

# Family History Notes

Winter, 2008

## Nicknames and Middle Initials to Avoid Confusion

The repetition of Christian names in Glarner families had the tendency to cause confusion. Sons were named after grandfathers and fathers. Daughters were named after grandmothers and mothers. As a result of these traditional naming conventions, the same given names continued in families for generations. In *Native's Return*, Herbert Kubly wrote about the 32 men and boys in the small village of Elm with the name Kaspar (Kap for short) Rhyner. In Elm, nicknames were devised to help identify the various Kap Rhyners. Kubly wrote "to differentiate between themselves each Kap Rhyner had his village designation, some of which were *Hinderhaus-Kap*, *Klepberg-Kap* and *Gerstboden-Kap*, named for regions in which they lived; *Sager-Kap*, who operated a sawmill, and *Habamine-Kap*, whose mother was a midwife. *Baumeister-Kap*, which translated as Building Master Kap."

In New Glarus nicknames were also used. But additionally men with the same name would adopt a middle initial generally based upon the maiden name of their wives. For instance many years ago there was a Samuel Duerst who married Rosina Altmann. He was known as Samuel A. Duerst. His first cousin, also named Samuel Duerst, married Rachel Geiger. He was known as Samuel G. Duerst. Sam G. Duerst's brothers included Henry Z. Duerst (he was married to Verena Zentner), Edward W. Duerst and John W. Duerst (married to sisters Rosina and Barbara Werndli). Other John Duersts included John B. (he married Maria Blum), John S. (married to Anna Streiff), John G. (married to Maria Ida Girschweiler) and John Z. Durst (married to Florence Zweifel).

There were numerous area men by the name of John Hefty including John K. (married to Agnes Kleppe), John E. (married to Maria Elmer), John Z. (married to Verena Zweifel) and John S. (married to Bertha Streiff). There were also numerous men by the name of Jacob Hoesly including Jacob B. (married to Rosina Becker), Jacob K. (married to Amalia Kundert), Jacob D. (married to Barbara Domholdt) and Jacob L. (married to Barbara Legler).

There was Jacob S. Disch (married to Bertha Streiff) and Jacob A. Disch (married to Maria Altmann). There was John S. Zweifel (married to Barbara Streiff) and John M. Zweifel (married to Anna Marty). And in the Klassy family there was Sam B. Klassy (married to Anna Becker) as well as Peter O. Klassy (married to Verena Louisa Ott), Peter H. Klassy (married to Barbara Hoesly) and Peter Ch. Klassy (married to Rosa Duerst Christen). There was Nic H. Zweifel (married to Verena Hauser) and Nic K. Zweifel (married to Kathryn Kundert). People may remember Fred W. Stuessy (married to Regula Werndli), their son Fred V. Stuessy (married to Bertha Voegeli) and Fred D. Stuessy (married to Barbara Emma Duerst).

Other local men sporting middle initials included Werner L. Zentner and John L. Streiff (married to sisters Maria and Lena Legler), Henry B. Hoesly (married to Lena Blum), and Jacob S. Urben (married to Tillie Stuessy). There was John D. Legler (married to Magdalena Duerst), Jacob Z. Duerst (married to Mary Zentner), John B. Schneider (married to Leona Becker), Matt A. Marty (married to Anna Arnold) and Sam T. Hefty (married to Bertha Truttmann). Anton Christian Ott was known as Anton I. Ott (married to Hulda Ingold) and Johann Jacob Hefty was known as Jacob B. Hefty (married to Olga Blum). Occasionally the middle initial really did represent a middle name and, coincidentally, the wife's maiden name. John H. Kundert (married to Anna Hoesly) had the middle name Hermann. Peter E. Ott (married to Beulah Engen) had the middle name Edward. And Sam P. Klassy (married to Wilma Pluss) had the middle name Peter.

