

Copy of German Mail from the East
Number 12, December 1939

LETTER FROM ARZIS [BESSARABIA] - 1818

In God, beloved Friends!
Our greetings first and foremost!

Dearest Friends, it is our wish that these lines may meet all of you in good health. It would please us very much. As for us, God be praised, we are all healthy. As the precious opportunity came to us to write to you, so we availed ourselves. Several men from our area are traveling to Poland and offered us the kindness of giving our letters to you friends.

Dear Friends! Since our departure from Poland, we have successfully completed our journey. For two years, we were quartered in Moldavia where we were supplied with provisions by the Crown. Presently, we are on our land, which appears good to us, for it is extremely fruitful and the soil is black. The pasture land is excellent for us so that the colonist, who brought little or nothing, now possesses 30-40 cattle. The natives of the land are very ordinary, and one wouldn't believe that a Bulgar, who sits alone in the hills [*Gebuerger*], has up to 200 cattle, 150 horses, 900-1200 sheep and goats. The person outfitted like this is not to be compared with a poor Polish farmer.

The forest is 6-7 miles from us. However, in our area a species of plant grows which is called *Burjan*. We bake the finest bread with it. During those first years, it was difficult for us. However, now we are doing quite well and know how to adapt in all things. We already have our own *bread*, and also hope that with God's help we will progress further. Until now, we have been sitting in shelters [*Buden*], but all of us are building bigger structures out of stone, since we have a very fine stone quarry. We get the wood from the regional and area government. In short, we are very pleased. Our towns, where we go to trade, are the neighboring: Killig [Kilia], Kanischan [Kauschani], Kirschenow [Kischineff], Bender and Ismailof [Ismail] and others within 3.4 to 5 miles. In Bessarabia, there are already 13 established colonies, each one at a strength of 130-144 household heads. Dearest friends. Whoever of you has the desire to follow us, sell everything except a wooden wagon, a steel plow and a good team of horses. The one who brings these with him can soon have *bread* in Bessarabia.

Dearest Friends, when you receive this letter, inform us through those carrying our letters how you are and how things are going with you. We ask that all of you be content with this letter because the time and circumstances did not allow for anything else.

In closing, we commend all of you to the protection of the Almighty. Remaining your true friends.

Arzis Colony
29 August, 1818

Christoff Griep
Jacob Griep
Daniel Mantey
Adam Voltz
Jacob Tim
Andreas Schultz

Michael Koehntopff
Friedrich Hasp (?)
Christof Mantey
Jacob Drews
Johann Lenz

Friedrich Wakenhat has died.
Both the Klukens have died.

The old Mellentins have died, but the children are alive. Andreas Schultz married the daughter of Jacob Drews in Warsaw and he has two living children.

We are also reporting that we have plowed the land once and harvested twice. However, 8-12 oxen have to be harnessed to the plow. The sheep are such that one gets 8-10 *Ocken* [6 Kr.=1.28 liters] of tallow out of one tail. One *Ocken* weighs 3 pounds. There is such an abundance of fruit here that one can buy an *Ocken* worth for 7 Polish Groschen. As for garden produce in this place, we have the nicest potatoes, melons and watermelons [*Arabusen*]. We don't have to buy *Botealgan* because here they grow big and small. The corn [*Babschen=Popuschoi=maize*] is an excellent produce for it makes good cornmeal grits [*Mameluek*] which one eats with sheep cheese [*Brinze*]. It's our favorite meal. With *Wildpret* there's no want. Two men can eat to their satisfaction on one *Rephuhn*, and the nicest *Arrihut*. But the person who really wants to eat deer, let him come to Bessarabia. We don't need shelters for the cattle since they stay outside. We don't have severe winter.

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