

Letter from Germany

---

Hosena, 7 March 1922

Dear Agnes with mother and sisters and brothers,

I received your letter on January 28. I regretted to hear that your father had such a terrible accident that he had to die. He could have stayed with you for many years. We were neighbors in Hosena and had been good friends and we remained that until death separated us. Where you live farmers live so far apart that when somebody dies you have to transport the dead to a cemetery in the city, or do you bury the dead on your property? I turned 67 on February 1 but have been ill for many years. Now the illness has progressed so much that I can only do light work in the garden during the summer months because I have rheumatism in my joints and I am very short of breath. During the winter I have to stay indoors. We had a very cold winter. If you experienced such a cold winter you would freeze to death. We burn little wood but much peat and brown coal. What do you burn in your stove? Do you have peat, coal or peat? Two brothers of your father live in Hosena, Adolf and Moritz. Adolf lives next to me and works for the railroad and earns much money. They have 3 children, a boy and two girls. All are married. Moritz has been retired for several years. He also worked for the railroad and receives a pension. He makes a little money on the side. I gave them your letter to read. At the present we can buy everything but very expensive. The bureaucrats and the laborers earn much money. They can buy what they need. They got the money to pay for everything. But we old and sick people cannot work anymore and are much worse off. Many will have to die the death of hunger. Before the war one pound butter cost 1Mark 30 Pfennig; now you pay 50 Marks. Margarine costs 30 Marks, one pound bread 10 Pfennig before the war and now 3 Marks 50 Pfennig, pork today 32 Marks, beef 28 Marks, one liter petroleum 11 Marks, 1 liter milk 6 Marks. You are amazed at these prices but it does not any good. If you cannot pay for it you cannot have it. Last year's potato harvest was bad, one hundredweight costs more than 100 Marks. Bread and potatoes are the main nutrition for us. Agriculture decreases because the land is bought for industrial purposes. We have several sand pits which are used for the manufacture of glass. We also have many pits of coal. It is pressed into briquettes. One hundredweight of briquettes costs 30 Marks, before the war less than a Mark. Before the war if we took the train to Hoyerswerda we paid 70 Pfennig, today we pay 10 Marks. Our enemies, the French, Belgians and English want to destroy us. Our money is worth very little. We only have paper money, gold and silver disappeared. Before the war we got 4 Marks 40 Pfennig for one dollar. Today we have to pay 200 Marks for one dollar. We have to buy much from foreign countries.

For the last 8 days it has not been so cold here, no more snow and ice. But we cannot work in the fields. It is too wet. The lasting frost caused a lot of damage. Potatoes froze, winter seeds were damaged. We sow rye, wheat and barley in the fall. We had barely any snow when we got the frost. We will harvest little fruit this year because the buds will have frozen. Last year we had little fruit too because the blossoms froze. My wife and I live in a small house. My wife turned 70 in August. The work does not come so easy for her. We have a few goats. They give us milk until Christmas. The first quarter of the year we have to drink black coffee. The milk from goats does not make butter, we have to buy it. We choose margarine because it is cheaper. I rent one acre of land where we plant potatoes and a little bit of rye. We use it to make coffee, because coffee beans cost 80 to 90 Marks per pound. We old people struggle to stay healthy. Many

people have taken their life because they did not want to starve to death. Many more will take their life. The situation in Germany looks sad. The newspaper tells us that Americans collect money for us but everything remains in the German cities. We old people in the country don't get anything. I wished I was with you and would not have to suffer as we do here in Germany. But we are too old to travel so far and have to survive for a few more years here. It can't be long before we will be with our father in heaven. Treat your mother well so that she can spend many more years with you, because she raised you children and had much work with raising you. I will close here and hope that my letter will reach you in good health.

Best regards to all from

Christian Nuglich and wife.

Now my dear Agnes, I have a big favor to ask: your brothers have friends and acquaintances who could have a small collection of dollars and send it to me to alleviate our suffering. Weeks will go by before we would receive your gift. I express my thanks to you all. As long as I live I will send you some news.