

# Family History Notes

Fall, 2012

## Knobel Family

The Knobel name is common in Canton Glarus can be found running in a line from Glarus to Schwändi and on up the Linthal valley. The family name is also found in a few Canton Schwyz villages as well as in Germany. The name Knobel may derive from an archaic German word meaning servant. Or the name may have come from a word for knoll and thus referred to someone who lived near that topographic feature. In Canton Glarus a gold arrowhead (*Pfeilspitze*) adorns the Knobel coat of arms. The Knobels first appeared in Canton Glarus in the first half of the 1500s from unknown origins. In 1529 a Jacob Knobel served as *Landvogt* at the Werdenberg Castle.

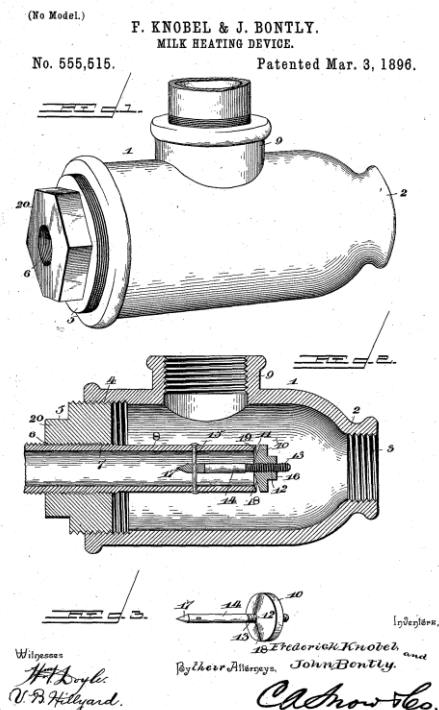


The name Knobel has been known in Green County over the years with only a handful of people by that name living in the area today. Perhaps best remembered in New Glarus were Tobias Knobel and his sons Palmer and Herbert. The Knobels ran the Chrysler-Plymouth-Dodge automobile dealership and sold Massey Harris farm implements and International trucks.

Tobias was the son of immigrants Balthasar and Ursula (Figi) Knobel and the grandson of immigrants Balthasar and Sibilla (Hefti) Knobel. In 1880 Balthasar Knobel Sr. and Jr. were living with Canton Glarus immigrants Adam and Sophia (Jenny) Hefti near Battle Creek, IA. The Heftis were the grandparents of musician Neal Hefti, composer of the “Batman” and “Odd Couple” themes.

Caspar and Dorothea (Schindler) Knobel and family arrived from Schwändi around 1861. They had three children and one on the way when Caspar and his younger brother Abraham went off to fight in the Civil War (see accompanying story about Caspar Knobel and Jefferson Davis). Caspar never returned home -- he died of disease while in New York. Abraham did return home and married his

brother Caspar’s widow Dorothea. The family left New Glarus, first moving to Crawford County, WI and then to the New Schwanden settlement in Minnesota. Caspar and Dorothea’s son Fridolin, better known as Fred or Frederick, returned to Green County, married Cleophea Babler and settled in Monticello. Fred and Cleophea’s grandson, Donald J. Knobel, a Monticello native, died in 2009. Fred Knobel and John Bontly had a milk heating device patented in 1896 (pictured below).



Fabian Knobel was an immigrant from Betschwanden, Canton Glarus. He taught at the Pioneer School in the 1880s and was involved in the Swiss Reformed Church where he served as Church Secretary from 1877 to 1891 and Church School Superintendent from 1871 to 1890. Knobel died in 1892.

Immigrants from the Leuggelbach/Luchsingen vicinity were Johann Peter Knobel and his wife Anna Margarethe Tschudi. Their daughter Katie Knobel married George Itten. George and Katie Itten were the parents of three daughters – Belva (Mrs. Karl Mueller), Ione (Mrs. Ivan E. Zweifel) and Eldera (Mrs. Paul Eichelkraut). When Katie passed away, George Itten married her younger sister Maggie. George and Maggie were the parents of

Kathryn (Mrs. Kenneth I. Hanson). Immigrant Johann Peter Knobel also had a brother David who resided in Monroe.

Farming in the Town of Washington in 1880 were Schwändi immigrants Abraham and Anna (Knobel) Knobel and their son and daughter-in-law Adam and Afra (Knobel) Knobel. There are no known Knobel descendants from these people.

Fridolin and Magdalena (Kläsi) Knobel immigrated in 1861 with son-in-law and daughter Johann Peter and Anna (Knobel) Streiff. Another daughter, Magdalena Knobel who never married, also accompanied them.

There were several other Knobel women who settled in the area, including Sibilla Knobel (Mrs. Paulus Kundert), Katharina Knobel (Mrs. Andreas Schindler), Sibilla Knobel (Mrs. Johann Balthasar Streiff; daughter of aforementioned Abraham Knobel of Washington), Sibilla Knobel (Mrs. Sebastian Luchsinger), and Anna Magdalena Knobel (Mrs. Johannes Heitz; see following story).

Sam Knobel, a farm hand on the Oswald Schmid farm, was killed when a tree fell on him in 1943. Sam was a Canton Glarus immigrant who was survived by a brother and sister back in Switzerland. And Marcus Knobel, another immigrant, was a single cheese maker who died here in 1915 at age 29.

Other Knobel immigrants from Canton Glarus settled in the Gays Mills, WI area as well as in the New Schwanden settlement immediately north of the Twin Cities.

