

ables, such as mother's and Rosa's household furniture, implements, tools, mother's cow and chickens, together with a team of horses (which had to be bought first) were to be loaded into a R. R. car for shipment to our far off and future homesteads by slowly moving freight. We, of course, would go by passenger trains.

At last the time arrived, when we were to say "Fare well" to home and friends in Nebraska and to leave for a very uncertain future. What would it bring, or have in store for us? No one could, or dared answer this question. We were bound for a new land in a new country of which we had scarcely even heard the name before. Through the Settlement Society we had made entry for two claims, or homesteads: one for mother who as a widow with dependent children enjoyed the Canadian right to homestead, the other for our brother-in-law Henry Ansay, Rosa's husband. About the middle of April, 1903, all preparations had been made. Our property had been sold at a rather low figure, but the proceeds of this sale were all the capital with which mother could finance the venture. The freight car was loaded with our effects and Henry left with it via the Missouri Pacific R. R., to give our live-stock the necessary care during the long journey. My brother had come down to see us started and accompanied us to Omaha. Often have I thought of these last hours and what must have been in his mind, when the last "Farewells" and his "God be with you, Mother, and help you all" were spoken in that train at Omaha! His priestly duties called him back to his field of labor, but there remained yet the untangling of a money transaction which mother had with a Nebraska City banker and which had been handled so unsatisfactorily that the bank refused to refund to mother a deposit which constituted almost her entire resources. When mother wanted to draw this money the banker was out of town and we had to leave on that same afternoon, trusting to the honesty of this man and our brother's efforts to have the money forwarded to us. Brother Anton was the only one of the family who had to stay in Nebraska. Oh, cruel world! was it for this that we were born and grew up to love one another, only to be parted again? It seemed to me as if we were saying "Good Bye" for all times in this world to him. How sad I felt for a while as the fast train carried us away, farther and farther towards the North. At a siding, a little way out of Omaha, we passed Henry and his car. Little did we dream then that this car would be more than three weeks on the road, while we reached our destination in a little over three days.

CHAPTER 2. THE JOURNEY AND EPISODES OF TRAVEL

We left our home town in the afternoon of a Wednesday, arriving at Omaha about an hour and a half later, where we had to change trains for the Twin Cities Flyer. Our next stop was St. Paul, Minn. As the train sped on, and night was approaching, we all settled down in our seats, making ourselves as comfortable as possible. We had provided ourselves with a big basket full of sandwiches, cookies, etc., but, alas, when we wanted to take our first meal on the trip we discovered that all our eatables were ruined. It happened like this: Rosa had taken a small alcohol stove along, so that she might boil on it the milk for her little baby, and the bottle with the alcohol was in the food basket. This bottle unfortunately had become broken, spilling its poisonous contents over our provisions. There was no way out of this difficulty,

except to restock our larder at the first opportunity. I remember that Anna bought a book on the train, in order to be able to pass the time easier which dragged heavily on us all during the evening and night. If I remember rightly the book was entitled: "Die betrogene Braut".

At break of a new day Mary and I watched with great interest the ever changing and fleeting landscape. Towards noon we came in sight of the Mississippi river and following its course for a few miles, crossed it. Here we got our first view of St. Paul, a fine city crowning the cliffs and hills on both banks of the mighty river. At St. Paul we had to make about an hour's stop and change trains again. Anna thought of going during this short interval to the office of the Settlement Society to see about some matters connected with our land claims. However, she had not reckoned with the difficulties that confronted her, when hunting up the street and number of the address in this strange city. While she was gone on this errand, we others were sitting, as it were, on pins and needles for fear that she would be left behind without money and friends, since the train caller had twice already cried out our train. But just at the very last moment, when we had already gathered up our luggage and were standing at the gates with anxious hearts and troubled looks, she came running through the street entrance toward us. After we were once more settled in the train, she told us that it had been almost impossible to find the office in the tangle of streets, though the distance was only a few blocks from the depot. At last she took a cab and was driven there and back again.

On this train, now moving towards the international line and Canada, we met a man and his two sons, one being about my age, or eleven years old, and the other a year or two younger. This man had left the remainder of his family behind. This was a very good plan, as things turned out afterwards. From this time on we had at least some one to talk with, as his plans were similar to mother's. There was quite a contrast between the Omaha-St. Paul Flyer and this emigrant train, gotten up quite cheaply, and yet, it was a much better train than the one that took us to our journey's end.

While we were riding across the seemingly endless prairies of North Dakota, we got our first glimpse of pioneer life and activity. Here and there, with long intervening distances, we caught sight of rudely built board shacks. Their roofs and walls were covered with weather-beaten tar paper which had faded into a brown color. There were also seen sod houses and mere dugouts for human dwellings. Strong, hardy men were breaking up the tough prairie sod and even little boys helped with discing and harrowing to get the new land in shape for its cultivated crop. At Portal, the last American station, we were changed to another train and Canadian custom officials searched our baggage for dutiable ware. Then, our train passed on again.

We passed, later on, a large herd of antelopes which, frightened by the train, raced westward across the barren prairie. Where the ground had been scooped out for the roadbed, the holes were full of snow water. Our first impression of Canada was anything but favorable. Ever northward the train carried us over endless stretches of raw prairie. The eye did not behold a single tree or bush, settlers were scarce and the little hamlets were far apart, the dead grass of the prairie was a dull gray and once in a while we saw banks of belated snow. There was no sign of spring here yet, while back in Nebraska our cow had already

munched green grass. This backwardness of the season was enough to give all of us the "blues." We felt, as if mother and all of us were fated to spend the rest of our lives far away from friends in a country as frigid as Siberia. On Friday about noon we reached Pasqua, where we connected with the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. This was then the only transcontinental railroad in Canada. Our train took us over this main line as far west as Moose Jaw. At Moose Jaw we went aboard another train which took us east again through Pasqua and onward to Regina.

Night had fallen, when we arrived in this town. As we had to stop over in this place, Rosa and Anna left us at the depot and went in search of suitable quarters for spending the night. After a short time they were back, reporting that they could not find any shelter for us in the overcrowded town. Together we left the station then and landed at last in the outskirts of the town in front of a rough board shanty. The inside was partitioned off like stalls in a barn. It had no flooring save the bare ground, but there were to be found rough cots with very little covering in place of beds. I think it was Anna who, after another long search, found an open shop, where she bought some food for us. We all spent a miserable night in this place, rose early almost chilled to death, and after some breakfast returned to the station, where we boarded the most rickety train in existence for our destination, Rosthern, a small town only a few stations south of Prince Albert which city was then the most northern railway point on the American continent. This last train was a slow-moving freight with a passenger coach hung on to the rear. The seats were made of slats and looked like lawn or park seats. The train moved with the speed of a snail. After some hours we crossed the Saskatchewan river on a pile trestle. This same trestle was washed away by an ice jam during the following spring, whereby the towns and settlers were cut off from the outside world for many weeks. On the river bank was a small village, composed only of a few lumber shacks and many tents. Who would have then thought that this little village of Saskatoon would grow in 10-15 years into the mighty "up-to-the-minute" metropolis of Saskatchewan? After another score of miles we came at last to the end of our journey by railroad. We arrived in Rosthern on a Saturday evening.

To be continued.

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