

Family History Notes

Summer, 2010

Ulrich Zwingli Descendents in New Glarus?

It has been known in New Glarus for decades that people who descend from the Wild family of Canton Glarus are descended from Anna Zwingli, sister of Reformer Ulrich Zwingli. In 1539 Anna Zwingli married Claus Wilhelm (later known as Wild) and they were the progenitors of all Wilds in Canton Glarus (see Family History Notes Spring 2005,



Spring 2007, and Fall 2008). Additionally, Canton Glarus records provide a link between two branches of the Elmer family who are said to be descended from Ulrich Zwingli's brother Niklaus. This connection was made through Niklaus Zwingli's descendent Johann Balthasar Zwingli who served as minister in the Elm church from 1710 to 1737 (see Family History Notes Summer 2008). And now there is evidence that the Reformer himself had descendents living in Canton Glarus as early as the mid-1600s. This discovery was based upon a combination of family data provided by the Canton Glarus Archives (*Landesarchiv des Kantons Glarus*) with genealogical information provided by a Geneva, Switzerland resource.

Zwingli was Switzerland's leading figure advocating the Reformation. He was an ordained Roman Catholic priest who was named to Zurich's *Grossmünster* in 1519. In 1522 Zwingli secretly married a widow, Anna (Reinhard) Meier. They publically announced their wedded status in 1524 prior to the birth of their first of four children. When Zwingli was killed in battle in 1531, his widow and children were taken in by Heinrich Bullinger (Zwingli's successor at the *Grossmünster*) forging a close relationship between the Zwingli and Bullinger families. And when Zwingli's widow Anna died in 1538, the Bullingers continue to raise and educate the Zwingli children.

Ulrich and Anna (Reinhard) Zwingli had four children – sons Wilhelm and Ulrich and daughters Regula and Anna. Wilhelm and Anna both died young. Son Ulrich married Anna Bullinger, a daughter of Heinrich Bullinger. There were grandsons named Rudolf and Ulrich Zwingli, but apparently this Zwingli male line ended without issue upon the deaths of grandsons Rudolf in 1571 and Ulrich around 1600. Zwingli daughter Regula married Rudolf Gwalter (also spelled Gwalther) in 1541. Gwalter also had been raised and educated by Heinrich Bullinger. He served as editor of Ulrich Zwingli's writings in 1545, and eventually become the Bullinger's successor at the *Grossmünster* upon Bullinger's death in 1575. Regula and Rudolf had several children before Regula died from an outbreak of bubonic plague which swept through Zurich in 1565.



About a hundred years passed and, according to the data, a great-great-granddaughter of Rudolf and Regula (Zwingli) Gwalter was married to Stephen Zeller, a minister who served the parish of Betschwanden, Canton Glarus between 1652 and 1670. Zeller children married into the local Canton Glarus population thus merging their Zwingli connection with Glarner blood. (Stephen Zeller, himself, was possibly a direct descendent of several Reformation-era leaders such as Heinrich Bullinger, Hans Rudolf Lavater, and Anabaptist Conrad Grebel – see Family History Notes Summer 2008).

This new research points to several early New Glarus area residents who are believed to be directly descended from this Canton Glarus/Zwingli connection. These descendents included Esaias Stuessy, Mathias Stuessy, and Fridolin Streiff of New Glarus and John B. Streiff and Sabina (Zopfi) Waelti of Monroe. Research on this Zwingli connection is continuing as more genealogical material becomes available from both Swiss resources and online data.

The above portrait of Ulrich Zwingli was by Zurich painter Hans Asper (1499-1571) in 1549. The portrait of Regula (Zwingli) Gwalter and daughter Anna Gwalter was also painted by Asper in the same year. Daughter Anna Gwalter later married Heinrich Bullinger, son of Reformer Heinrich Bullinger.

Robert Marti Elected Canton Glarus Landammann

Despite a heavy rain at the 2010 *Landsgemeinde* (Open Air Assembly), Robert (Röbi) Marti of Riedern was elected *Landammann* – the highest public office in Canton Glarus. He had previously served in this role in 2006-2008. Marti's family roots run deep in the Sernftal – his ancestors having the typical Glarner surnames of the little valley – Marti, Bräm, Baumgartner, Blumer, Elmer and Hämmerli. Marti's grandfather's sister was the late Mrs. Leonard Altmann (née Margaretha Bräm) of New Glarus.