### **Anna Magdalena (Knobel) Heitz and Family**

One of the earliest persons named Knobel in New Glarus was Anna Magdalena (Knobel) Heitz. Anna Magdalena Knobel was born in 1795 to Burkhard and Elsbeth (Dürst) Knobel probably in Betschwanden, Canton Glarus. She had the uncommon occupation of “*Zeinenmacherin*” or basket maker. By the time she immigrated in 1852 she had buried two husbands. Anna Magdalena accompanied her three children to America – son Johannes Heitz, daughter Amalia Heitz, and son-in-law and daughter, Oswald and Elsbeth (Heitz) Kundert.



Upon arrival in New Glarus, Johannes Heitz and Oswald Kundert purchased some land upon which had a log cabin had already been built. The 1860 census records the seven inhabitants of the tiny one room plus loft cabin -- Anna Magdalena (Knobel) Heitz 65, her son Johannes 33, daughter Elsbeth 26, Elsbeth’s husband Oswald Kundert 32, and the three little Kundert children Elsbeth 6, Anna Maria 4 and baby Rosina 1. The historic Heitz-Kundert log cabin (pictured) is on display at the Swiss Historical Village in New Glarus and is one of the oldest homes of New Glarus.

Anna Magdalena’s son Johannes Heitz soon left for the Civil War. He served in the 9<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry and was wounded at the Battle of Jenkins Ferry (AR). When he returned home he married Agatha née Heitz and they farmed in the Monroe area. A descendant, Bob Heitz of Monroe, was the first baby born in Monroe’s St. Clare Hospital in 1939.

Anna Magdalena’s daughter Amalia Heitz married early New Glarus teacher Peter Jenny -- one of three Peter Jennys living here in the 1850s. Peter and Amalia Jenny left New Glarus, later farming in the Town of Jefferson before moving to Monroe. They are ancestors of Bertha (Jenny) Dignan of Monroe.

The Oswald Kundert family continued living in the cabin which after a period of years was incorporated into a larger frame farm house. When that farm house was being razed in the 1970s the original log cabin was discovered inside. The cabin was donated by Harold Hoesly and family and re-assembled at the New Glarus museum by Jacob Tschudy.

## Caspar Knobel and the Capture of Jefferson Davis

Caspar Knobel of New Glarus (1829-1865) was an immigrant from Schwändi, Canton Glarus. In 1852 Caspar had married Dorothea Schindler. They and their three children immigrated around 1861. By late 1862 another child was on the way. And it was in late 1862 that Caspar and his brother Abraham enlisted in the 31<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin Co. B. They marched south to such locations as Cairo, IL, Nashville, TN, and participated in the sieges of both Atlanta and Savannah, GA. Caspar never returned home for in March of 1865 he died of disease in New York.

There is a curious notation found in Caspar Knobel's entry in the family history books held in the *Landesarchiv des Kantons Glarus*. It says that Caspar Knobel helped to capture the Confederate States' President Jefferson Davis and that Caspar was still living in 1913. But there is a problem with this notation, for as previously stated, Caspar Knobel of New Glarus died of disease in New York in 1865. He died before the war ended and while President Jefferson Davis was still residing in Richmond, VA.

But there was another Caspar Knobel who did help capture Jefferson Davis.



This Caspar was another Canton Glarus immigrant who was the son of Johann Peter and Katharina (Steinmann) Knobel. Shortly after this Caspar arrived in the U. S. he enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry.

When General Lee surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox Court House in April of 1865, the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry became one of the units in pursuit of the fleeing Jefferson Davis. In the early morning hours of May 10, 1865, Knobel and 13 others were in a party scouting for the fugitive Davis. They came upon a makeshift camp – a dying campfire with some tents spotted nearby. Knobel and one comrade were sent to look in the tents. Knobel opened the tent flap and there was Jefferson Davis. Knobel grabbed Davis' satchel which contained shirts, collars and baby items. Knobel kept a Davis collar as a souvenir of that fateful day and wore the collar years later at his wedding.

When Davis exited the tent into the chilly morning air Mrs. Davis threw her shawl about his shoulders. It was Mrs. Davis' shawl which spawned the story (see illustrations) that Jefferson Davis was trying to escape wearing women's clothing. The national media went wild with numerous cartoons, illustrations and staged photographs which portrayed Davis in hoop skirts and Army boots! The public ate it up.

And this subject of the "President in Petticoats" continues to interest history buffs. A current exhibition at New York City's International Center of Photograph Museum is showcasing a collection of Civil War-era photographic propaganda featuring Jeff Davis in women's attire. Here is a link to view a few of the exhibition photos: [President in Petticoats](#)

Caspar Knobel died in 1919. He was an honored Civil War veteran for having participated in the capture of Jefferson Davis. Of the \$100,000 reward offered for Davis' capture, Caspar Knobel received a mere \$293. But he had stories to tell for the rest of his life and was a historical first-hand witness to the fact that Davis was not dressed in petticoats.





### Living in Harmony

There is an inn located in Schwändi, Canton Glarus operated by a former Swissair flight attendant named Elisabeth Knobel. This inn, named *Eintracht* (Harmony), has been operated by Elisabeth's family for three generations. A pub named Eintracht was started in 1894 by her grandparents Heinrich and Magdalena (Knobel) Knobel. Heinrich worked as a fabric printer in the factories of Schwanden and Magdalena ran the pub. When Eintracht opened, the other establishments in town did not want a new competitor. They subjected the Knobels to a beer boycott. But Magdalena was persistent and soon hung out a sign proclaiming "fresh beer".

