

Diary Entries From an Immigrant

Wednesday, April 5th, 1848

I just woke up from a restless night of sleep filled with a tsunami of thoughts. Why, you might ask? Well, tomorrow we are leaving for America, the land of opportunities. My father has sold our house and the farm, so we have enough money for this big move. To be quite honest, I'm nervous because I'm not sure what it will be like, and being on a boat for months, not all people make it. I'm leaving my whole life behind and going to some place, which people dream about. My parents say that it will be amazing because I can be who I want to be. Yes, I'm extremely excited for this wonderful journey, but there is a little part of that keeps saying that so many things could go wrong. Anyway, I have to finish packing up my belongings and say goodbye to our extended family and friends, back here in Germany.

Saturday, June 3rd, 1848

We've been on the boat for a couple of weeks, which means we have a couple more to go. Many people have fallen sick from horrible diseases, and some have even passed away. We stay in one of the few cabins, with four other families. When I go to bed, I usually lay my shawl on the floor and use a pile of clothes as my pillow. Oh, I can't wait till we reach! I have overheard people on the boat saying that there is a big, beautiful place called Central Park, where you can play on swings and watch ducks swim around in a pond. Also, my dad told me that there are huge parks filled with fun activities and a thing called a Ferris wheel, whatever that is. Sometimes I feel like he is telling me these things so I worry less. Since there isn't much to do on the boat, I usually spend my days staring out into the vast ocean, getting lost in my thoughts and hoping everything goes smooth when we reach. Well, that's actually what most others do

too. There isn't much food on our boat, so we try to eat as little as possible, which means we are all starving. The crew offers two meals a day. For breakfast, we get two pieces of bread and dinner, rice with peas and carrots. I have to go now because it is my turn to clean the kitchen.

Friday, July 21st, 1848

Another week has passed since I have last written to you guys. The captain of our ship has told us that a storm is coming towards us, so our arrival to America is going to be delayed by a couple of days. Many of the people have boarded up their doors to stay safe. There isn't much food or water left on the ship, so we are staying careful about how much we consume. Lately, my stomach always seems to be disturbed because I have sacrificed my meals for the others, so I don't feel like doing much most days. I tend to laze around in bed or stare into the dangerous yet beautiful ocean that we ride on.

Sunday, September 3rd, 1848

We arrived to America a couple of days ago and I completely change my mind about being nervous because it is absolutely amazing. I remember staring at the Statue of Liberty and having this voice inside me saying, "You have made your way to freedom" My eyes stared to water as I slightly shifted my head and stared at the vast land of America. When we got off the boat at Angel Island, there were many officers that checking us and making sure we didn't bring in diseases with us, but luckily my family and I passed. The people who didn't were sent back home, where they had nothing left because they had sold everything to be able to come to America. I felt so incredibly bad for these people. It is currently summer in New York and the sun is shining brighter than ever. We live in a very small home on the edge of New York, so going to the city takes quite a while. My dad is working in a steel factory and my mom cleans

clothes for people. All the streets are filled with people and dirt, but this was the place that everyone talked about and I feel so honored to be here. But, oh, do I love America!