Albert Struebin's Proud Legacy

The name Albert Struebin may not be well-recognized in New Glarus history. This Swiss immigrant who enjoyed music and gymnastics, made an artistic mark in 1913 which continues to impress people to this day. The handsome murals gracing the interior walls of Puempel's Tavern were painted by Struebin. It has been reported that Albert Struebin was an Austrian traveling across America and that he painted the murals in return for room and board. Another reference says he was an itinerant artist and a boarder at Puempel's who stayed for six months. Even the 2010 Green County visitor guide says Struebin was a traveling artist. But Struebin was neither Austrian nor itinerant.

Albert Struebin was a native of Liestal, Canton Basel-Country. Liestal, the capital of the canton, lies on a main rail line which runs north-south through Switzerland linking Germany and Italy. The 23 year old Struebin immigrated in 1902 and was listed as a baker upon arrival at Ellis Island. Chicago was given as Struebin's destination but by 1907 he is living in this area. He is found in a photograph of the New Glarus *Männerchor* (men's chorus) and entertained at the "Harmonie Concert" in Monroe where he performed in a yodel duet. He traveled with fellow members of Monroe's *Turnverein* (Turners) to the state contest in Green Bay where the Monroe gymnasts won seventh prize. But Struebin was more successful placing second in his individual class competition. In between his work, music and gymnastics Struebin also acted as a witness to the 1907 wedding of John Hirsbrunner and Mary ZumBrunnen.



In 1908 Struebin was in Chicago where he became interested in another Swiss immigrant, Agnes Filliger. Two handmade postcards sent from Albert to Agnes survive and are pictured at the end of this article. The first (dated May 25, 1908) is a hand-tinted drawing of "*Winkelried's Tod*" (the death of Arnold von Winkelried, a Swiss hero from the battle of Sempach). Perhaps this could be considered a romantic image since it expresses the ideals of heroism, selflessness and sacrifice for family and country. But it is certainly not romantic in the sense of flowery and sentimental verse. The second card (dated July 19, 1908) contains a hand printed and colored poem "*Ich hätt' es nie geglaubt*" or "I would have never believed it" in which Albert appears to express his regret and disappointment over some event which likely occurred between the pair.

But all ended happily for in 1909 Albert married Agnes. They are listed in the 1910 census living in New Glarus and he is identified as a painter. Albert and Agnes had a son Albert Paul Struebin born in New Glarus in 1910. (Photo at left is Albert and son Albert Paul.)

Struebin found a creative outlet for his painting talents. The scenes he painted at Puempel's in 1913 are a curious mix of topics – an Appenzeller music trio, a scene of the Bodensee-Toggenburg Railroad in Canton St. Gallen, the capture of Andreas Hofer the Tyrolean military hero by Italian troops on January 19, 1810 (Hofer mural pictured below), and a scene from the American Civil War. Near the back door is an unorthodox painted clock. A clock face – without hands – is accompanied by a quote attributed to Schiller (in his Wallenstein trilogy) "*dem Glücklichen schlägt keine Stunde*" meaning "hours do not strike for a happy man" or expressed another way "those who are happy do not notice the passage of time".

In July of 1914, several advertisements appeared in the local paper in which Struebin sought painting jobs also mentioning how he had baking experience. At some point between 1914 and 1918 Albert, Agnes and Albert, Jr. moved to Janesville where Albert was employed as a house painter and where they lived the rest of their lives. And like in New Glarus he painted scenic murals for Janesville businesses. In 1921, the cheese store of Paul Hofer opened in the Grubb Building on Janesville's North Jackson Street. Albert Struebin painted the walls with Swiss scenes as he did in Puempel's Tavern. In later years when Struebin worked for Janesville's Mercy Hospital, he set up an outdoor nativity scene using figures which he had hand-painted. The Struebins maintained



New Glarus friendships including those with David and Anna Kundert, Margaret Mueller, and Matt and Anna Marty.

