestic circles to look around and yet with the various differences between us in Europe and them here in America we found to our joy a real similarity between us on the foundation of the Word, as well as in the distinctive doctrines in which we separate ourselves from the popular churches, and this did our heart good to find so many churches with similar interests, which made in us new hope and courage and a desire to make a home here and in time to become accustomed to a new place to live. Amongst many new and remarkable things which I heard and saw in my associations here I will make mention of but one instance. Brother Buzzard in the timber which is on his farm cut walnut trees that were 5 feet in diameter at their base, and 72 ft to the first limbs, and they sold for \$51.50 per tree.

Five days I remained with my fellow journeymen here in the church, then at one A.M. on Aug 1 we started on our way to Ontario, Canada. The ~~day~~ before leaving I gave my parting message at the church in Elkharingsing as a text Eph 6;10-24.

Learning that some of our faith from Europe had settled near Detroit we decided to stop off there and pay them a visit. There we found 8 families with the following names; Corn, Unruh, Peter Tjart, Gerh Dürks, Dav Willms, George Willms, Heinr Ratzlaff, Johann Schroeder, Peter Kerber and also several single persons were there. We first came to Bro. Gerhard Dürks then visited Bro. Unruh who is the church leader, then to several other families and back to Unruh for the night. These people were satisfied here, were all busy with their work of which there was plenty, and said they earned more than it took for their sustenance.

Aug 2. Saturday. We again went farther. Bro. Dürks and his son Robert took us to the depot. At Port Huron ~~where~~ our train without the locomotive was placed on a mighty steamboat and we crossed the lake and finally came to Bro. Schantz's home where he again greeted ~~us~~ his family and then he showed us his fields and garden. It was harvest time. In this church I already had become acquainted last Pentecost. On Sunday they put me to work, and it was so arranged for the week days that three services daily were held and they were all well attended. The true Lord who in the weak is strong added His Grace that I could with joy testify to his grace and truth, and I often yet think of the love and close attention that my companions and myself observed here. In 1882 I again had opportunity to visit these dear churches, renew old acquaintances and make new ones. May the Lord who has promised that his word shall not return void, but shall fulfil the mission for which it is sent bless these feeble efforts on both these visits.

In the visitation from house to house there was also an opportunity to speak to those who were on their sick beds, and to aged and infirm brothers and sisters. Of the dear brethren who gave us such a warm welcome I still remember many, but here make especial mention of one by the name of David Scherg, who concerning our singular profession resorted to an especial examination of myself, and then in my testament which I used on the trip, which I had forgotten there, and which he forwarded to me in Pennsylvania, he had written as follows: "Dear brother, your valuable treasure, which you have so highly recommended to us, and which you so much need on your journey as the best bulwark you have forgotten at Peter Niszley." Dear brother, you will kindly send or bring this to Brother Sudermann. I wish all of you good luck and God's blessings wherever you go.

Leibe Brüder in dem Herrn,
Die Ihr wohnt in der Fern;
Ihr habt jetzt ein Land erspäht,
Wo gewissensfreiheit steht.

Laszt euer Herz nicht erbeben,
So wird Gott euch Segen geben;
Braucht nur dieses Buch zu Waffen,
So wird Gott euch Sieg verschaffen.
Amen.

David Scherg, Ontario, Waterloo Co., Preston

Bro. George Schmidt related to me how he as a young man came over from Europe and hired out to one Bishop Eby of Berlin. How he became convinced of the truth and so accepted the mennonite confession and through the rite of baptism became a member of this faith. How this step so grieved his mother that she forbid him to ever cross the threshold of her door again. This condition was long a heavy burden on the sons heart with no visible prospect of a change, and especially was this true since having heard that she was very sick. He made an effort however, and sent one of his children to grandmother with a bottle of boiled down fruit for the relief of the sick. The gift was accepted but nothing more was said. This act was repeated and the child returned saying; grandmother asked, "why does not father come?" That was what the son so wished to hear. Immediately he went to his sick mother and the reconciliation, after so long a separation was easily made. Tears still flow when the brother relates the instance. The mother was convinced that the son did not do wrong if he was led by his conscience to make this change, and he was ~~xxxx~~

and he was of the opinion that had his mother again gotten well she also would have embraced the non-resistant faith.

