

Correspondence from Germany (by Matheus Hantschko)

Family Home near Spremberg February 2, 1916

Dear *Volksblat*t readers in distant Texas!

The month of January was exceptionally warm, along with much rain and storm; in some places even high water.

On January 27, the emperor's birthday, there were festive divine services in the morning a 10 o'clock at the main church of Spremberg. Old folk songs of Lower Germany were presented, among others, accompanied by the band of the reserve battalion. The celebration proceeded, in general, along narrow constraints. Festivities in the schools followed themes of common practice; the rush toward the house of God was such that many had to leave since even the most dismal spot was already occupied. The main celebration of the day then took place in the recess in front of the town hall on Langen Street were the "Iron Marker of the city of Spremberg," donated by the factory owner Friz Heinze, was unveiled as landmark. I will let the recap of the dedication ceremony, as reported by the "Spremberg Gazette", follow:

It was a cool but dry day of the year if not also a Hohenzoller, true emporial one, created for the unveiling of the Iron Marker. The participants of the

[The next 6 lines are not readable –translations resume with the word Bewohner]

residents who came flowing in, in order to participate in the ceremonies. All corporations and clubs of the city, the military, the youth were

m Militar, die Tubend, alle weren ig auf dem Blane, um ben Tag feftuf lich zu begeben. In langem Buge t. tamen fie heran : Die Schulen, pe Bereine, bas Militar, jum Stand. tr orte bes Biafrzeichens, bas, noch durch die Sille ben Bliden ber ib Menge entgogen, nun bald feiner :. Beftimmigne überneben merben 1. follte. Geftlich gefchmucht war bie Rifde, Die bas Bahrzeichen birgt, umgeben vom Tannengrun beimatlicher Malber, getront bon ben Fainen bes Bierbundes, die luftig it ihre Sarben im Binde weben liegen. Es nabten fich bie Bereine und nahmen Aufftellung por ber 9 Rifche. Unaberfebbar faft mar bie Menge, die dem Rommenden entgegenharrte. En war es mittlerweile 11 Uhr geworben und mit bem Glodenichiage 11 ericoll von ber Blattform bes Rathaufes ber Charal "Lobe den Berrn", von der wohl nach Taufenben gablenben Renge mitgefungen. Inzwischen batten die vereinigten Mannergefangvereine bie Roten bereitgehalten und unter Leitung bes Berrn Ranters Leitmann erklang Ludwig Uhlands "An bas Baterland" in ber Ronradin Rreugerichen Romposition. Rachbem bie lesten Tone verftungen, betrat Berr Burgermeifter Rath bas por ber Rifche befindliche Bodium und ergriff bas Bort gur Feftrebe, bie er in ben Borten : "Unfer Raifer, unfer Beer, unfer Bolt Doch !" austlingen ließ. Das Raiferhoch fand Biderhall in ben Bergen ber Menge und braufend ericoll es in die Lufte. Den Bliden aller aber zeigte fich nun bas von Runftferhand geschaffene Bahrzeichen ber Stadt Spremberg. An bie Feier folog fich im Sotel gur Soune ein allgem. Frühichoppen." Mit treu-beutschem Gruß an alle Boltsblattlefer verbleibe ich Der Gifenbabner.

on the square in order to spend the day in celebration. They arrived in long formation: the schools, the clubs and the military at the site of the landmark, still hidden from view by its cover but soon to be designated. The niche, which concealed the landmark was decorated in festive colors, was surrounded by the green of fir tree branches from the local forests, crowned by banners of the beer league which allowed their colors to gaily flow in the wind. The clubs appeared and took up their positions in front of the niche. The size of the crowd which was anxious for what was to take place was almost too vast to estimate. It got to be 11 o'clock in the meantime and with the 11th chime of the bell, the sound of "Praise to the Lord," by the choir from the stage in front of the town hall, was accompanied by the masses which were most likely in the thousands. The united men's singing clubs had gathered up their notes in the meantime and under the leadership of Cantor Leitmann could be heard Ludwig Uhland's "To the Fatherland" in the composition by Konradin Kreutzer. When the last notes had passed, Mayor Rath ascended the stage in front of the niche and took on the meaning of the ceremony by concluding with the words: "Our emperor, our military, our nation – Hail!" The hail to the emperor resonated in the hearts of the multitude and it soared with a boom. The landmark for the City of Spremberg, developed by the hand of an artist, was now revealed to all. The ceremony ended at the Hotel zur Sonne with a common morning pint."

With a loyal German greeting to all readers of the *Volksblatt*, I remain

The Railroader

Translated by John Buerfeind