M Koko

Ik laat U weten dat ik door des Heren Zegen nog fris en gezond ben, ik hoop dat U die delfde letters in gerondheid moogt ontvangen UE Zal naar mijn denken wel verlangen naar een brief hebben. Maar nogal gelikkig dat U van mij die letters moogt ontvangen, want wij hebben in het landverhvizen al veel ondervonden, want gelijk gij weet zijn wij den 26 Feb: van Harlingen vertrokken. Loo zijn wij den 28 Feb: de Lowestoft aangekomen. Daarvandaan met de spoorwagen naar Liverpool en zijn aangekomen den 1 Maart te Liverpool: Zoo volgens afsprack van den Her Bonnema om met de stoomboot naar N: Amerika. Loo konde de stoomboot geen passagiers meer hebben, dat wij moesten 3 weken te Liverpool blijven. No met een Zeilschip naar N: Orleans te vertrekken. De naam van ons schip van ons driemaster was William and Mary. Zoo raakten wing den 24 Maart. Het engels kanaal uit , Zeer voor spoedig tot aan den 3 Mei Des avonds om negen our stortte het schip op een klip, en hadden al spoedig lekkage tot dat wij het water al gaan zien Konden Allen waren Zeer verschrikt van Zulk een slag tegen een rots aan, en wij Zaten allen in den wood des doods. Niets Zag men voor onze oogen dan den dood. Want als er geen vitkomst komt dan moeten wij allen ons graf in de golven vinden, en nergens Zag men vitkomst nog. Den 4 Mei des nade middags om 2 vur Zag men in de verse afstand een schip mear ongelikkig het ziet ons met want het zeilde weg. Ut moet kegrijpen dat kan ik u wel zeggen, det die nood Zit omkomt niet, want wij moeten van een ander schip verlost worden of verdrinken, dat kunnen wij voor ous organ Zien. Maar het

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moet maar bij. Haben en Schraben. De geldkist verzadigen dat is de meeste menschen hun lust. Wy hebben op dat eiland vele Zwarten aangetroffen. maar zijn nog de besk menschen van allen Die willen Zich Zelf wel omkleeden en geven het de ongelikkige Zeelieden. No van Nazow met twee Schepen haar Nieuw Orleans Daas kreeg de man 5 en een halve Dollar en voor 10 Dagen eten op de stoomboot tot St. Coisius. ten dollar is 2 gulden 50 cent. Hollandsch geld to onze groote 3 Master is den 6 Mei in een klap te zient want er stond bij de 200 voet water, daar het wak dreef No once goederen zijn allen weg maar het is beter goed verloren dan wij allen het leven Maar Zulke reizen zitten I naar mijne gedachten met in de kleeren want wij hebben al veel kovde geleden. en ook al wat gebrek aan eten gehad. want het ciland Dahama was wor zoo veel man geen eten in. No 4 a 5 dagen op een Schip haar Nazonw. Het ziet er (al wat slim vit. Maar onze schippers al gaar aan t Visschen en hadden al spoedig veel visch . In m twamen wij nogal voorspoedig te Nazovw aan toen ik van het schip af kwam had men meer dan 20 voet water in , in toen dreven de kisten al gedeettelijk in 't water rond . In het was gansch eene Verstrooide huishording dat kan U begrijpen. Wij hebben allen al een schadelijke reis. Maar dit geloof is wel als God ons maar gezondheid mag Schenken, dan Zillen wij het nog al spoedig weer te boven zijn. Ne van Nieuw Orléans naar St. Louisius en daarvan daan haar Gelina en van Ge'lina haar le Gras en denkelijk om ovs daar te vestigen, maar toch dat weet it nog met vast. Wy hebben groot en klein 16 man op Zee verlosen. Allen onbekend. Johannes Steema en zijne vrouw

Noem ik mij Uw Zoon Hendrik Vans Kas. U kan wel tegen Kasel Spanjer Zeggen dat Hendrik Spanjer overleden is op het schip. Complimenten aan alle vrienden en bekenden.

Waarde Broeders en Zusters Down en Tantes ik doe Ute weten dat ik hog frisch en gezond ben. en wensch van Uallen hetzelfde . Het veronge lukken van het Schrip zult gij wel weten maar de Goede God heeft ons allen ger. Nu ben ik van plan als wij te Plak zijn U. een brief te Schrijven want waar wij one vesten weten wij nog niet. U kan wel begrijpen dat wij wel haar eenige tijding verlangen van friesland. hoe het dear staat met de omstandigheden . en dan kan ik U melden het Adres waer gij mij moet schrijven. Compl. aan vrienden en bekenden. de pennen zijn hier zoo goed niet als in friesland.

Nen ik mij Uwe zuster Gretje Jans Vansonius.

HENDRIK JAN KAS TO RELATIVES

U.S.A. TO THE NETHERLANDS

1853

Dear Parents, Brothers and Sisters!

I can inform you that by God's grace I am still healthy and well, and hope you will receive this letter in good health. I think you have probably been looking eagerly for a letter. It is fortunate that you can receive these letters from me, for we have experienced a great deal during our immigration from Lowestoft on February 28. From there we went by train to Liverpool, and arrived in Liverpool on March 1. Then, as planned with Mr. Bonnema, we were to go by steamboat to North America.

