

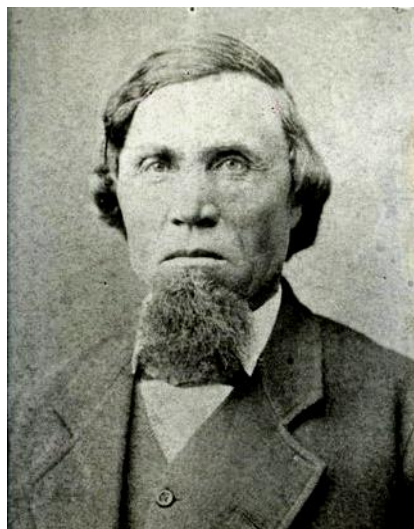
Family History Notes

Summer, 2011

The Dursts of Durst Valley

Fridolin and Magdalena (Streiff) Durst (originally Dürst) arrived in New Glarus in 1854 from Dornhaus-Diesbach in Canton Glarus. They settled in the small valley running directly west of New Glarus. Today the road which runs much of the length of the valley is known as Durst Valley Road. Fridolin and Magdalena had six children, but only two sons lived to adulthood. Older son Fridolin was born in Canton Glarus in 1848 and Johann Heinrich was born in 1860 in New Glarus. The Dursts arrived on the immigrant ship Macedonian, accompanied by Magdalena's father and sister, Mathias Streiff and Anna Katharina Streiff (later Mrs. Gustav Alder). Fridolin Durst Sr. (1826-1916) is pictured below in a photograph shared by Durst descendent Kerry Kasza.

Fridolin (Fred) Durst, the elder son of Fridolin and Magdalena, helped his parents carve the family farm out of the wilderness. He trained in Madison in blacksmithing and wagon making, and for one term studied at Mt. Morris Seminary in Illinois. Fred moved on to Missouri and Nebraska and eventually California. He settled in Yolo County, California where relatives David and Barbara (Schindler) Durst had already settled. Fred Durst descendents still farm in Yolo County. Fourth generation farmer Jim Durst of Durst Organic Growers raises organic produce (asparagus, melons, tomatoes, squash) on a 550-acre farm. And the nearby Durst Home Ranch is still owned and operated by third and fourth generation Durst family members.



The second son of Fridolin and Magdalena, Johann Heinrich (known locally as John E.), remained in the small Wisconsin valley where he and his wife, Anna née Elmer, farmed the Durst land. John and Anna Durst's children all lived in the area. They were Lena (Mrs. Alvin Ott), John Z. Durst, Fred J. Durst, Anna (Mrs. Herman D. Hefty), Susan (Mrs. Fred A. Karlen) and Kathryn (Mrs. Casper Zentner). Third generation brothers John Z. and Fred J. farmed in the valley on adjoining farms. The fourth generation sons of the New Glarus Durst brothers did not continue farming.

In 1884, J. Conrad Zimmerman wrote the following regarding the area topography and specifically the small valley in which the Fridolin and Magdalena Durst settled. "The valleys are winding around in all possible curves and angles, not unlike one of those ancient labyrinths, and just as well adapted to mislead a stranger. They are now widening and now contracting, in obedience to the freakish fancies of those lively promontories, projecting here and there into the valley ground. There is one exception to this rule. The *Schmurzi Thale*, running nearly due west of the village is not only straight, but even without springs."

The *Schmurzi Thale* (also seen written as *Schmürzenthäli* or *Schmuzen-Täli*) is a name only a few people will recognize today. Zimmerman translated it as "roasting valley". As Zimmerman noted it was the only valley in the region without springs and perhaps considered a hot and dry valley.

In 1892 Durst Valley (aka the *Schmurzi Thale*) received a special visitor from Canton Glarus. Daniel Dürst, son of Judge Niklaus Dürst, came to see the Swiss-American village his father had helped establish nearly 50 years earlier. Daniel stayed with the Fridolin Dursts for much of his New Glarus visit.

In addition to Fridolin and Magdalena Durst, early farmers in the Durst Valley included immigrant Gabriel Zimmermann, from Schwändi and Samuel Freitag and Heinrich Geiger both immigrants from Elm. These farms passed to their sons Thomas Zimmermann, Oswald Freitag and Jacob Geiger. In later years farmers included the Durst brothers (above), Jacob Truttmann, Martin Bonkoski, Herman D. Hefty, Larry Disch and Roger Arn. Today the original Fridolin and Magdalena Durst farm is owned by Dennis and Toots Hoesly.