## Who was Harriet Fisher?

Amy Fisher of Colorado hit a brick wall researching her great-great grandmother Harriet Fisher. Little was known about Harriet before her 1851 marriage to George Fisher in Hancock County, IL. Marriage records spelled Harriet's maiden name as Stanfacker or Staufacker while other family records listed her maiden name as Stofer or Stauffer. An entry in the RootsWeb genealogical database says Harriet was born in Onton Blarivus, Switzerland in 1835. Her entry in the LDS database says Harriet Ann Stouffer (or Stauffer or Staufacker) was born in Llanton Staris, Switzerland. Amy knew that Harriet was born in Switzerland and made the connection with Canton Glarus. She believed that Harriet had immigrated to the U.S. in 1844 via New Orleans and had spent some years in Galena. Fisher family lore reported that two of Harriet's brothers died en route to America. Another family story told of a little girl was buried at sea. But these bits and pieces of Harriet's life wouldn't reveal her ancestry.



People from the Green County region may immediately recognize that the name Staufacker is quite likely the Glarner name Stauffacher. Local historians may recall reading that original New Glarus settlers Heinrich and Barbara (Blumer) Stauffacher buried one daughter at sea (recorded by diarist Mathias Dürst) and that two of their sons died presumably en route to America (see p. 208 of "New Glarus 1845-1970" by Dr. Leo Schelbert). Heinrich and Barbara did not have a daughter named Harriet, but they did have a daughter named Afra born in 1836. Was Afra Stauffacher the same person as Harriet Fisher?

Heinrich and Barbara Stauffacher, like the other Stauffacher families who arrived in 1845 left New Glarus within a year or two. Fridolin Streiff wrote that this family was in Galena in 1846 and census records indicate they were somewhere in Illinois around 1850. In the 1860 federal census, "H. Stofaker" and wife Barbara are found in Scotland County, Missouri. And only miles away living in adjoining Knox County, Missouri are Harriet and George Fisher! Based on circumstantial information it appears quite likely that Harriet Fisher was born Afra Stauffacher, an original New Glarus colonist. Harriet died in Missouri in 1929. She is pictured above with two grandchildren around 1920.

### Online Illinois Vital Records Databases

An online Illinois marriage database was used to help find records related to the story of Harriet Fisher. This and other Illinois databases can be found at: <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases.html> The Illinois database is particularly useful for those Green County couples who got married “south of the border” in Stephenson County, IL.

### Multi-generation Family Photographs

The sweep of time is captured in multi-generation family photographs. Faces wizened but wise contrast with youthful innocence. The lives of these venerable people span New Glarus’ past and can serve as authentic lessons in local history.

This first photograph is that of Verena (Jenny) Ott and her descendents. Verena Jenny (1835-1924) was a native of Sool, Canton Glarus and immigrated with her parents Peter and Sara (Freuler) Jenny. In 1852 Verena married Anton Ott, also a Canton Glarus immigrant. Anton and Verena had a large family of 13 children – 10 who lived to adulthood. Our museum has the tombstone of the two small Ott children who died in November of 1863, the tombstone of Verena’s father Peter Jnni (sic), and the beautifully handwritten plaque commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of Anton and Verena. The Ott’s eldest child Sara (1858-1941) married Heinrich Hefty. By the age of 34, Sara was widowed with five small children. A few years later Sara married Andrew Stuessy and had three more children. The Hefty daughter, Bertha Hefty (1885-1972) married Andrew Hoesly and they farmed on the Hoesly homestead north of New Glarus. Bertha is show in the picture with her firstborn child, daughter Hilda. Hilda Hoesly (1908-2004) married Ernst Zentner, and they were the parents of Carlton, Sharon and Linda Zentner. The baby in this picture, Hilda (Hoesly) Zentner died in 2004 at the age of 96. This photograph was taken in approximately 1908.



The second photograph was taken around 1916. The four generations pictured here begin with Anna Katharina (Wild) Eichelkraut (1838-1918). Katharina was born in Schwanden, Canton Glarus and immigrated to America in 1845 with her parents Joshua and Barbara (Speich) Wild. The Wilds



lived in Syracuse, NY for several years and arrived here in New Glarus in 1850 following the arrival of the Ottts in 1849. (Joshua Wild was the half-brother of Anton Ott mentioned above, having the same mother Katharina Fluri.) Anna Katharina married a German immigrant, Johann Heinrich Julius Eichelkraut in 1856. They farmed in the hills of Crawford County for the first several years of their marriage but moved back purchasing the farm west of New Glarus which is yet in Eichelkraut

