

Family History Notes

Spring, 2012

Comparing Churches: New Glarus Swiss Reformed and Western Koshkonong Lutheran

New Glarus historians are familiar with the succession of three Swiss Reformed Churches built here. These three churches have often been described by their respective building materials – first the log



church, then the stone church and now the red brick church. The log church was built in 1849 by volunteer labor and donated materials. In addition to being used as a church, the building was also used as a school and community meeting hall.

The second Swiss Reformed Church (circa 1870s Andreas Dahl photograph at left) was built of stone in 1858. It bears a resemblance to churches found in Switzerland, in particular the *Burgkapelle*

in Glarus (pictured right). The New Glarus structure had an unusual tower – not quite a full-blown *Zwiebelturm* (onion tower) as is found on the *Burgkapelle* but certainly distinctive.

The stone church was the most Swiss-style building of its day. Visitors to New Glarus in that period remarked at the singular church building. It was perhaps the only visual clue to the village's Swiss ethnicity. It was surrounded by frame homes, stores, and barns, and a smattering of brick and stone buildings all arranged on a neatly planned grid of broad streets -- a decidedly American look. When stone church was torn down around 1899 to make room for the present church, the village of New Glarus lost an iconic building which proudly stated its Swiss character.



And in 1900 the current red brick church was built in the then-ubiquitous neo-gothic style. While the present Swiss Church is a grand and glorious edifice, it lacks the simple charm and unique architectural pedigree which the stone church possessed.



About forty miles from New Glarus is the Western Koshkonong Lutheran Church. This congregation founded in 1844 by Norwegian immigrants has a building history which parallels that of the New Glarus Swiss Reformed churches. As in New Glarus, the Koshkonong congregation began with a simple log structure. This log structure was used until 1852 when a larger church was constructed. And again like New Glarus this second iteration of the church was based upon church design which could be found in their homeland. In

this case the Norwegians built an imposing brick octagonal church surmounted by a large lantern (pictured left). The Western Koshkonong church could seat 800 congregation members. The nineteenth century Hadsel Church in northern Norway (pictured right) shows a similar octagonal church architecture existing in Norway yet today.



The New Glarus/Koshkonong parallel doesn't end here. In 1893 the distinctive Koshkonong octagonal church was demolished and a brick gothic-style church (which is still used today) was built in its place.

The Stone Church Builders

Samuel Luchsinger (1825-1914) is credited with the masonry work associated with the stone church (see Family History Notes Spring, 2008). Two other men credited with the construction of the 1858 landmark were Johannes Becker (1804-1876) and his son Heinrich Becker (1828-1912). Both father and son were carpenters and natives of Ennenda, Canton Glarus. To assist Luchsinger and the Beckers in the church construction, 550 days of labor were contributed by congregation members

Johannes Becker and his wife Anna Maria née Trümpy had 12 children although only three daughters and two sons lived to adulthood. In 1855 their daughter Barbara Becker and son-in-law Samuel Duerst immigrated to New Glarus. In early 1856, Johannes and Anna Maria also decided to immigrate to New Glarus. They were accompanied by their sons Fridolin and Heinrich Becker, Heinrich's wife Sara née Aebli, and daughter and son-in-law Anna Maria and Fridolin Oertli. Only daughter Magdalena (Mrs. Johann Melchior Jenny) remained in Canton Glarus.

Johannes Becker sold his Ennenda property which consisted of a home, stable, coach house and garden. The auction was held in the evening of March 6 in the *Sternen* -- presumably one of Ennenda's public houses. Over two days the Beckers auctioned off their possessions beginning with Johannes' carpentry tools. This consisted of a wide variety of items including workbenches, files, saws, drills, gouges and a lathe. On the second day a variety of the Becker's household items were available at the auction including beds, cabinets, chairs, copper and crockery pots, a scale and even some potatoes.



The Becker and Oertli families purchased land in the area of Pioneer Valley northwest of New Glarus. At some point, Johannes and Anna Maria moved to 60 acres of land on the hillside east of New Glarus (just a bit above the present-day creek-side brewery). The little frame house in the center of the 1911 photograph has been identified as the Becker home, perhaps even built by Becker himself. The home had an unobstructed view of his stone church. The Becker home can also be

seen in the distance in the stone church photograph on the first page.