Early Swiss in Green County

The 1830s tale of Jacob Andrick and Joseph Payne maneuvering to get their land holdings named as the county seat of Green County has been told many times. Helen Bingham provided a colorful account in her 1877 history of the county. Again in 1884 C. W. Butterfield described the story in his history, as did C. A. Booth in 1913. E. C. Hamilton's 1977 "Story of Monroe" also told of Andrick and Payne. More recently Dan Wegmueller retold the tale – a dramatic soap opera as he phrased it – in his June 27, 2007 column for the "Monroe Evening Times". A few weeks later the Andrick-Payne tale was repeated in the "Wisconsin State Journal" for the Wisconsin Historical Society's "Odd Wisconsin" series.

What these various accounts never mentioned -- perhaps because it was never known -- was that Jacob Andrick was a second generation Swiss-American. This is a curious addendum to the early history of our county – a county long celebrated for its Swiss heritage. Jacob Andrick was the grandson of immigrant Christian Anderegg (1704-1785) a native of Rumisberg, Canton Bern. Christian Anderegg arrived in America in 1733 and became known as Christian Andereck. He married in Lancaster, PA and later lived in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Christian served in the Revolutionary War, shaving 10 years off of his age in order to serve with the militia. Immigrant Christian's son, also named Christian (~1738-1815), was the father of Jacob Andrick of Green County. Helen Bingham wrote the following of Andrick in her 1877 history when she described the dozen or so buildings which comprised the area in those early days. "It is easy to enumerate the houses here in 1840. Beginning with New Mexico proper, the most important house was Jacob Andrick's, now the residence of Mr. Niles. Across the road was the home of his brother, Christian Andrick."

Anderegg is an old Swiss-German name derived from a geographical location – *an der Egge*, dialect for *an der Ecke*, meaning someone who lived on the edge or corner of a field or village. Historically this family name was found in Cantons Bern and St. Gallen. In America, Anderegg morphed into other spellings such as Andereck, Andrick, Andricks and even Andrix.

For those not familiar with the Andrick tale, the story goes something like this: in 1836 Green County had been carved out of the eastern portion of what had been a larger Iowa County. The new county was sparsely populated with miners near the Sugar River and Skinner Creek diggings, some Yankee farmers in southern



Clarno and a number of settlers in the high and dry northern portion of the Town of Clarno. One such northern Clarno land owner was Virginia-born Jacob Andrick. Andrick drew up plans for a townsite which he named (for unknown reasons) New Mexico (shown at left on an 1838 Wisconsin Territory map). And it was Andrick's intent that his land would become the new county seat for the new county.

In fact, the territorial legislature had declared that New Mexico would be the county seat. Joseph Payne, another player in the drama, wanted in on the anticipated real estate action. Payne approached Andrick offering to buy some of Andrick's land. Andrick refused. So Payne drew up his own town on land to the north of Andrick's. Andrick had let it slip that his New Mexico plat had never been officially recorded in Mineral Point at the land office. Payne realized an opportunity and quickly set off on horseback for Mineral Point to register his own plat. Andrick heard of this and pursued Payne to Mineral Point but was too late. Payne officially registered his paper town, and with cunning strategy, named it New Mexico. Since the legislature had previously decreed that New Mexico was to be the county seat, Payne's New Mexico now held the legal claim.

But many of the locals were unhappy with both New Mexico sites and successfully petitioned the legislature to repeal the earlier decree naming New Mexico as the county seat. An impartial commission was formed to find a more suitable site. The new site they located was named Roscoe about two miles northeast of present day Monroe. The locals living in the area of New Mexico did not like this location either. They intimated that the Roscoe site was chosen because legislator Daniel Sutherland owned timberland nearby.