hands today. In addition to being a mother and farm wife, Katharina taught Sunday School at the Swiss Reformed Church for over 50 years. Several of Katharina’s intricate hair weavings are in the museum collection. The Eichelkraut’s had ten children, nine of whom lived to adulthood. Their second born was Emma (1858-1955) who married Caspar Elmer in 1877. They farmed on the Elmer homestead north of New Glarus. Their oldest daughter Anna Maria (Mary) Elmer (1878-1940) married J. J. Figi in 1899. Theirs was the last wedding ceremony performed in the stone Swiss Reformed church before it was razed. J. J. and Mary Figi had two children – Kathryn and Elmer. Kathryn Figi (1901-1979) married Melvin Streiff in 1921 and they were the parents of Kenneth, Clayton, Paul, Dennis, Harley, Marie and Steve Streiff.



This five generation photograph was recently identified as the female descendents of Barbara (Becker) Duerst (1836-1928). Barbara Becker was born in Ennenda, Canton Glarus, the daughter of Johannes and Anna Maria (Trumpy) Becker. Barbara married Samuel Duerst in 1855 and they immigrated a month after their marriage. Barbara and Samuel farmed for over 30 years a few miles southwest of the village. Their oldest daughter Maria Duerst (1856-1940) married Henry Aebly. Aebly’s parents Heinrich and Anna Maria (Becker) Aebly were the first couple to marry in New Glarus in 1847. The Henry Aeblys ran the Wisconsin House in the 1880s. This former hotel is located at 28 Sixth Avenue (today the Lienhardt-Jeglum Realty). The Aeblys later farmed near Eau Claire, WI. Their oldest daughter, Anna Maria (1876-1957) married John Mathias Schmid. Schmid’s four grandparents were all original New Glarus settlers of 1845 – one being Mathias Duerst the diarist. The Schmid’s daughter Letha (1897-1961) was a nurse who trained in Milwaukee. She met and married Arthur Sandner and they had two children Marianne and Arthur. Marianne (Sandner) Gleisner – the little girl in the middle -- lives in Green Bay, WI and her brother Arthur Sandner resides in Milwaukee. The photograph was taken in approximately 1926 in front of the former Duerst home at First Street and Eleventh Avenue in New Glarus.

## **The White Church**

The “White Church” and its congregation in New Glarus has been referred to over the years by a variety of names -- the Evangelical Association, the German Methodists, Pisgah Gemeinde, German Evangelical and eventually the Evangelical United Brethren or EUB Church. The EUB Church had its roots in the Evangelical Association movement formed around 1800 by German-speaking Pennsylvanians who were influenced by John Wesley and the Methodists. In 1946 the Evangelical Association merged with the United Brethren to form the Evangelical United Brethren. And in 1968, the EUB Church merged with the Methodists to form the United Methodist Church.

In the 1840s German-speaking immigrants were finding their way to Wisconsin. And following on the heels of these immigrants were the Evangelical Association ministers and circuit riders. Circuit riders started to stop in New Glarus as early as 1847. Another congregation on the circuit formed in the 1850s in Dutch Hollow where many Glarner (many from Matt) and Germans were settling. In New Glarus, the EUB congregation was always smaller in size than the Swiss Reformed Church. New Glarus histories have spoken of the early animosity between the two groups – so much so that the first Evangelical church building was located outside of the village on the hilltop south of town. The church was built on land owned by Heinrich Hoesly. Joshua Wild wrote of the church and Hoesly in his notebook – “1859 - a frame Methodist church was built. The Methodists were organized a few years before by a Henry Hoesly, who spent most of his time with wine and cards, hoping that someday he could be a preacher, so he could avoid hard work. Up to this date he did not succeed.” (Translation by Paul Grossenbacher, 1979). Despite Wild’s reproachful words about Hoesly, the White Church boasted members influential and greatly respected in the community.

Our 1861 map of Green County shows the location of this church. It was located on the hilltop north of today’s County H and south of Legler Valley Road. In those days, a road existed coming straight south from New Glarus (today’s Eighth Street), over the Legler Valley creek then doglegging up the hillside to the southwest. The church was sited alongside this former country lane.

