

#40/GW#21

Letter from David Epp, co-Ältester in Chortitza, to Gerhard Wiebe, Ältester in Ellerwald.

From the diary of Gerh. Wiebe [#19781] pages [254 – 255](#).

Translated by Helen Ens, May 2020. Edited by Glenn Penner, July 11, 2025.

Writing from David Epp [#12844] from Russia

On August 24 I received some letters from Russia. The first one, from Elder David Epp, dated July 4 reads as follows:

Ekaterinoslav, July 8, 1793

Hon. G. Wiebe

Grace, peace, salvation and eternal happiness, is my wish for you, from God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, and for myself, from my heart. Amen. Dearly beloved brother in Christ, yes, one whom I love as a father from my heart! Yet it pains me quite dearly that I have never yet received a letter from you. Love motivates me to write to you. With great sadness I have to confess that I often ask myself rather despairingly, 'How will everything finally develop?' If God were not my comfort I would succumb beneath the burden! Now I can say with confidence, 'What is man that you are mindful of him!' One just has to remind oneself of how many different attitudes there are among us; how much slandering and ill will! Hon. Joh. Wiebe cannot decide to accept the calling to his position as minister and be ordained; Peter **Dyck** is leaving his position; Jacob **Hoepfner** and **Bartsch** have been looking for ways of giving up their jobs. (the colony does not want them either). They have handed in statements of accounts to us. One Cabinet Resolution reads as follows: After 10 Free-years, in 5 following years, all our expenses to be paid; of which we were ignorant until now which has made the church very uneasy, because we were under the impression that we were to pay the advance to the high crown. Our "Privilegium" is still in the (?) Signat (a branch of government?) We have not received any payment so far. We believe our two men have not worked diligently enough for us. For this reason, I beg you to consider all this and give us some good advice. Our colony will, through the grace of God, prosper. We are building more houses; more dairy cattle is making its appearance; butter and cheese price at 10 to 15 Cop. per pound, in Cherson 15 to 17 cop. Cheese, if it is aged, up to 20, even 25 per pound. Winter has been severe and long here; we travelled on ice on the Dnieper until the middle of April. The summer has been fairly wet, the grain fields look to be average. Pasture and hay fields we have in over abundance at present. Will close now and commit you to the care of the Most High and remain bound to you in love, your very weak co-servant and brother in Christ,

David Epp

“Geschrieben beim Gouvernement
In Angelegenheit und Colonie”

Please, greet my cousin and brother in Christ, Hon. Corn. **Regier** [#19815] and all other friends from me. Because my time is limited, I will write him at my first opportunity... A greeting from Jac. **Wiens** to Hans **Penner**..