After Anna Maria and Johannes Becker died (in 1875 and 1876 respectively) the little house became home to Martin and Katharina (Zentner) Disch.

Bryce Dallas Howard

Have you seen the movie "The Help"? It is a peek behind the curtain at the contrasting lives of white housewives and their black domestic help in early 1960s Jackson, MS. The drama's antagonist is a young Jackson society maven named Hilly Holbrook. The Holbrook character, the embodiment of the segregated South, is played by actress Bryce Dallas Howard. Bryce is a direct descendent -- seven generations back -- of New Glarus original settlers Mathias and Anna Katharina (Schmid) Schmid. She is also a direct descendent of early settlers Niklaus and Anna Maria (Streiff) Duerst and Fridolin and Maria (Elmer) Babler.

Glarner Names: Ulrich and Afra

Two Christian names commonly found in Glarner genealogies are Ulrich and Afra. Both names have been found in New Glarus. Both names have declined to the point where they are probably no longer used here in Swissconsin.

The two names are linked. The Abbey of St. Ulrich and St. Afra can be found in Augsburg, Germany. The abbey crypt holds the remains of both saints. St. Ulrich has the unique distinction of being the first saint officially canonized by a Pope in Rome in the year 993.

St. Ulrich was born in the year 890 near Kyburg in Canton Zurich and died in 973 in Augsburg. He and his family were members of the medieval House of Dillingen. The Counts of Dillingen were the predecessors of the Counts of Kyburg. St. Ulrich's brother, Manegold I Count of Dillingen, was the direct ancestor of Ulrich III Count of Kyburg who is a direct ancestor of Johann Christof von Hohensax, the gateway ancestor (see "Family History Notes" Summer, 2010).

St. Afra dates from centuries before Ulrich. Her history is sketchy at best. By legend she was a courtesan in Augsburg having come from Cyprus. She was converted to Christianity and died as a martyr for her faith. She was buried in Augsburg.

In 1095, Hartmann I Count of Dillingen, the great-great grandson of Manegold I, founded the Abbey of Saints Ulrich and Afra in Neresheim (Germany). Hartmann's son, Bishop Ulrich of Constance, founded the abbey in Kreuzlingen (Switzerland) in 1125 also dedicated to Saints Ulrich and Afra. Both abbeys are open yet today, the former known for its splendid 18th century Baroque architecture and latter known for its superbly hand carved wooden Calvary scene.

The name Ulrich (or John Ulrich) was found over the years in many local Swiss families such as Freitag, Elmer, Marty, Geiger, Babler, Zentner, Boss, Gerber, Naef, Stoller and Strahm. Afra was less common but could be found in Stauffacher, Speich, Schiesser, and Hefty families.

Marriage Lists (Part 2)

The following lists of area marriages continue on from those printed in the last newsletter issue.

Uncle and Niece who married Sister and Brother

Oswald Hauser (uncle) and Verena Hauser (niece) married sister and brother Ursula and Nicholas H. Zweifel

John Eichelkraut (uncle) and Katie Eichelkraut (niece) married sister and brother Anna and Fred Zimmermann

Willy Eichelkraut (uncle) and Kathryn Rhiner (niece) married sister and brother Katharina and Henry Klassy

John S. Disch (uncle) and Sylvia Zimmerman (niece) married sister and brother Anna Katharina and Oswald Schmid

Walter Schindler (uncle) and Velma Reuter (niece) married sister and brother Frieda and Walter Waefler

Uncle and Nephew who married Sisters

Edward C. Gmur (uncle) and Joseph Gmur (nephew) married sisters Anna and Louise Jordi

John Freitag (uncle) and Keith Freitag (nephew) married sisters Bernice and Irene Maertz

Raymond Disch (uncle) and Doral Disch (nephew) married sisters Ellen and Esther Waage

Robert Pfund (uncle) and John Pfund (nephew) married sisters Anna and Minnie Hefty

Father and Son who Married Sisters

Dr. Samuel Blumer, a widower, married Katharina Legler. Dr. Blumer's son by his first marriage, Dr. Johann Jacob Blumer, married Margaretha Legler. Margaretha was the younger sister of Katharina.

