

Family History Notes

Spring, 2007

Jacob Kundert

One of the local casualties of the Civil War was 20-year-old Jacob Kundert. Kundert, who lived in the Town of Montrose, enlisted in May of 1861 and became a Corporal in the 3rd Wisconsin Infantry. Jacob was born in Rüti, Canton Glarus the son of Johann Heinrich and Elsbeth (Kundert) Kundert. His father, Johann Heinrich, died in Switzerland, and mother Elsbeth and her 7 children immigrated to New Glarus in 1853 aboard the ship Siddons. Jacob's sisters included Sarah (Mrs. Oswald Babler) and Elsbeth (Mrs. John Luchsinger). In Civil War records, Jacob's name was misspelled as Condert or Condrett. According to Glarus records, Jacob Kundert died in the Battle of Bull Run. However according to Wisconsin Civil War records he died at Antietam (also known as Sharpsburg) on 17 September 1862. (Note: Jacob Kundert's uncle, also named Jacob Kundert, enlisted in the 9th Wisconsin Infantry and he is the Jacob Kundert seen in listings of New Glarus Civil War soldiers.)

Antietam was the first battle of the Civil War to take place on Northern soil. It was the single bloodiest battle-day in American history with 23,000 casualties. To understand the magnitude of losses, consider that Antietam resulted in several times as many Americans killed or wounded (23,000 soldiers) as took place on June 6, 1944--D-day, the so-called "longest day" of World War II. Also consider that more soldiers were killed and wounded at the Battle of Antietam than the deaths of all Americans in the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, and Spanish-American War combined.

On-line Civil War Rosters

The Wisconsin Historical Society has the alphabetical and regimental rosters of all Wisconsin Civil War soldiers on-line. This useful resource is found at: <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/roster/>

Streiff of Diesbach and Schwanden

Many Streiff families came to America. Naturally we are familiar with the families who lived here in Green County, although other Streiff families are known to have settled in Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Oregon, Nebraska and Ohio. The Streiffs were found in Canton Graubünden many hundreds of years ago. The first Streiffs found in recorded history are the brothers Konrad and Otto Straiff who served as witnesses in 1270 to a document of Bishop Heinrich IV of Chur (Heinrich of Montfort). These Straiff brothers were wealthy landowners in the Prättigau Valley. The first Canton Glarus Streiff was Lux Streiff (~1510-1553) who lived in the area of Diesbach and Betschwanden. Lux' grandsons were brothers Fridli and Peter Streiff. Fridli's descendents are the Streiffs of Diesbach. Peter moved to Schwanden and became the progenitor of the Schwanden line.



The Streiffs of New Glarus represent both Diesbach and Schwanden lineages.

Fridolin Streiff (the scout) and Fridolin Streiff (the Civil War veteran) were from the Schwanden line; the brothers Fabian, Johann Balthasar and Johann Peter Streiff

were of the Diesbach line. Peter Streiff (whose tombstone is in the museum cemetery) was from a Streiff branch that lived for several generations in the village of Luchsingen, but appears to be descended from the Schwanden branch. Another Peter Streiff from the Diesbach line settled here around 1879 and married Elsbeth Schindler in 1884. Peter and Elsbeth had six daughters. One of their daughters, Emma Streiff, married Robert Streiff (son of Civil War Fridolin) and thus merging the Diesbach and Schwanden lines.

Some interesting material has been put together in a Streiff website by David Rutherford Streiff of New Zealand. It can be found at <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/s/t/r/David-R-Streiff/>

Historic 500th Anniversary

It was in 1506 that 22 year old Ulrich Zwingli was ordained a priest by the Bishop of Constance. Later that same year Zwingli was sent to Glarus, Switzerland and became the priest of the local church. He served in Glarus for 10 years before accepting the post of people's priest at Einsiedeln, Canton Schwyz. Only two years later (1518) Zwingli was named the people's priest at the Great Minster of Zurich.



Zwingli was a native of Wildhaus in the Toggenburg region of Canton St. Gallen. The family home still stands in Wildhaus -- one of Switzerland's oldest extant wooden structures. Zwingli's niece Anna married Klaus Wilhelm (later Wild) and they became the ancestors of the numerous Wild family branches in Canton Glarus -- thus making Reformer Ulrich Zwingli an ancestral uncle to countless Glarners.

Localities with the Villages of Canton Glarus

The following listing, prepared for the most part by U. Petra Suess, documents the various localities associated with the villages of Canton Glarus. For example, a family researcher may find a reference to the Blumer family from Thon or a Hefti family of Dornhaus. Using the list below, one finds Thon associated with the village of Schwanden, and Dornhaus associated with Diesbach. Thon is an area on the hillside just above Schwanden and Dornhaus is adjacent to Diesbach on the road to Betschwanden. The Schwanden and Diesbach community flags are shown below.