Aug 8. After breakfast we again came to the hour of parting from the family of Bro. Schorg. The son of the home took us to the depot at Preston. Brother and sister Jacob Schantz also accompanied us thus far. Arriving there our guide for the trip Bro. Elias Eby also showed up. They did not want to allow us to make the trip to Pennsylvania alone as we did not understand the English language; which was a real act of friendship on the part of our Canadian brethren. Bro. Eby showed us along the way through Canada, a number of places where our brethren in the faith reside. At noon we crossed the remarkable bridge three miles below the mammoth falls, and entered the United States again. To obtain a clearer conception of the size of the Canadian woods in which our brethren have settled we have sufficient evidence in what Bro. Eby related to us; that on the place where he settled they felled a tree that was 6 feet in diameter; 60 feet of the lower end needed to be split up before the logs could be transported.

Because of the fact that the place where we now were was a junction we were forced to spend the night in Rochester and for the same reason had to lay over two hours at Elmira. Yet in good time on Saturday evening Aug 9 we arrived at Mt Joy, Lancaster Co, Pa and found a hearty welcome with Brother Gabriel Baer. Here for me on Sunday morning it meant a special work as the brethren so arranged that I be kept busy in expounding the Word of God; next we went to the church house in Kastanienberg, where at my side the brethren Heinrich Schenk and Christian Neukommer also served. Over the noon hour we came to the home of 79 year old Bro. Christian Niszley. For supper to Brother Heinrich Schenk and for the night to brother Peter Niszley with whom we had a very lively conversation as he wished to find out many things and so had many questions to ask.

Aug 11. Monday. Between hours of services we visited at Bro. Chr Niszley, then with Bro. J K Niszley, whose wife suffered with a weak heart, and then we visited with Bro Bergthold whose mother-in-law was sick, then to sister Brenneman who also was down with a sickness. Over the supper hour we visited the 87 year old brother Horst, who for a long time has taken a warm interest in the Russians and here two single daughters immediately prepared a meal for us. It was dark when this evening we came to our place for the night's lodging with the dear Brother Bishop Jacob Brubacher.

Aug 12. Tuesday. Bro. P Niszley took me after the forenoon services to friend Kauffman, who was not a church member, but was a very good friend of our brethren, and he was janitor of the church house which was not far from his place. This dear friend had lately made a trip to California and he related to us many interesting things. He showed us the picture of a barn 85 feet long the siding of which was made out of one of the native trees there. Another similar giant tree was fallen and the center burned out with fire, and through this cavity some travelers rode. Still another fallen tree was 30 feet in circumference at a place 64 feet from its roots. Such and similar almost unbelievable statements were made to us, and yet we had the impression from the giver that the information was not exaggerated. We spent the night with Bro. David Hershey.

Aug 13. Wednesday. Bro. D Hershey took us to church at Lititz from where Bro. John Hess took us along for dinner. With this dear brother we staid for the night after we had made a call with the old co-laborer Brother Risser, and with Brother Bamberger we now returned to Lititz where he had staked out a place for the "Brudergemeinde" and where I had the privilege to become acquainted with a man named Frühauf. The brethren Benjamin, Amos, Daniel and Elias Horr were not only good hosts, but together with all others had a very sympathetic heart for the great responsibility which we had and of which we were permitted to inform them; also a similar

concern had old Brother Mosemann who we visited in Lancaster, and Bro. Benj Herr, who both are bishops of the church. All the above named brethren and many others that we learned to know I still remember after these 20 years, with a warm feeling of love and due respect, and shall never forget how much comfort their consideration of our responsibility meant to us. In this manner every new day of our stay in the Lancaster county churches afforded new opportunities to testify, though in weakness, with the help of God, with joy, of the mystery of our redemption through Jesus Christ; and we were joyed in being convinced that in America as also in Europe the spirit of God leads his children into all truth, and that the faith which is mutually ours becomes a power in the knowledge of all good that we have in Christ Jesus, the only Saviour; and as the anointing teaches so is it right and true and no lie according to 1 Jno 2:27.