Some years later the pub passed to the next generation -- Abraham (known as Ham) the son of Heinrich and Magdalena, and Ham's wife Verena Schmid. Abraham was totally committed to his community and it was estimated when he died in 2001 at the age of 93 that he had served as the president of various community groups for a period of time equal to 200 years. He was also a committed Social Democrat and the Eintracht was a local political hotbed.

Elisabeth Knobel has turned the Eintracht into an inn with 6 guest rooms, each room with a unique feel. Her collection of artwork and art exhibits provides guests with an unexpected modern touch to an off-the-beaten-path country inn.

Elisabeth's great-great grandfather, Heinrich Knobel, was the younger brother of the aforementioned Knobel brothers, Caspar and Abraham, who had emigrated from Schwändi to New Glarus. Elisabeth's great-grandfather on her mother's side, Gabriel Schmid, had a sister Anna Katharina Schmid, who was among the first settlers of New Glarus.

### Lake Knobel

One of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes is the 163 acre Lake Knobel which lies in Otter Tail County. It was likely named for the Knobel families who lived in the immediate vicinity. Peter and Maria (Zimmermann) Knobel farmed in Otter Tail County near the lake as did Heinrich (Henry) and Margaretha (Zimmermann) Knobel. Both Knobel families were natives of Schwändi, Canton Glarus. The Knobel men were not closely related but their wives, Maria and Margaretha were Zimmermann sisters.

### Country School Memories

The last newsletter sparked some country school recollections. Wayne Duerst mentioned his great-grandfather Samuel Duerst and the Duerst children who attended the Meadow Valley School. Samuel had the contract to make fire wood for the Meadow Valley School. He earned \$17.15 for the 5 month school term in the late 1800s. Several generations of Duerst descendents attended the school including



Samuel's great-granddaughter Lucille (Duerst) Elmer and her daughter Ruth. Ruth completed the fourth grade in 1962 when Meadow Valley closed.

Wayne Duerst also noted that his mother, Mavis (Figy) Duerst, and her siblings attended the Bem School. Katy Marty added that her grandmother, Florence

(Legler) Marty, taught school at Bem. It turns out that Florence Legler lodged with the Figys who were her cousins. I learned that my great-grandmother, Emma (Eichelkraut) Elmer, and her siblings also attended Bem.

Don Schneider (NGHS Class of 1957) sent in these two photographs of Pioneer School students. The first photo circa 1952 shows the students of Ernest Lufi (standing far right). Back row from left: Ruth Buesser, Lynette Streiff, Janet Disch, Linda Elmer, Don Schneider, Hans Anderegg, Monika Anderegg, Dorothy Disch, Joe Anderegg, and Leo Anderegg.

Front row from left: Ruth or Linda Voegeli, Dwight Hoesly, Barbara Disch, Elaine Mueller, Fred Disch, Eugene Buesser, Eugene Maurer, Gerald Voegeli, and Roger Maurer. These country school students



graduated from New Glarus High School in the years from 1957 to 1963. Fred Disch stands among three lovely young ladies also named Disch – not his sisters but his aunts.

The second photo, probably from March of 1949 when Mrs. Mary DeRemer's Pioneer School students went to WCLO radio station in Janesville where they entertained on the air with Mexican songs. Included in this photo are: Linda Elmer and Ruth Buesser (both with button accordions), back row Mary DeRemer (teacher) John Buesser, Judith Schneider, Judy Disch, and Don Schneider; seated Dorothy Disch and Carol Hoesly; the remaining two girls in the middle are Rosalie and Kathy Disch.

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In 1952 the Pioneer School was invited back to WCLO with their teacher Ernest Lufi. On this occasion Swiss yodeling, accordion numbers and other songs were performed. Students attending were Linda Elmer, Ruth Buesser, Lynette Streiff, Janet Disch, Elaine Mueller, Barbara Disch, Joe Anderegg, Don Schneider, Hans Anderegg, Judy Disch, Dorothy Disch, Rosalie Disch and Monika Anderegg.

Thank you to Don Schneider for sharing the photos and to Barbara (Disch) Argue for the identifications.

### **Hardanger Fiddle**

Norway's Hardanger fiddle (*Hardingfele*) is a stringed musical instrument like a violin. But rather than just four strings, the Hardanger fiddle has eight or nine strings. The top four are played while the understrings, or sympathetic strings, vibrate and resonate creating the fiddle's unique sound. The oldest known Hardanger fiddle dates from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century and was made in Ullensvang on the Hardanger Fjord. Over the years the instrument spread to other parts of Norway. These instruments were often beautifully decorated with carvings and inlaid mother-of-pearl. According to the Hardanger Fiddle Association of America, the Hardanger fiddle "has survived the assaults of cultural change and foreign musical influences to continue nearly unchanged up to the present day".



One of America's most skilled masters of the Hardanger fiddle is not of Norwegian background. But he is half Swiss through his mother, a New Glarus native. Tobias (Toby) Weinberg is the son of Merle (Hoesly) Weinberg and grandson of Gilbert P. and Anna (Marty) Hoesly. Toby is recognized as a world-class Hardanger fiddle performer and instructor. Today he is keeping the centuries-old Norwegian traditions alive through his performances and workshops. Toby is pictured (center with fiddle) with his performance group "Vestafor" which translates as "of the West".

