

TAGEBUCH

REINHARD FREIWALD



UNITED STATES LINES	NAME <i>Reinhard FREIWALD</i>		
	STEAMER <i>Washington</i>		
	SAILING DATE <i>4. April 1950</i>		
	FROM <i>Hamburg</i>	PIER NO.	
	BOOKED TO <i>NEW YORK</i> VIA		
	ADDRESS AT DESTINATION		
HEAVY BAGGAGE MUST BE DELIVERED AT PIER NOT LATER THAN THE DAY BEFORE SAILING.			
<i>R. Freiwald</i>		STATEROOM	
<i>Big Stone City</i>		Deck	Number
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WANTED ON VOYAGE			
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Left Hamburg at 6:30 AM on April 4, 1950 on the S.S. Washington for New York.

April 3, 1950

We went by bus to Pier 84 of the United States Lines to where my ship, the S. S. Washington was docked. It cost me 2 DM. That was too much because it was a very short way to drive. We paid and said, "Let them be happy".

In the hangar we had to go through customs. There they put a stamp on everything. Finally came my time to go on the ship (23,000 BTR). All of a sudden there is so much to see that you can get dizzy. On the ocean, we are only one big ship.

April 5, 1950

I will only write about the most important happenings because there is always so much to see, I don't want to miss anything.

This morning at 7:00 AM we entered the harbor of Le Harve, France. It is always the same picture. Everybody went to eat.

At 12:00 PM we saw the coast of England and the harbor of Dover. There were many different ships there and they greeted each other with the searchlights. I think they wished us a good journey. In the evening between 8:00 PM and 12:00 PM, the ship band was playing. They played German and English songs and we were all dancing. Yesterday the North Sea was very stormy and a lot of people got seasick.

I made friends with a young American. He had been in Slovakia for eight months, his home was in Pennsylvania.

Yesterday noon I did not go for dinner because I did not feel good. In our cabin, everyone gets along very well.

April 6, 1950

At 1:00 AM we left the harbor of Le Havre. It is surprising how much the ships can take along, even ours. A lot of ships are loaded and unloaded. The harbor is still damaged from the war. There was even a German Uboat Bunker. Compared to Hamburg, the harbor is directly on the ocean. At night the harbor was an ocean of lights. About one hundred passengers came on board in Le Havre.

At 7:00 AM we arrived in South Hampton. It is a beautiful and very clean harbor, a very wide and deep bay. We are now close to the Queen Elizabeth, the biggest ship in the world. There are a lot of passenger boats. At the entrance of the harbor, there were still wrecks of several war ships. At 1:00 PM we left the harbor with one hundred more passengers. The sea is calm and the sun is shining. The big English cranes work almost noiseless compared to the German cranes. I have never eaten such a variety of food than on the ship. Our cabin steward told us that in South Hampton, not many people go on land because everything is very expensive.

April 7, 1950

Today at 8:00 AM our ship went into Kolb Island for anchor. Last night there was high sea and we were almost thrown out of our beds. Only a couple of passengers came on board from small boats. An hour later we left and it seemed like we were swimming on the big ocean. It is very very foggy, storming and it is raining. Last night we saw a movie on board. Last night was the first time I tried the American beer. Two Americans invited me for that. The price was 10 cents a beer. When you stop drinking, the steward brings you free sandwiches. Then you get more appetite to drink again.

The ship is rolling very strong, many people went to lay down. The Irish scenery is wonderful. There are many small islands, all with houses in between. My young American friend picked me up for a walk around the deck. When it is good weather, you can play table tennis, ring tennis, shuffleboard and many others. Many times I have to play my accordion for my steward. He likes to hear the "Alte Kameraden" and "Wenn on Sonntag Abend die Dorfmusic Spielt." He likes those the most. In his free time he is mostly in my cabin. He was born in Scotland. He bought a German camera for his wife. He says, "The Germans are the best." The workers shift changes at 9:00 PM. A friendly, rather fat Negro was working now. The stewards all have gold armband watches and most of the ships officers speak good German.

Every day you can see how far we have gone on a map that is hanging on the wall. It will be two more days on the pretty ocean. This will be lucky for the people who were sick since Hamburg. They look like people from the planet Mars and walk around the ship as though they are drunk. There are thick ropes to hold on to everywhere.

April 19, 1950

Since my arrival in New York I have been in America for one week. At 7:30 AM we docked at the hangar of the United States Lines. About an hour before we entered the harbor, about forty people came on board. They are customs people and others who looked at all of our papers. Now the people started to push, everyone wanted to be the first one off the boat. I myself did not hurry to get off, I went out on the deck. I enjoyed looking at the New York scenery from the water but I felt sorry because it was snowing. Only half of the Empire State Building could be seen because it was in clouds and fog.

We passed the Statue of Liberty and saw all the skyscrapers from Brooklyn. It was a very interesting picture for all of the newcomers but it was not for the people who stood in line to have their papers checked.

I knew that my train for Chicago was leaving in the evening so it was not important for me to get done early. I had lots of time, it didn't matter where I was waiting, on ship or in the train station.

From shore we saw lots of cars driving very fast on the wide streets. You can see that the cars here drive much faster than in Europe. I believe that without the speed, the heavy traffic would not flow in the big cities and on the highways.

At 12:00 noon I left the boat. I enjoyed seeing how people looked for their luggage and do what they had to do. Here in New York there is more going on than on the other harbors we were at. The people started leaving the boat and many of them were met by relatives with flowers.

