

Letter from the Wishenka Hutterites to Gerhard Wiebe – 17 Jan 1794

From the diary of Gerhard Wiebe, pages [266](#) and [268-69](#).

Translated by Helen Ens Mar 2020. Edited by Glenn Penner 14 Jul 2025.

Year 1794, month of March

The 16th from Wirschinka in Russia I received a writing as follows:

Wirschinka, January 17, (old style) 1794

Grace, healing, peace from God, the heavenly Father, we, the brothers from Wirschinka extend to you our friends and acquaintances in Prussia who live in the vicinities of Dantzig, Elbing, Marienburg and Heuboden, especially the two dear Elders Gerhard Wiebe and Cornelius Regier in Heuboden, together with their colleagues in the work of the Gospel through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Especially the much beloved and honourable Gerhard Wiebe, because of heartfelt love we cannot omit to visit you with a brief writing on this occasion to visit you and greet you with a brotherly greeting. For though we could not fully agree, and you as well as we continued to maintain our separate points of view, yet we still remember, especially I do, the communal interchange we have had nine years ago when I was there with Jacob Walther, etc.

Be informed that we have not received any communication from you for three years; so that we have begun to think you may have departed from this temporary environment. Now, however, that we received notice from D. Penner [this person can not be found in any Russian records] of your state of health and inheritance (?), we have been happy and thanked God. The last time you wrote us you asked us to visit the Church in Chortitz which we faithfully complied with and have filled the requests of the honourable Christian Hofer and Paul Glanzer. But after our two brothers arrived home safely and also brought some letters we immediately wrote a letter to you and explained their circumstances to you carefully, enclosing the letters they brought and mailed all of this to you. But so far we have no notification if you have received this or not and in the past '93 year, approximately in the month of March we wrote to you once, but also then we received no answer. We cannot know what is impeding it. You are likely well aware of the circumstances in the church in Chortitz, for which reason I am not reporting on that. On March 11 two youths, Jacob Reimer [#173512] and Franz Dyck [probably #196132], came to us to learn the pottery trade. They brought a writing from the Elder from Rosenthal, saying the circumstances had improved greatly, that the church community was more peaceful, and that they were quite happy and content.

In my last writing to you I spoke of our circumstances but since I do not know if you received that, I will briefly review. Know that we still gather in peace- praise God- and live in love and harmony. We still have a gracious abundance in the spiritual and material areas; but there are occasions of sorrow and worry. Our heavenly Father has seen fit to let sickness come and rob us of some of our useful brothers in their middle ages; among these was our brother Joseph Mueller, together with others who had been elected by the church for service in the Word, another by the name of Andreas Wurzi. Our Elder, Joseph Kuehr is still well and living, is now in his 80th year of age and sends his friendly greetings to you. A friendly greeting also from me

and Christian Hofer to you and your whole household. Extend also a friendly greeting to Cornels Regier, Herman Wiens, Isaak Jantzen, Abraham Daniel Heinrich Suderman, Abraham Woelk, Simmia(?), to all who would remember us.

We have sent two men last spring to Hungary from Sabatisch but they returned alone; the enthusiasm is almost flickered out. They also visited the church community at

Lemberg and had a discussion with the older and younger Jacob Mueller and they became quite close; they have promised to visit us.

There also were in one village by the name of Falkenstein Pöder 7 families of the Swiss Brothers, their Elder is named Joseph Muendlein, they would like to be joined with us if we would just practise Foot-washing together with the breaking of bread. What God has in store time and circumstances will tell. If and when you want to write to us, address it to Mr. Sir Heinrich Mueller, Postmaster in Nowgorod.

(Paulsohn has died.)

David Penner arrived here in Wirschinka with his wife and 6 children on January 15, he cannot go on. We will take care of them this winter.

I have written this in a great hurry.

Be heartily greeted with joy by us Elders and the entire church with the dear peace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God be with you.

Joseph Kuhr

Johannes Waldner

Andreas Wurzi