Brother/Sister who married Sister/Brother:

John H. and Barbara Zweifel married Lilly and Victor Babler
Adam and Katharina Blumer married Margreth and Jacob Hefty (Blumer and Hefty brewers)
Anton and Magdalena Jenny married Margaretha and Fridolin Hefty
Oswald and Verena Kubly married Barbara and Fridolin Schrepfer
Caspar and Anna Hauser married Anna Katharina and Thomas Schmid
Caspar and Lisetta Schmid married Louisa and Sam Schneider
Matt and Anna Barbara Wittenwyler married Rosina and Johann Jacob Becker
Leonard and Anna Maria Roby married Eliza Jane and William McClintock (aunt and uncle of author Hamlin Garland)
Frank and Anna Schiesser married Elda and Jacob Strahm
Vincent and Anna Kubly married Ida and Fred Benkert
J. Jacob and Louisa Tschudy married Olive and Jacob Burgy
Henry and Hedy Gruenenfelder married Margaret and Maurice Wahl
Fred and Susan Stauffacher married Lydia and Ed Wenger
Alvin and Lillian Elmer married Dora and William Stauffacher
George and Katherine Wild married Katherine and Alfred Beckwith
John Ulrich and Euphemia Elmer married Emma and Fred Abey
Fred and Katharina Voegeli married Bertha and Henry Blumer
Jacob and Cleopha Rhyner married Sara and Johannes Freitag
Albert and Sophia Zimmerman married Anna and Fred Blumer
Johannes and Sara Freitag married Cleopha and Jacob Rhyner
Waldo and Clara Kempfer married Anna Barbara and John Jacob Hefty
Johannes and Euphemia Elmer married Anna and Peter Elmer (Elmer married Elmer)
Nik and Regula Freitag married Elsbeth and Fred K. Hefty. This was the celebrated triple wedding of October 24, 1894. The third couple was Hefty sister Rosina and Albert Voegeli.

Astronaut William B. Lenoir

Previous stories in these "Family History Notes" have told of various people who have passed through this area over the years and the mark that they or their descendents have made on our world.

The Austrian apothecary Eugen Vidal and his family lived in New Glarus in the 1860s. The Vidals were the great grandparents of writer Gore Vidal. Al Ringling of circus fame worked in area wagon shops in the late 1800s. He and his brothers went on to form the Ringling Brothers Circus. Their first tour (with famed showman Yankee Robinson) included a performance in New Glarus on May 25, 1884. Little Frank Leipzig, a schoolmate of Josh Hoesly and Philipp Marty, Sr., lived here while his father was employed in the Gabriel Zweifel brewery. Frank went on to become Bishop Francis P. Leipzig of the Roman Catholic Church. Bishop Leipzig attended all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s. And then there was Sol Levitan, a local pack peddler and store merchant who left New Glarus for Madison eventually becoming the long-time State of Wisconsin Treasurer.

Another story of a family who passed through New Glarus belongs to the William J. Yann family. Bill Yann was a barber here in the nineteen-teens. Twin daughters, Iola and Iona, were born in New Glarus to the Yanns in 1915. They left shortly thereafter moving to Illinois and then to Miami, FL. Daughter Iona Yann married Samuel Lenoir and they had a son William B. Lenoir, born in Miami and named for his grandfather Bill Yann.

William B. Lenoir became a member of a still-exclusive club -- those who have flown in space. Bill Lenoir, an MIT graduate in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, became a scientist-astronaut for NASA. In 1982 he flew on the Space Shuttle Columbia where he and three fellow crew members deployed two commercial satellites. Lenoir was scheduled for the first shuttle spacewalk. But it was postponed when he became ill, and then scrapped when there were issues with the spacesuits. Lenoir left the NASA and became a consultant with Booz Allen and Hamilton.

Bill Lenoir died in 2010 as a result of a bicycling accident near his home in New Mexico.

New Glarus barber Bill Yann was a native of the Highland, IL area. He likely settled here because of family or friends who had relocated to New Glarus with the opening of the Highland-based Pet Milk Company (then the Helvetia Milk Condensing Company) in 1910. The Yann family (originally Jann) was of Swiss descent, originating in the village of Klosters in Canton Graubunden.

