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Un8tb Unruh, Abe  
1982 Great Grandfather's  
diary

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GREAT  
GRANDFATHER'S  
DIARY

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## FOREWORD

Upon request I have translated Tobias A. Unruh's diary from his deputation journey in 1873 and the immigration to America in 1874-75.

These two booklets were handed to me by my late aunt, Mrs. Peter Goertz of Newton, Kansas, and they are now in the possession of her daughters, Mrs. C. F. Bergman, 216 S. W., Newton, Kansas, and Mrs. Joel E. Schmidt, Box 85, N. E. Corner, Waldheim, Sask.

In translating these writings I have used care to present them as near as possible in the form that they were originally written, only omitting and making short some reports on weather conditions while sailing the sea, and also omitting the names of some towns through which they traveled.

May those who read this booklet, whose ancestors were involved in this great immigration continue to live in the spirit, faith and trust in God which our fore-fathers manifested in leaving their comfortable homes in Europe to undertake this dangerous and perilous journey and start life over on the barren prairies and mid struggles and hardships that we as their posterity might have a home in a country where we could live according to the teachings of the Bible. May we as their descendants in appreciation to their sacrifices and efforts be loyal to God and His teachings that we may be found worthy to understand His voice and claim His promises in the future when He speaks or calls.

He who has prompted our fore-fathers to forsake their comfortable homes and flee from a country where chaos and ruin would rule, hath led them to a land of liberty and freedom. He said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

ABE J. UNRUH

Montezuma, Kansas.

26191

## PART I

### DEPUTATION JOURNEY

April 19, 1873. I left home as a delegate to America. Arrived at Lumburg across the border April 25. I located my fellow travelers at the Black Eagle.

Apr. 26. Went thru Krakaw, Breslau, and arrived at William Evert's, elder of the Thornor church in Germany.

May 4. Communion was observed and we also partook of it.

May 5. An agent was at Evert's home, inviting the delegates to view and choose a place for settlement in Minnesota.

May 10. We began our journey toward Berlin.

May 11. Spent Sunday in Mission Hall. Good message in the morning. In the P. M. the children also came to the services. They were very attentive. After 3 o'clock we went to the zoo. We saw a large number of strange and wonderful animals. At 10 o'clock we left for Hamburg where we arrived at 6 the next morning. We were held over at Hamburg two days and nights.

May 14. We entered the ship and sailed till 11 o'clock and had to change ships. We now entered the right ship to sail across the ocean. We were taken to our quarters. For dinner we had soup, fish and bread. It was rather windy in the P. M.

May 15. Early morning our ship stopped at La Havre, France till 11 a. m. The water rises and falls two times daily from 20 to 30 feet. We walked into the city and saw many beautiful sights—flower gardens fenced with pickets—a beautiful city.

May 17. Twelve o'clock our ship left the French port and sailed into the large ocean. Soon we could see nothing but Heaven and water.

May 18. It was foggy and windy, rather large waves rolling.

May 19. Very nice till noon—p. m. windy.

May 20. Cloudy and foggy.

May 21. Windy. Stormy in the evening and all through the night. The ship rocked back and forth, dishes fell and broke to pieces. It was a terrible night and appeared as though we would perish. Many thought the sea would be our grave.

May 22. Storm continued. Great waves were thrown against the ship. Water was a foot deep on deck. I sighed with Peter: "Lord Save Us." True, the comforting hand of God was watching over us. "Fear not for I am with thee, in the midst of the stormy sea." But yet in all, such a severe test does your heart good; it brings you face to face with the all-seeing eye. Before whom we are naked and uncovered. The finest little malice which we may harbor within our heart is bright and clear like

the brilliant sunshine before Him. How willingly a heart then submits to its Maker and says, "I am un-done, Oh Lord! save me by Thy grace." Oh, how precious is the love of God; how tenderly it appears and gives you great calmness in your heart. Yea, to such a poor creature, poorer than the poorest worm in the dust, but if we come to this Great Physician, naked and blind; then His Holy Mouth speaks, be thou whole. If we search our heart and cleanse it from all dross, then salvation is free thru the wounds on the cross.

The moment your own righteousness you deny,  
He fills your heart with peace from on high.

Here in this wilderness below,  
I cannot find a place to go.  
Bitter water, bitter bread,  
Are the victuals that I'm fed.  
Therefore Lord, prepare a table through Thy merit,  
To refresh my soul in heart and spirit.

May 23. Weather was mild and clear.

May 24. Windy foggy. We nearly met with a serious accident. Another ship coming from the other direction could have collided with our ship. It passed us so close that we could have reached hands together with the people on the other ship.

May 25. Very nice day.

May 26. Cloudy.

May 27. Cloudy and stormy.

May 28. We met another ship and the raging storm forced it against our ship. It broke the mast of the other ship. Our ship was not damaged. In the morning three cannon shots were fired, upon which another ship came from New York and escorted us into the harbor. We remained all night in the harbor.

May 29. Breakfast was prepared early and in the meantime our ship sailed to the dock. At 8 a. m. we stepped upon American soil with great joy. My heart could not cease to thank God for His protecting care over us on our way to the new country. In New York we went to the great commission house and remained there till the next morning.

May 30. Contacted Mr. Hespler, immigration agent for Canada, and Mr. Hiebert of Minnesota. Both these parties contended that we come with them, so we separated; Wm. Evert and Schrag went to Pennsylvania, and Suderman, Jacob Buller and I went towards Canada. We came to a conclusion that we would meet at Elkart for our return trip. We went through the state of New York. The state is rather hilly and stony, otherwise it looked like the soil was very productive. We went through a tunnel, it was over a mile long, it was pitch dark in there. In America the people do not live in colonies like we do in Russia. We find a lone home here and another one there. They call these isolated homes—farms. They have nice homes here, not large, but nice, mostly two stories high. They raise much fruit

here in spite of the soil being very hilly and stony. We pass a farm, then a stretch of woods, another farm and so the people live scattered here. We went through a town called Buffalo. We also saw a great waterfall, it is 164 feet high, it is called the Niagara Falls. It is a wonderful handiwork of God. It is marvelous how wonderfully God has created the universe. This speaks of the greatest wonders of the world. The water when it dropped appears white for a short way. Then it turns blue and after it travels another short distance it appears green. I cannot describe it as beautiful as the eye beholds it. I could have hardly believed it, had I not seen it with my own eye. The bridge across the river is 500 yards long and 144 feet above the water. It is just one great span with no supports in it.

May 31. Arrived at Berlin, Can., (now Kitchner) where Jacob Schantz had received government orders to receive us. Hespler had been instructed by the government to receive us in New York and escort us to Berlin. Berlin is about 160 miles from New York. We spent several days visiting the brotherhood there it was just Pentecost and we also attended church services in the different congregations there all three holy days. We received a very warm reception there everywhere we visited, it left a very deep impression upon us.

