
THE DAILY RECORD OF OUR JOURNEY ACROSS THE OCEAN

and recorded by Doeke Harm Witteveen

FELLOW-TRAVELERS

Left on Tuesday, April 2, 1869, from Oostrom
All of them are from Vriesland.

DOEKE H. WITTEVEEN	GRIETJE J. DYKSTRA
MARY D. WITTEVEEN	GERBEN J. DYKSTRA
JACOB W. WITTEVEEN	HATTIE J. DYKSTRA
HARM D. WITTEVEEN	WM. J. DYKSTRA
NUTTERT D. HOEKSTRA	EGBERT L. VISSER

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On April 2 at 1 o'clock noon we left with Henry Stelwagen. The first day was pleasant but the first night we could not sleep very well for the beds were very poor because the boat was small and there were forty people on board. We are all still courageous and strong.

On April 3 at 5 in the morning we left Leeuwarden (a city in Vriesland). When we were out of the canal we came thru the villages Warga, Grouw, and Jinsum, all three beautiful villages near the river past the old scow. In the afternoon at 3 o'clock we came to Lemmer, the last place in Vriesland. Our children don't feel so very well.

On April 4 we left Lemmer at 11 o'clock. It was splendid weather but it did not last very long for soon nearly all of us were seasick. The sailors say that the Zuider Zee is a rough intro-

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duction to sailing. At 10 o'clock that night we remained anchored near Harderwijk (in Gelderland) and stayed there all night.

On April 6 at 5 in the morning we left Harderwijk and at 8 o'clock that night we arrived at Amsterdam. The wind was with us. That night we anchored in Amsterdam. Our little son Jacob is not very well.

On April 7 at 5 o'clock in the morning we left Amsterdam. We did not see much of the city for we had to leave early because of lack of time. At 8 P. M. we came to Burgvliet and stayed there that night.

On April 8 at 5 A. M. we left Burgvliet and arrived at Gouda at 8 A. M. At 1 P. M. we left Gouda in tow of a steamboat and at 5 P. M. we were in Rotterdam. Our little son Jacob is still sick. We can do nothing for him.

On April 9 at 9 A. M. we went to the Customs House to pay our fares to New York and then back again to Stelwagen in order to ship our trunks and to pay Stelwagen the freight. At 5 P. M. we left Stelwagen and the men and at 9 P. M. we went aboard the steamboat Horse Hull. We sailed into the North Sea. Our Jacob is about the same.

On April 10 at 2 A. M. we sailed into the North Sea and we were all seasick. At first the wind was contrary but it changed to the side. Toward evening the wind increased and at night it blew a gale. The ship rocked back and forth and all night it was very cold.

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On April 11 at 6 A. M. we arrived at Hull (in England). We had to wait near the town till 12 o'clock. We then went thru the town and at two o'clock we took the train. It was a beautiful sight from the train—the mountains on one side and the sea on the other. We saw fields of wonderful crops. There are no ditches here as in Vriesland. There are hedges around the farms as well as many beautiful trees. We saw villages, big and small, beautiful groves and other trains passing by. Everything seems to go by train here. We road constantly thru the mountains and once we saw a village on the mountain. Telegraph wires are plenteous in England too. We went thru a tunnel under the hills. Sometimes we are in a tunnel for half an hour. There are villages on the mountains too. We see hundreds of trains. The whole country is wonderful to see and very interesting. The mountains are 200 feet high and covered with fine trees. Who never saw England will be astonished for we nearly looked the eyes out of our heads. At 10 o'clock at night we arrived at the station in Liverpool. The women and the children came on the wagons and the men walked to the big hotel. When we got to the hotel the table was filled with good food. Then we went to sleep and slept wonderfully that night. Our Jacob has not recovered. He does not seem to get better.

