

The Life Story ¹ of Our Mother, Mrs. Johannes Bartsch

[Anna Hamm Bergman Bartsch - September 1, 1847 - September 16, 1926]

I, Mrs. Johannes Bartsch, was born Hamm the first of September, 1847 in Petershagen near Tiegenhof, West Prussia. My father, Jacob Hamm, was born in Ladekopp. My mother, Marie Hamm, was born Esau in Petershagen. My mother's parents bought a farm where they lived until 1855, until some Mennonites, including my parents and close relatives, moved to Russia.

I had five siblings of whom one brother was older than I.

In 1862 I was baptized by my uncle, David Hamm, and I was taken into membership. In September, 1865, I married a young man, Jacob Bergman, who was born in Prangenu, Germany. He took over a farm from his uncle, Peter Esau, who had died on the sixth of December, 1865, of tuberculosis, the same year we were married. The Lord gave us four children, all of whom He took back when they were young. In 1875 the Lord took my beloved husband from my side after he had suffered three years from tuberculosis.

It is well known that in the 70's they ² commenced conscription. Following that several families moved away. My parents, my siblings and I went with them in 1881. The Quiring family stayed behind. This good bye was like half dying.

In 1882 I married Johannes Bartsch, father of my beloved children, who stand beside my casket now. And the Lord gave us six children, of whom He took back three young ones. As it is known, my husband was in the service of the English Bible Society, and that is why we lived in the capital of Turkestan, Tashkent. Because my husband had to travel a lot in cold and heat, it became too difficult for him. So after nine years we resigned from the Society. Then we went to the settlement and from there onward, in the year 1893 together with the Kopper family, to America. My parents had already gone home.

In 1915 the Lord took my second beloved husband and father of our three children after a long, heavy suffering, to Himself and to His kingdom.

Now the children step in: In February, 1925, our beloved mother suddenly had a shivering fit. ³ To provide her with better care, she was brought to the hospital and the children were hurriedly called to their deathly sick mother. Our Heavenly Father gave us her cherished life back and she was allowed to stay with us 1½ years longer, although with poor health.

Mother was always filled with great joy when her children and close relatives from far and near came to her. She took their visits as gifts out of the Lord's hand. She kept her visitors

¹ or obituary. Apparently, having survived a "shivering fit" in 1925, Anna, sensing her time of departure was approaching, wrote her own obituary in the first person. After her departure, her children completed it.

² i.e., the Russian military

³ Apparently a severe case of the chills, which left her shivering uncontrollably [JTB].

and the people of the congregation in her daily rigorous prayers.

On the tenth of September at 4:30 a.m. the heavy shivering fit repeated itself and left her with an extremely sick body. The children and two nieces and close relatives stood there devotedly along with other close relatives, and she recognized them only for a few moments occasionally -- and then her face became a happy smile. There weren't a lot of words spoken, but she understood all the words of comfort being spoken to her.

On the fifteenth of September at 1 p.m. her breath grew shorter and on the sixteenth of September at 1:45 a.m. the Holy One took the soul of our beloved mother home.

Our mother left behind to mourn two sons, two daughters-in-law, one daughter, two grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews from near and far.

Our beloved mother closes her self-written obituary with the following verses:

"How nice it will be for the soul to get rest
after battle and long journey and after suffering."

'Til we meet again! 'Til we meet again!
O how the word sounds so nice;
Bell-chimes out of heaven;
Keep on ringing for my beloved ones,
Take all that cry down on the earth to heaven!
'Til we meet again!

Translated by Nina Mueller and Catherine Quenzer. Transcribed by James T. Bartsch June 5, 1996.

[Order of Service for the Funeral of Anna Hamm Bergman Bartsch]

1. Processional -- “Where the Soul Finds Home and Peace” (Choir singing seated)
2. Pall Bearers and sorrowing family stand on their feet for prayer -- Rev. J. E. Entz.
3. Congregational Song: No. 530 -- 5 verse --
4. Scripture Reading: Psalm 103 Rev. J. E. Entz
5. Solo: Anna Linscheidt
6. Sermon: Rev. J. E. Entz
7. Choir:--
8. Message: -- Rev. A. Warkentin
9. Congregational Song: -- No. 7
10. Life Run ⁴ -- Rev. J. E. Entz
11. Closing Prayer and Blessing
12. Viewing of the Deceased (Choir seated: Let Me Go”)

⁴ Obituary