It was finally decided to bring the county seat location to a vote. For various reasons, known and unknown, the two sites known as New Mexico as well as the Roscoe site were all dropped out of consideration. Two new locations were submitted – one location favored by Joseph Payne near the spring in what would become Monroe and a location favored by Andrick near the previously proposed Roscoe site. The elections held in the summer of 1839 all took place in Jacob Andrick’s house. Three separate votes took place with essentially a tie on the first and second votes. When a third vote was taken, several miners from the Sugar River Diggings were persuaded, perhaps “encouraged”, to come and vote. Their votes swung the election to the spring site. The location was decided by a majority of 5 votes and the site was named Monroe.

Jacob Andrick lost the bid for his New Mexico to become the county seat. In 1857, Jacob Andrick sold his land to Francis H. West and James Bintliff (both men who were to become Civil War Brigadier Generals). And in 1858 Jacob and family left for Kansas, where Jacob died in 1864 (some sources say 1884) in Fort Scott. Joseph Payne died in California in 1875. Christian Andrick, Jacob’s older brother mentioned by Helen Bingham, died in Monroe in 1850.

And Speaking of Andereggs . . .

Sherry Anderegg of Monroe, WI has spent considerable time and effort creating a name index for all “Family History Notes” issues. To date she has listed nearly 2800 names of people mentioned in the 23 issues. Next to each name is the issue and page where the name was mentioned. Sherry is a member of the Green County Genealogical Society and recognizes the value of having indices to source material. Thanks, Sherry.

Life with the Rich and Famous

If you were watching the “CBS News Sunday Morning” on May 22 you were given a taste of the exquisite jewelry created by Paris’ famed jeweler Van Cleef and Arpels. Their clients have included the likes of

Elizabeth Taylor, Princess Grace of Monaco and the Duchess of Windsor. The Van Cleef spokesperson during the program was their Vice President of Retail Operations Nicolas Luchsinger (shown at left with Chelsea Clinton).



Nicolas Luchsinger was born in Basel. He earned a degree in law also attaining the rank of Captain in the Swiss Army. His passion for antiques, art and jewelry led to a 10-year career with Christie’s in Geneva. He became a jewelry expert and is now recognized throughout the world. More recently he was named Store Director for Van Cleef and Arpels’ New York City flagship store.

As you might have surmised, Luchsinger’s heritage goes back to Schwanden, Canton Glarus, Switzerland. His earliest Luchsinger ancestors who are recorded in the cantonal records are Hans Luchsinger and his wife Magdalena Knobel who married in 1617. Nicolas Luchsinger descends from a Luchsinger family line known as the “*baltische linie*” – the Luchsinger line who immigrated to the Baltic

region in the late 18th century. Luchsinger’s ancestor Hans Jacob Luchsinger (1737-1797) immigrated to Riga (today in Latvia) in 1783 where he was employed as a *Wattfabrikant* (cotton manufacturer). Hans Jacob’s three adult sons followed him to the Baltic however his daughter Susanna, who had married Joshua Wild, remained in Schwanden.

In 1919 Ernst Frederick Luchsinger (Nicolas’ great-grandfather) was killed by the Bolsheviks in Reval (known today as Tallinn, Estonia). Ernst Frederick’s son Ernst Ferdinand left the Baltic and returned to the safety of Switzerland during the WWII years. Uwe Luchsinger (Nicolas’ father) was tragically killed in a 1970 snow avalanche which hit an army camp in the upper Valais. Luchsinger and 28 other army officers were killed. Nicolas Luchsinger was born 3 months after his father’s death.

And there are New Glarus connections to this same Luchsinger line. Hans Jacob Luchsinger the immigrant to Riga mentioned above was the great-grandfather of Joshua Wild (1813-1878) and Margaretha Wild (Mrs. Christian Luchsinger; 1821-1895), both natives of Schwanden and residents of early New Glarus.

Primrose History and the Hanna, Baker and Anderson Families

The Winter, 2010 issue of “Family History Notes” mentioned the 1895 history of the Town of Primrose written by Albert O. Barton. A more recent Primrose history was written nearly a century later by Mary (Hanna) ZumBrunnen. Mary’s Primrose history is full of pictures, maps, stories of early families, cheese factories and school houses. The book records and compiles many important elements of the life in Primrose which would otherwise be lost or difficult to research.