It afforded me great joy to thus make new acquaintances among the brethren. In each service I faced almost altogether new listeners. Even this in a manner brings great encouragement to a minister, yet on the other hand it also makes him feel the great responsibility when he realizes that all these listeners will in that day of ~~reckoning~~ reckoning either bless him, if he as a true servant of God has fulfilled his duty, or will accuse him if he has failed to bring the glorious evangelical truths in a holy earnestness, or if he has not made the urgent invitation, "Come to Jesus" from as warm a heart of love to his fellow sinners and fellow redeemed ones as should have been done. In this may God in his grace and mercy look down upon me, and give me power to speak and to testify of his wonderful plan of salvation in every place where opportunity and privilege may be had. Unto me is given the ministry of reconciliation as the predominant part of my life's work and this even here in America in part and to many now attentive ones to preach the precious Word of God. This I value highly and consider as an especial act of grace, and yet on the evening of my life that the accountability that rests upon me because of this, has not been fully appreciated as it should and even yet perhaps does not.

Aug 15. Friday. Came a dispatch with good news; the brethren Jac Buller and Wilh Ewert landed at New York safe and sound from their trip to Texas. They requested our presence at Philadelphia next monday where we are to meet some officers of the Northern Pacific railway in regard to an offer to settle on land along their right of way. Thus we still had saturday and sunday left in which to visit our brethren and sisters here, and new opportunities were always present for service arranged for by the dear ones in whose midst we were. On monday as we were getting ready to leave a number of brethren were prepared to go with us to Philadelphia which made us very happy, since they were accustomed to the American ways, could give us much good advice and keep us from many mistakes. The brethren who went with us were, Amos, Daniel and Jacob Herr, Peter and Jacob Niszley, Joh Schenk, Gabriel Baer, Heinrich Eby and Jacob Ernst. At 12 noon we arrived at Philadelphia where Bro. Buller and Bro. Ewert met us at the depot.

Aug 19. Tuesday. We had an interview with Mr Cook the president of the Northern Pacific railroad in which the Pennsylvania brethren truly supported us. In the evening we separated from the dear brethren who so well served us here, and took the train at seven o'clock. for New York.

Aug 20. Wednesday. Here an earnest desire was satisfied, in that I could yet before leaving for Europe, meet with someone from the family of Corn Jansen, who lately came from my home church and landed in Canada. Bro. Jansen with his oldest son Peter came to New York to make this meeting possible. This was greatly appreciated by both of us although the time at our command was entirely to short. We had much to say to each other and the following day at 2 P.M. came the hour of parting, as at that time we were to board the ship that was to again return us to our home and to the loved ones there. O, what is life with its joys and

sorrows? How empty, how fleeting? There was yet much to do before sailing, the writing of letters, the arrangement of baggage, and in this manner the time passed rapidly by. At parting time both the brethren Stobbe also were there; whose acquaintance we had made when first we came here. They and the Jansens, father and son, accompanied us to the vessel at the appointed time.

At the harbor we met entirely unexpected several families of immigrants who came from our community in south Russia who in the time of our absence had disposed of their possessions and made a home here. We regretted that the short time at our disposal gave opportunity for but a few hastily exchanged expressions as all of us, and especially they, would have desired to exchange thoughts and happenings relating to our trip. The steamboat in their rule of procedure naturally does not wait on their passengers. Those together with others in this immigrant party were the families of Carl Glöckler, Heinr. Goerz, and Aron Peters, who for a number of years had resided on the half island of Krimm. The moment came in which separation in earnest took place, and to part from the Jansens was for me a real test. The engines were started and in a few minutes we were out upon the waters. The fog obstructed our view of the land which for some distance was followed on either side. Soon we lost sight of it on our left and after several hours the sight of all land was gone.