On April 12 at 10 o'clock we left the hotel to go to the ship. We passed thru the town and at 12 noon boarded the ship. It was very busy. We had never seen such crowds—hundreds of big boats and many, many people. We could not stay together. We had to watch our baggage

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closely or lose it in the crowd. The ship was anchored in the harbor and we had to go from wharf to the big ship in a smaller boat. At 2 P. M. we boarded the ship. Liverpool is a big city and has a large harbor.

On April 13 at 4 A. M. we left Liverpool on the boat named Minnesota and sailed into the vast ocean wishing each other a safe journey. The harbor was full of big ships and many small boats which sailed from one side of the harbor to the other for there were people living on both sides of the harbor.

April 14 is Sunday and now we are on a huge ship on the boundless sea. Last evening we had a favorable wind but during the night the wind increased and was contrary. It was a storm and the boat rocked.

Our little Jacob was some better this morning. At 7 A. M. we had white bread or ship biscuit with coffee and sugar. At noon at 1 P. M. we had meat, potatoes and "pudding" as they call it but anyhow it tasted good. At 5 P. M. we had tea with sugar, soup and rusk. That's good too.

On April 15 our Jacob is the same. He is so unsatisfied. He wants absolutely no food. The wind is not so strong today as yesterday. At J. we had stopped to pick up 400 emigrants so now we have 1000 on board. According to reports that is not so good. What a rush! Now we have to stay on deck from 9 A. M. till 3 P. M.

On April 16 at night the wind began to blow violently and it was contrary. It blew hard all day. Our Jacob is better than yesterday. The

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doctor says that he will be better. He gave him some powder. Some of our companions are seasick. It seems that they cannot stand the sea.

On April 17 the wind is on the side now. We made better time but toward night the wind was contrary. Today is rainy. Our Jacob is better, the seasickness is calmed down, all are well.

On April 18 our Jacob is better, but our Harm is not so well. He has whooping cough. Toward night our Jacob was not so well either. He has no appetite.

April 19. Our sons Jacob and Harm are better today but they care very little for food. We did not sleep much. The ship rocked violently. Today the wind is favorable and we are making good progress.

April 20. Today is rainy and the wind is contrary but at night the wind changed. Jacob is not so well. He has a fever. He took medicine again. We are worried about him. Harm is not so well. He was on the deck too long. We were out on the deck for four hours before we were allowed to come inside. It is too cold to be out so long. My wife is not very well. Hattie is always seasick.

April 21. Sunday. Easter. Our two sons are better. Jacob gets medicine and milk every morning from the doctor. The wind is contrary again but toward evening it changed and we made good progress. We sail 14 miles an hour but otherwise 1 mile in 20 minutes is the ordinary rate.

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April 22. The rations on the ship are getting worse. They could be better. First we got white bread and now it is so sour that we can hardly eat it. Drinking water is scarce too. We long for the end of the journey on this ship. The food is not agreeable to many but we get good meat and pork. The trip progresses nicely. We sailed 200 miles today. Jacob's fever is better. He is beginning to eat again. We will also write about the ship. It is a new iron steamboat with two big masts. It is 200 feet long and 50 feet wide. It must be a large man to see the whole length of the ship if he stands near the railing. It is its first trip. We wonder why we never see any other ships. Today we saw two steamboats, one on each side of the ship. During the night there was a woman very sick so the doctor came, but this morning we heard no more about it. They told us that in three days we would be in New York.

April 23. It is beautiful weather today with a favorable wind. This noon we had a fuss with the chef because we did not get enough to eat to suit us. At 9 o'clock in the evening Jacob became broke out. The doctor says measles. He slept very well; otherwise he is about the same.

April 24. Jacob is the same as yesterday. This morning we saw a ship with emigrants — a big one with three masts but it could not go as fast as ours.

April 25. This morning we saw more ships sailing in the distance. They were steamships. We could not tell what kind they were. It is very

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rainy today. Our Jacob is better today but towards evening he was worse. He gets milk twice a day now from the doctor.

April 26. We had most beautiful weather today. It was very pleasant on the deck. Jacob is eating a little food again today, but some days he gets nothing. We are all healthy. We saw another ship today. We are getting anxious to see New York.