Toby is also the leader and founder of the Boston Spelemannslag – the oldest existing Hardanger fiddle association in America. This group was the first American fiddle group to tour Norway and take part in a Norwegian fiddle competition. In Norway, Toby placed first in a fiddle competition, one of very few Americans to do so. In addition to the Hardanger fiddle, Toby has mastered the willow flute (*Seljefløyte*) another Norwegian folk instrument as well as teaching folk dancing. Toby is from a musical family -- including his grandfather Gilbert P. Hoesly (1883-1958) who played the cornet/trumpet in the local boy's band around the turn of the last century.

Another Swiss-American with a connection to the Hardanger fiddle was Otto Rindlisbacher, the son of Canton Bern immigrants. Otto was the owner of the Buckhorn Tavern in the logging town of Rice Lake, WI and a connoisseur of a wide variety of folk music. Otto and his wife Iva née Kundert (whose ancestry included early New Glarus Kunderts), were folk musicians who embraced their Swiss folk music heritage as well as the folk music of Norwegian, Irish, French and even Ojibwe peoples. The Rindlisbachers' band "The Wisconsin Lumberjacks" performed as far away as Washington, DC where they were recorded for the Library of Congress folk music collection. Otto assisted the folk music and ballad scholar Franz Rickaby in his study of northwoods lumber-camp songs. Professor Rickaby was the brother-in-law of New Glarus native Dr. John A. Schindler.

Otto built and played a 9 string Hardanger fiddle. Apparently this was a favorite of his since there is an image of the Hardanger fiddle engraved on Otto's tombstone in Rice Lake. Rindlisbacher would also play a 4 string fiddle which was favored by the French-Canadian, Celtic and Indian tunes. Iva Rindlisbacher was a Swiss bell ringer and played a homemade folk instrument she called a "Viking cello"-- a one-stringed base fiddle.

### **Hardanger Embroidery**

The photograph at right was taken around 1915 of the New Glarus Swiss Reformed Church (*Reformierte Kirche*) interior. The photograph documents when the two apse windows were still open to the interior and when the old pulpit and Stone Church organ were still in use. A small altar stood at the front and center and was covered with a piece of Hardanger (*Hardangersøm*) embroidery.



That Hardanger embroidery was made by Agatha (Streiff) Hoesly (1866-1941), a lifelong and faithful member of the church. And to this day her Hardanger piece still sits upon that same altar as part of the display in the Swiss Historical Village's log church.

It is claimed Hardanger embroidery has its roots in ancient Persia. It spread to Italy during the Renaissance, and then to northern Europe in subsequent centuries. The embroidery flourished in Norway where it developed into predominantly white-on-white geometric designs used in home decorations, embellishments for costumes, and for religious use on altars and clerical vestments.

Agatha Streiff married Marcus (aka Marx) Hoesly. They farmed about 2 miles north of the village on what is today called "Old Madison Road". Their children were Clarence, Miloe, Ray and Pearl (Mrs. Fred Heller). Grandsons Paul and Jack Heller and great-grandson Jim Hoesly are New Glarus residents today.



Pictured are Agatha Hoesly (on right) and her sister Anna (Mrs. John S. Duerst) from about 1940. Agatha and Anna were the daughters of Fridolin and Barbara (Wild) Streiff. Agatha grew up on the Streiff farm west of New Glarus and in the vicinity of Norwegian neighbors with names such as Johnson, Erickson and Trondrud. So perhaps Agatha picked up this embroidery skill in her youth from Norwegian neighbors. Agatha's Norwegian sister-in-law lived a couple of farms down the road in Spring Valley

(see following article), and perhaps it was learned from her. Agatha and Anna were among the local seamstresses who crafted the original costumes for the Wilhelm Tell drama.

### Swiss-Norwegian Hoeslys

Jacob Hoesly married Barbara Helena Domholdt in 1880. Jacob was the son of Canton Glarus immigrants Jost and Anna (Freuler) Hoesly and Barbara was the daughter of Hendrik and Bertha Maria Domholdt, natives of the Hallingdal area of Norway. The Hoesly and Domholdt families were farm neighbors – both farming along the Green County/ Dane County border in the Town of New Glarus. So it is not surprising that a child of one family would marry a child of a neighboring family. And so Jacob and Barbara wed on March 18, 1880. They had six “mixed blood” children all of whom spoke Swiss, Norwegian and English.

Jacob was referred to as Jacob D. Hoesly or sometimes Jacob Dt. Hoesly. His middle initial “D” or “Dt” came from his wife’s maiden name, Domholdt, and was used to differentiate him from other Jacob Hoeslys in New Glarus (e.g. Jacob K. Hoesly married to Amalia Kundert; Jacob L. Hoesly married to Barbara Legler; and Jacob B. Hoesly married to Rosina Becker). This use of a middle initial derived from the wife’s maiden name is probably unique to New Glarus and was discussed in “Family History Notes” Winter, 2008.

### Ironstone Tea Leaf China

In 2008 photographer Jessie Walker authored a book entitled “The Curious Collector: A Lively Little Tour of 101 Favorite Collectibles”. Jessie lists Ironstone china bearing the tea leaf design as one of her 101 sought-after collectibles. This china became the everyday dinnerware for many of our ancestors beginning about 200 years ago. Ironstone was durable and inexpensive as opposed to the more costly and fragile bone china and porcelain.