June 4. We left Berlin, crossed the river and went to Elkart. On our way we traveled through much wooded territory. Also visited a number of factories in a large city—iron works, paper mills, clothes factories and others. In Michigan we were at a large canal where people go and bathe from 1 to 4 weeks. They do this for their health and some claim their health is completely restored by this. Jacob Buller, Suderman, Schantz and I also took a bath. They have a nice large building over the canal; it is divided into small rooms and each one has a separate room. Each room contains a large white tub and there are two faucets over it, one supplies cold water and the other hot. We could mix the water to the temperature that we desired; it was something that we had not seen nor heard of. We thought it wonderful.

We arrived at Elkart at 10 a. m. We did not find John Funk at home. He and Ewert, the Bergthalers and Hutterites had already left for Canada.

June 6. Left early 2 a. m. Arrived in Chicago at 8 a. m. We got our breakfast and walked into the city. It is the largest city in Illinois. Wisconsin is located N. W. of this large city. The state also is very rolling. Now and then we can see an isolated farm. This seems to be the situation all over, that two or three farmers are settled on suitable places for settlement and they are not easily moved. It is our desire to settle collectively on farms like in Russia, and these isolated farmers would hinder this. The states still have a lot of good land which is not populated, much of it is in timber. When we got through the state of Wisconsin we arrived in St. Paul. Here the state of Minnesota begins. The state has much dense timber and some very rough land which will never be populated. Many rocks, large mountains all rock. We went along a river, one side had large mountains and the other side a deep canyon and one had to shiver when we looked down.

June 8. We arrived in Duluth, Minn., and remained all Sunday. Duluth is a seaport. It is rather chilly, raining very hard.

June 9. We left Duluth, Minn. The water from the heavy rains had soaked the grades and washed them badly. All at once the rails gave way. Broke and twisted. We had a very narrow escape. There was a great commotion among the passengers, some screamed with all their might. Two coaches became uncoupled. The trains run unusually fast in America and the roads are not built any too good. Sometimes the trains go speeding at such a terrific speed that you must commit your life into the hands of God and say farewell to your loved ones at home. But when we arrive at our destination without harm (although many accidents happen) and it is only the protecting arm of God hovering over us that keeps us; then my wretched mouth cannot find words to express my thankfulness towards the wisdom of God, how He leads us through this wilderness and over mountains and through valleys, protecting us and piloting safely till we reach our destination. And should the long night come over us, it is also then in His power to pilot our soul into the realms of Bliss, where all sorrow will vanish; where hearts will meet in love; where the source of all blessings are; the true eternal home, where showers of blessings will continually fall from the fountain of Life which has gone before us through this valley of tears.

June 10. We arrived at Moorehead, and after crossing the river from Moorehead we are in North Dakota. North Dakota has an abundance of good level land suitable for raising wheat and adaptable for all crops. We remained here over a day looking the country over. We looked at a garden. It was very beautiful. Wheat planted March 17 stood 18 inches high. Our whole party, consisting of 12 members were together here in North Dakota viewing the land. We drove along the Railroad viewing the land, occasionally we'd stop, walk into the fields. There is a stretch of land 60 miles long and 30 miles wide on each side of the R.R. to be had. It's all good land.

June 11. We were out all day inspecting land.

June 12. Found farmer planting. Asked if not rather late to be planting. He answered that it did not make much difference, it would still produce good.

June 13. Left by boat on Red River for Manitoba. Nice trip.

June 14. 4 p. m. became stranded on sand hill. Took 3½ hours to break loose.

June 15. Sunday P. M. we held church services on the boat. John Funk preached English, Suderman and Ewert made additions in German. The Americans sang three songs. The whole services were rather long. The Americans knelt in prayer with us; this left a deep impression upon us.

June 16. Went thru Pembina and upon reaching Canadian line, John Funk had to explain who we were and what our mission was. They took our names and ages and we went on.

June 17. Arrived at our destination. Left the boat and walked into town. This city is fortified and called Winnepeg. Both the city and fort were built only four years ago. The city is located in Manitoba. Upon our arrival Mr. Hespler and Suderman spoke with the governor. He was very friendly and extended a hearty welcome to our visit. He spoke of the fertile lands and cheap prices that were available in his dominion. Later we were all introduced to the ministry and he commanded them to invite us for lunch. They also wished us many blessings and sang a blessing hymn for us. In the P. M. teams and wagons were provided by the minister of the public works to take us through the country showing us the land. We saw good land with wheat and barley; gardens with nice vegetables. Everything was good.

June 18. Five wagons were secured and rigged up to take us over the steppes that we might view the whole country. Two wagons carried food, tents and equipment. Three were filled with people. The route which we were to take was mapped out and the rigs with equipment went ahead. When we were ready to leave the three rigs loaded with people were lined up and photographed. This act grieved me seriously. We had come here as pilgrims and strangers, labouring in distress, seeking a home in a country where we could, with our children together, live according to the dictates of our conscience, and now we were, as it were, arrayed and classed highly. This photograph should reach the British authorities that they could see the warm reception that had been extended to us. Yes, when I consider our miserable condition, my eyes often run over. I cannot hide my face. My heart was deeply humiliated. When this was all over our journey began. After driving a while we came to a creek. Here we stopped at noon. Here we encountered a heavy rain. The soil was still virgin prairie. It was rather low land, the horses mired down. This would be a very good country if ditches were provided so that the low places could be drained. We viewed about 16 square miles of land.

June 19. We resumed our journey inspecting land. We saw many things of interest to us. We reached a corner post again. Our tents were set up again, had our supper. After supper several songs were sung and we had prayer together. By this time we were 30 people in the party. Seven were leaders, 12 deputies and the rest accompanied the party.

June 20. We arose early, sang a song of praise, had our breakfast and took up our inspection tour again. We went into the wide world. When we had driven a stretch we found a lone farmer who had settled all by himself. He was an Englishman and his wife was of German descent. She was very happy to meet German people. She asked us if we were seeking land and told us that the land in that locality was very good and invited us to become their neighbors. And it was true. The country around about looked very good. From here we drove further and reached another stream and stopped for noon. After noon we came to a river. Here we had to unhitch the horses, take them through then pull the wagons through. There was nice green grass along the river. The river was about the size of the

Vilna. We continued our journey till towards evening, set up our tents, had our supper, sang several songs, then had prayer together and committed ourselves under God's protection and had a nice rest that night.

June 21. We arose at six o'clock and after washing and singing a song of praise, we then knelt in prayer and had breakfast. After breakfast we took up our journey again and got back to Winnipeg. It rained hard in Winnipeg. The land here is good and plentiful, but it is rather hard to establish homes in Manitoba.