All over you could see the workers busy unloading the luggage. The cranes worked almost without any noise. At the end, the immigrants were the last to get off the ship and only a few people were picked up by relatives. It was a quiet, sad group.

Now the conductor from the train came to pick up the people who were continuing by train. The conductors all had a round shield around the neck and looked for certain people. They were all heavy Americans with glasses and around 50 years old. I think the men here all look the same. There were many translators for all languages and you can always hear the words "all right" and "ok".

Then came the customs officers. All the luggage was searched. Because there were enough people, everyone wanted something to do. They looked especially for cameras, jewelry and anything of value. You could have one camera but you had to know how to use it. Musical instruments could only be taken along if you could play them. I played "Wer Kann das Bezahlen, Wer Hat Soviel Geld". The boss smiled and said "alright, it is OK."

Finally it was my turn. Before we were brought to the railroad station, we were brought to a big waiting room of the ship. There were vendors with wagons, selling their wares. They tried to cheat the newcomers but I can say, they couldn't cheat me. If you can speak any English, you will not be noticed so much any more as the greenhorns. There are so many dialects and languages. You can find a lot of people who speak German in this country.

There we waited and then were brought to the railroad station. A very nervous taxi driver got seven people together to take to Central Station. With a loud voice, he wanted \$1.00 from each one. I gave it with a heavy heart because we were sitting on top of each other. It was very crowded. He must have had good business that day, every time he got \$1.00, his face lit up. I think with the word money, people go to sleep and wake up with it again. Money is always in their thoughts.

Now we came in the heavy traffic, one who never saw it cannot imagine it. The cars are driving in four lanes. Cars were parked on both sides of the street. Cars, cars, cars, all over. In this country it's almost as if

the cars take up the most places. There is no place where there is no car. The cars and the skyscrapers make the most impression for us. I'll stop for today, my eyes are closing.

Immigrants who had a long trip ahead of them, about 300 in all, were helped by the Travelers Aid. That is an organization you can find in almost every railroad station. They help mainly to see that the immigrants don't get into the wrong hands. They are mostly women who volunteer their work. I must say, every immigrant must be thankful for these people, they were all over with helping hands. They brought us to the right trains, made sure we had the right tickets, etc. Again, many thanks dear Travelers Aid.

At Central Station in New York, a German went to the information counter and tried to speak English. It was very hard to have a conversation until the immigrant spoke some German words. Then the man behind the counter said, "Why didn't you speak German right away, then we could understand each other." That happens very often.

April 24, 1950

It was astonishing to me that I did not see even one policeman. Later on I took a walk outside, still no policeman. The traffic is controlled by red and green lights, the same as in small cities. The traffic is very orderly. Everyone knows where to go inside the train station. There are advertising signs with lights all over. The biggest advantage here is no old buildings. Everything looks as if it is not old. You have to think again and again how that could be done in such a short time. I never saw a poorly dressed person. The porters and shoeshine men are mostly black people. You can see very overdressed black ladies, all dressed in colorful dresses.

The train station is very clean, no paper or cigarette butts laying around. There are always black people around, cleaning up with a big shovel and broom. Everything is very practical in this country. If you want to put your luggage in a locker, you put 10 cents in the slot, the door opens and you put your things in it.

April 25, 1950

When I awoke this morning, everything was white, it was snowing and a strong wind was blowing. At the ticket counter, there was a good looking girl wearing a uniform and she showed everyone who didn't know where to go, the right way to get to where they wanted to go.

In the railroad station you can hear no noise from the trains and no doors were slammed. Even with all the traffic, it was very quiet.

On the ship, in the railroad station and many other places you find bubblers for drinking water. There are paper cups all over and you throw them away after you use them. They all drink very much water, probably because of the bubblers being all over. Also, there are sinks to wash your hands all over and paper towels which you throw away after using. I liked that very much because everything is very sterilized.

At 6:00 PM our train left for Chicago. They put us in the first wagon. The train was so long, it seemed as it never ends. They are almost twice as long as trains in Germany, you enjoy every comfort. If you want to sleep, you put the seat back and the light is shut off. We were just sitting down when the conductor came and asked us if we wanted to eat or drink something. He noticed we were not Americans so he spoke Russian and Polish. When we spoke German he said in broken German, "Eat and drink, the last time" but then he came back three more times. People carry their coins in their pockets and you hear them jingle.

After a ten minute ride we came again to daylight. (I, Oma think they must have gone through a tunnel). We saw where the black people live, how dirty it was. It was a big disappointment. You cannot see that in Germany. On the left side we rode along the Hudson River and on the right side, the rocks. Then night came and you saw only the lights and small towns. I talked to many people, including black people, business people and bums. So far my knowledge of the English language was good. I found out that everyone knew who Hitler was but otherwise they were all very friendly. They were asking about Germany and if there is

something to eat now. They read lots in the newspaper and asked if that was all the truth. A young man asked if Hitler didn't allow the people to smoke. It was not true and I told him. I found out he was a Lutheran like many others and we got along. He gave me a charm with Jesus on it. He said it will bring me luck.

Almost everyone asked me how I like this land. I believe they were very proud of their country. When I said good-bye to the people, they all wished me good luck and a good job in the states and I said "I hope so." During the whole journey the weather was bad, the country didn't look good in the rain, not a pretty sight. The houses in New York looked almost like those in South Dakota. The farms too. On the highway you see all the advertising billboards, signs saying how far to the next city and then a welcome sign when you get there. There are lots of gas stations on the streets which mostly go over the railroad tracks or under them. There are railroad warning signs with bells when the train is close by. Once in awhile you can see a factory in the distance. The parking places for the factories take as much room as the factory because of so many cars. At about 11:00 AM I arrived in Chicago. Enough for today.