Mary also has researched and written two family histories – one for the Hanna family and one for the Bakke/Baker family. These two families – Mary’s paternal and maternal ancestors – were both of Norwegian ancestry. Some of the ancestral information is traced to the early 1500s. Each book is nearly 600 pages in length. These family histories are much more than names and dates. Like her Primrose history, her family books are full of maps, photographs, early letters (some translated from Norwegian), and assorted discussions on farming practices, cooking and preserving, and socializing. One of the books briefly touches on the phenomenon of gypsies who roamed these parts. You do not need to be a member of these families in order to enjoy these books and learn a great deal about how our ancestors lived. Mary ZumBrunnen’s books are available at local libraries or by ordering through the Linkcat system.

Another family history telling of early Norwegian immigrants to Primrose is that of the Anderson family. 1852 immigrants Henrick and Andreas Anderson married sisters Gunhild and Maren Bjolgerud. Their immigration story was told in a privately published book written by descendent Alfred G. Anderson in 1949. The Anderson book is found in the collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Descendents of this Anderson branch in the New Glarus area are numerous – Greg Erickson, Bill Hustad, the late Paul Thompson, Jean (Anderson) Foster, Kent Anderson, Kim Tschudy and Harold Jenson.

More Primrose history can be found online. The Primrose Lutheran Church cemeteries – East and West – both have online-accessible transcriptions as well as photographs. Here are the four links:

[East Primrose Cemetery Transcriptions](#)
[East Primrose Cemetery Photos](#)

[West Primrose Cemetery Transcriptions](#)
[West Primrose Cemetery Photos](#)

A Depression-era Hustler

Ernest G. ZumBrunnen, Mary ZumBrunnen’s brother-in-law, has recently penned an autobiography in which he has chronicled his Depression-era youth in Brooklyn, WI and Shell Lake, WI. Ernest’s book, entitled “The Kid was a Hustler”, clearly demonstrates how imagination and hard work could help put bread on your family’s table and a bit of spending money in your pocket – even if you were only a six year old boy.

Starting at age six, Ernest took on a wide variety of jobs including the traditional chores such as raking leaves, mowing lawns, shoveling snow, delivering newspapers and babysitting for neighbors. But it was some of the other jobs he describes which attest to his resourcefulness. In 1934, when Ernest was 8 years old, gophers overran Brooklyn. The city elders offered a nickel bounty for each gopher killed. To earn your five cents, the only proof required was the severed leg of the gopher. Of course, Ernest learned you could earn twenty cents for each gopher by producing all four legs! The outsmarted elders caught on and subsequently specified only the severed right hind leg as proof.

Ernest cut asparagus along roadsides and sold it to housewives. He used a discarded cart to pick up household ashes and cinders and hauled them to the local dump. He trapped and sold pigeons, and later raised chickens, selling both the eggs and the chickens. Over the summers he picked strawberries and grew cucumbers. He dug worms and caught frogs to sell as bait to local fishermen. And he learned about horseradish – digging, grating, pickling, bottling and selling his own condiment locally.

The life lessons learned by Ernest as a child have served him well throughout his life. ZumBrunnen justly concludes that “imagination and hard work are a very powerful combination.”

The ZumBrunnen Family

The Jacob and Susanna (Sigrist) ZumBrunnen family arrived in Green County from Canton Bern, Switzerland in 1852. The ZumBrunnen farms were located in the area which was once called the *Bernertali* (Berne valley) in the Town of Washington. Jacob ZumBrunnen was a native of the Simmental area of the Berner Oberland. He married Susanna Sigrist in 1830. Susanna's family was from the Linthal of Canton Glarus. This was a somewhat unusual match considering that marriages between Berners and Glarner in that pre-emigration era were rather uncommon. ZumBrunnen is another family name based upon geography referring to someone who lived *zum Brunnen* or "at the springs, well or fountain"

Jacob ZumBrunnen had a variety of occupations – he trained as a tailor but became a hemp rope maker. In America he turned to agriculture and is recorded as making cheese from the milk of his 12 cows as early as 1856. Jacob and Susanna's sons Jacob, Gottlieb and Martin all farmed in Washington, having over 1100 acres between them by the 1870s. Martin also had a cheese factory producing Swiss and Limburger cheese.

In 1972, four granddaughters of immigrants Jacob and Susanna ZumBrunnen donated over \$3000 in funds for the construction of a park shelter still used at the New Glarus Woods State Park. The granddaughters – Marie Johnson, Euphemia Hagerstrom, Sarah Hagerstrom and Felicia Larson – were all between 72 and 82 years of age at the time of the donation, and all had passed away by the end of the same decade.