Around the 1850s the many companies manufacturing white ironstone china began decorating their wares. The most popular design was the tea leaf pattern (plates pictured on top shelf). Ms. Walker describes the Tea Leaf pattern as the “common folk” china. The distinctive tea leaf is formed by copper lustre technique in which copper oxide is added to the china glaze.

Both New Glarus museums -- the Swiss Historical Village and the Chalet of the Golden Fleece -- display examples of the Tea Leaf dinnerware. At the Historical Village the examples are in a condition one would expect of china used by generations of families. The Tea Leaf collection of the Chalet is in excellent condition and shows a great variety of serving pieces. Yet it is somewhat incongruous that the “common folk” ironstone china is found in a museum known for its many eclectic and rare pieces. Tea Leaf pattern china is also seen in the collections of Wisconsin’s Wade House and Milton House.

Jessie Walker (1921-2010) was an accomplished photographer renowned for her images of homes, rooms, gardens and collections. She traveled the world in her pursuit of the photograph. She was the author and photographer of five books of her own. And her photography is found in more than 130 other books as well as numerous magazines ranging from “Architectural Digest” to “Better Homes and Gardens”.



Jessie’s great-grandparents, Johann Rudolf and Rosina (Müller) Freuler and great-great grandparents, Fridolin and Salome (Müller) Freuler were immigrants from Glarus, Canton Glarus first settling Allegheny County, PA, then here in Green County, before finally settling in Milwaukee. Fridolin Freuler was a textile printer and son Johann Rudolf was also a fabric printer as well as a shoe maker. Father and son operated the Glarus tavern “*Zum Wilden Mann*”. However bankruptcy led to their immigration to America in 1866. Mrs. Jost Hoesly, née Anna Freuler of early New Glarus, (pictured in the Winter, 2009 issue of “Family History Notes”) was the sister of Fridolin Freuler.



### **Area Marriages of Interest**

The following lists complete the series of interesting area marriages. The Winter 2012 issues listed brothers who married sisters, and brothers who married aunt and niece. The Spring 2012 issue listed sisters who married uncle and nephew and marriages where brother and sister married sister and brother. Now in these final listings are situations where three siblings from one family married three siblings of another family, where a widow or widower married the spouse's sister, brother or niece.

#### **Three Siblings married Three Siblings**

Sam, Fred and Clarence Goecks married Helen, Gertrude and Hilda Burkhalter  
Gottfried, Albert and Samuel D. Wittwer married Helena, Mary and Rosina Dick  
Charles Albert, Wilmer and Grant Ingwell married Clara, Effie and Edna Hanson.  
Johannes, Josua and George Blumer married Ursula, Margaret and Katharina Tschudy  
Nordeen, Francis and Arthur Judd married Rose, Olive and Martha Urben  
Will, Albert and Flora Rufer married Margaret, Mary and Edward Gempeler  
Jacob, Anna, and Dietrich Elmer married Magdalena, Conrad and Barbara Elmer

#### **Marriage of Three Siblings to Two Siblings plus a Niece or Uncle**

Brother and Sister Johann Jacob and Margaret Duerst married sister and brother Anna Maria and Jacob Streiff. Another Duerst brother, Nicholas, married Elsbeth Streiff, niece of Anna Maria and Jacob. Brothers John W. and Edward W. Duerst married sisters Barbara and Rosa Werndli. A Werndli brother, Henry, married Barbara Hefty, a niece of the Duerst brothers.  
Brothers Albert and Gottlieb Matzinger married sisters Clara and Rosa Schiesser. A third Matzinger brother, Herman, married Marie Strahm, a niece of the Schiesser sisters.  
Sisters Martha and Waldburg Marty married brothers Martin and John Jacob Hefty. A third Marty sister, Katharina, married Johann Melchior Hefty, an uncle of Martin and John Jacob.

#### **Widower/Widow who married spouse's Sister/Brother/Niece**

Johann Blum married Rosina Benkert and after her death married her sister Ursula  
Jacob Wild married Gertrude Prior and after her death married her sister Markert  
George Itten married Katie Knobel and after her death married her sister Maggie  
Mathias Figi married Anna Baumgartner and after her death married her sister Salome  
Frederick Bloom married Mary Ann Roby and after her death married her sister Barbara  
David Tschabold married Maria Duerst and after her death married her sister Rahel  
Rudolf Lehnherr married Rosalie Regez and after her death married her sister Amelia  
David Teuscher married Nellie Baumgartner and after her death married her sister Libbie.  
Blacksmith Marcus Luchsinger married Regula Legler, and after her death married her sister Katharina (widow of Dr. Samuel Blumer)  
Esajas Hoesly married Verena Schmid and after her death married her sister Sibilla  
Caspar Kundert married Louise Sickinger and after her death married her sister Verena  
J. J. Tschudy married Barbara Hottinger and after her death married her sister Anna (widow of Jacob Hoehn)  
Henry Hoesly married Agatha Duerst, and after her death married her sister Barbara (widow of Contantine Haegele)  
Dorothea Schindler married Caspar Knobel and after his death in the Civil War married his brother Abraham (see related story in this issue)  
Louisa Hoesly married Samuel Duerst and after his death married his brother Henry  
Magdalena Zweifel married Jost Zweifel and after his death married his brother David  
Sibilla Knobel married Johann Thomas Kundert and after his death married his brother Paulus  
Irene Sponem married Arthur B. Hustad and after his death married his brother Olen  
Andrew Kundert married Martha Hefty and after her death married her sister Maria Magdalena  
Edward J. Freitag married Alma Hoesly and after her death married Alma's niece Florence Hoesly



### **Double/Triple Weddings**

A triple wedding was held in Monticello on November 20, 1884. The couples were Albert Weissmiller and Anna Bieri, Fridolin Zwickey and Lina Craven, and Gottfried Wittwer and Helena Dick.