April 26, 1950

We passed Detroit, the automobile state. The name says everything. In Chicago we saw again a part of the black neighborhood. Chicago has about seven big railroad stations. I rode by taxi to Union Station. The railroad stations all look about the same. In Chicago I spoke to a man who left Germany 26 years ago. I found out that Radio Courtme (?) from Uelzen was his cousin. Like every place else, we were helped by the Travelers Aid in Chicago too. Wherever we had to go, they brought us there.

At 1:00 PM my train left Chicago for Minneapolis. I could have waited until 6:00 PM and then I could have gone right through to Ottumwa. The train stops at every station, takes their mail with them but the train is still like Germany's fast train. It doesn't matter if it takes longer, they are not exact. The passengers take it easy too, they lay back, put their feet on the other seat and sleep. They can sleep without worry because the conductor comes and wakes them up when it's time to get out. I could not do that, put my feet on the nice upholstered seats so I didn't sleep much either. On each side of the train, there are toilets for men and women. They are separated in the fancier train. There, there is a room in front of the toilet where you can sit down, relax and smoke. You always have hot and cold water to wash your hands. Otherwise, everything is like Carl told us.

April 30, 1950

Tomorrow is May 1st, no holiday here. Everything is one month later this year because there is still snow on the fields. Ernst doesn't think that's bad because the seed is already in. They don't have winter seed here, everything is planted in spring time. About 4:00 AM I arrived in Ottumwa. Dear Arno, there is so much more I could say about the whole journey but I don't have much time to write. You already read about America and can make your own picture. If I read now what I have written down, I must say that I have not written everything in order. It is also very hard to read. I have to think to myself, what it is. I had an hour of sleep and that has to stop because I

cannot do that forever. I have to study more English if I want to get ahead here. Sometimes it seems to me as if something happens in my inside so as if I am not Reinhard anymore, like it was in Solitendieck. That isn't very funny after such a short time. I hope you don't understand me wrong, I cannot write it down. I have to turn my life completely over. Everything is different, the food, the language, the people, yes everything. I can't imagine that you would bring older people here and they would feel good. Maybe if they would live in a bigger community with their own people. Now I want to stop with my philosophy because it doesn't go anywhere.

May 3, 1950

I can see that there are lots of pages to write so if I have time, I will write more. First of all I would like to say that I am reminded every day of Jörn Jacob Hurth. Everyone here still speaks the same German as out of the book. Maybe I will bring once-in-awhile how they speak. In the whole, everything is always the same, nothing special. To that I would like to say that it is here better to keep the hat on the head. That is all I can say to that story.

The knife you need here to cut the meat, otherwise you only use the fork to eat. I will tell you something about the eating. That is what is most important to the people. In the morning you start with an egg and stop in the evening with the same thing. In the morning you fry them, in the evening you cook them. That brings some change. Here everything is more spicy than by us. You drink lots of tomato juice for breakfast. The Germans on the ship did not know what the red stuff was, they ordered it only once. I think it made some of them sick. To every meal there is coffee, white bread, butter and afterwards, cake, torte or cookies. Ernst brought the cows to the butcher in the city for slaughtering. There he has a refrigerator so he takes only what he needs of meat and sausage. If we have hotdogs, everyone eats five or six. You have menus so you can see what variety they have. I think you know enough about the eating.

2nd breakfast we don't have here but we drink coffee in the afternoon. We have a lot of chewing gum and chewing tobacco which is called "Preem." Ernst said a lot of people like the chewing tobacco but on Sunday you take the chewing gum because of the brown spit. We have here a neighbor born here of German parents. If somebody of German heritage speaks to him in English he does not answer him.

When I arrived here, Ernst introduced me to Otto. He is a worker on the farm. It was this way. Otto was a soldier in Japan for 1 ½ years. He said he didn't like being a soldier. Otto's father was born here too, his mother came here at fifteen years of age. Otto asked me "How long did the journey take?" I said "14 days." Otto in broken German said, "That was not long." I said "For me it was long enough." Otto asked "Did you feed the fish?" I said "No." Otto said, "It didn't cost a lot." I asked him where do you live? He said, "I think eight miles south." "If you want to go along on Sunday, I will take you along. My car chokes more than Ernst's car." Long pause. Otto asked me if I like to work the horses. Otto said not to go too close to the two black horses, they sometimes like to jump up. Otto learned his German on the street. Then he asked if they still thrash by hand in Germany. I asked him if he was married. He said "I think I am too slow, you should have brought one from Germany." Otto said he's like a male cat, he runs away. Reinhard said he will stop that now, you only have to read the book Jörn Jakob Hurth. Reinhard then tells a joke about hunting which I will not put in here. It's boring and of no interest to us. After the joke, Reinhard says Good Night.

