

Henry Claus Schultz Letter

73rd Indiana

Tacoma, Wash.

Aug. 11, 1956

Dear Harold:

When I gave you the broken shell watch fob, and mentioned some facts concerning its making, you asked me to "put it in writing". I start to do so. But first I'll go back to the 1840's. Grandpa Schultz, my father, was born in the Province of Schleswig-Holstein (northern Germany). Came to the U.S. in 1842, with his father, mother, brother and three sisters. On Mother's side, (Anna M. Holch) the family came to the U.S.A. in 1846. Came from the same province in N. Germany. Germany, of course, was not an Empire at that time, and Holstein was at times a part of Denmark, and again of Holland. Also claimed by Sweden. (Lots of small wars.) Both families sailed from Hamburg. All were farmers (tenants), under some Count or Prince. In the U.S. they could get land of their very own! No "staterooms" on those little sailing vessels. Just steerage passengers. No privacy. In storms, - and they had plenty, - the "hatch" was battened down, and the passengers were without light or ventilation. Food was mostly potatoes and salt pork. Passengers had to bring their own bedding. In Father's case, the trip was made quickly - three weeks. The "ship" Mother's family came in, met with storms; was blown southward and back eastward, hundreds of miles off its course; made New York in 8 weeks. Two deaths. The Captain was also "doctor" and minister at deaths.

My Grandfather Schultz settled near LaPorte, Indiana. Grandfather Holch settled near Valparaiso, Indiana. My father was apprenticed to a blacksmith, and learned the trade. This takes us to 1860, and the Civil War. At the beginning of the war, the Confederates were successful, pressed the Union troops hard. More troops were needed. Indiana could not get volunteers enough, and offered a cash bonus, \$50.00, for enlistments. My father, his brother, Detloof, and a friend, Christ Fresse (who afterwards married Father's sister, Sophia) all enlisted. Father got two 20 dollar gold pieces, one ten, - salted them down. Went into training, and quickly to the battle lines in Tennessee, where the Union troops were being mauled. At the battle of "Stone [sic] River", - Murfreesboro - Dec. 31, 1863 to Jan. 2, '64 [sic], Father's regiment "73 Indiana Volunteers", took awful punishment. Here Father was hit by a "Minnie ball", - a canvas bag of iron balls an inch in diameter, rammed into a cannon a fired, - a deadly thing - at close range. Father's company was marching in close formation, was fired on at right angles, and almost destroyed. Of course, Father never knew when he was hit, on the left side and from the

left. Three ribs were shattered, right over the heart. The Union forces were driven back. In the afternoon, under a flag of truce, Union soldiers came to pick up their wounded. Father was left for dead. Next morning, a burial squad came, under a truce flag, to bury the dead. Father was found to be breathing, and was carried to the field hospital (tents). Shattered ribs were cut away, and the wound sewed up. Well, Father did regain consciousness and was taken to Nashville, to a Catholic Sisters Hospital. Was there all spring. The men went to the Cumberland River to bathe and swim. Here they gathered clam, mussel shells, - made trinkets and ornaments,-- hence the piece of watch-fob I gave you. Father had a file, an awl (he made it) and a small kitchen (steel) knife, - filed into a saw. There were other trinkets, but he gave them away. Father was in the hospital near six months; then, honorable discharge, a/c unfit for further service.

Was sent back to LaPorte. But more men were needed, and Father re-enlisted; was accepted as a Mounted Scout, and served to the end of the war. I never saw the wounded side until after Father's death, when the undertaker came out of the bed room and wondered about the awful scarred left side. I went in with him, and then wondered that he lived.

Coming back to LaPorte, Father found he could not handle the black-smithing work. He went into what was then called the Florists Supply business, making wreaths of mosses and ferns, stawflowers [sic], immortelles, etc. and made a success of it. Father could always foretell a change of weather, - aches in the left side. He never liked to talk about the "war", except for the times when the opposing armies were entrenched, - neither side ready to fight, when, in spite of military orders to the contrary, they did fraternize. The southerners were "Johnny Rebs" the union men were "Hey, Yank." A piece of white cloth - flag, on the end of a bayonet and waved from the back of a trench (no head showing), was a truce signal, and Yanks and Rebs met each other on "neutral" ground, sometimes not over 200 ft. in width. With all ports blockaded, the Rebs could not get coffee, when the Yanks had plenty. The Rebs did have sugar. So they traded, and became friendly, - at dusk, when no offer was likely to be watching. In conflict, of course, it was "kill or be killed."

In the early 1880's Mother told us of her childhood in the "Old Country", - and we - Marion and I (Henry was just walking, and Emma was a baby) sat and listened, until "time to go to bed." In those days Father bought wool from the farmers around. Mother washed the wool - what a waxy, oily, messy job! When dry it was literally "white as snow." Mother carded the wool, and spun it into thread. These "threads" were then spun together to make yarn, - for stockings, which she knit, for all of us. No "boughten" talk, yes, and rock the cradle, all at the same time! What workers they were, in that generation!

Now just a word about "Great Grandfather Schultz" of today. At six, I started in school. Mother had told me to tell the teacher my name and age. Well, I sat on a bench. Miss Eply came, with register, and pencil, and a smile. Name OK, and "how old are you?" "I bin six yahr [sic] old"! I wondered why some of the children snickered! And here, today, I'm started on 84. At this age, children "should be seen, and not heard." And you have been hearing me for nearly five pages. Enough. Period.