June 23. Seven were interested in a tour west of Winnipeg. Five of us left by boat for Fargo, North Dakota. We got out of the boat at Pembina and were taken out into the country about 18 miles. We saw some very good land and much timber, some trees large enough to make lumber. The timber is mostly oak, the land is still mostly meadow, but what is broke out appears to be very fertile soil. Everything that is planted grows well, including gardens and vegetables. We need not look nor wish for better land. We stayed all night with an Indian farmer. They showed us much hospitality. They gave us a good supper. After supper we sang a hymn and prayed, then went to bed.

June 24. Arose, found hosts busily engaged getting breakfast ready and we indeed had a very good breakfast. These people tell us many wonderful things how their crops grow. They had planted two bushels of potatoes and without further attention they had dug up 95 bushels. The story was similar in production of other seeds. Should our brethren in faith make up their mind to settle here, it is no question but what they would prosper. We could see that this Indian knew his business. He had his home furnished like we seldom find it in Europe. Carpets on all floors, cupboards, dressers, beds and everything that was necessary in the line of furniture. We did not know what to think of it, a tiller of the soil (farmer) having such a completely furnished home. We left this Indian's place, drove 12 miles further and met with German people. They were very glad to meet us and they took every means possible on their part to show their appreciation of our presence. And we also were very glad that we could meet someone with whom we could freely speak without an interpreter. It made us feel like we were brethren. A little distance from them was a high hill, he said we could view the country 30 miles around about from the top of the hill. We climbed to the top of it; it was 400 feet high. I looked to the east and my thoughts went home to my loved ones and an ardent desire arose, could I now only look into my home, my heart bled and I could not keep my tears from flowing; but in vain. I had to turn again and look after the things that pertained to my mission. And behold, as I turned around there before me were the many different wild flowers, how they greeted me with their smiling faces and sweet fragrance. I had to marvel and rejoice at the wonderous works of God, how my heart was refreshed. If we make use of the wonderous works of our Heavenly Father, He can comfort us and drive away the gloomy hours and forget many troubles in life, we can be brought nearer to God and walk more in obedience. Our eyes of faith can be opened more by beholding his beautiful handiwork,

and the more our eyes are opened, the deeper we can see into His wonderous works, how He has created them.

June 25. We viewed the land on our return trip at Pembina. There is an abundance of good land which will raise wheat and other products and a man that is willing to work could make ends meet very well in this country. We met a man in Pembina who told us he had raised potatoes weighing 5 1-2 lbs. each, onions with a circumference of 12 inches. May 6, 1872, a man had planted barley and had harvested it July 10. We could hardly believe his report.

June 26. We left Pembina by boat to return to Fargo. The journey is very good. Our boat does not rock to and fro like it does on the ocean.

June 27. Several of our party hired a team to drive the rest of the distance to Fargo overland and inspect the country. The banks of the Red River are covered with trees, many of these trees and animals in them are strange to us in Europe. Some trees are wonderful to behold. There are also many different kinds of wild and domestic flowers and roses blooming, all growing together, giving a sweet smelling fragrance. The people in the boat rejoice over it.

June 28. We arrived at Fargo. We have now viewed land at Pembina and Manitoba. We found good soil at both places.

June 29. They took us on inspection tour west. Left Fargo by train about 25 miles. There three rigs were waiting for us. We took a cup of coffee then we went on an inspection tour inland. The rigs carried eats and other provisions like tents, etc. We again saw many wonderful sights. The whole country is adorned with beautiful flowers and roses. In one place I counted 7 different varieties of roses. When a child walks among these beautiful roses that God has strewn over the universe, it forgets the world with its troubles when it starts picking the beautiful roses. Likewise will a man do if he will in a simple way walk in the garden of God; if he delights in the law of the Lord and doth meditate therein; he will also forget the troubles of this world and say with Paul: I forget the things which are behind, reaching forth unto the things which are before. That is the way we poor sinful creatures should journey through the noise-some bustle of this world and wholly commit our walk and deeds into His hands and rely on the mercy of God which is more than any other thing that we may find. For the world tries to swallow our soul and it is often attacked with trials and temptations and must battle under a burden to keep this sinful world from crushing the inward man; but if we through the wisdom of God, before we are completely overtaken, commit ourselves into His hands, search our hearts and lay aside all sins; if we by His grace can see how frail we are and that nothing good is within us; then we can find the way to the cross and sink into the wounds of Jesus; it will crush the heart of stone and melt the eyes in tears; yea, when a man's eyes are opened, he sees that the flower of the field is adorned much more wonderfully than man who was created after the image of God. Man in his fallen condition is not a sweet smelling savour like

the flower of the field; man is now corrupt and his works are vanity, but the fragrance of the flower riseth upward to God as though it brings its Creator praise and honor for the way it has been created.

We viewed the land near Fargo and stayed in the open steppes in tents for a whole week. It is a wonderful country in the neighborhood of Fargo. Wheat looked very good, now and then a stream crossed the country, trees were plentiful; the meadows nice and green, and it would be very good for dairy cattle. Most of the land is tillable and produces good nearly everything that is planted. Another great advantage here at Fargo is: the land available is located along the railroad.

Should it be God's will that we settle here near Fargo, No. Dakota along the railroad, we can get the option of 24 miles square for 10 years, 12 miles wide on each side of the railroad. Any land that is not taken up during these ten years falls back to the railroad. The agreement is: you can file a claim of 80 acres from the government and buy the adjoining 80 from the railroad company. The terms were 7 years at the rate of 7 per cent. It makes a tract of 160 acres for each individual. The terms and arrangements of the land are such that we cannot complain. The Maple river goes right through the district available. Both sides of this river has very productive land. Everyone with whom we come in contact speaks well of this country, the other delegates confirm this likewise.

Back of the Maple river is also much good land available, but the 24 miles square would be more than we would need temporarily, but in the event that others would follow it would be well that an option be taken on the whole plot, then those who would follow would find an abode with those who went first, although it will be very hard for those who settle here first in the open prairies. All lumber to build will have to be purchased. Foot boards are priced at \$16.00 to \$18.00 per 1000 square feet.

When people build a house here in America, they usually make a framework of 2x4 planks, then they box it with 1x12 boards on the outside and inside. The inside is then coated with lime or gip. Sometimes the house is built more expensive to be warmer and it is then only boxed on the outside and the inside is plastered and the plaster coated with gip. This makes a very nice warm house.

Minnesota still has a lot of timber land for sale at \$1.25 per acre. This timber land lies next to the Red River. In the event that our people should settle here near Fargo, it would be possible to ship lumber over the Red River. It is 80 miles by land to this timber land, but by river it is further, the Red River winds back and forth quite a bit. Never-the-less, this lumber could be secured cheaper than buying it direct.

July 7. An American took Lorenze Tschetter and I together with a German interpreter out in the country. He showed us lots of good land 3 and 4 miles from town. Potatoes and other garden products have a good price. This land lies along the Red River and lumber shipped along the river would be placed close to the homesteads. This layout suits me fine, only thing is not so desirable: here and there we find a homesteader has settled. We could not settle in a compact body like we are in Russia.