In November of 1865, the Evangelical Association moved from their country location to a village site at 207 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It has been somewhat ambiguous if the congregation moved to a church building “put up” in the village or if the country church building was literally “moved” into town. In the 1884 History of Green County, Conrad Zimmerman wrote that “this building was erected on Section 22 and moved into the village around 1860.” Once again, Joshua Wild captured the 1865 event by recording “*Wurde die Medotistenkirche in den Village geschleift.*” Wild’s passage was shared with Swiss historians. They indicated that the verb *geschleift* means to drag or pull -- thus supporting the view that the building itself was moved into New Glarus.

Just six years after the Evangelical Association church was built in the countryside due to “hostilities” with the more dominant Swiss Reformed congregation, it was moved into New Glarus. Perhaps these reported “hostilities” were not so deep after all. Perhaps Reverend Etter of the Swiss Church who replaced Reverend Zimmerman in 1860 had a more ecumenical side. Perhaps the tragedy of the Civil War in the intervening years had sown the seeds of greater tolerance. The handwritten minutes of the early EUB church may hold some insights on the affairs of that time. In 1890, the congregation built a new church – the “White Church” which we know today as the Masonic Hall.

The Evangelical Association began their local cemetery around 1867 when Heinrich Geiger donated a half acre of land for that purpose. The first burial may have been Sara (Voegeli) Kundert (1792-1867) since hers is the oldest extant tombstone. Unlike the Swiss Reformed cemetery, the EUB cemetery was transcribed some years ago and the burial listing (based on the monument inscriptions) can be found in libraries and historical society archives.

Some of the early families who were faithful members of the EUB congregation included people such as John and Dorothea (Speich) Legler, Oswald and Sarah (Kundert) Babler, Fridolin and Maria (Elmer) Babler, Johann Jacob and Magdalena (Baumgartner) Zwicky, George and Anna (Dürst) Legler, and Peter and Sabina (Zweifel) Hoesly. Children and grandchildren of these people kept the congregation going until 1968 when the church quietly closed its doors – the last service being held on Sunday, May 26, 1968. The oldest remaining member of the congregation was Mrs. Baltz (Anna Legler) Kundert. Anna died in 1973, the last surviving child of original 1845 colonist John Legler and wife Dorothea.

Of interest to family and local historians is what became of the “White” Church records. These records were said to have passed into private hands, but microfilm copies of some of the minutes, membership lists and sacramental records have been located at Southwest Wisconsin Room archives in the Karrmann Library in Platteville. Photocopies of the church minutes (handwritten in German) have been made for our Historical Society archives. Membership lists, baptism, marriage and death information have recently been photocopied and can be found in the Monticello Area Historical Society’s archives. The sacramental records are from the 1870s until the 1930s and the membership lists are from around the late 1890s to the early 1900s. These records also include family information from the Dutch Hollow and Little Sugar River (Monticello) congregations.

## **Peter Speich – Evangelical Minister**

Peter Speich (1841-1913) and his sister Dorothea (Mrs. John Legler) arrived in New Glarus as orphans -- their parents, Peter and Dorothea (Babler) Speich of Matt, Canton Glarus both died in 1851. Their oldest sister Elsbeth (Mrs. Jacob Stauffacher) had arrived here in 1845 and two other sisters arrived in the region in 1846. Speich became a minister with the Evangelical Association serving communities throughout Wisconsin including Mazomanie, Monroe, Madison, Alma, Honey Creek, Waukesha, Prairie du Chien, and Milwaukee. In 1885 he officiated at the New Glarus funeral of Mrs. George (Anna Dürst) Legler. Rev. Speich died in 1913 in Milwaukee at the age of 71 – the last of the Speich siblings.

## **Tschudi vs. Habsburg**

The origin of the Tschudi family history is said to go back to an alleged slave-cum-nobleman born in the year 870 A. D. While this story is likely a fabrication, the Tschudi name is possibly the oldest and most historic in Canton Glarus. The line beginning with and descending from Heinrich Tschudi (1142-1220) is based on verifiable documentation. Heinrich's great grandson, Rudolf Tschudi (1257-1335) lived in the time of the legendary Wilhelm Tell and the birth of the Swiss Confederation. A tale is told that in 1313, Rudolf was attacked by enemies and in the struggle his sword was shattered. With Herculean strength, Tschudi pulled a hemlock tree out of the ground and slew nine of his attackers with the outstretched roots. To this day, the Tschudi coat of arms depicts the tree and nine blood-stained pinecones.



