

## THE ANNE BANDSTRA STORY

This diary was retained these many years by his youngest son, William baptized, Wijbren and translated by Mrs. Henry De Vries.

### MY BOAT TRIP TO AMERICA

On Wednesday, May 24, 1899, we departed from Harlingen, Friesland, 6:15 in the evening and arrived in Rotterdam 30 minutes after 12 o'clock noon, in the best of well being. There we were met by servants of the Steamship Co. They provided a boat which brought us across the river to the Holland-American Line Hotel, where we were treated humanly and friendly. At once we ate a warm meal, consisting of potatoes, meat and buttered beans, and soup made of barley and currents. In the evening we had white bread with tea, Thursday morning white bread with coffee. At 11 A.M. another warm meal, soup with meat in it, potatoes with butter, and oatmeal with raisins. These meals tasted very good, and we could fill ourselves, the children have healthy appetites and feel fine. A man came to check our ship tickets, the doctor also checked each one of us. Everything is in good order, so we could go on board of the Steamship Rotterdam. We have had bad weather since Wed. evening, wind and rain. We are sailing along the Maas River, not many people on deck due to the weather but all our family are up there. The pilot says we are getting closer to the sea, and all who want to take a last look of our land, must come up on deck now. We are now in the North Sea and the breakers are high and rough. Our boys are saying "how nice we are rocking" and I am holding their hands tight. Haaije (Harry) is getting scared and beginning to cry, "I don't want the boat to rock." The people are all going downstairs now, and I take my family to our cabin too. There is no other passenger by us in the hall. Soon there are many seasick and throwing up. What a mess and dirty business. Haaije is also starting and crying "O, I wish I had stayed by Auntie." Syke (Sam) and Louje (Louie) are complaining of a pain in their belly. Now they are all seasick, but not little Jan, and I do not know the difference between land or sea, which is real good because I can help the doctor. The bell is ringing for meal time but there are only a few guests. White bread with cheese, such good butter and coffee. The weather is getting better and we all go to sleep. Friday morning we arise after a good night's rest aboard ship. Between 7 and 8 we have breakfast, a sandwich and tea. Beautiful weather, we all must go upstairs on deck because the cabins must all be cleaned and fumigated, they burn sulphur to do this. Everyone is on deck now, only a few are still sea sick, but my family are all well. The clock announces the noon day meal is ready. Soup, potatoes with plenty of meat. We all return to the deck but is soon was announced we must all go to our cabin to be vaccinated by the doctor for small pox, young and old. We return to the deck again where everyone is busy trying to drive out the vaccination stuff. I figured on this and so had put a big chew of tobacco in my mouth which I spit overboard later. It is beautiful weather and really warm on deck. 6 o'clock we have another meal of bread with butter and pickled herring. This they serve every evening trading with cheese. You can take pickled herring or smoke fish or both. Our boys like the herring and eat all they can, my wife too, except the coffee and tea do not taste good to her.

Now we attend a service, because we have Jews aboard from Russia and Poland, and thier Sabbath starts. Many people went but what an awful ritual. We go back to the deck. There are citizena from Greece, singing and playing. There are Hollanders and Germans. It is a pleasure to be on board. Our cabins are divided by Nationality, Jews by Jews, Germans by Germans, etc. We are sailing along the English coast now and see many ships. During the night we make a stop in France, where we took on 40 passengers. I was up on deck two hours to see all this while my family slept. We are sailing on again and on Saturday morning we awake on the big Atlantic Ocean. We get up and wash and dress ourselves, eat breakfast, and go up on deck which must be cleaned. Beautiful weather. The same activities as before, singing and talking together and the children having fun playing games.