May 5, 1950

Our Assessor:

First of all I want to say the assessor is Otto's father and he travels around. The assessor has the job to go every year to estimate the value of what you have on the farm. He has to count things that have value. He

gets \$250.00. He doesn't do it for the money but he likes to meet the people and to show how important his job is. That is for taxes. He comes on a very rainy day, he knows the farmers are at home. He came with a very old car, had a very old suitcase with all his documents. He put the suitcase in the house. In front of the door he spit his "Preem" out, put his glasses on his nose, then unpacked his suitcase. We had to clean the table because he had so many books. Then the counting started. The notebook and receipts were in different colors. Once-in-awhile he was searching in his papers and still got something out of the suitcase. He started to ask questions. "How much new machinery did you buy?" Then he said, "I think you bought your tractor two years ago. Here you have the papers, you can figure out how much it was." Ernst asked if he had been by Strubbe? Assessor says "No, I start with you and I have to first find myself through. Two years ago I started by you too." He puts a new "Preem" in his mouth. In between he figures out on the left side of the receipts the big sums together. It looks as if he has his own writing. "How many little pigs did you feed?" "Oh, I think ten pieces" Ernst says. "How many sows do you have?" Ernst says ten. "How many cows do you milk?" "Oh, I have to count them first." "Do you have a bull too?" "Ya but you can't count it because he is not registered. Ernst asks him if he can miscount. "Did you build anything new?" "No, nothing." Now the assessor puts his glasses on the tip of his nose, he has the kind where they will not fall down. He looks once in the kitchen, once in the living room. The assessor asks "What do you think is the value of the oven?" Ernst said his mother had that already and he didn't think he could sell it today anymore. The assessor said four years ago a man in Milbank liked the old ones. He paid \$20.00 for one. Ernst asked "What do you think the value of the cupboard is?" "Oh, I think not much" said the assessor.

Now, he says again he will take a summary of the whole house, then he writes a certain amount down and Ernst has to sign the document twice. The assessor says "That stuff I have to write down in the books---it takes from morning to evening." I went outside once in awhile, laughed so hard, it was so funny. Ernst had to hold his hand to his face, it was so funny.

After two hours, Ernst said "I think you are done now, we will have some coffee." He was completely satisfied with that. It took still a long time until he got all his stuff back into the suitcase. While drinking coffee, Ernst said "With my little pigs I had so much trouble." The word "trouble" is used a lot here. They had to feed the little pigs with the bottle.

The assessor didn't eat a lot. He put more "Preem" in his mouth, then left fast. He spit outside. The two dogs ran after him. Enough of the assessor, I could write a whole book.

There is a butcher in Ortonville, his father came from Germany and he was selling herring. Not long ago, the butcher ordered a whole barrel of herring. Now he says to Ernst, "The old Germans must have died, no one buys them anymore."

May 8, 1950`

The seed is not in yet, the same as fifty years ago. A couple of days ago a cow kicked me in my side. Her name is "Emma." I flew quite a distance, I was very surprised that happened. Otto asked if I was afraid the cow broke her leg; "She probably wanted that for the farmer, not you" he said.

In the attic there were many rats. Ernst shot them in the morning and the evening but he got only two. I said I will try, maybe I will have more luck. I shot five rats in two days. For that I needed seven bullets. Now we haven't seen anymore. I think they moved somewhere else, it's getting too hot here. If you try to shoot them you have to open the door fast or you wouldn't get them. You have to aim the right way to get them, they are very smart, those beasts.

In our refrigerator, you can make ice too. The refrigerator is a wonderful thing. Below is a big drawer where we keep apples and oranges. We eat them every night before we go to bed.

And now comes the church.

Our Church:

I wrote you already that you can see it from our place. You see also a lot of farms around. We live about one KM from the highway. The driveways to the farm are all covered with gravel.

Now to the facts:

When there is bad weather, there are lots of boots in front of the church. I wonder always how you find your own boots again. In the hallway, the men leave their coats because the churches are heated. The women have a different room for that. There are mirrors that they can see if they have red cheeks, ("the old women,") I apologize for that. The ladies keep their hats on. At this time of the year you can see all kinds of hats. The hymnals are placed in a rack on the back of the pews. There are a lot of German songs in them. Only the title is German but the words are English. And the sermon is the same like in Germany. You bring all the children, even the small babies to church. The farmers are all by themselves on the farm so they have nobody they can leave the children with so bring them to church. The woman who holds the baby will sit when others stand up. In between, the babies start crying, that's natural, not disturbing. At the end of the sermon, the pastor is standing at the door and shaking hands. That is good, then they know exactly who was there. If the farmers don't see each other during the week, they see each other at church on Sunday. After church, they tell each other what happened all week long.

I think the organist should not play too much before singing the song, she does not play too good. But, the farmers say she tries her best.

For me, the church is a very good thing. I need the people and it improves my language. This is all about the church.

On the farm, there is an electrical box. Everybody reads them himself and they figure out themselves how much they have to pay. He pays that in town. I was very surprised about that, that they trust them. Ernst said ten years ago was the last time the meter reader was there.

Every farm has a big gas tank. From time to time comes the tank wagon and refills them. Most of the tractors are driven with gasoline.

May 11, 1950

Ernst's birthday is today. On birthdays, no one celebrates. We have cake everyday but on the birthday, they write with cream, "Happy Birthday."

Carl Jr feels sick so Ernst has to drive the tractor for that reason. Everybody works on planting the fields, because they are late, they work day and night. You can hear the tractors.

Yesterday I was shooting rats and out of the attic came a hamster. I never saw an animal like that. For that reason I shot right away. He was almost as big as a rabbit. Afterwards I still shot another rabbit for the dogs. Then comes Carl with family, I have to clean up for that reason. More people came than we counted on, not like in Germany. Here everybody comes for the birthday. And still came our neighbor lady Frau Strubbe with her daughter-in-law, Carl Jr and family and Carl Will in an old Henry Ford. Little Leonard said "This is a funny car." Carl Will made a funny impression to me. He speaks a very bad German, he is very heavy and for that reason, he can't work anymore. In all, there are twelve people. The women brought cakes and tortes, Ernst bought the beer, coca cola and ice cream. We were until 12:00 together and we were very happy. I cannot understand that people who were born here speak a better German than the people who came from Germany twenty years ago.

