

Transcript of a letter from Sebastian Landwehr

Green Bay Feb. 4, 1898

Dear Mr. Maier and family !

With a trembling hand, dear friends, I take the pen to inform you of the death of my dear, good, good wife, which occurred on January 5 at ½ 8 o'clock and almost completely unexpectedly and quickly where none of us thought of it without pain. Just an hour before she gave up her spirit, she woke me up because I was sleeping with her and said she was feeling bad and I should pass her some wine and fix her pillow a little. I did everything and she lay back down to sleep. But when I felt her hands and feet, there was cold silence on her. I looked into her eyes and face and was frightened. I woke up my sister, whom I had here to pass the time. She came and we began to pray and cry and half1 an hour later she had suffered and given up her spirit to her heavenly Father whom she loved so much and from whom she had received her life.

Now dear friends! I cannot describe to you my fright and fear with any word, I stood there like a marble image and could not cry at all at first, it seemed to me like a dream until my feeling and attitude came back, but then I got pain I thought I would have to collapse, I could not hold myself up at all, because we had not yet spoken anything about deaths. She did not think in the least that she would die. She always had hope until the spring and I almost thought it myself until the doctor called my attention and said we should be careful, it could happen quickly. She had a disease like cancer in her breast for 6 years and all the time she had an open wound that was getting bigger and bigger, but she didn't give a damn. The doctors wanted to operate on her but she didn't want to and in the end they couldn't do it anymore because there was no flesh around the wound - nothing but bones and then it was too late because she had no pain and was eaten through. That was the end and it happened so fast. She died a good death. Well provided the day before with all the holy last sacraments, she died blessed in the Lord; may the Lord give her eternal rest. Amen.

Now dear friends! This was the second death in our friendship since the new year 1898.

Therefore you must excuse me if my letter is faulty. For I still have not sorted out my thoughts. I want to write you everything that has happened since then. On January 3, 1898, a telegram came to me from Neufranken where we used to live and also where cousin Melchior and all our friends live. I was to come right away without fail their best friend was dying. That was the first shock for my dear, good wife. I went and an hour later I was to him. He still knew me and was happy, those were his last words which he spoke and 4 hours later he was dead. He died blessed in the Lord, may the earth be easy for him. Amen

Well, I stayed the night there and kept vigil and the next day at 10 o'clock I was back home with her. And when I brought her the answer about the death of her best friend, she was frightened, she could not cry, but the life had gone out of her. Because from that same hour she did not speak much as usual, and of that I am sure, otherwise it would not have gone so quickly with her.

The funerals took place. Cousin Melchior on St. Epiphany and my wife hers on Saturday, January 8. They had a beautiful funeral. She was picked up and escorted by the St. Boniface and Women's Association, to which we both belonged, to the German Cathedral and there the ceremonies and a requiem mass were held and then we went by carriages and under greater

escort to Neufranken, our old home and where our parents and friends have long since rested to rest with them also until the day of the resurrection. I will certainly keep her grave open with roses and flowers. May the Lord grant her and all souls eternal rest.

Now dear friends! It would be too far to write it to you in more detail because I am tired. So I received your letter as well as the view as a congratulatory wish on February 2 and from it I gathered that you are still healthy, which pleased me warmly with thanks, and then that you almost had bad luck due to fire, which fortunately went well, for which you can thank God. And herewith I send you a prayer decree in memory that you include my dear wife in prayer. Herewith I close my sad letter with many greetings to all of you and hope that this letter finds you in good health.

Sebastian LANDWEHR.