

Indians were bundling up their packs intending to set off the next morning on their five or six days' journey westward to Captives' Town. The brethren and sisters, with the young people and the children, were in the river-bottom opposite the town on this (the eastern) side of the Tuscarawas [Muskingum] River, gathering and husking the corn, left unharvested since the previous September, when they and the missionaries were led away into the barren wilderness in what is now Wyandot County. During the intervening months of the fall and winter they had almost perished from starvation. Many of the infant children had died. In her autobiography Sister Zeisberger writes of this terrible winter: "Many a time the Indian sisters shared their last morsel with me. Frequently for eight days in succession I had no food of my own." Heckewelder writes of this winter: "In this wretched situation the hungry (heathen) Indians--the Wyandots--would often come into our cabins and look if there were any victuals cooking or nearly cooked. One day just as my wife had set down what was intended for our dinner, the Half-King and Simon Girty and a Wyandot entered and, seeing the victuals ready, without ceremony began eating."

When our brethren heard of the unharvested corn standing unhurt and still good in the bottoms here at Gnadenhütten, a company of men, women, and children set out on the five or six days' journey through the trackless forests, which brought them to their old home on the river bank. They worked day and night gathering the golden ears. They had been here for some weeks, when suddenly the militiamen from Pittsburgh and its vicinage came upon the harvesters.

They greeted our brethren as friends and expressed their sympathy and warmest admiration for them as converts to the common Christian faith.