Not so Fast!

Many years ago Fridolin confided a secret to his brother Jacob. Fridolin was thinking of leaving his wife Verena. "That darn Vreni hasn't talked to me in two months and she won't even tell me what I done wrong," Fridolin sighed.

Brother Jake quickly responded, "*Numä nüd gschprängt, Fridli!* (Not so fast, Fridli!) Women like that are hard to find!"

Züri G'schnetzeltes

Zurich's classic dish of minced veal with mushrooms in a cream and wine sauce has the hard to pronounce name of *G'schnetzeltes* (generally pronounced gah-SHNETZ-lets). Its French name, *Émincé de veau à la zurichois*, sounds so much more refined. This dish is traditionally made of veal, however recipes using pork and chicken versions are also commonly found. This very Swiss dish is easy to prepare. One pound of veal (or pork or chicken breast) is cut into thin strips. The strips are dusted in seasoned flour and pan seared in 1-2 T butter. When lightly browned (but not necessarily cooked through), the meat is removed from the pan. A small diced onion and ½ pound of sliced mushrooms are then sautéed in an additional 1-2 T butter for about 5-10 minutes. The meat is then returned to the pan to reheat and finish the cooking process (about 5 minutes). One half cup of dry white wine (such as a Sauvignon Blanc) is added to the meat, followed by one half cup of heavy cream. This mixture is slowly simmered on low heat until thickened. Salt and pepper are added to taste and the dish can be finished with a squeeze of lemon to add a bright flavor note. Freshly chopped parley can be sprinkled on the dish before serving. The dish is typically accompanied by noodles, rösti, or dumplings such as spätzle or knöpfli.



Habsburg Origins and the Origins of Switzerland

The Fall, 2010 issue of "Family History Notes" introduced the concept of a gateway ancestor – an ancestor through whom medieval ancestry can be traced. A gateway ancestor by the name of Johann Christof von Hohensax (1548 - ~1625) has been identified for many people of Canton Glarus and New Glarus. Because of his noble birth, Hohensax lineage can be traced back for centuries to most of the royal dynasties of medieval Europe. And because many of us can claim Hohensax as an ancestor, he becomes our gateway ancestor. The following articles describe one of the Hohensax medieval ancestors, King Rudolf I of Germany, a man whose death in 1291 prompted the forest cantons to sign the famed *Bundesbrief*.

Part 1: The Rise of the Habsburgs and of King Rudolf I

Near the confluence of the great Swiss rivers Aare, Reuss and Limmat (in present day Canton Aargau) lies a medieval castle which by legend was named *Habichtsburg* (Hawk's Castle) by its early owners. This castle was the home of the Habsburgs, a minor noble family who possessed a limited sphere of influence in the 11th and early 12th centuries. But from the late 12th century and for the next one hundred years, the family steadily gained in stature – not through a military or political might but through a series of inheritances from other medieval dynasties. By the late 13th and 14th centuries, the Habsburgs had risen to become Kings of Germany and the powerful oppressors in Switzerland's quest for autonomy. And the powerful Habsburg dynasty continued to rule for centuries until WWI put an end to the House of Habsburg. (Hint: use the accompanying Habsburg chart to follow this story.)

Around 1172, Count Arnold IV of Lenzburg died without male issue and his holdings were inherited by Arnold's daughter Richenza who had married Hartmann III of Kyburg. The Kyburgs, already an influential noble family living in the Kyburg Castle near Winterthur, received the Lenzburg holdings. Hartmann and Richenza had a son Ulrich III Count of Kyburg who married Anna of Zähringen, the daughter of Berthold IV Duke of Zähringen. The Zähringens were another powerful dynasty that controlled parts of Swabia north and south of the Rhine (today's Black Forest and northern parts of Switzerland). The Zähringens are remembered in Switzerland as the founders of the cities Bern, Fribourg and Murten and as the builders of the castles at Burgdorf and Thun. Berthold IV's son and heir died in 1218 without issue and the Kyburgs inherited land and power from their Zähringen connection.