Albert Struebin died in April of 1962 and his wife Agnes followed him in September of the same year. Albert Jr. died in 1986. Struebin's grandchildren still reside in Janesville remembering their grandfather's yodeling, hearing of his gymnastic abilities, and his New Glarus legacy. And Struebin descendents are still avid gymnasts. Dalton Struebin, 12, Albert's great-great grandson, is an accomplished gymnast. By age 11 he had earned about 500 medals and three dozen trophies attesting to his athletic abilities. His sights are set on the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

In 1965 Dave Zweifel wrote an article for the "Capitol Times" about the Struebin murals at Puempel's Tavern stating that the four murals represented various stages in Andreas Hofer's life. "Struebin and his brush," wrote Zweifel, "told Hofer's life in four huge paintings". Actually, only one mural depicts Hofer. But Zweifel had it right saying that the murals were painted by a New Glarus man who later moved to Janesville – none of the apocryphal itinerant Austrian story. And while Zweifel waxed eloquently about Hofer, he missed the story of a Swiss immigrant whose artistic achievement is still appreciated by locals and visitors alike now nearly 100 years later.



(Photo and postcards courtesy of the Struebin family.)

An Indirect Liestal Connection

Another art connection exists between New Glarus and Liestal, Canton Basel. It is the hand carved *Steinbock* (ibex or alpine mountain goat) found in the collection of the New Glarus Historical Society. The life-size wooden carving was sent from Switzerland as part of the Swiss exhibit in the World's Columbian Exposition, i.e. the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. The Swiss Consul in Chicago at the time of the fair was Arnold Holinger. In addition to his duties as Consul, Holinger served as Commissioner General of Switzerland at the Columbian Exposition. And like Albert Struebin, Holinger was a native of Liestal.

The fair ended in October of 1893. On January 3, 1894, Arnold Karl Holinger was born to Consul Holinger and his wife Elise. The carved ibex became a gift to the newborn baby. The ibex remained in the homes of Holinger family members for several decades. Holinger grandchildren climbed onto the carving riding it as if it were a rocking horse. In 1933 the carved ibex again became part of a Swiss exhibit – this time at the Century of Progress International Exhibition, i.e. the Chicago World's Fair of 1933. After that second Chicago fair, the ibex was returned to the Holinger family until it was traded to Chicago tailor Charles Lohse for a suit and a pair of trousers for Arnold K. Holinger.

Charles Lohse was born Karl Lohse in Hannover, Germany in 1897. After spending many years in Chicago, Lohse bought a tailor shop in Neenah, Wisconsin in 1942 which he operated for over 30 years. But Lohse was more than a tailor – he was also a collector and historian. He had an enviable collection of miniature paintings of historical personages. These paintings of private citizens and royalty predated the science of photography. And the miniatures provide Lohse a window through which he could view history, studying the life and times of those portrayed in his miniatures. Lohse had a generous nature. He donated a Nuremberg Bible to the Animal Welfare League which helped finance the construction of a new animal shelter. Lohse was an active member of the Animal Welfare League as well as the Friends of the Bergstrom Art Museum and the Neenah-Menasha Historical Society. And knowing of New Glarus' Swiss heritage he donated the carved ibex to the New Glarus Historical Society. Lohse died in 1973.

Fighting the Ottomans

Centuries ago Christian Europe fought against the Islamic World during the Crusades. Chances are we all have countless ancestors who “wore the cross”. Two centuries ago America fought the Barbary Pirates, also known as the Ottoman Corsairs, on “the shores of Tripoli” in today’s Libya. And back in 1714-1718 the Venetians unsuccessfully fought the Ottomans for control of the Peloponnese in southern Greece.

One of the casualties of the Ottoman-Venetian War was Adam Dürst (1669-1718) of Diesbach, Canton Glarus. Dürst fought for the Republic of Venice forces and died in 1718 while fighting the Turks in Dalmatia. He had married Margreth Kundert and they were the parents of several children. Among Adam Dürst’s direct descendents include early New Glarus residents Caspar Hefty and Mrs. Adam Zweifel (née Verena Durst). Adam Dürst descendents today include Carlton Zentner, Kay Zweifel and Robin Reuter.

Glarner Casualties of the French Invasion

When French troops invaded Switzerland in 1798, one of the areas which saw battle was the area around neighboring villages of Richterswil, Canton Zurich and Wollerau, Canton Schwyz. Here the French came up against the defending Swiss including the Canton Glarus troops under the command of *Oberst* (Colonel) Fridolin Paravicini (1742-1802) of Glarus. (The photo is an historic 1780 timber-framed house from Richterswil now relocated to the Swiss outdoor museum at Ballenberg.) The Swiss defenders were not able to repel the French advance and lost at the Battle of Wollerau (April 30, 1798). Ultimately the French went on to overrun Switzerland and established the Helvetic Republic. Canton Glarus became part of the new Canton Linth. It was not until the Congress of Vienna in 1815 that re-established Switzerland as a fully sovereign country.