A triple wedding was held in New Glarus on January 5, 1888 when Jacob Figi married Verena Streiff, Peter Ott married Rosina Voegeli and Peter's sister Anna Barbara Ott married Jacob Aebly. The Jacob Figis are remembered for having raised their nephew, Edwin Barlow.

A double wedding was held in New Glarus on December 18, 1900 when John Streiff married Lena Legler and Henry Steussy married Elsbeth (Ellen) Kundert. Streiff and Steussy were New Glarus businessmen. John Streiff and Ellen Kundert were first cousins, both the grandchildren of Joshua and Barbara (Speich) Wild.

Other double weddings included sisters Regula and Anna Voegeli who married Melchior Hefty and John W. Wittenwyler (respectively) on February 14, 1878. And brother and sister Conrad and Euphemia Stauffacher married Maria Elmer and Oswald Zentner on May 16, 1882.

### **Marriage of Step Brother and Step Sister**

Thomas Schmid married his step-sister Anna Hauser. Thomas's sister Anna Katharina Schmid married her step-brother Caspar Hauser.

Edwil Duerst married his step-sister Emma Beutler in 1923. Edwil and Emma shared three half-sisters -- Hortense, Dora and Frieda Duerst.

Oswald Elmer married his step-sister Anna Schindler in 1868.

Albrecht Babler married his step-sister Anna Barbara Voegeli in 1856.

### **History Detective Answer – Windlach Street**

The question posed in the previous issue was how New Glarus' Windlach Street came about. Admittedly this question is best suited for the New Glarus readers. The New Glarus readers were silent, but Barbara Kuehni of Virginia correctly surmised the street was named for an immigrant from the Canton Zurich village of Windlach. John Lienhardt of Lienhardt Realty helped develop a new residential area on the south side of New Glarus which necessitated a new street. John suggested the name Windlach, the home village of his immigrant grandfather, Alfred Lienhardt. Area families with the surname Gutmann (Goodman in America) and Richard were also from this corner of Canton Zurich.

Immigrant Alfred Lienhardt was a Green County cheese maker. Later he and wife Marie (née Luthi) and family operated the New Glarus Hotel for 21 years before selling to John and Ida Zurkirken in 1945.



According to a 1930s advertisement (pictured) the New Glarus Hotel was the coolest place in town. The Lienhardt family began a movie theatre in the hotel's old vaudeville hall. And after the family no longer ran the hotel, Fred Lienhardt (John's father) built the New Glarus movie theater in 1950.

The village of Windlach lies below the flight path into nearby Zurich International Airport. Willi Gutmann, a Windlach native, jokingly explained how you can tell when you are flying over Windlach on your approach into Zurich International. He said it is when the crew instructs the passengers to "fasten your seat belts and return your seats and tray tables to their locked position". At that moment look down and you'll see Windlach!

### **History Detective Multiple Choice Question**

According to newspaper articles in 1950, The New Glarus movie theatre had how many seats -- 250, 350 or 450 seats? Let me know of your answer. Did you know the theatre also boasted a cry room for parents with fractious infants and a smoking room in which you could smoke while viewing the movie?

### **New Glarus Wedding of 1852**

Elizabeth (Moore) Wallace emigrated in 1851 with her family from Ireland to Exeter Township, southeast of New Glarus. Her memoirs were published in 1926 called “This Side of the Gully” and told of pioneer life in this area. The following entry relates the wedding of the Moore’s neighbors, Melchior Stuessy and Katharina Legler in 1852.

“Mother needed tubs for the butter she made, so father went over the river in search of a cooper. He found Melcher (sic) Stuessy putting finishing touches on his new log cabin, while one of the Legler girls, who was to become his bride the next day, was inside baking her wedding dinner. Her father’s cabin was well filled with younger children, so why should she not do the baking over the fireplace in the new cabin that was so soon to be her home?”

Father . . . came home to tell us about the approaching nuptials. How thrilling it was to my young ears, and how I wished I were over there with those Swiss young people the next night, when I heard them yodeling and calling to one another; their voices echoing and re-echoing from the hills. A wedding in the Swiss settlement was an occasion for much merry-making. If the contracting parties belonged to the most influential families, the festivities would sometimes last for several days. There was always a wedding dinner with a dance and free beer. Every Swiss drank beer, but comparatively few got drunk.”

One further anecdote relating to the Stuessys is mentioned, unrelated to the wedding. “It was over by Melcher Stuessy’s cabin that Uncle James killed the big rattlesnake.”

Pictures of Melchior and Katharina (Legler) Stuessy are found in the Swiss Historical Village’s Community Building, and indeed they were married on June 6, 1852. Their farm was located on Exeter Crossing Road on Sections 25 and 36 in New Glarus Township and on adjoining acreage in Exeter Township. They were neighbors of the Moore family who lived further east and just across the Little Sugar River.

Melchior Stuessy arrived in the U.S. from Switzerland in 1845 and later ventured to in New Glarus in 1848. Melchior’s brother Jacob, sister Anna Dorothea (Mrs. Fridolin Blum), and their widowed mother Anna née Schlittler also immigrated. Melchior’s bride Katharina was the daughter of David and Barbara (Streiff) Legler. Ten children were born to Melchior and Katharina between years 1853 and 1877.