Creative Fabrication

In 1993 the Swiss brothers Daniel and Markus Freitag embarked on a creative endeavor which has blossomed into a world-wide business. Using only recycled materials such as used cargo truck tarpaulins, car seat belts and bicycle inner tubes, the brothers created one-of-kind messenger bags. The waterproof and functional Freitag bag (pictured left) became a hit in Zurich where they are frequently seen draped across the shoulders of young bicyclists. A single Freitag bag, made from these repurposed materials, can cost in excess of \$250. But despite their hefty price tags, the Freitag bag popularity has spread throughout the world.



Fueled by their success, the Davos-born Freitag brothers needed a Zurich flagship store to sell their creative products. In 2006 a Zurich landmark was born when 17 recycled and rusty shipping containers were bundled together to create an innovative 86-foot "skyscraper" on Zurich's trendy west end. The Freitag Tower can be seen from trains coming and going from the *Hauptbahnhof*. Freitag retail stores can also be found in such cities as Tokyo, Vienna, Florence, Berlin and New York. If these cities are not in your travel plans, there is also an online Freitag store. If you are an eBay buyer, Freitag bags do pop up occasionally, although bidding is brisk and prices generally exceed \$100 per bag.



New Glarus native Randall J. (Rand) Kuenzi has also discovered creative fabrication. Like the Freitag brothers, Rand has embarked on a venture to create tote bags often using recycled fabrics, ranging from t-shirts to military uniforms to canvas. This unlikely venture had its start when Rand was helping his daughter with her sewing project. He ended up creating a tote bag and turned his new-found skill into a business called Kuenzi Fabrications.

Rand was raised on a New Glarus dairy farm, graduated from New Glarus Christian School and the Baptist Bible College. In 1986 he joined the Air Force and has built an impressive military career. Rand's military career assignments have taken Kuenzi and his family to numerous states as well as Great Britain and Saudi Arabia.



He is the son of Bill and Eloise (Klassy) Kuenzi and the grandson of Bill and Dorothy (Palmer) Kuenzi and Paul and Doris (Sherven) Klassy. His ethnic heritage includes Swiss, Norwegian, German and Yankee background. His ancestors were some of the earliest Glarner settlers in this area including Johann Peter and Barbara (Schiesser) Klassy, Joshua and Barbara (Speich) Wild, Rudolf and Elsbeth (Schuler) Kundert, and Melchior and Anna Maria (Salmen) Marti. Great-grandfather Ernst Kuenzi was an immigrant cheese maker from Wachseldorn, Canton Bern who married great-grandmother Clara Friedli, a native of Langnau, Canton Bern. His Yankee roots include a gateway ancestor whose medieval pedigree (per RootsWeb data) included King Edward III of England and King Louis IX (St. Louis) of France.

Rand's great-uncle, Otto Kuenzi, was New Glarus' first casualty in WWII and the local legion post is named the Stuessy-Kuenzi Post in his honor. Rand is pictured at Otto's grave in Belgium. If you would like to take a look at Rand's creations, click on the following links:

[Kuenzi Fabrications on Facebook](#) [Kuenzi Fabrications on Etsy](#)

History Detective Multiple Choice

For those wondering which of the multiple choice answers from the past issue is correct, here is the answer. The question asked which of four possible Swiss travel destinations was a traveler going to take. The answer lies in the three hotels previously chosen. The first three hotels were the Weisses Kreuz, the Croix Blanche and the Crusch Alba. The names of these three hotels all translate as “White Cross” (as in the white cross of the Swiss flag) in German, French and Romansch. Thus, the traveler will stay next at the Hotel Croce Bianca which translates as white cross in Italian. German, French, Romansch and Italian are the four national languages of Switzerland. Tom Ackermann was first to respond with the correct answer. Pictured is the outstanding wooden façade of the historic Auberge de la Croix Blanche in Montbovon, Canton Fribourg.



My Name Jose Jimenez

Do you remember comedian Bill Dana’s character Jose Jimenez from the 1960s? The somewhat slow-witted character was retired about 1970 due to changing tastes and cultural sensitivities. After all, Dana was not Hispanic but of Hungarian-Jewish background. Since that time the name Jimenez and so many other Mexican surnames have become much more commonplace across America.