However, the American who took us out, said these settlers would sell out at a very cheap price. They had settled only the year before. Wheat planted April 30 was already headed. Barley planted May 20 was also headed. Present prices paid for produce are:

Wheat 90c to \$1.35 per bushel. Oats 35c to 60c per bushel. Rye \$1.00 per bushel. Potatoes 50c per bushel. New Potatoes \$1.00 per bushel. Barley 50c per bushel.

Ordinary farm hands received 50c to \$2.00 per day. Blacksmiths and Carpenters \$2.50 to \$4.00 per day. Team of horses \$5.00 to \$6.00 per day.

July 9. We left for Breckenridge, Minnesota. The superintendent, a German, showed us great hospitality. We remained all night in Breckenridge. In the morning the officials of the railroad company took us out on a railroad car into the country, a distance of 40 miles, from there we were taken overland a long ways. The land may be alright, but it was somewhat marshy and had a great many lakes in it. Some of them were rather large and the land was not suitable to be divided equally like in Dakota. The marshy places were all covered with grass, the upland also had grass on it but it was not so thick. The system like we had in Russia to divide the land in villages would not work out here. I prefer Dakota for settlement.

In the P. M. we viewed land on the other side of Breckenridge. Here the land suited us better but this country has quite a few settlers, this however, did not appeal to us since we desire to settle in a compact colony. From here it is 139 miles to Minneapolis. This city has many factories in which woolen and cotton goods and other textiles are made. There are also tailor shops and woodwork factories. Windows, doors, chairs, beds, etc., are made in large numbers here. Beds sell for \$2.00 each. Chairs 50c each. Doors \$2.00 each.

The owner of a fabric mill was very friendly and in order to show his appreciation of our presence he hired three rigs and drove around for two hours showing us the city. He was indeed very friendly and showed much hospitality.

In the P. M. we went to St. Paul where we also remained over Sunday. Here we had good hotel accommodations and the people as a whole were very hospitable. A number of them invited us to come and lodge with them.

July 14. We went by rail to Worthington, a distance of 75 miles. We arrive at 5 P. M. We had our supper and after supper we drove out into the country with 5 rigs viewing the land till sundown. The land in Minnesota is also very good. However I like it better in North Dakota. But people get along well in Minnesota.

July 15. We went into the country again with four rigs viewing land. We found good land with good wheat growing on it, and the prospects for a crop were good. Everything that was planted seemed to grow good. The country is situated for both farming and dairying. Brooks with fresh water are plentiful, a great advantage for the dairyman and also suitable to raise geese and ducks. But there is also the drawback for our condition—isolated settlers are strewn all over the country and pros-

pects are that many more will soon come.

July 16. We again toured the country viewing land. We came to a place where the land looked good, but the grass and other crops were small and rather thin. After we tasted the soil we learned that it had a salty taste to it which no doubt was the reason of the poor growth. In the P. M. we left Minnesota, went through Iowa as far as Sibus City. We remained here all night. The Missouri river runs through this city. It is about the size of the Weichsel.

July 17. We toured the country viewing land. We saw much kaffir corn which we had not noticed elsewhere. We especially noticed good horses and cattle in abundance in this part of the country. Livestock prices are cheaper here than in other regions where we visited. The land is very good, the most of it is already settled and what is not settled is in the hands of real estate men and speculators and consequently higher in price than comparatively the same land in other states. There are many beautiful cities in this state. Four o'clock we went through a town called Columbus, no doubt named after Columbus who discovered America. It is a very beautiful city and is located in Nebraska. We met German people here who had come from Odessa. We saw much good land in this state although grass seemed to be a little short but other crops looked good. The country also has many settlers and it would be impossible to settle in colonies like we live in Russia. Another drawback in this country is that it is 100 feet to water which would make it very hard for poor people. The citizens go to great expense taking us out and showing us the country. They pay from 6 to 8 dollars a rig. If we should pay all that our trip would be very expensive. In Minnesota it was still higher and it would have been impossible for us to carry out our mission if we would have paid our way everywhere.

July 18. Four P. M. we left Columbus. There is good land all along the railroad as we travel through this part of the country. The country here also has settlers strewn all over it. We also see many travelers going back and forth seeking for locations. We had to marvel that so many of these homeseekers are coming from the south and traveling north. As a whole, the people looked healthier in the north than further south. Since we are not familiar with these conditions, we really do not know which part of the country we should choose. When we arrive in a town, the people seem to rejoice at the prospect of getting German settlers.

July 19. We toured south Nebraska with four rigs. We traveled a stretch of 50 miles where there are no people living. The country and soil appear to be good for both farming and grazing purposes, but there are no woods, no hay and deep to water. The distance to markets is also a drawback. Poor people would find it hard to settle here since there would be no opportunity to get work of any kind here.

July 20. We held Sunday in a town only five miles from the Kansas line. We went to church in the morning. Since it was only a small town, the people could not support a minister, but they came together each Sunday and worshipped without a min-

ister. I rejoiced over the sincere attitude that they manifested in this. First they sang a song, then another song was sung for which we all arose. After this song was sung, we all knelt in prayer and one of their number led in prayer. After prayer they formed in classes. The men all in a separate class, the women in another, four boys in another and 11 girls in another. They meditated and conversed in the scriptures. The men's, women's, and boy's classes were led by men and a lady led the girl's class. I was greatly astonished at the attention of the little children classes. The leaders entertained the children with such interest from the word of God and Jesus that they all sat quietly and each one looked steadily at the mouth of their teacher to hear what was being said.

That was a good lesson for me to observe. It taught me that we shall likewise look steadily at the mouth of our Great Teacher and be ready to hear and accept every word that falls from His mouth, that the Word spoken from His holy mouth may penetrate my heart and my spiritual ear may not become deaf—but alas, how soon does a man always forget that we shall be like little children, and are inclined to leave the paths of God.

When a child is acquainted with the love of its mother, but in playing forgets it and wonders away, then suddenly becomes aware of the absence of its mother, the child then seeks its mother with tears. The mother in turn does not answer immediately for the welfare of the child, then the child becomes more careful in the future and does not wander away so easily. So God also does with us if we do not continually heed His calling.

In the evening they had meeting again. We were then asked to sing the first song in German. They then sang a song in American. Their singing excelled ours. The women were the main singers in the American song, their mild voices rang above the men's and made a beautiful melody.

July 21. We left and went by way of Hastings. There is still much level land available in this region. We went as far as Lincoln. This is the capital of Nebraska. It has 6,000 inhabitants, it has 12 churches, a number of schools and other institutions. The city was only established 6 years ago. We were taken through the whole city and it was pointed out to us how fine the city was laid out and encouraged to settle in the neighborhood of this fine city. Although it has not been decided yet where we will settle, but my choice is Fargo, North Dakota.