### **Royal Family History Meets Glarner Family History**

In 2011 a question was posted on an online royal genealogy board asking who the oldest surviving descendant of Queen Victoria was. The answer was Count Carl Johan Bernadotte of Sweden, her last surviving great-grandchild. The Count was the youngest son of King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden and his wife Princess Margaret of Connaught. Princess Margaret was the daughter of Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, who was the third son of Queen Victoria.

Carl Johan (pictured right) was the correct answer when the question was posted in 2011, but he died in May of 2012 at the age of 95. With his passing, the oldest surviving descendant of Queen Victoria is now her great-great grandson, Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II. Queen Elizabeth herself is the sixth oldest surviving great-great grandchild.



Count Carl Johan Bernadotte and his wife adopted two children – a daughter and a son. The son, Christian Carl Henning Bernadotte, married a Swiss girl with Canton Glarus roots. Her name is Marianne Jenny. Marianne was born in Zurich; her Jenny family roots from the village of Ennenda. Marianne has distant cousins in New Glarus -- Klassy sisters Jill Starz and Kathy Brockman.

## **Johnny Stompanato**

Johnny Stompanato's connection with New Glarus family history will be explained. But first who was Johnny Stompanato? Johnny was born in 1925 in Woodstock, IL to Italian-born immigrants John Stompanato, a barber, and his wife Carmela Truppo. Carmela died shortly after Johnny's birth and his father remarried. Johnny saw action in WWII serving as a Marine in the Pacific Theatre. After the war he briefly returned home to Woodstock, but soon found his way to Hollywood.

The muscular "Johnny Stomp" or "John Steel" became a bodyguard to Hollywood mob boss Mickey Cohen. Stompanato fancied himself a ladies' man and was drawn to actresses such as Zsa Zsa Gabor, Ava Gardner and Janet Leigh. But for the most part, his gangster associations severely limited his appeal. In 1957 Stompanato met actress Lana Turner and she became attracted to the good looking Italian-American despite his associations with the underworld. They had a short and tumultuous relationship strained by Stompanato's fierce temper, his jealousy and an alleged inclination toward the physical abuse of Turner. Pictured are Stompanato and Lana Turner.



On the evening of April 4, 1958, Johnny Stompanato was fatally stabbed by Lana Turner's 14 year old daughter Cheryl Crane – a crime which made front page headlines around the country. Crane claimed that she heard her mother being physically attacked by Stompanato. Fearing for her mother's life Cheryl grabbed a kitchen knife, ran to her mother's bedroom and killed Stompanato. She was acquitted; the jury citing justifiable homicide. Stompanato's body was returned to Woodstock for burial where he lies beside his mother, father and step-mother.

Stompanato's connection to New Glarus family history is by way of his step-mother. After his mother Carmela died, Johnny's father married Verena Freitag, who helped raise young Johnny. Verena was born in Albany, WI the daughter of Wolfgang Freitag a native of Elm, Canton Glarus and his wife, Verena Marty, a Green County native and the daughter of immigrants from Matt, Canton Glarus. "Grandmother" Verena (Marty) Freitag also lived with the Stompanato family in their Woodstock home.

Among Verena (Freitag) Stompanato's cousins living in the area were Mrs. Gilbert P. (Anna Marty) Hoesly and Mrs. E. J. (Edith Marty) Hoesly of New Glarus, and Mrs. Fred H. (Alda Marty) Steinmann of Monticello.

## **Prices from the Past**

The Mt. Horeb Historical Society ran an informative story in their June 2011 newsletter about a Main Street restaurant (originally Olson's, now Schubert's) which has been in business for over 100 years. As part of the article, Olson's daily menu from November 11, 1949 was pictured. The menu featured sandwiches, lunch plates and dinner plates bearing some now unbelievable prices. A tuna salad sandwich cost a mere 35 cents. A lunch plate of roast beef with potatoes, gravy, two sides and a drink cost a whopping 70 cents. And a fish filet dinner plate including soup or juice, potatoes, vegetable, fruit salad, a dinner roll and a drink went for 95 cents.



Unbelievable prices? Ridiculously low? Using an online tool called an inflation calculator, those 1949 prices can be adjusted for inflation and expressed in today's dollars. What the inflation calculator tells us about these 1949 prices may be rather surprising.

If those 1949 prices of 35, 70 and 95 cents are adjusted for inflation, the values become \$3.32 for the sandwich, \$6.77 for the lunch and \$9.18 for the dinner in 2012 dollars.

The current menu found at the Prairie Diner (one of Sun Prairie, WI's several diners) lists a tuna fish sandwich at \$3.35, a roast beef and mashed potato lunch special with coffee at \$6.30, and a fish filet dinner with soup or salad, potato, vegetable, roll and coffee for \$8.30. Net: when adjusted for inflation, those 1949 prices are surprisingly similar to what we are paying today.