The steamboat was not able to take on more passengers, so we had to stay in Liverpool three weeks. Then we left on a sailing vessel for New Orleans. The name of our ship, a three-master, was William and Mary. We left on March 24, through the English Channel, and everything was fine until May 3.

In the evening the ship struck a rock, and soon there was some leakage, and we could already see the water. Everyone was terribly frightened about such a collision against a rock, and we were all in fear of death. We saw nothing in store for us than death. For if there was no escape we would all have our grave in the waves, and no one saw a chance of being rescued.

On May 4, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, we saw a ship in the distance, but unfortunately it did not see us and it sailed on. You must realize, and

I can assure you, that anyone who is in that kind of danger does not escape, for we would have to be rescued by another ship or drown - this we realized very well.

But, we had better see what we can do. We had better pump as long as we can. Our captain seemed to be such a fine man judging outwardly. But on May 4, at 5 o'clock in the morning, the captain and eight sailors got into a life-boat, set out on the ocean, took off his hat and said: "Friends, may you fare well." Then we saw another life-boat with four sailors, and seven natives and three Germans and three of our people. One of them was Ulbo Bergsma from Kimswert, one was from 't Heerenveen, and one was from Wouden. But, where they landed we do not know.

But between the night of May 4 and 5 we had a severe storm, with heavy thunder and rain. Suddenly God caused the wind to die down, and we had the finest weather in the world and the sea was as smooth as glass. On the same day, May 5, at 11 o'clock, we saw a ship approaching in the distance, and fortunately it saw us, and knew we were in trouble. It rescued us from danger.

Now you will wonder what became of our things. Our trunks and all of our clothes are partially gone. There were approximately 200 passengers on the ship, and now we were on the other ship, and it brought us to the island of the Bahamas, where there was not much to eat. Then we were on the island for two days, and from there to Nazouw [Nassau?] where we had to stay for three weeks. There we all received clothing and free board for three weeks, and each a pair of shoes, and besides, each one of us 2.40 cents because a collection had been taken in the churches. For all of us \$400, and for each an English testament, for the people are very religious everywhere. They

sell nothing on Sunday, and worship faithfully in the churches and in the homes. Yes, in our Friesland they would have had to clothe 200 people and in addition raise two gulden and forty cents, you must understand. And it is such a small island; and I know this very well, that anyone in Friesland who has much cannot spare much, but we had better add: more and more, to satisfy the money chest is the desire of most people.

We met several black people on that island, and they are the best people of all. They would give the clothes off their backs for poor seamen.

Then we left Nazouw on two ships for New Orleans. There each individual received \$5.50 and food for ten days on the steamboat going to St. Louis. Ten dollars is equivalent to two gulden and 50 cents in Dutch money. Our larger three-master suddenly sunk on May 6, where there was 200 feet of water, and it was wrecked.

Now our belongings were all gone, but it is better to lose our things there than to have all of us lose our lives. Boat trips like that, to my mind, do not leave one unaffected, for we have suffered a great deal from the cold, and also from a lack of food. For in the island of Bahamas there was not enough for so many people. Now we were on a ship 4 or 5 days on the way to Nazouw. Things looked quite bad there. But our crew soon began fishing and soon had large quantities of fish. We arrived in Nazouw with little difficulty. Where I stepped ashore the ship had more than 20 feet of water, and some of the trunks were already floating around, and it was a completely mixed-up mess, as you can well imagine. We have all had an expensive trip. But, I do believe that if God will give us health, we will soon recover.

Then we went to New Orleans, and from there to Gelina, and from Gelina to Le Gras, where we will probably settle, but that I do not know for sure. We lost sixteen individuals, adults and children, at sea, all unknown. Johannes Steema and his wife and children are all well. And, Piet Zalverda also, and Jan Janssen too, and also G.J. Jansonius. I think I will like living here.

Americans eat pork three times a day, and beef, and that is a bright prospect for me.

Write to me about all circumstances, and how the crops look in Friesland, and the flax lands.

I read in the papers that the Catholics have increased in number considerably, and their influence is being felt.

The trip was quite difficult as everyone can truthfully say. But it is not for a single person. I know also that all emigrants do not have the experience like we had, and I also know this, that it could be much worse for many lost their lives at sea, and we are all still alive, except for three natives. As they attempted to jump into the life-boats, they jumped into the ocean and drowned. For they all wanted to get into the life-boat and that did look rather dangerous to me, due to being without food and water in the boat, and then to let it drift before God's wind and weather. So we decided to remain in our larger boat as long as possible, and God rescued us all.

Now I will stop with the pen but not with the heart.

Your son,

Hendrick Jans Kas

You may tell Karel Spanjer that Hendrik Spanjer died on the ship.

Regards to all friends and acquaintances.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Uncles and Aunts:

I wish to inform you that I am healthy and well, and wish the same of you. You will certainly know about the shipwreck, but the good God saved us all.

I now plan to write you a letter when were are at our destination, for where we settle we still do not know. You can well imagine that we are eager to hear any news from Friesland, what the situation is there. Then I can give you the address you must use when you write. Regards to friends and acquaintances. The pens are not as good here as in Friesland.

Your sister,
Grietje Jans Jansonius