The Glarner suffered 34 dead and 28 wounded at Wollerau. Among the Swiss defenders from Canton Glarus was Josef Anton Hauser (1761-1814) of Näfels. Hauser was severely wounded and left for dead on the battlefield. The 1803 history book “The History of the Invasion of Switzerland by the French” by Henry Zschokke reported the following anecdote about the wounded and nearly-dead Hauser and a compassionate French officer. “A French officer, named Tressinet, who passed near [Hauser], thought he discerned in him some signs of life. He approached, raised him up, and, finding that he breathed, cried, “Courage, comrade!” Hauser, as if awaking from sleep, fixed his eyes upon [Tressinet], and in a faint voice said, “It is not courage but strength that fails me.” The Frenchman, delighted and affected with this reply, ordered that the wounded man should be instantly dressed, and treated with all possible attention. Hauser was conveyed to WädenschwyI (Wädenswil), and shortly after was entirely cured of his wounds.” He survived and just about a decade later Josef Anton Hauser was elected Canton Glarus *Landammann* in 1806 and again in 1811.

Johann Heinrich Trümpy (1765-1798) died in the historic rendezvous with the French at Wollerau. Among Trümpy’s survivors was a 3 year old son, Jost, who would become one of the earliest settlers (and one of the earliest deaths) of New Glarus (see Family History Notes Spring 2009). Descended from the ill-fated Trümpy include Tom Marty and Larry Klassy. Also killed by the French was Jacob Rhyner (1759-1798) of Elm. Rhyner left a wife and seven small children to mourn his loss. Rhyner descendents include Mary Usher, Larry Disch, Carlton Zentner, and Faye Whitaker.

Another casualty of the conflict with the French invaders was Beat Freitag (1774-1836) of Steinibach near Elm who, like Hauser, was severely wounded. Freitag survived his wounds and went on to live out his life in Elm. Beat Freitag descendents in the New Glarus area include Carol Ruef, Doris Streiff, Marian Hustad and the late Earl Elmer.

Traditional Naming Patterns in Canton Glarus and New Glarus

The practice of naming children in Canton Glarus traditionally followed a pattern. The first and second born sons were named after their grandfathers. The third born son was named for the father. Sons born after that were named for various great-grandfathers. Likewise, the first and second born daughters were named after their grandmothers, the third daughter after the mother, and then after various great-grandmothers. When a child died in infancy, the next child of the same sex born was likely to be given that same name (see the following story). As a result of this naming strategy, the same names remained in families for generations.

Local examples are numerous which document these naming patterns, especially where the sons and daughters were named for their grandparents. But over time, the custom has faded away. One New Glarus example out of many can be found in the John and Anna (Figli) Wild family. The Wild sons – Matt and Joshua – were named for their grandfathers Mathias Figli and Joshua Wild, and the Wild daughters – Barbara (Mrs. Herman W. Duerst) and Salome (Mrs. J. Ivan Elmer also known as Minnie) were named for grandmothers Barbara (Speich) Wild and Salome (Baumgartner) Figli.

But traditions changed, new Christian names came into use, as did the use of middle names. The Emanuel and Katharina (Stuessy) Streiff family demonstrates how the grandparents were honored by using their names as middle names for the Streiff children. The Streiff children – Bertha Katharina (died as an infant), Bertha Barbara (Mrs. Jacob S. Disch), Melvin Mathias, Walter Fridolin, and Edna Katharina (Mrs. Herman C. Blum) – are named for their grandparents, Mathias and Katharina (Luchsinger) Stuessy and Fridolin and Barbara (Wild) Streiff.

The Hans Jacob and Verena (Luchsinger) Wild Family

Over two hundred years ago Hans Jacob Wild of Schwanden, Canton Glarus married Verena Luchsinger. The mothers of Hans Jacob and Verena were both named Agatha. Thus in the Glarner tradition, the first daughter born to the couple would most certainly be named Agatha. And indeed their first born daughter was christened Agatha in 1770. But daughter Agatha died in her second year. A few years later, a second daughter was born and she was christened Agatha. And again, she died young. Over the next decade, five more daughters were born and died all bearing the name Agatha. Then in 1790, an eighth daughter named Agatha Wild came into the world. She lived and married Marx Kläsi.