Upon this Atlantic ocean, by the guidance and blessing of God were spent a series of days the scope of which we had hopefully anticipated. Every one, even though under varying circumstances, who makes this trip, will understand the particular emotions under which such a trip is carried through. But, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust" Psa 91:1,2.

When the emotions became more settled I found leisure time to ~~write~~ read the letters which had been received while in New York. The contents were not conducive to especial cheerfulness since they gave information of a number of deaths, among which one especially stirred me; one of my four sisters which I had left hoping to see again on my return, had passed on. Therefore I must needs be resigned to the fact that she would not be met again here on earth, but needed to comfort self with the hope that the intercessory services of a crucified Saviour through grace will make a reuniting possible in eternity.

Nach kurzem Kampf zur Herrlichkeit;
Das Land der Ruhe ist nicht weit;
Dein Josua führt dich hinein,
Bald wirst Du bei Jesu sein.

To be with Jesus; how valuable the comfort, how sweet the hope.

The return journey on which we now found ourselves verified the words of truth expressed by King David in his active life of service; 1 Sam 20:3 "Truly as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death".

Aug 24. Sunday. We beheld a lovely morning although during the past night there was a storm which was now over and the passengers as usual were gathered on the deck. One of our fellow journeymen asked if we were going to have services today. On English ships the custom was to have such services and the captain was responsible to conduct them in the absence of any minister among the passengers. But among us no one was so authorized. The day before when without a wind the sea was high the captain said he did not know if this was the result of a storm just passed or if we were to expect one to come. Soon a strong south wind arose and the sailors were busy in hoisting the sails for the wind was strong and we were making good headway. Toward noon it became quite severe and the passengers on the deck sought protection.

At last on account of the wind it was no longer comfortable to remain on the deck and they resorted to their cabins. The ship began to rock violently and the waves beat upon the deck so that the people were soaked with water. I decided it better to lay down on my bed or else it is easy to become sick. But even in bed a person had so little rest since the swaying was so violent that it became necessary to cling to something in order to avoid being tossed to and fro. Thus passed the afternoon and the fear and concern for safety through the night on the high sea is doubly dreadful. The scene seemed to become even more severe. All passengers had resorted to their rooms. Supper was forgotten by all, and it was not served, for the storm took on the proportions of a southern hurricane. Before evening a dreary countenance could be seen on the captain's face, and we supposed that he was aware that a real trial lay in store for all of us. All at once somewhat past eight o'clock there was a great tumult on the ship, the extent of which could not be ascertained from several stairs below. A huge breaker supposedly reaching to the lowest mast basket, 40 feet above the deck came down with its entire weight on the right side of the rear end of the ship. What havoc the power of this one wave played with our once beautiful ship. One of the eight lifeboats was gone, two others were torn out of their moorings and cast upon the deck, both canopies over the steps to the first and second cabins, one large and one smaller ~~xxx~~ doormer, the first with a window 20 feet long and 5 feet wide entered the upper salon, and the other of 6 sq ft giving light to the stairway, were torn away, and into these openings rushed water from each succeeding wave as though a river were supplying it from above. This interfered with the ventilation system. The water came into the lower salon in which my fellow passengers and myself were at this time. We rushed out of our beds and out of the cabins, hurried into the salon to see what was taking place. What a scene our eyes there beheld. As though pouring with buckets the water came in through the openings in the deck and into our part of the ship. In a short time we were standing ankle deep in the water.

