This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

This is a letter dated 29 May 1919 from Howard Gresham, a wagoner in the Army of Occupation at Neuwied in Germany to Clara Carns at Jasper in Jasper County, Missouri. The letter discusses life in the Army and mutual friends and relatives.

According to service records on file with the Missouri State Archives, Howard Gresham of rural Carthage was 21 years old when he was inducted into the Army on 19 September 1917. He served overseas from 29 January 1918 to 6 August 1919. He was assigned to Company A of the 314th Engineers until 16 January 1918 and to Company A of the 116th Engineers to discharge. However, his return address on his letter was Wag Howard Gresham, 2nd Eng. Train, American E. F., A.P.O. 710. At the time he wrote the letter Gresham was billeted in Neuwied, a small town on the Rhine River near Coblenz. His engineer train had “about 85 of us,” including 24 mule skinners, six truck drivers, and “some Sgt. & Cpl’s.”

Clara Carns, whom Gresham addressed as “Dear Cousin,” lived in or near the small community of Jasper in northern Jasper County, Missouri. According to Social Security death records, a Clara Carns was born on 12 August 1888, received a Social Security number in Missouri, and died in Boone County, Missouri, in January 1977.