

Letter Transcript of a letter from Anton Burkart

Green Bay, October 14, 1855

Dear brother-in-law!

If my letter finds you in good health, it would please us. As for us, we are all healthy, thank God. My wife is also quite healthy this year. I wrote to you last winter, but I have not yet received an answer as to whether you did not receive the letter or what the reason is. If you did not receive the letter, I must inform you that my wife gave birth to two children last year, but they died immediately. A boy and a girl, beautiful children. We did everything we could, but it was God's will, we had to submit to it. As long as my wife went along (was pregnant), she ate nothing but coarse rye bread and drank fresh water with it and did not eat a pound of meat. In addition, she had to sweat in wet sheets every day, from 5 to 7 a.m., for two hours, and that helped her more than all the medicines. As for my business, it is doing quite well this year. I always have enough work. I have had an average of 12 workers and could have kept 25 men, but I did not want to, because it is too much over (?). I have the most distinguished English houses in clientele. I can speak English pretty well now, but not write yet. I want to learn that this winter. I have processed over one hundred thousand (100,000) feet of wood this summer, the least of which costs 25 guilders and the best 55 guilders per thousand (1000 pieces each). I bought some wood, which cost me 131 guilders. Now you can imagine the expenses. I also bought a place in the First Street, it is 61 feet wide, 16 feet long, it costs 800 thalers (dollars), that is 2 000 guilders. 'Kasper Hauser is also with me now and has married my sister-in-law. He starts this winter on his furniture carpentry, he does not like the house carpentry very much. He is a hard worker. I can write you about my circumstances until another time.

Dear brother-in-law and sister and brothers. I have to bring you a sad message. What for me is a hard thing, But I still comfort myself: God has struck this wound and will heal it again. God called off my brother Joseph from cholera on September 12, Michel on the 13th, and John on the 14th - you can easily imagine how I felt. I could not help but think that I would have to go with them. I will tell you a little about how it happened. My brother Josef took this Belgian family from Belgium into his house, no one wanted to take them in. He said, "You can't just leave them on the street. They were with them for four days, the wife got sick and died suddenly; the husband got sick and died. My brother must have been a little horrified at that. The family left behind four children: one of 10 year, 8 years, 6 years and 2 years. My brother still went along to the funeral and was quite well. As soon as the service was over, he said to Michel: "Now I have done so much to my neighbor, and he won't even give me his day laborer, so that I can take the children among the brats (his own children), because the children could speak nothing but French. and the man who was to go with him knew French and German. That must have enraged him a little. The Michel said he should let it go (be), they want to go and give themselves, and see what could be done. They went together to .... It was 10 o'clock in the morning. When he came home, he said he had to go to bed, and he immediately got cramps, so sudden that they thought he would die any minute. I did not know about them for a long time. They immediately sent for a doctor and a priest. They had to come to the town of Green Bay, but they did not let me know that Joseph was sick. However, it did not bode well for me. I wanted to go out in the afternoon at four o'clock, but my wife said, "Wait until tomorrow morning and see how it goes first." The doctor came back in the evening at 9 o'clock, he had to

pass my house. He called me out and said I should not be frightened, my brother Joseph would probably have died by now, and I should come out tomorrow morning as soon as possible. I could not sleep all night. I got up early in the morning and took a cart and drove as fast as I could. I was not quite home when the children came to meet me and told me to come as soon as possible because their father was dying. You can imagine: to lose a brother than like him (like him)! We had not yet committed a syllable with for each other (never said a bad word to each other). I never started anything, but first asked him for advice. I then went into the house. He knew me right away, but he could no longer speak. The brothers-in-law were crying so much and said that the children no longer had a father. Then he still said and pointed his finger upwards. I said I would send for the doctor right away, but he would not have one. I sent away and sent for him, but it was too late. He died on September 13, just around the same time Joseph was buried. But he did not even know that he had to die, just as Joseph had died. Michel and Johann gave him the medicine, and when they gave him the last medicine, he immediately vomited, and some of it was injected into the gauge, and Kaspar (Hauser) must have been disgusted. When Joseph was dead, he took the four Belgians into his house and said to his wife: "You still have four children; I will make the father and she shall make the mother. And there he had the smallest child in his arms, which stroked him on the cheek (the cheek), and that hurt him so much. He said to his wife, he wanted to go out a little to the Mr. Pferrer to get other thoughts. He was with the priest for two hours and talked with him. At last he said he wanted to go home, in the evening at 10 o'clock. The priest talked him out of it, and so he went home. When he got home, his wife asked him if he didn't want to eat a little. He said he didn't know, he thought he was going to die, His wife asked if he had prepared himself. He said he was ready for it, and he said she should not be offended, nothing would come from nothing. He made an admonition to his children and said they should follow their mother, then there would also be happiness and blessings in the house. And so he went to bed. It took about an hour, then he asked the priest to confess. He was not in much pain. I came out in the morning at 9 o'clock. At noon, Joseph was buried. Then the priest said to me, if I went back to the city, he could not stay out today. He would also have to confess, he had not confessed for a long time and he was not feeling very well, and that made me anxious. So I said: "Yes, I wanted to go inside". I said to John that he should not worry so much, that we would all have to die, and that he should be satisfied with me, because I would come back tomorrow. Now I wanted to go on, but what to do with the children? Michel left behind 8 children, 5 of whom are still small, and four Belgian children. The doctor had just arrived and he said: "The only way is, if we want to be healthy again, we have to bring the children to the city.

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