From Lincoln we went 55 miles northeast and crossed the Missouri river by ferry in Omaha and Council Bluffs. Here we made correct railroad connections to Elkart, Indiana. On the opposite side of Iowa we crossed the Mississippi river. We had our breakfast in Galesburg, Illinois. We arrived in Elkart and remained there all night. In the morning we were taken out in the country by one of the brethren. We visited the brotherhood in the vicinity for several days.

July 26. We went to Holdeman.

July 27. We held services in Holdeman's church. It is a very large roomy building. They sang in English. The Mennonites in America are inclined to use the American language. They have ministers among them who cannot preach German. For the night

we went along with preacher Schaum. He is very friendly and hospitable.

July 28. We left Elkart and arrived in Cleveland the next morning at 11 a. m. We had to wait till 4 p. m. till our next train so we walked into town. It is a very beautiful city and it has a very large railroad station. Modern in every way and built of steel, the frame work is tied and braced wonderfully.

July 30. We arrived at Philadelphia at 12 a. m. I had hardly believed, had I not seen with my own eyes, that America had such beautiful cities. It appears as though the city had been built to the satisfaction and desires of man's heart and he could not wish for something better. There is a running to and fro and the sad part of the story is that it appears as though no one thinks that these things will all have an end some day and it will become a heap of stones and no stone left untouched when the day of judgment comes. I took notice of the water system for the town. The water for the city's use is all taken from the river. It is forced upward into a large reservoir, then it is distributed into three smaller ones and led all over the city. It is all operated and handled with wonderful and miraculous machinery. I examined them but I am not in a position to explain or describe the whole matter. The buildings in the city are from 4 to 6 stories high and the city is 15 miles in diameter. We had our lodging in the 5th story in a hotel and had to climb five stairways to get there. The streets are all layed our straight as if drawn by a line. Standing on a street crossing, you could look a long distance either way. It is all wonderful for the natural eye to behold, but when our spiritual eye casts a look, it teaches us the corruption of man and the end of all things like Jesus says: "No stone shall be left untouched."

Here in Philadelphia is the Hall where the Declaration of Independence was adopted and signed in 1776 when the United States separated from England. Here in this Hall is a large bell called the Liberty Bell. This bell was used to announce that the Declaration had been adopted. In this Hall are also many historical relics and documents. There are portraits of the presidents of the country and other high officials.

Here in this building we had an interview with the president of the railroad company regarding the constitution of the United States. When that was over we were asked concerning our teaching, our schools, our church services, whether we also permit women preachers or only men. About the confession of our faith they were mainly interested whether we love our enemies or hate them.

July 31. At 7 o'clock we left Philadelphia and went to New York.

August 1. We were busily engaged getting information for our prospective settlement. We had a very good man representing us. He insisted that land should be sold to us for 50c per acre. After this we went into a department store; it was a very large building and stocked with all kinds of merchandise. The building and merchandise were worth every bit as much as all the stores with the merchandise in our town.

August 4. We went to church services in the Mission Hall.

August 5. We saw a ship on fire. It was filled with oil and burned for several days till August 7. Three ships had been ignited here in New York and the people had to make their escape in life boats. The captain of the ship on one perished. The damage and loss was very heavy.

August 8. We left New York 8 a. m. to see the president. At 8 p. m., we were introduced to the president in his residence. He is the president of all the states of the union of the United States. Our agent Hiller sent his servants to him with a message and also our petition and plea. He looked them through, then requested that we come and meet him. He was a plain man and very friendly. He informed us that the constitution has a concession that it will not over-ride a man's conscience and religious freedom is guaranteed. We appreciated this information, expressed our gratitude and bid him adieu. He then offered us his hand and gave us a very warm friendly goodbye. We then returned to our hotel. We had our supper there and also our breakfast. Here in America the hotels also have beds for lodging, these beds cost 50c per night.

We remained 14 days in New York, made 25 trips with our agent concerning our deals and other arrangements. We made the trip by boat from where we had our living quarters. It cost us 4 cents each trip. We could not get our work completely accomplished.

August 14. Two o'clock p. m., Paul and Lorenz Tschetter and I boarded a ship to return home. It was stormy and rainy.

August 15. Cloudy and a little rain.

August 16. Sunshine and nice all day. It was very warm way into the night and people could not sleep. I went to the upper deck to sleep. When I got to the upper deck I took notice of the constellation of the stars. How beautiful God has created the heavens. I viewed the whole creation of God with what perfectness He has made it. Yea, an all-wise, all-knowing God has made all with righteousness and in this righteousness He will some day judge all things and nothing is hid from His eyes. Our slightest mistakes that we overlook so lightly are bright as the sun before Him.

If a man places himself before this Judge, then that heart of stone melts away and becomes soft and tender, and the more tender the heart, the deeper we can look into this Deity, that everything that exists, heaven, earth and the sea and everything that is therein, only exists by and through His Word. This ship upon which we are sailing is not only carried by the water, but the eternal Word of God also carries it or else it would sink in the twinkling of an eye.

If a man studies the creation and the wonders of how God has created everything then he will not find much time to spend with unnecessary earthly things. That is indeed the most pitiful condition of man; man who has been created after the image of God and should desire nothing but His Wisdom and Goodness, and wholly seek to live and walk in the love and image of his



Creator daily; that man is so easily beset with the things of this world. But like the dove that found no rest and returned and landed in Noah's hand, so our spirit again finds shelter in the arms of God if we return to Him, when it finds no rest in this world as we sail the ship of time. Oh, that man might at all times set his whole trust and confidence upon God and rely upon His mercy. Although our ship might sink, but if it sails with Jesus as the Captain, then the sinking would be blessed and peaceful. Too often the soul is assailed day and night and remains as though it is sunk in the depths of the sea, it appears as though God is gone and has forgotten the burdened soul, but if we earnestly seek His face and come to Him in confidence, then He stretches forth His hand and receives us like Noah did the dove.

August 17. Weather mild all day.

August 18. Somewhat foggy. We met three English ships.

August 19. Mild and calm all day.

August 20. Nice day. I felt somewhat sick.

August 22. I became sea sick.

August 23. A great storm arose in the early morning hours. The waves swayed the ship back and forth. I sat on the upper deck and tried to write, but the ship rocked to and fro and I had to hold myself that I was not thrown overboard. The waves often splashed above the ship. The storm continued all night.

August 24. About 10 a. m. the storm abated somewhat, but it remained stormy all day. Large waves came rolling and dashed against the ship.

Oh, Son of Man, Thou dost not fear the waves of the sea. We people often think we are at the portals of death when we see the huge waves come rolling. We cry with Peter: "Lord help, we perish." But if Jesus, the eternal Word, watches over us, then there is no danger and we are far from death's portals. But never the-less it is good for man to be placed at the threshold of death. The heart is then moved to realize how easy life could be snuffed out, although man's life is secure when the goodness of God hovers over us. But how unthankful is man often found with this goodness hovering over us.