The children Ulrich of Kyburg and Anna of Zähringen included son Hartmann IV and daughter Heilwig. Heilwig was the wife of Albrecht IV Count of Habsburg. Hartmann IV was married to Marguerite of Savoy, sister of the powerful Peter of Savoy. The politically well-connected Peter was the builder of Switzerland's famed Chillon Castle as well as the Savoy Palace in London. Hartmann IV of Kyburg died in 1264 with no heirs and a political struggle ensued between Hartmann's brother-in-law Peter II Count of Savoy and Hartmann's up-and-coming nephew Rudolf of Habsburg, son of Albrecht of Hapsburg and Heilwig of Kyburg. Rudolf was the victor in this power grab. Thus between 1172 and 1264, the Lenzburg, Zähringen and Kyburg dynasties had died out and the ultimate beneficiary was Rudolf of Hapsburg.

Rudolf had been a staunch supporter of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and in fact was the godson of the Hohenstaufen Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. The Hohenstaufen dynasty died out in 1254 and Germany was ruled by more or less ineffectual kings for the next two decades. In 1273, the Holy Roman Empire chose Rudolf of Habsburg as King of Germany and he was crowned at the Aachen Cathedral. (Rudolf was never crowned by the Pope in Rome and thus was never styled Holy Roman Emperor.) Rudolf died on July 15, 1291 and was buried in the Speyer Cathedral where his tomb (pictured above) can be seen today.

Part 2: King Rudolf I and the Swiss

In pre-Switzerland days, the Swiss living in the forest states had forged a somewhat autonomous relationship with the Hohenstaufen rulers of the Holy Roman Empire. What is now central Switzerland held little importance to the Empire since the north-south travel routes over the Alps went through over the St. Bernard Pass to the west and the Septimer and Brenner Passes to the east. But all that changed when the legendary Devil's Bridge was built over the Schöllenen Gorge, creating a north-south passage over the St. Gotthard Pass. A village like Altdorf in Canton Uri went from an unimportant backwater, to one of strategic and economic importance. And the King Rudolf began to ignore the previous pacts and imposed upon the Swiss the notorious *Vögte* (overlords like the legendary Hermann Gessler) who served as administrators, tax collectors, and sheriffs in the name of the King.

The forest cantons bridled, having been used to their previous degree of freedom. The conflict which ensued is the basis for the Wilhelm Tell legend, as the Swiss struggled to regain their previous autonomy.

As mentioned, King Rudolf I of Germany died in Speyer on July 15, 1291. News of the King's death traveled quickly and it prompted the men of the forest cantons to gather and declare a defense pact known as the *Bundesbrief* (pictured). The independence sought by the Swiss was autonomy of rule without any foreign *Vögte* (overlords) between them and the King or Emperor. The Swiss eventually won their autonomy from Hapsburg control after the battles of Morgarten (1315), Sempach (1386), and Näfels (1388), but remained part of the Holy Roman Empire until 1499 when the Swiss fought off the advances of Holy Roman Emperor (and Hapsburg) Maximilian I and won their full independence in the Treaty of Basel. But it was not until the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 that Switzerland was finally recognized by the European community as fully and legally independent.



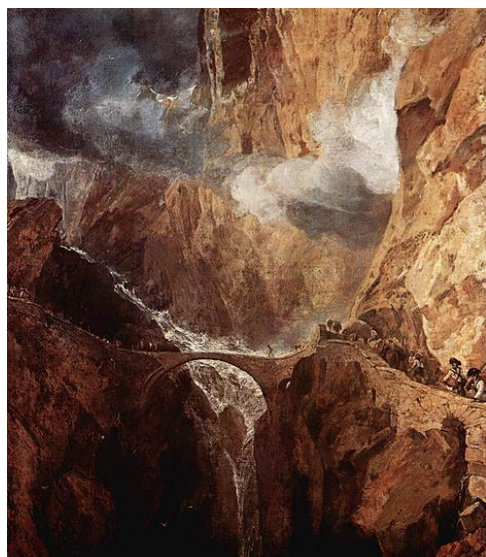
Swiss National Day is celebrated annually in Switzerland on August 1 – the day which commemorates the signing of the *Bundesbrief* in early August of 1291. In New Glarus the day is celebrated by the annual *Volksfest* concert and dance, and is typically referred to (somewhat incorrectly) as Swiss Independence Day.

