



The Diary of Abraham Ulrikab: Text and Context (NONE)

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In August 1880, businessman Adrian Jakobsen convinced eight Inuit men, women, and children from Hebron and Nakvak, Labrador to accompany him to Europe to be "exhibited" in zoos and Völkerschauen (ethnographic shows). Abraham, Maria, Noggasak, Paingo, Sara, Terrianiak, Tobias, and Ulrike agreed, partly for the money and partly out of curiosity to see the wonders of Europe, which they had heard about from Moravian missionaries.

The Inuit arrived in the fall of 1880 and were much talked and written about in the local press. Meanwhile, the Moravian missionaries, who had begged them not to embark on the journey, were busily writing letters and trying to stay in contact with Abraham and his family. By January 1881 all eight Inuit had died of smallpox.

This story is told through several different perspectives, from Abraham's diary, the earliest known Inuit autobiography, and the missionaries' letters and reports, to a scholarly article, newspaper pieces, and even advertising. Many illustrations, including portraits done of the Inuit visitors, scans of some of the original documents in German, and recent photos of the abandoned Moravian mission in Hebron, round out Abraham's intriguing and unfortunate story.



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