

Letter from Gerhard Wiebe to Hoepner & Bartsch.

From the diary of Gerhard Wiebe: [June 19, 1791](#).

Translated by Helen Ens, May 2020.

On June 19 I have written to Russia, in the first place to the deputies Hoepner and Bartsch.

Your very welcome correspondence from Feb. 11, 1790, I have received, albeit belatedly, but I did receive it. I would have answered you immediately but because we had written to your ministerial servants on March 11, giving them the authority to have an election, choosing an Elder, it seemed superfluous to repeat the matter, thereby incurring unnecessary postal expenses, for it is easily recognizable that money is not that plentiful at the beginning of a new economy and settlement. We would gladly pay for all postal expenses but do not see how we can do that. That is why I have waited so long but in vain, for an answer from your ministerial. Now, about two weeks ago, the dear old friend Abr. **Dyck**, from the Neustaedter Wald, came to me with the request to mail this letter. I noticed it was still open and the paper was not nearly filled, so I asked for permission to fill it. The request was granted gladly and I could use my own discretion as to what I would write. We here are quite worried that we have received no answer to our afore mentioned letter. We received just a few lines from Dav. **Dirksen** but he reports on nothing except his health. I have forwarded the greetings to Dirk W. who returns his hearty greetings and states that he is quite well. But Simon Friesen [1365582] has passed on and the widow has remarried with Simon **Dyck** [932357] born in 14. Huben [Vierzehnhuben].

This spring two young men from your area, one was a Klaassen, the other a certain Engbrecht, appeared here, but I have not had an occasion to speak with them yet. What the purpose of their visit is and whether they speak the truth is hard to tell. As I have heard, they are not too well satisfied with the deputies, but they have said that according to your ministerial, they already have an Elder.

The Peter Behrends, old and young send many greetings; as well as Cornelius Wieler, the whole family is healthy and very much wish to receive a letter from you with report on your well-being as well as about the conditions in your colony. Each well-wisher deems it important to finally get an all inclusive report of how our friends in your location are faring.

The hon. ministerial of Danzig have sent communication to your hon. ministerial and have reported in it that your colleague hon. Jacob de **Veer** [#8281] has been chosen as confirmed as Elder and at the same time asked for information on whether your congregation has already elected an Elder according to our recommendations. Also, they want to know what is to be done with the monies you have in Danzig. Also they would like to know how your land/soil is and if you already live under your own roof. About all this they would like a report but until now, nothing has arrived.

The wish of many well-meaning brothers has been expressed (when only there would once be a clear peace declaration between the great powers) to send a deputation of 2 or 3 capable men to your colony in order to receive a clear picture of how things are with our brethren in your location. The suggestion is within reason, I believe. Perhaps the Lord will be gracious. But which would be the best route to take, through Russia or via Poland?

Here at our place we have had two exceptionally mild winters, especially the present one can hardly be called 'winter'. The Nogat was barely filled with sloppy ice and was free quickly. The past summer we were very blessed with a good cereal grain harvest and the present one looks fine too. I just wish we could be deeply grateful for these gifts.

Well, dear friends, I wish you from my innermost being that everything for you, together with whole colony, would go well. Especially, I hope that you would all be rich in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and that you would be filled with the fruits of justice, so that your light of faith and good walk would shine in honour of God, so that your good works would be visible to everyone. May you walk wisely with those not of us, be obedient to the government, respect the people of other religions so that you give no cause to quarrels, but that you would live wisely before God, respecting the conscience of others.

With heartfelt greetings and committing you to God's care I remain your loving friend and brother in Christ,

Gerhard Wiebe

Ellerwald by Elbing , June 19, 1791

please refer the following to the Jacob von **Riesens**