And Rudolf of Habsburg, whose death in July of 1291 set those historic events in motion as told in Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, has many direct descendents who live and have lived in New Glarus. King Rudolf was the 22nd grandfather (grandfather 22 generations back) of three of New Glarus' *Wilhelm Tells* – Gilbert Ott, Clayton Streiff and Jim Hoesly.

The Gotthard: Still a Vital Route

As mentioned in the previous article, when the Gotthard Pass was traversed in the 13th Century the strategic importance of the Swiss Forest Cantons grew immediately. Despite the fact that the pass summit lies at over 6900 feet, the route became one of the favored trade routes between the Holy Roman Empire in the north and the Italian cities to the south. Pictured below is the English landscape painter J. M. W. Turner's dramatic depiction of the Devil's Bridge spanning the gorge over the Reuss River.

In the 1800s rail lines began to crisscross Switzerland. The nine mile long Gotthard rail tunnel was completed in 1882 linking Göschenen in Canton Uri with Airolo in Canton Tessin. This tunnel was constructed at an elevation of about 3800 feet above sea level and thousands of feet below the Gotthard summit. The rail lines had to gain thousands of feet in elevation over a short horizontal distance. And this was accomplished by some rather spectacular engineering -- seven spiral and loop tunnels, three on the north side near the village of Wassen and four on the Canton Tessin side.



The rail approach to Wassen has been described in numerous guide books. As passengers approach Wassen on a southbound train, they look far above to see the village church. As they emerge from one of the rail loop tunnels they observe the church at about an equal level, and as they emerge from the final loop tunnel, the passengers are looking down upon the church far below. Nearly 100 years after the construction of the Gotthard rail tunnel, a 10 ½ mile Gotthard road tunnel was built. The road tunnel is now known for its maddening traffic jams as cars and trucks clog the route.

And today the Gotthard Base Tunnel is currently being built, attesting to the fact that the Gotthard is still a route of vital importance. This 35 mile rail tunnel will pass under the entire Gotthard massif making it the longest rail tunnel in the world. In October of 2010 when workers from both sides met, the celebrations were televised live across Switzerland. Traffic in the base tunnel is expected to commence in 2016. The ancient Gotthard route, which historically took days to complete will take just 100 minutes from Zurich to Lugano.

If You're Looking for a Smile . . .

. . . then click on this link: [Lustige Emmentaler](#)

John and Dorothea (Speich) Legler

In May of 1911 John and Dorothea (Speich) Legler celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. To mark the occasion, they dressed in their finest attire and gathered their family around. They rode like royalty surrounded by bouquets of flowers in brother Peter Speich's Royal touring car. Granddaughters of John and Dorothea riding on the festive car included Dora (Streiff) Ott and Fay Zentner. Dora is the little girl on the running board and Fay is the girl on the right holding the urn of flowers.

John (Johannes) Legler was born in Diesbach, Canton Glarus in 1837. In 1845 he accompanied his parents, Fridolin and Barbara (Hefti) Legler, and brothers Fridolin Jr., Andreas, Niclaus and George as part of the original group of New Glarus colonists. The Legler brothers made a favorable impression upon immigration diarist Mathias Durst who remarked "the sons of Fr. Legler Senior were outstanding; they also were always, during the whole voyage, the most obliging of all passengers."

Fridolin Legler Sr. and Jr. drew 20 acre lots like the other settlers, and within a few years had purchased land in what was to become known as Legler Valley (just over the ridge from Durst Valley mentioned in a previous article). John and Dorothea farmed a bit south of Legler Valley in the Town of New Glarus Section 33 -- not far from the Meadow Valley School.

Dorothea Speich was born in Matt, Canton Glarus in 1844. She and her brother Peter were the youngest children of Peter and Dorothea (Babler) Speich. Dorothea and Peter became orphans in 1851 when both of their parents died. They came to Wisconsin where older siblings lived. (Their oldest sister, Elsbeth Speich, was an original New Glarus colonist with her husband Jacob Stauffacher and their children Afra, Jacob and Heinrich Stauffacher.) In 1860, the teen-aged orphans Dorothea and Peter were living with their brother-in-law and older sister, Esaias and Barbara (Speich) Babler.