At noon we have a good meal, green peas with plenty meat, also potatoes and endive. Most passemgers go for a nap, but I go up on deck to see the big ocean, one sees only water and sky. The captain says our course is North. At 3'o'clock we are served tea and bread. This will be served every day now, at 6 another warm meal with bread coffee and tea. The first few days we could not have this schedule due to inspections and vaccinations. We put our boys to bed and go up on deck. We see big seals playing in the ocean. It is very cold and the wind is coming up so we go to bed. We have a very bad storm on Sunday and no one is allowed on deck, so many are seasick again. The storm kept up long into the night, but we did sleep pretty well. The boys are feeling better but my wife is still a little sea sick. The wind has died down, but now itis very foggy. The healthy ones come down to the dining room for breakfast, the sick may stay in bed. I may stay with my wife to care for her, also Syke and Haaije stay in bed, but they are well enough to eat a sandwich which I brought them from the dining room. The boys are already playing in bed so I tell them to dress and go up on the deck. The weather is beautiful now since the sun is shining. The cook is ringing the bell for the noon day meal. There are many more passengers at the table than yesterday. Today we have potatoes, sauer kraut and bean soup with salt pork, but because the potatoes still have the jackets on and we do not like the bean soup, we content ourselves with sauerkraut, salt pork and white bread. There is plenty to eat so we fill ourselves. Today I go to take a nap, the others go up to the deck, and Syke takes care of Jan. They soon wake me up to see another boat passing us, a new interest, for all we can see is water and sky. Coffee time with white bread. We take the coffee and treat ourselves to a piece of cake that we had taken along. There are many people on deck, not much pleasure for all are so drowsy. Supper again and this time we have potatoes, onions and meat all mixed together, tea, white bread with good butter. My wife does not care for all that white bread.

Tues. We all slept very well and through God's care and goodness we all arise feeling fine. During the night it stormed again but none of us had bother of it. We have our breakfast, coffee, bread and pickled herring, as much as we could eat. All have to go on deck because our cabins must be cleaned, but because we are such good friends with the head steward we may clean our cabin

ourselves which pleases my wife very much. There are very high waves on the ocean, none of us became sea sick but we must stay downstairs. Lunch again, smoked herring with white bread. There is another boat passing us which claims our interest. I am not going to make and more notations on the food we eat, we get plenty and it is cooked tasty. Wednesday is the same, except we saw another boat and there is a heavy fog again. We all go to sleep. During the night the whistle blew, I go on deck to investigate, no danger, still a heavy fog. Thurs. all in order but still a fog. A child on board has the measles and is brought to ship's hospital, the bedding of the whole family is thrown overboard. The fog is clearing now and the weather is beautiful. We can see each day that Jan is growing. My wife is feeling better too, as well as myself and the boy's. If everything keeps going well, Tante Baukje's fears were all for nothing and we shall all arrive at our destination. We have been on the sea a week now and the boat people say we will arrive in America either Sat. or Sunday morning. The children are all in bed and we are going to the dining room to see what a Jewish service is like. I still have no idea, so we go to bed. In Harlingen it is midnight and on board it is 9 o'clock. The ship's clock is set back a half hour each day.

#### Expenses of trip from Harlingen to Chicago

Train fare to Rotterdam	\$9.50
Freight for 300 kilo	4.80
Hotel Rotterdam	6.40
S.S. Rotterdam to America	294.00
Train to Chicago	112.50
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	\$427.20

Most important sayings<sup>by/</sup> my Mother and Father which profit us all the most were-

1. That the good Lord directed and made it possible for him to bring his family to this good land called America.
2. That even though it was rough going at times the Lord at all times lead him safely on.
3. His prayer always was that God would bless him richly but not so much that he would become so independent and proud of himself that he should curse he Maker.

My Mother's admonition was, "that all things happen for the good to all those that love the Lord." Which saying took a long time for me to believe, sorry to say, but after some time found it to be truly so.

Wijbren (Bill)

Alphabet

A-ee

B-bie

C-sie

D-die

E-ie

F-ef

G-chjie

H-eets

I-al

J-chjee

K-kee

L-el

M-em

N-en

O-oo

P-pie

Q-kjoe

R-aar

S-es

T-tie

U-joe

V-vie

W-dubbel joe

X-eks

Y-waai

Z-zie