August 25. The storm is abating and although the waves are still boisterous, the ship does not rock back and forth so much. We are sailing against wind and are traveling slow. At 3 p. m. we met "Frisia", the ship upon which we sailed to America in April. A little later we met four more ships.

(The last page of great-grandfather's booklet is gone and consequently the report of their arrival back home is missing. However, according to Paul Tschetter's report they arrived home on August 28, 1873).

## PART II

### The Immigration

July 28, 1874. Twenty-five families immigrated from Heinrichsdorf to America.

October 24, 1874. Forty families immigrated from Karlswalde to America.

November 3; 1874. Twenty-seven families immigrated from Karlswalde to America.

November 11, 1874. Ben Buller and I (Tobias Unruh) from Karlswalde, and Peter Unruh from Antonofka, immigrated to America. We went as far as Brody and waited for the rest of our party, 325 souls, to arrive. My wife and grand-children were also included in this number.

November 15. We left Brody and arrived Krakau, a distance of 52 miles.

November 17. We arrived in Berlin towards evening and at Koln the next day.

November 19. We left Koln and went through 24 tunnels. The first one was 3½ versts long, the rest were from 1 to 2½ versts long. It was an unusual experience for my congregation, fear came upon them and many a sigh went up to God that He might protect us on our journey. We arrived safely at Antwerpe towards evening where we received a friendly reception from Lord Streich. We remained here till the 22nd, all the necessary arrangements for the trip were made. It was quite a chore to look after all the affairs and set everything in order to enter the ship. Towards evening we entered the ship, many sighs and groans went to the Throne of Grace, that the Almighty God, who has control over all the elements, might protect us on our journey and guide the ship safely across the ocean.

The beautiful city of Antwerpe attracted the attention of the whole party; magnificent stone and brick buildings, from two to seven stories high. Signs of prosperity were seen on every hand. The whole congregation had not seen or heard of such. After we had entered the ship, it sailed about 2000 yards off the shore and remained all night.

November 23. At 8 a. m., the anchors were loosed and the ship set sail. Weather was fairly nice and everything went along good till midnight, when our ship collided with another steamer, (The Indus). The impact slightly damaged our ship. The jolt caused a great commotion among the passengers. People all awoke from their sleep. It was an unusual happening, and those on board were not familiar with the nature of ships; cries and moans were heard in every direction. People thought the ship was damaged to the extent that it would sink. The ship crew inspected the damage at once after it was anchored. The damage was not considered serious, but it was decided to return to London and repair the ship. Here in London we waited from the 24th till the 30th of November while the ship was being repair-

ed. The ship stood dry docked and we all had our sleeping quarters on it.

November 28. Grandmother Buller died. Also an 8 years old daughter of Henry Dirks died the same night. They were both buried in a cemetery in London November 30.

What made matters worse for the whole party, small pox broke out among the children. Orders were given at once that the ship should leave the harbor or the passengers of the ship leave at once. As soon as possible we were rushed away; it was nearly dark and raining very hard; it was indeed miserable and a dreary night for us. Eight families, who were affected by the epidemic, could remain on the ship.

December 1. Towards noon four of the patients were taken to the hospital. In the P. M. four more were taken to the hospital. Henry, son of Tobias Dirks, passed away from this number.

December 4. These eight families were taken to another ship. It was a special hospital ship for such occasions. While being transferred to this ship, Tobias, infant son of Tobias Jantz, passed away. He had been sick three years. The body was buried

December 5. This ship sailed 5 miles out of the harbor and remained there. We were on this ship from December 4, till January 10, 1875. We had a good ship with good accommodations. We did not have anything to do, only sit and marvel at the mighty works of God. We considered this kind deed as a wonderful grace of God. We are all fed well, and although we are afloat on the water between heaven and earth, it seems to teach and tell us that God can provide for us and we shall not be attached to earthly things. May the divine wisdom of God teach us to abstain from all earthly cares and put our whole trust in Him.

December 15. Had a headache all day.

December 18. We received word from the doctor and inspector that all well persons on the ship were released and could continue with the journey. But I did not go since I had agreed to remain with the sick ones till they were well and could follow the rest of the party. Our grandson was also among the number who were in the hospital.

December 20. We received notice that all who wanted to join the rest of the party, which was just-ready to leave, should be ready to board the ship by 12 o'clock, but it took till 3 o'clock p. m., before the ship was ready to leave. All those who were on this hospital ship joined the rest of the party to sail to America except three of us and those with the small pox in the hospital. Benjamin L. Unruh, John Becker and I remained on the hospital ship. It was a sad parting and many tears were shed, as we did not know what the outcome of it all would be. We three agreed to remain on this hospital ship till those who were sick in the hospital would be restored to their health so that we altogether could follow those who went before on the journey.

This was indeed a kind act from the ship company. We were kept free of charge. Also the 396 souls on the ship were fed free of charge during the time that the ship was being repaired. It

must have cost the ship company a large amount of money.

December 21. While we were eating breakfast one of the men in charge called us out and showed us the ship in which our loved ones were sailing for America. It was just leaving the harbor. The ship was bound for Philadelphia.

December 22. Cloudy all day.

December 23. Foggy all morning. In the afternoon the sky cleared and bright sunshine, calm.

December 24. Foggy and cloudy, very windy, rather dangerous to sail on the large ocean. May God keep our loved ones from all harm on their journey.

December 25. It is a nice day, hardly any wind and no frost last night; this is also Christmas Day. A bountiful dinner was served today, over which the doctor rejoiced greatly. He repeatedly said: "Good dinner, good dinner." And indeed it was a good dinner; it was something that we were not used to.

December 26. Cooler and foggy. We can hardly see the water from the ship. When it is clear we can count from 40 to 70 ships sailing back and forth. There is a ship association on the water about which the people on the land have no idea. People carry on trade just like they do on the land. There is a great harmony at sea with ships passing back and forth.

December 27. It is cold and foggy and a little snow at times. Towards evening the skies cleared. No frost at night.

December 28. Nice and clear till towards evening. Rain and snow fell in small quantities.

December 29. Nice and warm in the morning, towards evening it grew colder. The sea itself is a miracle. The water rises and falls every 24 hours. It is much like the circulation of blood in a person. Our ship makes a complete turn every 24 hours and then back again. It is not noticeable from the inside of the ship, but by objects on the outside we can see that it revolves.

December 30. Nice weather all day.

December 31. Last day of the year, very cold and foggy, cannot see any distance. Nearly dark.

January 1, 1875. Nice and clear all day. Towards evening it became cloudy, rained all night.

January 2. Nice and warm, clear skies in the morning, towards evening stormy and foggy, rain and snow all night.