John Legler and Dorothea Speich married in May of 1861 and had 12 children – William Fred (married to Anna Maria Schmid), Peter (married to Barbara Kundert), Barbara (married to Paulus Kundert), Dorothea (married to Jacob Kundert), Elsbeth (married to Gottlieb Wittwer), Anna M. (married to Baltz Kundert), Emma (married to Mathias Cantieni and later Johann Peter Klassy), Maria (married to Werner Zentner), Angelika or Lena (married to John Streiff), John C. (married to Fannie Argue), Verena, and Herman (married to Rosina Marty). Three of the Legler sons – William Fred, Peter and Herman – moved on to North Dakota. Son John

lived in Colorado. Only a few descendents – Ann Marie Ott, Mary (Ott) Funseth, Peter Ott, and Denise Vollmer – remain in the area today.

John and Dorothea Legler both died the year following their anniversary. John died on July 28, 1912 and Dorothea followed him 6 weeks later. They were buried in the EUB cemetery west of New Glarus.

History Detectives Answers:

The last issue asked readers to identify the first alumnus of the New Glarus High School to graduate from the University of Wisconsin. That honor went to Meyer Katz, NGHS Class of 1919. Katz was the son of Russian immigrant Sam Katz and his wife Becky. Sam Katz was a Jewish rag and junk dealer and their family lived locally for many years in the early 1900s. Despite meager means, the Katz family apparently valued higher education for their children. Meyer's brother George was also a student at the UW in those years. Jewish immigrants and their children, like the Katzs, worked hard, educated themselves and have been contributing to America and American culture since their arrival.

Meyer Katz's classmates in 1919 were Edna (Hoesly) Hefty, Alda Arn, Bertha (Stuessy) Scheu, Flossie (Elmer) Hefty, Kathryn (Figi) Streiff, Otilie (Stuessy) Urben, Cora Hoiby, Herman Becker and Robert Marty.

Other New Glarus students in various institutions of higher education of the same period were Antonia Streiff at Lawrence, Emil Bruni at Ripon, Sylvia Babler, Griselda Schmid and Wilbert W. Hefty at Stout, Euphemia (Fay) Zentner, Lydia Stauffacher and Wilma Luchsinger at Milwaukee Normal, Fred Kundert at Marquette, Ray Werndli at Mission House, Dora Zentner at Madison General, Barbara Louise Klassy at Cook County. Besides the Katz Brothers, others attending the University of Wisconsin were Flora Streiff, Wilbert J. Hefty, Sam Freitag, Adolph Kammer, John Schindler and Edwin Klassy.

The other question first posed in the Winter, 2011 issue asked what Elmer Figi, Oswald Geiger and Arnold Marty had in common. The following issue offered a hint that these men, along with Elmer Lemon and Oliver Maas, had a connection concerning their given names. The answer to the riddle is that each of the men was named using his mother's maiden name. Elmer Figi was the son of Mary Elmer and J. J. Figi, Oswald Geiger was the son of Maria Oswald and Henry Geiger, Arnold Marty was the son of Anna Arnold and Matt Marty, Elmer Lemon was the son of Lela Elmer and Luther Lemon, and Oliver Maas was the son of Mary Oliver and Edward Maas.



Railroad Valley Cheesefactory, Town New Glarus, Green County.

History Detective Question

Pictured here is the Railroad Valley Cheese Factory. Who knows where this factory is or was located? The caption provides the clues – found in Railroad Valley and in the Town of New Glarus. Email me with your answer at – raelmer@charter.net

The photograph displays the distinctive cheese factory style – a long and narrow structure composed of the cheese maker's residence over the underground storage cellar with the cheese factory portion built on one end.

There were dozens of local cheese factories in Green County one hundred years ago. Due limited transportation and refrigeration, it was necessary to locate the factories close to the dairy farms. Farmers could haul their milk a short distant to the nearby cheese maker. This all changed with the advent of trucks and refrigeration. And the opening of the Helvetia Milk condensery (aka Pet Milk) in New Glarus also had the effect of shutting down many of the small cheese factories in the immediate area.

The numerous volunteers at the National Cheese Making Center in Monroe, WI, most notably the late Doran Zwygert, have performed a valuable service to local historians by creating a log book and map of the locations of the Green County area's numerous historic cheese factories. Many of these cheese factory sites would be slowly lost to history but for the efforts of these Monroe volunteers.