

Courtesy of Kellee Quick, 4616 S. Hogan St., Spokane, WA 99223

MORRIS KEIM

*Christina Keim for Andr*

I write this little sketch of my life for the benefit of my children. I was born October 27th, 1835, at Offenheim, Kreis Alzey, Grosherzog - thum Hessen Darmstadt. Christened by Rev. Daniel Schneider, Pastor of Evangelish Protestantish Church at Offenheim, my Godmother being Christina Neumyer. My parents' names were Konrad Andre of above place and my mother Elisabeth Heck of Gauerheim, Bavaria. Attended school from my sixth year until fourteen, my schoolmasters' names being respectively Johann Maas, Wilhelm Beyer and Karl Braun. Was confirmed in above mentioned church on Ascension Day, 1849. My parents and seven children, myself included, started to remove to America on May 19, 1849. Traveled by stage to Alzey, from there to Mainz, then by steamboat on the River Rhein to Rotterdam, Holland, from there per Steamer to Havre, France, where we embarked on Sailship Arago for New York City, where we arrived with about 200 other passengers from various parts of Germany after a 32 days' voyage on Atlantic Ocean. Had a pleasant trip, very little storm, some of us got very seasick, my father very much so, lost several passengers by various diseases, who were buried at sea, among them a little child and a very aged woman. They were very nicely dressed, sewed up in sail cloth and lowered very gently into the water by sailors, while the Captain of the ship gave a short sermon and prayer. Arrived at New York City July 2d, remained there two days, then started by Steamer for Albany and from there by rail to Buffalo, our destination, where we arrived July 4th, by booming of cannons and shooting of fire crackers, in celebration of Independence Day. Of course everything was new to us, could not understand the English language, which all seemed very strange. Also the intense heat was very oppressive, as in Germany the climate is more even, neither so terribly hot nor cold. But being young we soon got accustomed to it and also learned the English language. The latter part of July after our arrival the cholera broke out in Buffalo, when hundreds of families died out, being well in the morning and dead by night. It was terrible but our whole family was spared from it, as it was

also spared when the cholera broke out again in 1853. We mingled a great deal among our own country people and some of the sisters were married; the younger ones attended school; and our father occupied his trade of Merchant Tailor and secured a nice home on Oak Street. I was married on December 24, 1854, to Morris Keim by Rev. Geo. Samuel Vegt. Mr. Keim was born in Mergentheim, Württemberg, March 9th, 1832, his father being Joseph Keim and his mother Franziska Hofmann. He was employed at Geo. Prince Melodian & Piano factory on Niagara Street, but that work not agreeing with his health, we opened a grocery store and after a time traded our Buffalo home for a small farm in Cattaraugus County, N.Y. Meantime the war of the Rebellion broke out and in September 1862, he enlisted in the Union Army, Co. I, 154th Regiment, N.Y. Vol., served until April 1865, and was discharged on account of disability. Took part in a number of battles in Virginia and Gettysburg, Pa. How anxious we looked for news every day; it looked very dark at times, but victory came at last and those that were spared from the battlefield and prisons were able to return to their homes and families. From Allegany we moved to Washington, D.C., where Mr. Keim got employment as clerk in Agricultural Dept. After several years we bought a home in Farmwell, Loudoun County, Va., a small station on Washington & Ohio R.R., started a village and kept general country store and Post Office. The name of the town was changed to Ashburn and has now a large number of inhabitants, two schoolhouses, three churches, three stores, Post Office, Blacksmith and wheelwright shop, agricultural warehouse, telegraph, telephone, several physicians, &c. From there Mr. Keim received an appointment as Superintendent of National Cemetery at Nashville, Tenn., and was transferred from there to Danville, Va., as Superintendent of Cemetery. After five years, on account of ill health, caused by malaria, we moved back to Washington, D.C., where we now reside.

Six children were born to us, three in New York State and three in Virginia, four daughters and two sons, of which one son and

baby daughter died and are buried in Belmont Cemetery, Va.

In 1888 we visited in Kansas, a sister of mine named Susan Guschewsky, whom I had not seen for fifteen years. Her husband August Guschewsky died two months after our visit there of rheumatism of the heart, contracted in the army. He was a member of the 37th N.Y. Vols. served two years. Four years after him my sister died and left six children, three of whom we had brought here to raise, aged respectively 13, 11 and 7 years. The eldest of the three, a boy named Frank, is now 22 years of age and is employed in St. Louis, as a salesman in Simmons Hardware Co., after having gone through all stages from errand boy to clerk in D. N. Walford's Stores here. The younger two girls are living with us attending school.

In the year 1889 Mr. Keim and myself took a trip to Germany to our birthplaces. But such changes in forty years! We crossed the ocean on our way out on the Steamer Suavia; were on the way eight days when we had a break on some of the machinery and had to lay in midocean for forty-eight hours to our great dismay. After repairing damage we went on our way and landed at Hamburg after a 12-day voyage. We were entertained royally by our old friends and schoolmates, now being aged people, like ourselves, each of course having a different experience to relate. Visited my old church, which was kept in excellent condition, also my old Minister was still living, but unable to preach. He was overjoyed at seeing us, looked up the records in his church book and refreshed his memory and recalled everything to his great delight. Saw many tombstones in churchyard of old friends and acquaintances, kept beautifully green with ivy and forgetmenots. Visited other noted cities, also the Paris exposition, which was very grand. Visited the Louvre and Versailles, Pantheon, Napoleon's resting place, saw chapel where all the tattered flags are displayed that he captured. Stuttgart in Würtemberg is a fine city. We stopped at a bathing establishment called Berg, a mile from city, where they have hot springs where we drank the hot water bubbling from the spring, served in cups by young girls free of charge, but

of course the girls expected a tip, which they generally got, being so polite and attentive. Also visited King Karl's palace. He was absent on account of ill health, but we being Americans, the attendant took us all through and even let me sit on the King's throne. Tips are also in evidence here. We also went to Wiesbaden, a famous watering place, a hot spring spouting up, where you can see the steam-a-square off, has a latticework fence around it and a roof over it and seats all around where one can sip the water to their heart's content and a great Kursaal near with bands of music and other amusements for the guests. Went on top of a hill several miles away and through a robbers' den, that was infested with a gang of robbers, men and women several hundred years ago. On that hill also stands the Russian Chapel, whose dome is covered with gold glistening in the sun, which was built by a Russian prince in honor of his bride, who died aged 19 years. Her form in marble is there lying in her coffin dressed in her bridal robe. Had a lovely ride on steamer down the noble Rhein from Mainz to Coblenz and from there to Cologne; saw the Cathedral or Dom in its wonderful beauty and its grand interior, which is so vast and grand beyond description. Happened to see the christening of a child by Catholic priest. Along the banks of the river we delighted to see the old castles and also the new ones in their grandeur; also the Mouse Thurm at Bingen on the Rhein. Further down we stopped off to see the soldiers' monument on a hill, erected in memory of the soldiers and sailors who fell in the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. It is something grand as a work of art. After concluding our visit we returned to Hamburg and returned to New York on the Steamer Maravia, had a pleasant trip, except a storm of 24 hours. Had a good shaking and rocking over the waves, heard the crunching of the boat, but no damage was done. We returned to our home and found all well.

The summer following we spent in Springfield, Md., on farm in a stone house several hundred years old. In November returned to Washington where we are now living and intend to remain the balance of our days.

Christina Keim