

Die Welt-Post, Page 7, Thursday, the 5th of January 1922

Huck, 12, Nov. 1921.

Dear brother-in-law David, sister Elisabeth and children:

On the first of the month I wrote my last letter to you. Shortly thereafter, as I do with each letter I send, I drove to Balanda. I have once again to make a trip. You might wonder how one musters the courage for it now in the fall season where it will soon rain, soon snow, and one must travel by oxen. On account of this, things move more slowly, and one must now and then on the way, because of the lack of fodder, unyoke (the oxen) in vacant fields and feed (them). Courageous as well for one often gets wet and freezes.

You should see once how our Germans move around here from village to village and how like gypsies, quickly in and again camped, their tents pitched, their livestock pastured. Now they have to stop in the fields in order to get the livestock through and for themselves a little piece of pumpkin or perhaps something asked for (begged) from the Russian villages, or traded for some piece of clothing. A misery without equal!

One often sees hair raising pictures passing momentarily before ones eyes, such terrible sights from the people that at other times were hard working, industrious and blooming with health, especially in the last year before the war, and now---almost totally ruined. But there is no other way, it is the struggle for life itself, and God knows what is yet to come.

Now at the first of November and already we lack forage, of harvestable cabbages, Kohlrabi, Pumpkins and Beets, Grain, Potatoes, etc, also hardly any. I borrowed the last, (ed. note: borrowed all the money he could) and with a comrade trade and sell, I give him a portion for cartage out of the profits. I myself always keep all of the essential products, but it is not sufficient.

The sad thing is that everything is less available and becoming unspeakably expensive. It is my opinion that by Christmas one will not be able to buy anything more. Rye is already 300,000 Rubles a Pud (*40 pounds*), Wheat is even more expensive and is not even thought about. Millet is 400,000 Rubles per Pud, Potatoes 80,000 Rubles, Kernöl (ed. note: *Kernöl, meaning unknown*) 14,000 per pound, etc. With each day everything climbs.

We are yet living to a certain extent, therefore today and tomorrow we still have needs to keep from starving, but soon there will be no one left. We have become so few and so frail that one is literally always hungry. I personally can barely tolerate and endure it because I have been living on vegetables alone for food for 10 years already, but mine are quickly coming to an end.

I wrote you last time how we set our table. Most of the people are still living only on pumpkin and beets and this (*diet*) will most likely last until January. Just think, now already wholly without protein and for the time being nothing in the way of prospects. It gives one the shivers to think on it. Thinking about It often raises thoughts of despair, yet, even now I can cling to the belief that the dear Lord also has me here in his mighty hand. To Him I have entrusted my life, and if it shall be, also my death.

(letter not signed)