Betschwanden: Betschwanden, Obmatt

Bilten: Bilten, Oberbilten, Unterbilten, Rüti, Ussbühl, Elmen

Braunwald: Braunwald, Kleiner Gumen, Rubschen

Diesbach: Diesbach, Diesbach-Betschwanden, Dornhaus, Ohrenplatte

Elm: Aeschen, Egg, Elm, Meissenboden, Müsli, Obmoos, Sandbühl, Schwändi, Schwendi, Steinibach, Sulzbach, Töniberg, Unteral, Vogelsang, Wald

Engi: Engi, Engi Hinterdorf, Engi Vorderdorf, Hinterdorf, Höfliegg, Kummerberg, Vorderdorf

Ennenda: Ennenda, Ennetberge, Ennetbühls bei Ennenda, Großberg, Mühlefuhr, Sturmingen

Filzbach: Brittenberg, Filzbach, Habergschwänd, Vordemwald

Glarus: Bleiche, Hohlenstein, Käseren, Klöntal, Leimen, Rhodannenber, Richisau, Schwammhöhe, Seerüti, Vorauen

Haslen: Bühl, Haslen, Leu, Mühlebächli, Sand, Zusingen

Hätzingen: Hätzingen

Leuggelbach: Leuggelbach

Linthal: Auen, Bergli, Ennetlinth, Frittern, Fruttberge, Linthal, Nußbühl, Obbord, Oberberg, Oberreiti, Reitimatt, Stachelberg, Tierfehd

Luchsingen: Adlenbach, Luchsingen, Luchsingen-Hätzingen

Matt: Brumbach, Matt, Stalden, Weissenberge, Wissenbergen

Mitlödi: Ennetlinth, Mitlödi, Schlatt

Mollis: Beglingen, Fronalp, Kengel, Mollis, Mullern

Mollis & Weesen (St. Gallen): Biäsche

Mühlehorn: Mühlehorn, Tiefenwinkel, Vortobel

Näfels: Aeschen, Näfels, Näfels-Mollis, Obersee

Netstal: Langgütli, Netstal

Nidfurn: Nidfurn, Nidfurn-Haslen

Niederurnen: Niederurnen, Nieder- & Oberurnen, Ziegelbrücke

Oberurnen: Elmenrütthal, Näfels Berg, Oberurnen, Riet, Schwändital

Obstalden: Hütten, Mühlethal, Nidstalden, Obstalden, Voglingen, Wallenguflen

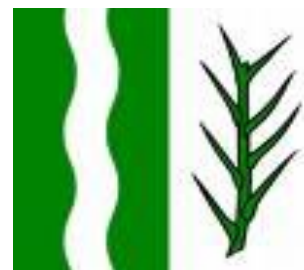
Riedern: Riedern, Staldengarten

Rüti: Rüti, Sätliboden

Schwanden: Au, Kies, Mettmen, Schwanden, Thon

Schwändi bei Schwanden: Lassingen, Niederrüti, Schwändi bei Schwanden

Sool: Sool, Soolstrasse, Wart



When Family History and Local History Intersect

Researching family histories can provide leads to other stories of local history interest. While researching various families and reading Madison local history, some interesting intersections are found. Various well-known Madison business institutions past and present have links to New Glarus and Green County. Many people remember stores such as Yost-Kessenich's. Mrs. Frank Kessenich was the former Ernestine Ott, daughter of John Conrad Ott a very early New Glarus merchant. In 1923 Frank Kessenich built his flagship State Street store – the façade of which is now incorporated into the Overture Center complex. Wolff Kubly and Hirsig was a partnership which included Vincent S. Kubly and Louis Hirsig. Kubly, a Green County native, was the son of Heinrich and Salome (Luchsinger) Kubli. Louis Hirsig married Marie Duerst, a granddaughter of Niklaus and Anna Maria (Streff) Dürst of New Glarus. The Wehrmann's travel and leather goods store was founded in 1886 by German immigrant Charles Wehrmann and still operates today. Wehrmann was married to Fannie Rhyner the daughter of Pancraz and Anna (Schneider) Rhyner who had emigrated from Elm, Canton Glarus. Another Elm immigrant to early Madison was Elsbeth Freitag who married William Veerhusen. Their son Herman Veerhusen was a partner in the Olson and Veerhusen men's store located at 23 S. Pinckney on the Square. And at 1 S. Pinckney was the First National Bank of Madison whose long-time President was New Glarus native Thomas R. Hefty. Hefty sold his Maple Bluff home in 1949 to the State of Wisconsin and today it serves as the Governor's Mansion. And the only Fortune 500 company headquartered in Madison, American Family Insurance, was begun in 1927 by an area native Herman Wittwer. Wittwer's father was born in Spiez, Canton Bern and his mother's ancestors (the Dicks and the Iselis) also have Canton Bern roots.

Surname Etymology

The ethnic origin of some American surnames may or may not be easily discerned. The surname Roethlisberger may immediately conjure up images of Canton Bern . . . or of pro-football. The name Zellweger may inspire thoughts of Canton Appenzell . . . or of Hollywood. However upon hearing surnames like Lookingbill, Loganbill and Graybill one may think of England or even possibly of Native America. Yet Lookingbill, Loganbill and Graybill are actually "Americanized" derivations of the Swiss names Luginbühl and Krähenbühl.