May 14, 1950

Today is Mother's Day. For weeks, they have advertised for presents over the radio. The pastor, in his sermon, talked only about Mothers too. That I liked very much. I can now understand almost everything.

By you, now probably every Sunday there is a singing concert. That I miss the most and my thoughts are a lot with that.

May 19, 1950

I have here a lot of newspapers. I always put them away, otherwise you cannot find through. There are too many. Everyday comes the advertising too. Most of it goes into the fire. It is astonishing how much is wasted here. You shouldn't even think about it.

August Remos had a car. On his birthday, he drank too much beer. He wanted to work off his stupor so he started cleaning up his yard. Then he made a fire to burn the rubbish he raked together. The fire was too close to his car so the car burned with the rubbish. August has a son and he had to go and register for the draft. He was very foxy and when he stood in front of the doctors, one doctor said to the other, "At home they must not be too smart." His son acted dumb. The doctors laughed very hard, they let him go again. Many times you have to laugh about August and he laughs along.

May 24, 1950

Yesterday they brought with a special truck, the gravel on the farm. Some spots of the driveway had to be filled. I am all alone on the farm. I can already talk with everybody. I don't have too much time to write, there's too much to do. Yesterday it was 95 degrees. It is very hot and I never perspired so much in my life. This afternoon August Remos and I collected stones from the field. If you are together with August, there is always lots to laugh about, he is a very simple, funny guy.

May 21, 1950

Not long ago was the graduation celebration from Hilde. It was not as festive as when Sauno graduated. At the school are nine teachers and I am surprised how Big Stone City can have such a big school. The farewell speech, one year the Catholic pastor gives it, the next year the Lutheran pastor gives it. This time it was the Catholic pastor. I think that he did a very good job. Lydia said when her daughters graduated, every time it was the Catholic pastor.

Afterwards, we were together with Carl, Sr. where I met the parents of Mariel. They are of German heritage but they do not speak German.

May 26, 1950

Yesterday evening there was once more a celebration. A professor who teaches politics at a college gave a speech. The eighth graders were honored on this occasion. The people at such occasions are very disciplined. Afterward we were still together with Carl Sr. Hilde received a lot of presents. Our neighbor Mueller was still there so we ate our supper together. August said, "The school was too hot for me, I like to work better with the horses."

May 30, 1950

Today is Memorial Day or Decoration Day. Somebody told me that it is the biggest holiday in America. Maybe it is only in that town. I noticed nothing about the holiday here, it is a day like any other day. I put in the kitchen a bouquet of lilacs. Ernst and Otto noticed that without saying anything.

Ernst planted corn and Otto and I have a wagon of cow manure to take to the fields. The manure smells the same as in Germany.

Just now we have a lot of asparagus. There is a lot growing in the garden but we do not use lots of it. I turned a piece of ground around and planted onions. We have a lot of rhubarb, nobody eats it. It is just growing out.

June 1, 1950

Today Ernst planted the last corn. The cows are all in the field, they come to the barn only to milk. You open the barn door and you holler "Come on." Then they come all by themselves. The horses, you have to take the tractor to round them up if you need them for work.

Around the farm there are fruit trees that grow like bushes. There are so many that it looks like a jungle. In this jungle, you find many different birds and small animals—wild rabbits, pheasants, squirrel and a lot of animals I never saw in Germany. There are nonpoisonous snakes about one yard long. The squirrels here are gray, not brown like in Germany. The male pheasants are very colorful and the females are grayish brown. In the fields you see animals as big as rats but they have a bushy tail and dark brown fur. I shot a couple of them already. Skunks are around here too but I have never seen one. Elk and deer we don't have here.

I will come to an end because tomorrow I have to get up at 4:00 AM do laundry by hand.

June 6, 1950

Our Garden:

You really have to look close to see that it was once a garden. Since Lenna died, no one worked it anymore. Ernst never had time for that, no time and no interest. The garden was about three times as big as the land that we had from Gefferts. There is still land around the house where you could garden too. I dug up the ground by hand, that was a big job because otherwise they do everything with the tractor. On one part I planted sweet corn, we eat that a lot here. Compost you don't have to put on because the soil is very good—black ground. It does not dry out so fast

Yesterday we were in Fargo, I told you about that in a letter. On the road, Carl showed me a historical marker. On that marker it was written that in 1672 came the first three white people to this part of the country and the Indians killed them there. This land was prairie for about fifty years. This historical marker is close to the Red River where there was a big flood.

Now, something from the college: The student housing is furnished very good. Everything is wide and between the houses are small parks. There are always three students in a room. In the room are the beds, three desks and different furniture. There is still a small room for storage. In every room is running water. Their dinner they can get in the same house at a low price. The students have to be in bed at 10:00 PM. In comparison to Germany, you don't see invalids. The classes are in more than one building, the same as in Gottingen. They have a big auditorium, the colleges are not as old as in Germany. The city is only seventy-five years old. When they have a celebration, you notice the Americans have big traditions and all are very religious. They do not talk about others. I have to say that with all the freedom they have, they are very disciplined. The Americans in the middle towns do not dance the boogie-woogie. In the whole, they are simple but always friendly, helping each other. You can talk to everyone as if it is an old friend. They are very helpful.

June 13, 1950

Next to the church is the public school on one side and on the other side is the church school. Years ago the children were learning German if there was a teacher to teach them. There was not always a teacher. This is where Elfriede taught religion to the children from the village. She picked the children up in her car in the morning, that is how it is done here.