The violent rocking of the ship, which took the water now within the ship first to one side and then to the other made the scene more frightful yet. We saw ourselves with lives endangered, for each new wave covering the ship added new power to the stream of water already there. I saw the possibility that in the next hour the destiny of myself and companions might mean a grave here. I thought of my wife and children and committed them to God who in His wonderful power could richly comfort them. To the merciful intercessor and mediator Jesus Christ I committed my own soul, He in whom I had faith and hope for a safe step from time into eternity.

But of the many at our side, our fellow sufferers, some half dressed and others entirely undressed, the piteous women and children—O, how many failed to possess the living hope that doth not forsake in death. I could not console them with the one comfort for both life and death, since my own particular condition occupied my time so fully and also each one needed to put forth all effort to remain on their feet in the severe rocking of the ship. Is it yet possible that we be saved out of this most dangerous situation? Was a question each one asked themselves.

In a wonderful way the rocking of the ship diminished, the inrush of water ceased, and up on the deck the sound of hammers was heard. Efforts were made to close the breaks with boards and canvass, and soon less frequently the water came in, and finally the breach was entirely closed. Then all efforts were turned toward getting rid of the water within the ship and the buckets were used to carry it up two flights of stairs which took no small amount of labor, and this was attended to by the mid-deck passengers. That was a hard and anxious night, never to be forgotten by all that experienced it. Those were experiences that the Lord considered me worthy of and which He felt necessary for my inward good and to impress upon us the seriousness of our contemplated move, giving us a glimpse of the eternal, the preparation for which we have opportunity in the present.

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The memory of Aug 24 is one that will be kept as long as we live. Thus passed the long night in petitions and prayers and the break of day brought with it the hope that the Lord in His grace would come to our rescue, save our ship, the Harmonia, and our lives. Following the fear of the night he permitted us to behold the light of a new day.

The following day was however still stormy so that but few of the passengers ventured upon the deck; the waves were high, but our hopes were that our greatest fears were over. We were now out of the center of the storm and somewhat more in the following calm. New hopes for life comforted our spirits even though the rocking of the ship still made it necessary for us to support ourselves along the walls and to do only that which must be done.

As another night drew near, new concerns were ours and with the fervency of oppressed hearts we committed ourselves in prayer and groanings under the protection of a gracious Lord. He, the Lord, whom all danger and harm, quiet the waves, the wind and sea obey may by his grace keep us from all danger and harm, quiet the waves and grant unto us poor mortals an experience of his mighty power. He who himself hears the desires of the oppressed and despises not our pleas, but granted unto us a gracious relief; gradually stilled the sea as well as our depressed hearts, and thus the tired bodies were relaxed and received sweet rest.

The following day, Tuesday, I for the first time went up on the deck. The common way of doing was not considered a breach of etiquette even though we did go barefooted because the thoroughly soaked boots and stockings needed to be dried in the nice warm sun that now again shone so friendly. The heavens were bright, the sea calm, or at least more calm, although the ship still rocked considerably, but the sea breeze for those still confined below was welcome. I have personally seen what was written above. Some more results of the storm were these: Two sails were torn to pieces. The starboard side suffered so severely at the rear that only the iron beams remained undamaged. The wood on the inside could not withstand the pressure and showed much evidence of being torn apart. An iron beam at the stairs entering the first cabins was bent and the iron steps were broken and we, upon seeing this became aware of the great danger the passengers in the cabins had faced during the catastrophe.

Nice walls were broken down, valuable mirrors were shattered and in fact everywhere the evidences of the mournful destruction were to be seen. The breast work on the starboard side was entirely torn away for 50 or 60 feet and this was repaired as best they could with boards and timbers that were available. How terribly mangled our beautiful ship now was. Through the affair there were 14 wounded, but luckily no one was in a serious condition. A boatman in the neighborhood of the captain's bridge, in the act of delivering an order to the pilot room was fortunate in being by the ropes that held the mast beams when one of the massive waves came or he certainly would have been taken out into the deep. The entire pilot house was in the twink of an eye entirely filled with water and the Pilot was in real danger of being torn away from his post, but another man grabbed him by his feet at the proper moment. By the gracious providence of God the part of the ship in which the engines were was unharmed. Two of the three boilers were out of commission, and yet with the help of God we steadily but slowly continued our journey with good weather.