So don't bother longing for that \$1.75 fish fry from 1970 – it is equivalent to your \$10.38 fish fry of today! Here is a link to this handy tool: [Inflation Calculator](#)

### **Frontier Justice**



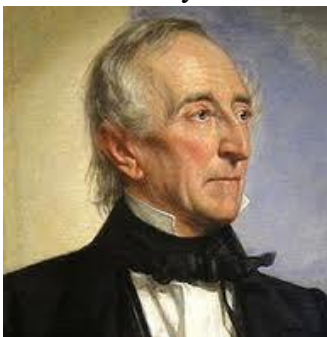
The once wild west town of Medora, ND made international news this past spring when Medora's mayor, Douglas Ellison (pictured), proposed the reenactment of a public hanging. Ellison is a serious student of western history and has authored several historical publications. His premise was to present a "historically accurate, educational lesson in frontier justice, with an emphasis on justice" which was to be aimed at Medora's summer tourists. In order to avoid any injury, he proposed using theatrical equipment (such as that used in motion pictures) to stage the hanging.

Doug's vision was not to be. While he enjoyed some local Medora support for the scheme, news of the mock hanging went viral and soon people around the globe were discussing the controversial plan. Criticism poured in. The Huffington Post ran the story and received 354 comments – mostly negative – including one reader who said "Tourist attraction (?) or symptom of significant mental illness?". In the end Doug's love for his town trumped his idea for this western tableau. He withdrew his proposal.

Doug Ellison's interest in history includes that of New Glarus. His great-great-grandparents were Heinrich Geiger, an immigrant from Elm, Canton Glarus and Maria Oswald, a native of Bilten, Canton Glarus. Doug's great-grandfather, Oswald Geiger (1869-1921) married Rosina Kundert and they had five children. After Rosina's death in 1914 Oswald moved to South Dakota and married a second time. At age 47, Oswald married 16 year old Clara Martin. But only a few years later Oswald died in Thunder Hawk, SD leaving Clara with two their little girls. Clara and the girls traveled to New Glarus to bury Oswald next to first wife Rosina, and then returned to live out their lives in the Dakotas. Clara, Oswald Geiger's widow, died in 2005 at the age of 103.

### **Presidential Grandsons**

March of 1845 saw the departure of Judge Niklaus Durst and Fridolin Streiff from Canton Glarus on their trip to America to locate and purchase the settlement land which would become New Glarus. In that same month and year, our 10th President of the United States, John Tyler (pictured), served his final days in that high office. Vice-President Tyler assumed the Presidency in 1841 upon the sudden death of William Henry Harrison. He served out Harrison's term which ended on March 4, 1845.



What may be surprising to learn is that President Tyler, born in 1790, has two grandsons living today. These two grandsons, Lyon Gardiner Tyler, Jr. and Harrison R. Tyler, were born nearly 140 years after their famous grandfather.

This unusual situation came about when then ex-President John Tyler, age 63, and his second wife Julia Gardiner, had a son Lyon Gardiner Tyler born in 1853. Lyon Tyler, like his father, married a second time late in life and fathered two sons, Lyon Jr. and Harrison, when he was in his seventies. The two Tyler grandsons are now in their eighties. Harrison Tyler still lives at President Tyler's homestead named Sherwood Forest Plantation in the State of Virginia.



### **Jack V. Koby: A Family Documentary**

For Anita Blumer of Engi, Canton Glarus, her quest for family history resulted in a documentary movie. Her movie is about Fridolin Blumer (1893-1969) of Engi, a great uncle of Anita's. Fridolin (Fritz) Blumer immigrated to America in 1913. He settled near Monticello, WI where he was a farm worker for the Zumkehr and ZumBrunnen families. A couple of years later Fritz left Wisconsin bound for the St. Louis area. Fritz occasionally wrote postcards to his family back in Switzerland, but after receiving a card from St. Louis, the family never heard from Fritz again. They hoped he was alive, yet feared he was possibly dead.

What actually became of Fritz Blumer is the subject of Anita's movie. Fritz had a strong sense of independence and adventure. He left St. Louis for the gold mines of Alaska where Fritz Blumer reinvented himself as Jack V. Koby, a Swiss native from Bürglen, Canton Uri (Wilhelm Tell's hometown!). Koby (pictured) became well known in Alaska as a skilled guide, mountain climber and explorer, particularly known for his exploration of the massive Taku Glacier. Koby married and raised a family of three children in various remote places in Alaska. All the time Koby never communicated with his Blumer kin, nor did he speak to his wife and children of his family back in Switzerland. While Koby was alive, his wife and children never knew his true identity.



The documentary movie, which debuted in Switzerland, is simply entitled "Jack V. Koby". It contains interviews with Koby's children and grandchildren, and people who knew him in Alaska. Blumer relatives still living in Engi were interviewed speaking their particular Glarner dialect. And Dennis Streiff of New Glarus is featured early in the film discussing how Swiss immigrants like Blumer frequently came to the New Glarus area to find work on farms and cheese factories.

After Koby's death in 1969, the Koby children found the name Fridolin Blumer on a document. They eventually learned the true identity of their father and his birth in Canton Glarus. They traveled to Engi and met the relatives they never knew existed. And the Engi relatives learned of the mysterious life of a mysterious uncle.

(The preceding article is reprinted from the Summer, 2008 issue of "Family History Notes". The reason for the reprinting is twofold. First, many newsletter readers were not subscribers back in 2008. And second, the 80 minute documentary described in the article below can now be viewed directly online by clicking on the following link.) [Jack V. Koby Documentary](#)

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"It wasn't the reward that mattered or the recognition you might harvest. It was the depth of commitment, your quality of service, the product of your devotion – these were the things that counted in life. When you give purely, the honor comes in the giving, and that was honor enough."

Scott O'Grady – American Hero