The roof of the school was leaking, they had to get a new roof. First they put the tarpaper on, then the shingles. They all have to be nailed down separately. It was very windy the day they worked on the roof, you had to hold on so you would not be blown away. That was very dangerous. On Sunday they talked it

over and one farmer picked those who he wanted to help. The farmers brought their trucks along, parked them all along the building so they could stand on them to do their work. They did not need a ladder. The old shingles they threw right away on the trucks. That was all very practical.

June 16, 1950

I am here now for two months. I painted the screens, there are twenty-three. I had to paint them twice because there was no paint on them anymore. Screens here are a must because of the mosquitos. They are the worse mostly when it is cloudy and no wind. That's not too often because we always have wind here. Flys I don't see but there are a lot of different small insects.

October 15, 1950

I am here now for half a year in this other world. Today I cannot say if I can make a living in this land. It is something you cannot decide in such a short time. It seems that you can't plan anything in this back land. It seems that there are too many people already in this world. Money and power go too far, people killing each other, that can go too far. I will quit for today.

I saw America with my young eyes and formed my own opinion. I probably will change my thoughts in the coming years about the life in America. I will live by the saying, "Think all you speak but don't speak all you think."

I will now send these memories to you. It is not the whole picture about America, but my first impressions. Please keep what I send to you, maybe I will once have it back again. I still have some pictures of Metha which I will send to you.

Many greetings from your son and brother.

OVER

October, 2007

To Jim, Linda and Rick,

Now some thoughts from me.

On Linda's last visit to Sun City, she found Dad's Tagebuch. She was very interested in it and asked if I could have someone translate it for us. So, I asked our friend, Hilde Brinck if she would do it for us and naturally her answer was "Yes". She and I worked on it and now we have some insight as to Dad's first thoughts and impressions of America.

He made a big decision at the early age of only twenty to leave his family and Germany, searching for a better life for himself in America. I'm sure it wasn't always easy. I remember him telling me that if he would have had the money, he would have gone right back to Germany. This was a big change for him. Well, that wasn't possible. He worked hard on the farm in South Dakota and when he had his fare paid back to Ernst and some money saved, he left the farm and went to Racine, WI where he got in touch with the Reimann family. He met this family on the ship coming over to American and they told him if he ever wanted to leave South Dakota, come and see us, here is our address, we will be there. He did this, exactly when I do not know.

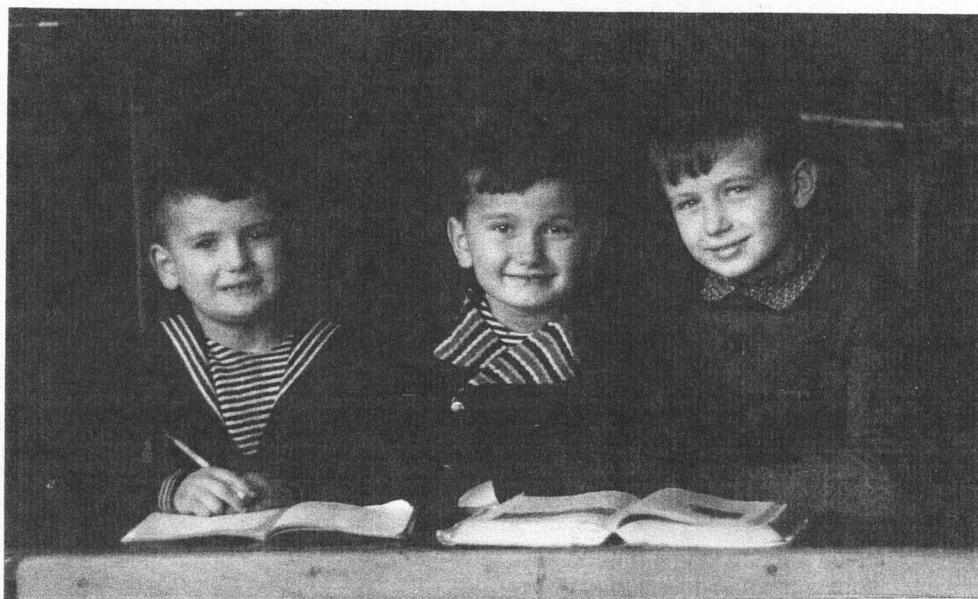
From Racine he came to Milwaukee, went to night school to learn more English and also to school to become a journeyman plumber. He found the Milwaukee Liedertafel, this made him feel at home and he was finally satisfied with everything. This was his family. If you remember he mentioned in his Tagebuch in May, 1950 that there were probably singing concerts going on in Germany at that time and that he missed them the most and his thoughts were with them. This was always very important to him.

And so he lived a long time in Milwaukee, married and started his family. That's where we came into his life, he loved his family and provided well for us. We always had whatever we wanted.

Again, many thanks to Hilde for sharing her time in doing this translating. I hope you all enjoy the book, I'm sure you will find it very interesting.

