

The Fatherland

"The next morning we were woken by the signal of a trumpet. The crew weighed anchor, and the boat left harbour at 8:00 am. Shirt-sleeved, I rushed to the forecastle to say my last Good Bye to my dear German fatherland and to the people standing at the pier. After a couple of hours we were ..."



The Fatherland.

To my grandfather, Viktor Herrmann (he's in the life preserver), the Fatherland refers to his place of birth. He left his Fatherland in hopes of finding a new life in America. This new land promised freedom, hope, and happiness. After my grandfather settled in America, he sent back to the Fatherland for my grandmother, Hilda Knoll. She too left Germany and made the trip across the ocean to start a new life.

I often heard my grandparents use the term *Fatherland* to describe their homeland. From time to time my grandfather would start a sentence with the phrase *back in the Fatherland*. My grandmother told me about how her brother Otto walked home from the Great War back in the *Fatherland*. In the *Fatherland*, girls went to knitting school on Saturdays and learned to bake bread from scratch.

The book of Hebrews also speaks of a *Fatherland*.

A land of freedom. A land of hope. The Father's Land. The journey to the Father's Land is a walk of faith that requires courage and strength. As wanderers as pilgrims, we count the cost of leaving the familiar and friendly to go where our Father leads. In our Father's Land we find challenge, joy, enemies, purpose, pain, love, loss, and blessing. But the best thing about the Father's Land is the presence of our Father.

13 ... they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. Hebrews 11:13-16

And one day, like my grandfather, we will be woken by the signal of a trumpet, and we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 1 Thessalonians 4:17

Forever with Him, in the Father's Land.

By Mary Kane.

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