January 3. Nice and warm. Here in England it is not as cold as in Russia. Today we had a very good dinner; boiled beef and other dainty food. We also have a very good table waiter.

January 4. Nice all day. I went along to London today and bought two pairs of stockings, one pair for my grandson Peter and one pair for John Becker.

January 5. Sunshine and warm all day, like spring weather.

January 6. Another spring day in January.

January 7. A little foggy and colder.

January 8. Foggy and cloudy in the morning. Towards evening the sky cleared.

January 9. Foggy and cloudy.

January 10. Foggy and cloudy and a great calmness. It was very windy during the night. It is now three weeks that the rest of our party left for America. We thought they would be in Kansas by now, and they could have been there by now had everything went smoothly, but to our disappointment we received word today that the machinery in the ship broke due to the stress against the dashing waves caused by the heavy storms which continued during their journey, and they had to return to get the ship repaired.

January 11. A very nice day. At 3 o'clock the inspector came and took us to the depot in London. Here we met with the patients from the hospital whom we had not seen for six weeks. We rejoiced with them that they were now well and we altogether could follow the rest of our loved ones to America. At 9:15 o'clock p. m., we all boarded the train and arrived at Liverpool at 3 o'clock the next morning, a distance of 250 English miles or 52½ German miles. We made the trip in about 6 hours.

January 12. We were in Liverpool making arrangements to continue our journey.

January 13. We were called to the harbor at 7 o'clock and by 11 o'clock everything was set in order and the ship began to sail. Once more we were on our way to America. Our destination is Philadelphia. It was very stormy and the waves swayed the ship back and forth all through the night.

January 14. We arrived in Queenstown. Here we met with our loved ones who had set sail for America on December 20, 1874. They had a heart-rending story to tell. After sailing the stormy seas for 7 days, the machinery on their ship was damaged to the extent that they could not continue their trip—word was sent with another ship to Liverpool, London, and also Antwerp that their ship was damaged with several hundred passengers stranded. In the meantime the damaged ship turned and started limping back to Liverpool. After struggling in the water for 9 days, the Pennsylvania, also an American liner, came to their rescue. In making an attempt to receive the passengers from the damaged ship, the two ships collided on account of the waves which dashed violently against the ships caused by the terrific storms. The Abbotsford was severely damaged by the impact. Its keel was rent open and water gushed into the ship with a mighty force. All indications were that the ship would sink within a short time. The ship crew put on their life belts and made provisions to lower the life boats. The boats were filled to capacity but did not hold all the passengers on board. Thirty-

five passengers had to remain on the ship without any provisions to be rescued. Among these 35 were Peter Nikkel, Peter Unruh, Ben Becker, my wife, two grand-daughters and others. They had to remain on the ship like orphans and await their fate. Their inward cry to God was that He might have mercy upon them and receive their souls; it was a most pitiful condition for those who had no provisions to be rescued, but right when they were in their greatest distress, one of the sailors went down into the ship to see how near the ship was being filled with water in order that they might lower the life boats before it became too dangerous. When the sailor returned he reported that he had found the water could not cover the entire ship on account of another wall which was not damaged. Only the fore part of the ship was filled with water and the ship would not sink. When these glad tidings were brought, the whole atmosphere changed. New hope and courage was taken that their lives would be saved after all. This disaster occurred January 8, 1875. The damaged ship was then towed to Queenstown where they arrived on January 9. They remained there till January 14, when we met them. They then entered the same ship upon which we were sailing to America.

We encountered terrific stormy weather from the 13th of January when we boarded the ship in Liverpool till the 21st. Often the waves would splash together on top of the ship. Many a sigh and groan was heard. Many prayers went to the Throne of Grace, that God, with whom nothing is impossible, might look down in mercy upon us and guide us safely across the ocean. Many thought the sea would be our grave.

January 22. The storm abated somewhat.

January 23. Snow and cold, the storm is moderate.

January 24. The night was very stormy. By noon the storm abated somewhat. By evening it had ceased and there was great calmness. The ship now sailed along smoothly and everyone enjoyed it. A daughter was born to John Deckers.

January 25. In the morning it became very stormy, it kept increasing until midnight, then it abated somewhat.

January 26. By sunup it was nice and calm, later in the day a cold wind arose, but sailing went very good all through the next night and all enjoyed a good night's rest.

January 27. Very nice weather for sailing, but the wind was very icy.

January 28, 1875. We finally reached our destination in Philadelphia. We were met by many American brethren—ministers, teachers. People had come from a long distance—20 miles, to welcome our arrival; it was indeed a warm, friendly, charitable reception that we received. Soon upon our arrival preparations were made for a meal at the station which was free of charge for the poor and only a very small charge for those who were able to pay. Everything was arranged well for the arrival of immigrants. We all had nice warm rooms and enjoyed the rest after a rough stormy voyage. We remained here till the next

day, then the whole party was taken to the station by a young teacher named Funk.

January 30. All families were distributed and given temporary homes.

March 19. I conducted services at the Lancaster Church. I visited and conducted services in 22 different congregations in 23 days. I was taken from one congregation to another by the bretheren. They drove from 6 to 21 miles taking me to the different congregations. It was a kind act of love.

April 19. I left for Ohio.—Tobias Unruh.

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#### NOTES OF REFERENCE

##### Deaths on the Journey—

Grandma Buller, November 28, 1874.

A daughter of Henry Dirks, age 8, Nov. 28, 1874.

Henry, son of Tobias Dirks, December 1, 1874.

Tobias, age 3, son of Tobias

Jantz, December 4, 1874.

##### Births on the Journey—

A daughter to John Deckers, January 24, 1875

Taken to the Hospital December 1, 1874,  
on account of Smallpox—

Peter, age 9, son of Tobias Unruh

Henry, age 15, son of Peter Becker

Helen, age 16, daughter of Abraham Unruh

Helen, age 2½, daughter of Benjamin Unruh

Cornie, age 1½, son of Tobias Jantz

Henry, age 6, son of Peter Nikkel

Tobias, son of Tobias Boese

John, son of David Buller.

#### IN CONCLUSION

In a letter written December 9, 1873 to the HEROLD DER WAHRHEIT, Tobias A. Unruh states: "Here in Wohlynien nearly all Mennonites have decided to immigrate. Wherever possible people are disposing property for a small proportion of what it is ordinarily worth; they take whatever they can get for it.

If only passports will be available, which seems to be a discouraging issue here in Russia! Nearly the entire group is considering immigrating in the latter part of March this coming year. May the good God of heaven and earth bless our undertaking, that everything we do or leave undone, may be according to His Will; may He keep us in pure faith till eternity.

With kindest regards from me and my fellow ministers and the congregation as a whole.

