

Letter # 5

16.1.29

Dear Brother and Sister, before I write any further we wish you good health in body and soul. Thank the Lord, we are also all well. Today is Christmas day, so although we cannot be your guests, I still want to come via a letter. We also have only a bit of snow. Until late in November, we drove around in the wagon.

Wilms had a funeral on December 14. She lay sick for 11 months; in the coffin she was just skin and bones, so thin. The whole family was relieved that she could finally die. The funeral was in the church. She was buried in Friedensruh. It was a large funeral. J. Hüberts were also here, at our place for night, so we visited as well. We also talked about matters relating to you.

On Sunday we had a funeral related to the Jakob Hüberts. They had a . . .? daughter 27 years of age; she was sick in the summer already and now died of dropsy. And on Saturday there was another funeral in Alexanderkron, by the Bergens. That woman lay sick for 10 days and then died. Actually, she was sick for many years already. Mr. Bergen has also been working on passports for some time, but none are being processed. We're also beginning to work [on that] again, have let ourselves be deleted [?]. Abram Klassens, and Bärgens work . . . ?

Now we can travel with our children already, they'll soon be grown up. Jakob was a year and a month when he began to walk alone. Tina can stand alone too already. I think she'll walk alone by February too. It has, of course, been busy and pretty tough looking after two children, but the Lord has helped wonderfully with the children. They have been healthy. Little Peter can already play a lot with Jakob. Helena is busy going to school in Tigerweide. She learns well.

Mrs. Peter Bärge's siblings from the south, the Görzens, were guests for 5 day. They were on their way to the Amur. They had 8 sons and a little daughter 7 months old, as well as a daughter-in-law. The oldest son had married just before they left. Heinrich Wiebe has married a Hahm woman from Margenau. Daniel Wiebe has [married] Katharin Klassen, our neighbour. They live in Tigerweide. In the summer they built themselves a house.

We have butchered two pigs, but we sold one for 74 rubles per pud. If we get passports, one pig will be enough for us till we leave, and if we don't leave, we still have three pigs through the winter. At the moment we have only one cow, but for the month of April we have two young heifers ready to calve, and one young steer. Here it's this way, if you have a lot of cattle, you have to pay a lot. Life is getting very difficult here. Our brother, Jakob Hübert had to go to Isilkul for two days. Now they have let him go again till the "Sud" (trial), because of the Christmas Eve with the children. Sunday school is not allowed either anymore. Here it's forbidden now for children under 17 to go to any Sunday school. Here they also had a Christmas Eve [celebration] in Friedensruh. Here by us nothing is heard, but we don't know what's coming. Persecution will probably begin now, so we want to remember our brother in prayer, he has a major task. We also celebrated New Year's Eve in Friedensruh. Our musicians were all together. There were about twenty. They played heartily, and sang, and a lot of poems were offered, as well as prayers for our . . . J. Hübert (?).

With greetings, I remain your sister.

[Anna] Dück

Since my wife has already written a lot, I'll just add a few lines. For me the [urge?] to write is just meager. You have probably not received our letters. Brother-in-law, I wrote to you about our earnings, but have received no response from you. I received the papers from Ruska-Pa ? that we have credit, but there is a huge "but" involved, whether we get passports. Here it's discussed that you, the Wienses and A. Giesbrecht want to leave your farm, should that be correct? In that case, I wish you good

courage. Freedom, after all, is freedom. Here life will cease. Here in the villages everything is as it was. Will close now. Take our hearty greetings, Peter and A Dück.

Isaak Wiebe had the *Sprawka* * for the passports in his pocket already as he got there, but they put him off for six months again. J. Wiebe, Friesens have also been there twice this fall, but they're always put off.

[Anna Dück, completed by Peter Dück]

*Sprawka - formal certificate of permission to get a passport