One of our fellow travelers who each evening had gone up on the deck to behold the beautiful view, said: our ship was literally surrounded by mountains. What a gigantic power lies in the elements and yet our Harmonia withstood it all under the protection of our God. Yes under the protection of a Gracious God. This we say with joy and gratitude since this gave a blessed opportunity through these experiences to behold his Glory and Power.

Aber ist am Schemel Seiner Füße

Und am Thron schon solcher schein;

Ei, was wird an Seinem Herzen

Erst für Glanz und Wonne sein.

Ja, an Ihn sich anzuschmeigen,

Erlüht in Seinem Sommerschein,

An Seinem Herzen liegen-

O Seele, was kann Seliger sein.

The journey was concluded by the help of God without further mishap.

In the monotony that followed each one sought as best he could to make the time seem short.

A library was open to all passengers.

Sept 2. Tuesday. After sunrise I went up on the deck. There were 12 sails raised which aided the engines and made the progress more rapid and at 5 o'clock the lighthouse on Seille Island could be seen as also could the rocks of the island. This caused a common joy one conveyed the message to the other and all felt relieved after a 13 day trip to again behold the solid land.

After dark we saw the first light house on the coast of England at Landsend. As this was reached first with its blood red color and then the flame itself, others also came into sight. At 9 o'clock we saw another one before us and the captain said fifty miles beyond that lies Plymouth. In spite of the darkness some of the outlines of the english coast could be made out.

Sept 3. Wednesday. As I arose early I observed that from the bridge signals were given to the engine room. On one of these signals the ship stood still and then came another signal and the ship moved. The harbour pilot had come and boarded the vessel. For quite a while the engines laboured on and then upon signal some pauses were made and at last we stood still. When I arose and had dressed it was three o'clock and I went out on the deck and found that we were in the harbour at Plymouth. Many lights showed to us the area of the city. The starry heavens are also bright and it is easy to orient ourselves into the heavenly realm. In the near distance many vessels, both large and small, were to be seen. A small steamer heads for us with the customary blue light. It is he who takes our mail from our ship for England. He flanks to our side. A remarkable difference, ours a mighty ship and this one in comparison so small. A rope is cast and our sailors lay hold and the voice calls "All right". The gang plank is let down and some new passengers come aboard. Some things are unloaded among which are 15 bars of silver each of which weighs 100 pounds. Now the ship's clock strikes three and I notice how the starry heaven grows dim and the morning red breaks in. It rained during the night and the deck is wet. The sky is clear.

At 3.45 the small steamer leaves, the unloading is done. The sailors take up the steps and the command is given to weigh anchor. Ten strong beams about the length and thickness of a wagon tongue were by windlass placed into the rear of the ship and the sailors and some of the people lay hold, two and three to each one and then it goes as it does at a mill. The sailors have a song suited to it and all join in. Each verse ends with "He hie hallala, falladra, falladra". In 15 minutes the work is finished and immediately the engines are started. In the meanwhile the day breaks and before we leave the harbour its excellent position can be seen. On three sides are high mountains and its mouth opens to the south and even here it is closed up in part with pillars. In this manner Plymouth has a position that a person can go through the channel coming very close to the city and not be aware of it.

Before long we again found ourselves in the open water and at 5 o'clock we see the sun rise over the mountains of England as we had never beheld this before. Maybe as the first so also will this be the last time that both the sun and the moon shine down upon us between the coast of England and France. After this I again laid down to rest a while until the breakfast bell awoke me again. Later as I came upon the deck the mountains of England could be seen in the far distance. So far as the land was concerned all points were lost to the eye, and yet the clock had not yet struck eleven till we came in sight of the coast of France. The storm of Aug 27 had reached into the channel and the harbour at Plymouth was almost full of ships that had sought refuge from the storm. The papers said that in the neighborhood of 250 ships were lost, among them a steamer with passengers. A steamer from Bremen one day out of New York passed by Plymouth only an hour before us. To unfortunate steamer was supposed to be from the Stettiner line.