/s/ Tobias A. Unruh  
Karlswalde  
Wohlynien, Russia"

Living on crown lands, our people in Russia did not have the title to the land upon which they lived; they only had the right to live on it. In the meantime the government had sent a Russian general, Herr Tod-Leben, to the Mennonite villages to convince them to remain in Russia. After the government saw that the Mennonites were determined to leave anyway, they transferred this land upon which the Mennonites lived to some Bohemian Catholics who were now coming to take possession of their holdings. This put the Mennonites into a critical condition. They owned the improvements upon the land; the Bohemians knew the Mennonites land; the Bohemians knew the Mennonites were leaving anyway, so they bought the improvements at their own price; in some cases they were given away. Many of the Mennonites had their life's savings invested in their improvements and giving them away reduced them to actual poverty.

Under these conditions, it was only the people with cash money who could see their way clear to get out of Russia. Possibly nearly one-half of the entire group was brought into extreme poverty thru these circumstances and were not able to pay their passage money to America. In their plight they cried to God and appealed to their American brethren for help. The Americans responded, not only for passage money for the most needy ones, but the Mennonite Aid Committee also arranged and made contracts for reduced rates with ship lines and railroad companies, as well as making provisions for immigrants when they arrived by ship.

It was already getting late in the summer of 1874, and although application for passports had been made early in the year, no passports were available yet; the Russian government refused to grant them, putting them off for every little occasion they could find. It became necessary for the Mennonite Board of Guardians of Pennsylvania to look into

this matter with an interview with the Russian Consul in America. Finally, in October, the passports began to arrive.

The first group to leave the Karlswalde area was forty families. Leaving their homes on October 24, 1874, they embarked at Hamburg on the S. S. City of London and arrived in New York on November 18. Proceeding on their way, they arrived in Newton, Kansas on November 24. About one-half of this group dug into the west bank of the creek right north of where the Newton water supply tank is located. Here they spent their first winter in America. The rest of the party went to Pawnee Rock where they lived in box cars the first winter. Early spring most of those staying at Newton left and settled in Turner County, South Dakota. Those staying at Pawnee Rock settled in Pawnee and Barton counties, Kansas.

Coming together with this group were sixteen families, forty-seven people, from the Michilin and Heinrichsdorf groups who lived approximately sixty to eighty miles east of Karlswalde. These people were from the same background when they immigrated from Germany to Russia seventy-five years earlier. Tobias A. Unruh also represented these congregations on his deputation journey in 1873. The larger part of the Heinrichsdorf group had sailed on the S. S. Colina somewhat earlier and settled in Bon Homme county, South Dakota. The majority of the Michilin group came about a week later. They arrived at Peabody, Kansas, December 5, and settled near Elbing and Whitewater, Kansas the next spring.

The second group to leave from the Karlswalde area left their homes November 3, 1874. The twenty-seven families embarked on the S. S. City of Montreal at Liverpool, November 16, and arrived in New York November 27. Eight of these families proceeded to Newton, Kansas where they lived in two box cars the first winter, then left in early spring and settled in Turner County, South Dakota. About 20 families of this group went to Orrville, Ohio where they spent their first winter in Mennonite homes. Some remained to work in this community for a time, but gradually most of these people found their way to their relatives and friends in Kansas and Dakota.

The third group, and by far the largest group to leave at one time, was one hundred fifteen families from the village, Antanofka. They left their homes late in November and embarked on the S. S. Vaterland on December 4 at Antwerp. After twenty-one days of rough sailing they arrived in Philadelphia on Christmas Day, December 25. Due to the rough seas, this ship lost all of its propeller blades. The first one was lost in the English Channel; the second one about midway and the last one was lost upon nearing the United States coast.

This group was shipped directly to Kansas and unloaded at Hutchinson at 11:00 P.M. one cold winter night when the thermometer registered 12 degrees below zero. After spending the first night in an empty store building the whole group was transferred to Florence, Kansas, where

they were housed in poorly constructed buildings this first winter. In spring practically the whole group settled on forty acre farms in Lonetree Township, McPherson County, Kansas.

The fourth and last sizable group to leave Russia from this area was a mixed group coming from Karlswalde and Antanofka. Three hundred twenty-five souls left their homes November 11, and embarked on the S. S. Abbottsford at Antwerp, November 23. This ship collided with another ship the first night of their voyage, slightly damaging the Abbottsford which was taken to London for repairs. While the ship stood in dry dock under repair, small pox broke out among the children and the eight families affected by the epidemic were quarantined.

After the ship was repaired the rest of the party sailed for America December 20, with the exception of Benjamin L. Unruh, John Becker and Tobias A. Unruh, who agreed to remain till those in the hospital were released, then would come together.

The group that started on the Abbottsford November 23 finally reached the shores of America on two other ships, the S. S. Kennelsworth arrived January 9, 1875, with two hundred eighty-four passengers, according to best information available. This whole group remained at Philadelphia with Mennonites in the surrounding community for several months, then early in March, twelve families left and settled in Turner County, South Dakota. Some of the remaining ones found their way to Kansas and some found employment for several years in Pennsylvania, then located with their friends and relatives in South Dakota.

The remnant of the Abbottsford group, ninety-three persons, arrived on the S. S. Illinois in Philadelphia on January 28, 1875, after being on the boisterous Atlantic for sixty-six days. This whole group remained with Mennonite families in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania until spring when the majority found their way to South Dakota and Kansas.

Not all the people were of a mind to leave Russia at the time our forefathers left. For a number of years individuals and smaller groups up to ten families came trickling in from time to time and joined their relatives and friends in Kansas and South Dakota. A sizeable group from Wohlymien also went to South Russia, about 500 miles south, to live with the Mennonite colonies in that locality.

Some of those going to South Russia became contaminated with some extreme millennial ideas by reading the Yung-Stilling writings. According to their leader, Christ was to return on March 8, 1889. Organizing a party of seventy wagons they traveled for fifteen weeks across southern Asia hoping to find the spot where He would descend. Finally most of those from the Wohlymien area had their eyes opened and brought this venture to an end by appealing to their relatives in America for help. At least ten of the twenty-three families who were helped to America were from the Wohlymien area, who had gone to South Russia at the time our

forefathers left for America.

When our forefathers left Russia, both places of worship in Karls-  
walde and Antanofka were practically dissolved. The remnant that was  
left gathered in private homes for services. As late as 1910 there were  
some twenty families gathering in a private home in Waldheim (now Lil-  
eva, Poland) for worship.

Today, of those who originally came from Wohlymien there are de-  
scendants living possibly in every state of the Union and most of the Cana-  
dian provinces. A large number are engaged in mission work in many for-  
eign countries. The greatest majority of those who came in the 70's and  
80's are still living in Kansas and South Dakota, with sizeable groups living  
in the states of Oklahoma, California, Minnesota, Missouri, Idaho, Louisi-  
ana, Mississippi, Montana and Oregon.

Abe J. Unruh  
Montezuma, Kansas  
February 15, 1970

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