April 27. This morning our pilot saw an island to the north of us. It was so far away that we could only see hills and rocks. We also saw many ships sailing. It is good weather. At 3 o'clock we arrived in New York (harbor). At 9 o'clock we tied up at the wharf. Now we are in Castle-garden, a large house for emigrants. It is very large.

April 28. We remained in the large house today. The children are not feeling very well. We spoke to three people from Gelderland. Their mother died on the ocean. This morning a child died in the house. They were German people.

Sunday we took many walks into New York. It is a huge city but we did not enjoy it much because our Jacob is too sick. My wife and Jacob secured a bed but the rest of us slept on the floor.

April 29. This morning at 9 o'clock they weighed our trunks. That seemed strange to us. We had to pay \$8.70 for overweight. At 11 A. M. we left the big house and made a three hour walk to get tickets. We then went to the train and left at 8 P. M. Mary is not so well and eats no food.

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April 30. Mary and Jacob are about the same. At 8 A. M. we arrived in Albany and at 12 noon we left. Last night a child died too. From Albany we went to Rochester and arrived at night. From New York to Albany there are woods, trees and mountains.

May 1. This morning at 8 we left Rochester. It is not so mountainous here as from New York to Albany but still there are many forests and also some cleared land. All travel is by train here. It has been raining all day and there is much water everywhere. At 11 A. M. we arrived at Buffalo. We stayed there till 6 P. M. We saw the waterfalls. It was wonderful to see that. The water falls 200 feet. A man said that at a two hour trip from there was a waterfall of 600 feet — the largest in the world. He who never travels in America is missing something. What a traffic in the large cities. It is unusual. We can hardly get thru the streets with so many wagons. The Falls also is wonderful. There are so many big cities. We rode thru many by night as well as by day but I do not know the names of them all. At 2 P. M. we had a meal of potatoes, soup, and meat for \$.35 a person. We ate in a hotel. At 6 P. M. we went to the train again and at 8 P. M. we left "Niagara Falls."

May 2. From there we came thru Canada. That still belongs to England. It is all forest here and some land is cultivated. The houses are mostly of wood and a few of stone. Our Jacob is so very sick that we don't know how long he will last. He still has severe diarrhoea.

There are also big cities in this state. At 6

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P. M. we came into Detroit, the first city in Michigan.

May 3. In the morning at 9 we arrived at Grand Rapids. But then was the worst. We had to leave the train and hunt up a house. There were no empty houses to be found so we had to stay at the hotel. We did not like it because Jacob is so sick that he can't last very long. It looks as if all is hopeless.

May 4. This Saturday we stayed in the hotel, the Michigan House. Late that evening we moved into a house on Division Street. In the hotel we had to pay \$1.20 a person per day.

May 5. This Sunday we went to church again for the first time in four weeks. We had not heard the Word of God all this time and it seemed good to be in church. When you don't hear a sermon for a long time there comes a desire because the Word is so precious to man.

May 6. On Monday we went outside the town because we could not get a house in the town. We walked for an hour and a half till we came to an empty house and then we walked another hour and a half to get work in the plaster mills. We had to go to work for our money was gone. Our Jacob is very sick.

May 11. Jacob D. Witteveen died at 2 o'clock this afternoon at the age of two and a half years.

With this our trip is completely related. We had a splendid journey for there were 1000 people on the ship, and on the ship we lost not one, so we must confess that the Lord our God did safely bring us over the boundless ocean.

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I have completed the task of translating this letter. There may be some errors for in some places I could not decipher the writing. Also, I am very sorry that it took me as long as this to do it, but to a student there are always a number of pressing duties. However the translation of a Dutch letter was a rather novel thing to do for one knowing so little Dutch as I know, but it was very good exercise. I appreciate the opportunity of translating this for you, and am happy to have made you my friends during the past summer.

FREDERICK H. OLERT.
Holland, Michigan.