Hans Jacob and Verena are not known to be the direct ancestors of anyone in the New Glarus. However Hans Jacob's brother Caspar Wild and Verena's sister Anna Luchsinger (Mrs. Gabriel Zopfi) are direct ancestors of various New Glarus family lines.

A Family History Revealed

When New York Times book critic Anatole Broyard lay on his deathbed in 1990, he summoned his two children to tell them of a fundamental aspect of his life that he had kept from them. He revealed that part of his ancestry was black. Anatole had "passed" as white amongst New York society. Meanwhile, Broyard's two sisters, who his children had never met, lived as black women in black society.

Anatole's daughter, Bliss Broyard, has captured her personal journey in discovering her black heritage in her book "One Drop: My Father's Hidden Life – A Story of Race and Family Secrets". After her father's death, she finally met her two "black" aunts as well as a variety of cousins – some who considered themselves black and some who considered themselves white. Slowly the Broyard family tree is revealed outlining the family's New Orleans ancestry which included French and Haitian immigrants, a Choctaw Indian strain, free people of color, free people of color who owned slaves, and even a white ancestor who "passed" as black in order to marry a free woman of color. One of Bliss Broyard's Creole cousins likened the family experience to a gumbo – the iconic Cajun/Creole dish resulting from a meeting of disparate cultures in 18th and 19th Century Louisiana.

"One Drop" is a blend of Broyard genealogy, New Orleans history and social history. It is a unique story of one family's history which challenges many of our ideas of race.

Swiss History: Arnold von Winkelried

The article on Albert Struebin mentioned "*Winkelried's Tod*" or the death of Arnold von Winkelried. Winkelried is a legendary Swiss hero. His tale goes back to the Battle of Sempach in 1386 which pitted the Swiss against the Habsburg forces under Leopold III, Duke of Austria. In order to create a breach in the enemy line, Winkelried forged ahead taking the brunt of the Austrian pikes. His body took on so many pikes that the Swiss were able to penetrate the Austrian line and ultimately win the battle. According to historians, neither Winkelried nor his deed can be substantiated. But like Wilhelm Tell, he remains an icon of Swiss history and of Swiss character.

James Baldwin (1841-1925) retold the story as follows ". . . a poor man, whose name was Arnold Winkelried, stepped out. "On the side of yonder mountain," said he, "I have a happy home. There my wife and children wait for my return. But they will not see me again, for this day I will give my life for my country. And my friends do your duty, and Switzerland shall be free." With these words he ran forward. "Follow me!" he cried to his friends. "I will break the lines, and then let every man fight as bravely as he can." He had nothing in his hands, neither club nor stone nor other weapon. But he ran straight onward to the place where the spears were thickest. "Make way for liberty!" he cried, as he dashed right into the lines.

A hundred spears were turned to catch him upon their points. The soldiers forgot to stay in their places. The lines were broken. Arnold's friends rushed bravely after him. They fought with whatever they had in hand. They snatched spears and shields from their foes. They had no thought of fear. They only thought of their homes and their dear native land. And they won at last.

Such a battle no one ever knew before. But Switzerland was saved, and Arnold Winkelried did not die in vain."

From A Previous Issue

Naming patterns are briefly discussed in an item found in this issue of Family History Notes. The use of these naming traditions resulted in many men (and women) having the same names. In the years before there were middle names, New Glarus residents devised a unique way to distinguish those men possessing the same name – e.g. the John Heftys, the Fred Stuessys, and the Jacob Hoeslys. Here is an article, updated from the Winter, 2008 issue, explaining nicknames and middle initials, and documenting over 60 examples of this local innovation.

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 *Hinterhaus-Kap*, *Klepberg-Kap* and *Gerstboden-Kap*, named for regions in which they lived; *Sager-Kap*, who operated a sawmill, and *Habamme-Kap*, whose mother was a midwife. *Baumeister-Kap* 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. This naming convention may be unique to the Glarner of New Glarus and it was a widely used means of identification from the late 19th century to the early 20th century. 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. Duerst (married to Florence Zweifel). Other Duersts included Fred H. Duerst (married to Salomea Hoesly), Nicholas S. Duerst (married to Elsbeth Streiff), Nic F. Duerst (married to Euphemia Freitag), and Herman W. Duerst (married to Barbara Wild).

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). There was Fred S. Zweifel (married to Lena Segessenmann), Fred G. Zweifel (married to Josephine Gisler) and Fridolin K. Zweifel (married to Barbara Klassy).