On the coast of France we first beheld a fort, then some rocks could be seen, then a mountain on which stood a windmill, and also a small town or village could be seen. Then followed a wide bay of water and then land again. An elevation could be seen afar off which abruptly ended in the sea; and beyond this a beautiful landscape opened up to view. We came so much nearer the coast now that meadows and fields enclosed with brush could be distinguished. The landscape offered various scenes which to us were of especial interest. At noon we came near the fort of Cherbourg. At about 2 P.M. we came into the harbour. A small neat steamer came nearby for the packages, and we did not cast anchor. In a half hour this was finished; several of our passengers left our ship going with the boat to the shore of France and at 2.20 our engines were again moving.

Now our ship again took to the open channel, so that by and by we left the shore and finally lost it altogether. A slender light house tower could be seen in the distance and at its side another smaller one could be noticed. The night of Sept 3 we passed through the narrows between Dover and Calais and then out into the north sea toward the mouth of the river Elbe. We met many ships including the Thuringia of the Hamburg line which passed us at a distance with passengers for New York. At 8 P.M. we saw on our right 2 light house at Trexel.

Sept 5. Friday. Early we heard signals from the watch bridge to the engine room. I surmised the reason and as I arrived on the deck the harbour pilot had already boarded our ship; shortly following at about six o'clock we saw the island of Helgoland on our left. At 9.30 we came to the mouth of the Elbe at Kuxhaven. At 12 we came to Glückstadt where we boarded another steamer on which we went direct to Hamburg. After such a perilous trip to enter a harbour caused many feelings of thankfulness in the hearts of all. They have with us experienced what Psa 107; 23-32 so appropriately expresses. This scripture follows; "They that go down in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their souls is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He anketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then they are glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders".

Next in order came the opportunity on Sept 6th, to worship in one of our churches in West Prussia near Marienburg and eight days later at the end of a long and tedious journey to once more be present on our own church the Alexanderwohl in South Russia, and here we gave a full account of our trip, which was also our duty.

The most important of all is when man is permitted, after an absence of five months, to come to his own family circle and greet and embrace those of his own house with no one missing. Thank the Lord for he is friendly and his goodness continueth forever.

Now after 24 years have passed, the trip, with its serious and yet enjoyable memories remains; it is a part of the instruction for my inner self. May the Lord bless these experiences that tend toward the upbuilding of his kingdom, even though carried out in great weakness. Often I remind myself of the feelings of gratitude toward God and the many dear brethren and sisters for the warm welcome and assistance that we were allowed to experience everywhere. May the Lord reward all whom this concerns.

The twelve emissaries that made this trip together are here in the various states greatly scattered and a number of them like Bro. Ewert have since then taken a more important journey, from time to eternity, and I with my 76 years stand at the portals as well. After this our journey over land and sea in 1873, the emigration of those of the household of our faith from Russia began in earnest in the following year, 1874. Five large strong populated villages of the so-called Bergthalers sold their properties and moved across England and Canada to Manitoba.

The greater part of the Alexanderwohl church at Molotchna emigrated also and chose Kansas for their new home.

To Minnesota the beginning was already in 1873 by a number of families and in the following years till up to 1880 Dakota and Nebraska was also settled by many mennonites while all of the above mentioned states had numerous additions yearly.

From West Prussia a large number of families joined this migration, some to new homes in Kansas and some to Nebraska.

All the ships taking these people to their new homes had safe voyages so far as is known to me.

Thus took place this great migration, with its important foundation in recognition of the help of a gracious God. Blessed be his Holy Name.

LEONHARD SUDERMANN.