

We tend to speak of the Civil War in terms of battles, muskets, deaths. I'm going to try to show the other side of the coin.-

Two teenage boys, Hermann and William Crede, ages 16 and 17, left Germany in the year 1853 leaving behind Mother, Father and four siblings – one brother and three sisters. They arrive in St. Louis in June of 1853.

Postal service, as we know it, was a long way off. So, a letter sent by Hermann to Father Heinrich written on June 29, 1853, reached Heinrich on August 2, 1853. And so it began with Mother Clotilda begging William to send her a “nice, long letter.”

And now it is 1855, Father Heinrich accompanies Carl (age 15) to Bremen for his departure to America – a month before his 15th birthday, to join his two brothers.

September, 1856, Father Heinrich finally hears from Carl – no word from William.

1859 – Grandmother Margaretha Schroeder Klassen passed away. Hermann marries, Carl has moved to St. Louis. Hasn't heard from William since May 1857.

1860 – Heinrich received his last letters – Hermann, March 1854 – William, May 1857, and Carl, April 1858.

Apparently Father Heinrich has finally been told the location of his sons, as he tells son Hermann in a letter of November 1861, that he is happy his brothers have returned from wars with healthy limbs; however, states that “your brothers lost everything.”

Charles writes in greater detail from Springfield, MO in December 1862.

Hermann apparently has written Father Heinrich (January 1863) in greater detail of the Civil War and the roles William and Carl are playing, using the word “re-enlisted.”

March 1863, Carl wrote to Hermann from Carthage, MO telling of conditions. Two months later in May 1863, William writes to Hermann that it is hardly in his power to tell him (Hermann), “dear Brother Charles is no more in the land of the living.” Write home as soon as you get this – give them my best respect.”

And so it was, William married Emma Clarenbach and settled in the Brazito, MO area, and Herman remained in Westphalia, MO. Father Heinrich and Mother Clotilda remained in Germany.