**Tschudi** <sup>IV</sup>

Rudolf's son Johannes Tschudi (1290-1360) fought in the great battle of Morgarten (1315) against the Habsburgs. Morgarten was a decisive Swiss victory. The Habsburgs were under the command of Leopold I, the son of the late King of Germany Albrecht I of Habsburg.

Johannes Tschudi's sons Heinrich and Johannes both died in 1386 in battles with the Habsburgs. Johannes was part of the Glarner forces which breached the Oberwindegg Castle at Niederurnen, Canton Glarus. Johannes was killed in this uprising and died on 4 July 1386. This castle (known today as the Schlössli) still looks down on Niederurnen. On 9 July 1386 in the great battle of Sempach in Canton Lucerne, brother Heinrich Tschudi was killed. Sempach was the second major Swiss victory against the Habsburgs, and the Habsburg leader, Duke Leopold III of Austria (nephew of Leopold I) was also killed in battle.

Two years later tragedy again struck the same Tschudi family. Austrian forces ordered by Duke Albert III of Habsburg (brother of Leopold III) invaded the town of Weesen (near Glarus) in the middle of the night and murdered the troops garrisoned there. Brothers Heinrich and Hermann Tschudi -- sons of Heinrich who was killed at Sempach -- were among those murdered on 22 February 1388. The massacre is known as the *die Mordnacht zu Weesen* and this event preceded the victorious Glarner battle at Näfels. Näfels was the final encounter between the Swiss and the Habsburgs.

These early Tschudis were the progenitors of the Canton Glarus Tschudi family. Many people have the Tschudi name somewhere in their extended family trees. And thus they are descendants of these early Tschudis who helped shape Swiss history in its struggle for independence from the Habsburgs over six hundred years ago.

## **Tschudi Tolerance in Reformation Times**

Valentin Tschudi (1498-1555) demonstrated a remarkable sense of tolerance during the contentious years of the Reformation. As a child, Valentin was identified as having great potential and so was educated in schools located in Vienna, Pavia, Basel and Paris. His teachers included the humanists Vadian (born Joachim von Watt in St. Gallen) and Glarean (born Heinrich Loriti in Canton Glarus). Valentin became a close friend of Zwingli and was recommended by Zwingli to assume the role of priest in Glarus in 1522. As a priest in Glarus, Valentin said Mass, but also preached the new beliefs of the Reformers. He respected the people and beliefs of both sides, even as his mentor Zwingli became increasingly strident. Tschudi married and accepted the Reformed faith, yet remarkably preached to the Catholics in the morning and ministered to the Reformed congregation later the same day. The city of Glarus church was shared by both the Catholic and Reformed congregations for hundreds of years. The sharing of political power was brokered between the Reformed and Catholic sectors of the canton and Canton Glarus weathered the Reformation storm -- unlike Canton Appenzell which split along religious lines in 1597 into half-cantons.

## **Tschudi in New Glarus**

Early people with the name Tschudi (generally spelled Tschudy in New Glarus) in this area were four brothers Johann Jacob, Peter Rudolf, Fridolin (Fritz) and Samuel Tschudy the sons of Fridolin and Rosina (Blumer) Tschudi of Schwanden, Canton Glarus. Arriving first in 1846 was Johann Jacob, a community and religious leader during the early years of New Glarus. He married Barbara Hottinger and they later moved to Monroe where they lived the rest of their lives. Peter Rudolf married Anna Legler (said to be the first girl born in New Glarus) and they moved to Beresford, SD. Fridolin (Fritz) married Amalia Blumer and they ran the Tschudy general store in New Glarus. The Tschudy store building (pictured right) was built in 1866 and still stands at 526 First Street. Descendants of Fritz and Amalia include Joyce Roth, Jim Tschudy, Al Hefty, Patricia Stein, and New Glarus historians Millard and Kim Tschudy. The fourth brother, Samuel Tschudy, remained a bachelor and died in Monroe.



Other Tschudys in the region included Fridolin and Elsbeth (Zweifel) Tschudy and family who arrived around 1866 and lived near Monroe. Anna Margarethe Tschudi (Mrs. Johann Peter Knobel) was the grandmother of Belva Mueller and Eldera Eichelkraut. And 1913 immigrant Barbara Tschudi (Mrs. Carl Wenger) was the mother of the late Walt Wenger.