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 Henry G. Hoesly (married to Hermina Grossenbacher), Fred B. Streiff (married to Sibilla Bollinger) 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), Fred S. Blum (married to Mary Ann Schuler), Adam D. Schmid (married to Anna Maria Duerst), and Sam T. Hefty (married to Bertha Truttmann).

Other examples of this phenomenon include Fred D. Marty (married to Anna Maria Duerst) and Fred N. Marty (married to Katharine North), Henry H. Marty (married to Rosina Hoesly) and Henry H. Zweifel (married to Katharina Hauser). Others included John H. Disch (married to Elizabeth Hoesly) and John S. Disch (married to Katharine Schmid), Caspar R. Disch (married to Lillian Robb), Jacob L. Stuessy (married to Anna Luchsinger), Fred V. Kundert (married to Elsbeth Voegeli), John G. Blum (married to Anna Gemperli) and Jacob D. Kundert (married to Anna Deal).

Sometimes men had been given a middle name, yet adopted the middle initial from their wife's maiden name. For instance, Anton Christian Ott was known as Anton I. Ott (married to Hulda Ingold), Johann Jacob Hefty was known as Jacob B. Hefty (married to Olga Blum), Johann Christof Marty was known as John G. Marty (married to Maria Rosa Glausen), Johann Heinrich Durst was known as John E. Durst (married to Anna Elmer) and brothers Herman Albert Duerst and Henry Melvin Duerst were known as Herman Z. (married to Fayme Zentner) and Henry H. (married to Louisa Hoesly).

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.

From A Previous Issue

The recent Iceland volcanic eruption (April, 2010) which disturbed air flights in Europe for a week, led one television reporter to state that no volcano had ever had such a profound effect. Had the reporter read the following item, updated from the Spring, 2008 issue of Family History Notes, she would have known that about 200 years ago, a volcano on the far side of the globe had a devastating effect upon Europe lasting for months. While the 2010 volcano inconvenienced thousands and had a short-lived economic impact, it could not compare to the hardships endured in 1816-1817.

1816: The Year without a Summer

The massive Mount Tambora eruption in 1815 on the remote Indonesian island of Sumbawa had catastrophic effects throughout the world -- particularly in Northern Europe, New England and the Canadian Maritimes. Ash fell two feet deep over nearly 1000 miles from Tambora and darkness shrouded a 300 mile area around the volcano for days. Only 26 of the 12,000 people living on Sumbawa survived. Mt. Tambora lost 4,100 feet in height and threw out an estimated 36.4 cubic miles of debris. Volcanic dust was hurled into the atmosphere where it circled the earth, darkened the sky and eventually helped make 1816 "the year without a summer". Due to the vast amounts of volcanic dust ejected into the atmosphere, less sunlight was able to pass through this dust causing temperatures to fall. Snowfalls and lake ice occurred in summer months. In 1816 killer frosts ruined crops. Consequently, 1816 and 1817 were also known as the *Hungerjahre* (hunger years) when crops failed and food prices soared.