Love,

Mom and Oma



Uncle Arno

Dad
1937

Uncle Helmut



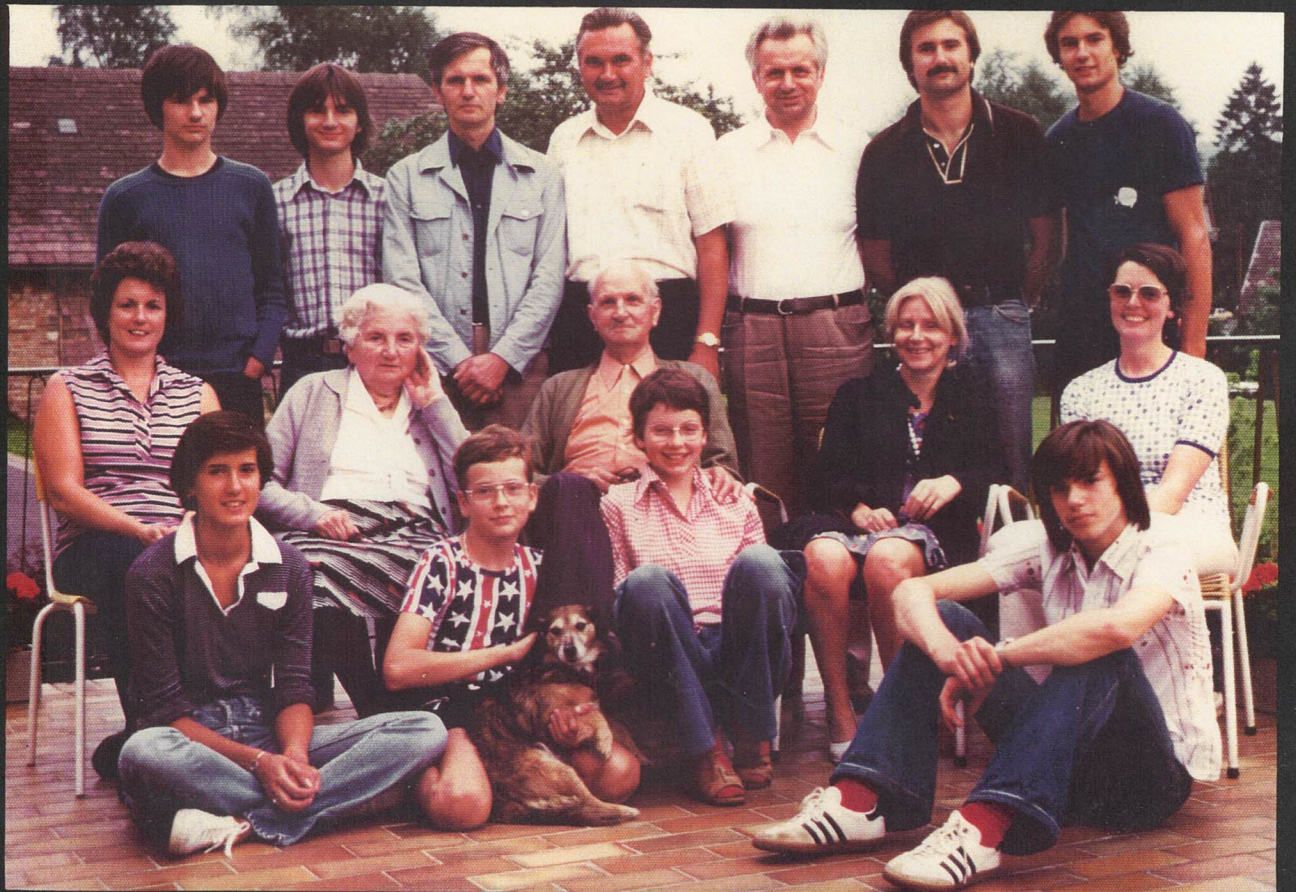
The three brothers liked to clown around
September, 1955



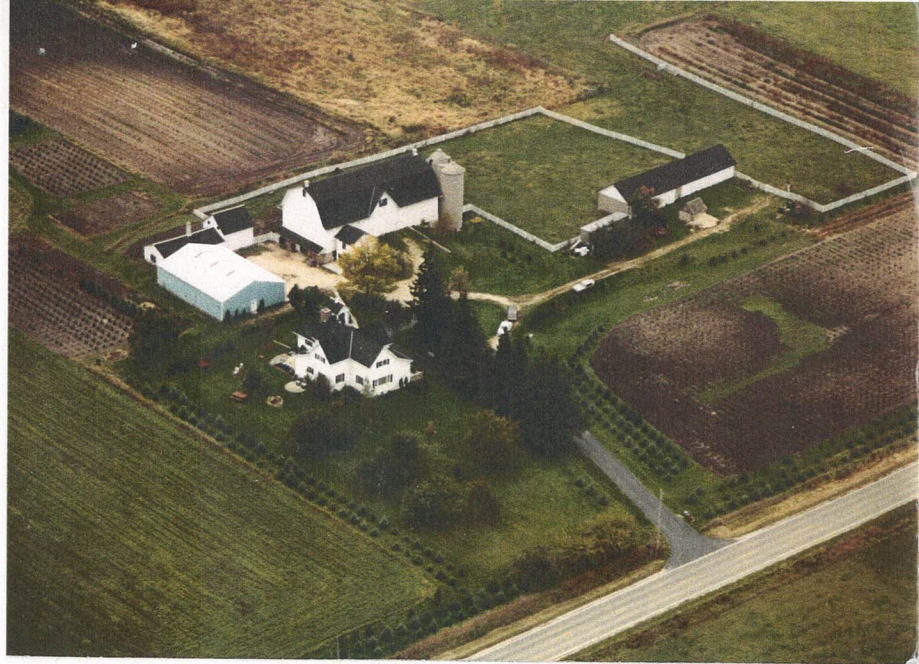
Uncle Arno Dad Uncle Helmut
Oma Opa
Opa's 80th Birthday, February 11, 1974



