

Dear Children:

Paterson, May 16, 1895

Last evening about nine o'clock we arrived here, all healthy and well. Jetze went to New York with Uncle Sieger and Sieberen and we missed each other. When they finally came home we were all sitting around the table drinking coffee. He was so surprised and very happy, you can imagine, to see us all healthy and well. We were just as happy.

We were all very tired from the long journey--fourteen days on the boat. We also encountered much stormy weather. The Lord has thus far made all things well. Last evening we considered it a great blessing and privilege that we might all be gathered around the table partaking of a delicious meal, consisting of potatoes, meat, green beans and plum pudding. Aboard the ship we could get enough to eat, but it was all so foreign.

Because of the stormy weather we were for the most part in our bunks. Especially Anne had eaten nothing since more than a week ago; a small piece of pickled herring and a few times a piece of an orange. Sometimes I would give Anne a little brandy. Then she would brighten up a little. Last week Wednesday when we left Liverpool Griet was not at all well, to the extent that I was worried about her. I gave her some Haarlem Oil, and on the boat she perked up a little. There were many passengers on the boat. I think there were more than 1000. All were foreigners. We could not understand a single one. Our group consisted of eleven persons. The rest were Swedes, Irish, Norwegians and Germans. Among them were many Roman Catholics.

On Sunday afternoon we encountered a terrific storm. The boat rolled about considerably. Father and the boys were in the fore-part of the boat and we were in the rear-ward. All the women were in the rear-ward. Most of them were unmarried. Many were praying, each in her own way. I said to the children that they

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(NOTE: This letter was written by the wife of Watze K. Pruiksma upon her arrival in the United States to her children who remained in the Netherlands.)

should keep calm. The Lord also controls the wind and the waves and is able to keep us in the storm. The Lord is Almighty and we are just as safe in stormy weather as when the ocean is calm and the weather is fair. The storm subsided and things were quiet again.

Now I will go to visit Tante Tryntje and have a cup of coffee with her. When I arrived she was so happy to see me. She is enjoying good health but, as you know, her walking is somewhat impaired. Recently they have moved and now live a little closer to Jetze and Manne. Jetze has hired a house for us not far from where he lives. Altje and Anne will go to clean the house. I have not been to see the house. From verbal description it must be an adequate big house. When we are settled I will describe it and let you know what it looks like. Jetze and Manne live near by on a second floor. They also have a good sized house; four rooms including two bedrooms and a basement. In the basement they have a stove where they do the cooking.

The men earn good wages and it does not look too bad for us either. When the children get a job we will be able to make a "go" of it and have a good living. It is very hilly in this vicinity and it takes one's breath away to walk up the hills. All the children are in excellent health and are very happy. You can imagine they like it here.

This morning I was thinking how far we are from each other. In our minds we can hardly comprehend it. Everything is still so real as of 14 days ago when we were all together. But we hope that soon our wish will come true, that you can come here also. The Lord also has the ways and means in His hand and may make it come to pass. This is our wish for you. May we pray much and believe and wait with patience. He will make it come to pass. This is our wish.

Many hearty greetings, WATZE en AUKJEN

This letter is also meant for Afken and Sjerik. Will you send it to them? Greet all our many friends; all those who ask about us. Write to us soon. Jaap Visser is boarding with Klaas Okma. At another time I hope to write you more. Especially greetings from Jetze and Manne.