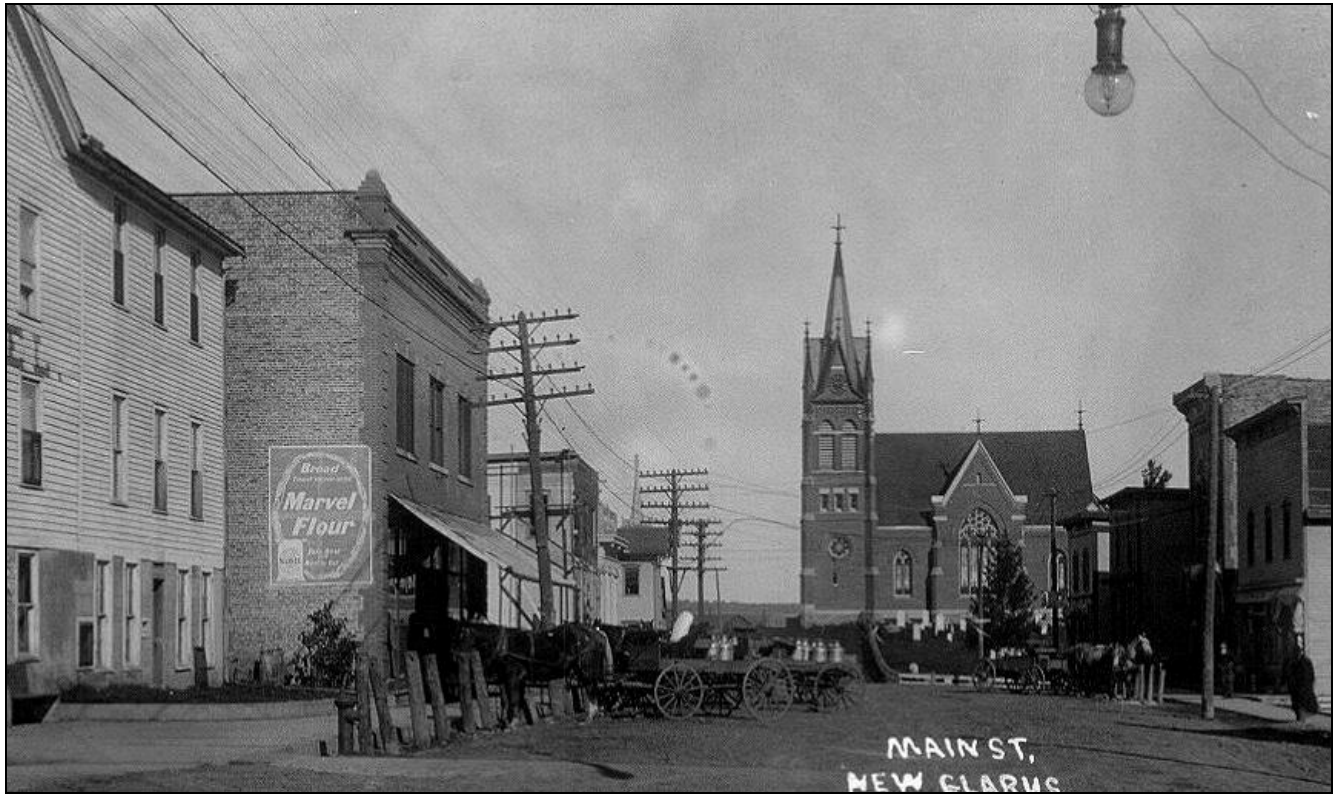
New Glarus resident Joshua Wild (1813-1878) originally of Schwanden, Canton Glarus recalled the hunger and poverty of that time. The Wild family's Newfoundland dog was butchered for food by some of their indigent relatives. An account from a Swiss newspaper picked up by *The Times* of London (26 December 1816) gives this profoundly heartbreaking description of life in Schwändi, Canton Glarus -- "Three and four families with many children, live crowded together in one room, in dirty rags; some half naked, other wholly naked. Tables, stools, bedsteads, bed-clothes, have long since disappeared. Roots, herbs, and even dug-up carcasses, are their food -- the dying cannot even obtain a drop of skimmed milk. All of them sleep, summer and winter, on the hard ground in their rags; those who are privileged by age or sickness on the stove. Most have the appearance of skeletons dug out of their graves, and the suckling comes like a corpse from the mother's bosom." In Elm, Canton Glarus, people survived by eating spelt porridge, roasted beans and whey. *Rumfordische Suppe* (a soup developed around 1800 to feed criminals and the destitute) was provided daily to the needy.

Yet despite this nutritional assistance in Elm, Johann Peter Zentner died of emaciation at the age of 48. His brother Heinrich Zentner, age 52, also died of hunger and emaciation as did a brother-in-law, 67-year old Johann Caspar Zentner. The brothers Johann Peter and Heinrich Zentner have numerous descendents in the New Glarus area including those descended from the Martin Disch, Paulus Schneider, Oswald Kubly, Paulus Schrepfer, John Disch and Oswald Zentner families.

A positive outcome of that bleak period - in July 1816 the unusually cold, wet and dreary weather forced Mary Shelley to stay indoors for much of her Swiss holiday, prompting Shelley to write her gothic novel "Frankenstein".

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A History Detective Challenge



Can you spot the difference in these two nearly identical postcard views of circa 1911-1914 New Glarus? Can you spot the buildings which are still found on “Main Street” and which ones have been replaced by new structures? Can you spot the New Glarus landmark present in these photos which is not seen today and the landmark not found in the photos but present today? Can you identify an architectural feature of the Swiss Church not seen today and a feature seen today but not seen in this photo? Did you notice the Marvel Flour (manufactured in La Crosse) advertisement on the side of the Levitan-Steussy store?

Any “history detectives” knowing the answers please email me – raelmer@charter.net – and I will print the results in the next issue.