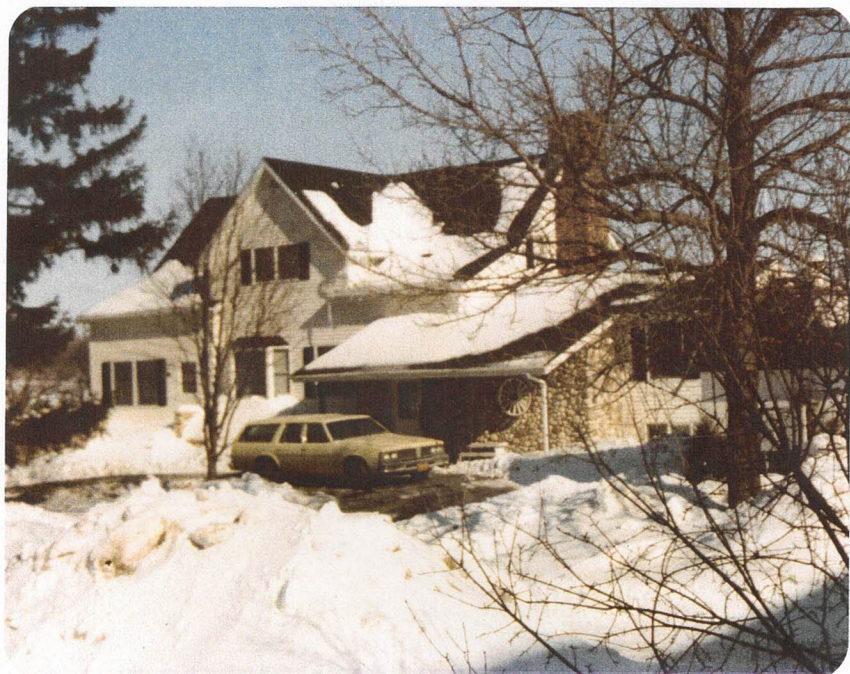
Our wedding, August 20, 1955



Freiwald Family Reunion in Neuhaus, Germany
July, 1978



Dad loved the farm in Freistadt





And he loved the Milwaukee Liedertafel

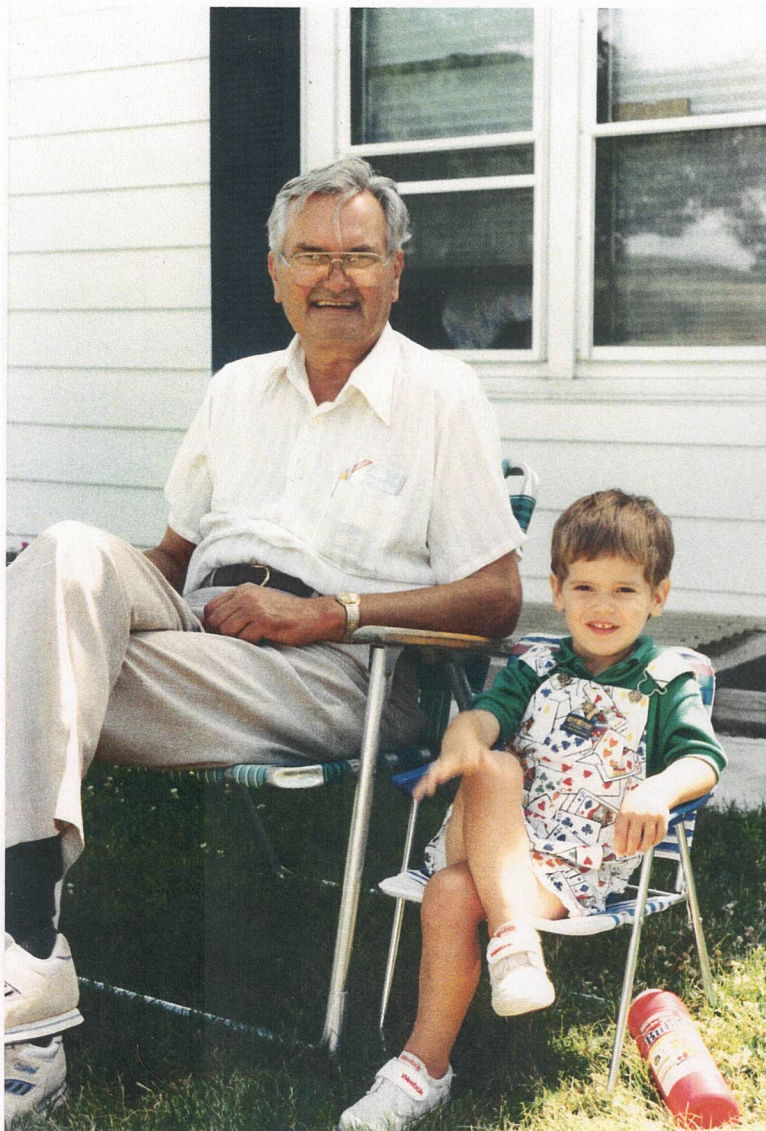


One of our Barn Parties with the Alte Kameraden playing music





Our Family



Bacco and Ryan, the boy who gave Opa the name "Bacco"



Bacco was famous for his "Bacco Bread" with the grandchild. Here he is with Allie, having their "Bacco Bread"



Bacco and Matthew
What does this button do?



Going away party from the Liedertafel, January, 1985



Christmas, 1988



In January, 1985 we moved to Sun City



Bacco on his golf car



Uncle Helmut, Uncle Arno and Dad in Sun C



Jim & Dad picking oranges



November 1988



Uncle Helmut, Uncle Arno, Dad
September, 1988