The Fall, 2011 issue of “Family History Notes” discussed the patronymic system of naming (the name is derived from that of the father) used by Norwegian families. In Norway the ending -son is indicative of the patronymic system -- as in Halvor Olson was the son of Ole, and Ole Halvorson was the son Halvor. And so in Spain centuries ago, Jose, the son of Jimeno (Simon) was named Jose Jimenez. The -ez ending is the Spanish version of the Norwegian -son.

Many other examples exist -- Rodriquez (son of Rodrigo); Martinez (Martin); Hernandez (Hernando); Lopez (Lope); Gonzalez (Gonzalo); Perez (Pedro); Sanchez (Sancho); Gomez (Gomes); Moralez (Moral); Fernandez (Fernando); Dominguez (Domingo); Alverez (Alvero); Suarez (Suero); Gutierrez (Gutierro); and Vasquez (Vasco).

And many of these surnames are now among the top family surnames found in America today. According to internet sources Rodriquez, Martinez and Hernandez are ninth, eleventh and fifteenth most common surnames in the United States today.

Medieval Ancestry: The Early Norman Kings of England

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, the 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 article describes medieval ancestors of Hohensax who ruled England 900 years ago. These Kings of England include King William I (known to history as William the Conqueror), his son King Henry I, William’s great-grandson, King Henry II, as well as King Harold II Godwinson and King Stephen.

The link to these Kings of England is through a Hohensax ancestor by the name of Mathilda of England (1156-1189). Mathilda was the eldest daughter of King Henry II of England and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine. She was married to Henry the Lion (*Heinrich der Löwe*) of the powerful German House of Welf (or Guelph). Mathilda is found on the Hohensax family tree about 13 or 14 generations back from Johann Christof von Hohensax.

The first Norman King of England was Mathilda's great-great grandfather William I (the Conqueror). He was also known in his lifetime as William the Bastard, which acknowledged the unmarried status of his parents. William, as Duke of Normandy, invaded England in 1066 defeating the forces of King Harold II Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings. King Harold II (who is also a direct ancestor in the Hohensax family tree) was killed at Hastings. The Conqueror became King, ruling over a feudal state comprised of freeholders, serfs, cotters and slaves. In 1066 William I began the construction of a London fortress which survives today -- the Tower of London.

William I was succeeded by his son, William II, who ruled for nearly 13 years when he was killed by an arrow in a supposed hunting accident. William II died without issue and was succeeded by his brother Henry who ruled as Henry I. Henry I's heir presumptive was his son William. This William died unexpectedly while crossing the English Channel. His death prompted a succession crisis and prolonged civil war known as "The Anarchy".

Upon Henry I's death, his nephew Stephen of Blois seized the throne ahead of Henry's only surviving child, his daughter Mathilda. Mathilda, also known as Maud or the Empress Maud, believed the English crown was rightly hers and fought her cousin Stephen. King Stephen prevailed in the nearly 20 year succession crisis and brought it to an end by naming Mathilda's son Henry as his heir. (Incidentally, King Stephen is also a direct Hohensax ancestor.)



Mathilda's son was crowned King Henry II. Historians consider Henry II among England's most effective rulers. Henry II's married Eleanor of Aquitaine, a wealthy and powerful woman in her own right. Their eight children included King Richard I (known as Richard the Lionheart), the notoriously bad King John, and the Hohensax ancestor, Mathilda who married Henry the Lion of Saxony. (Pictured is the tomb of King Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine at Fontevraud Abbey in France.)

A vast amount of resources is available to study these remote ancestors ranging from history books to movies. The movie "The Lion in Winter" examines the dysfunctional relationship between Henry II and Eleanor and their scheming sons. The movie "Becket" involves a low point in Henry II's life with the murder in of Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral. Ken Follett's monumental novel "Pillars of the Earth" as well as the Cafael mystery novels and subsequent television programs are set in the turbulent times of King Steven and the Empress Maud. Even the Robin Hood tale includes Kings Richard and John.

The Hohensax link to these early Kings is remote. But it is an interesting notion that many of us can follow a documented ancestry line nearly 1000 years back to England's early Kings.

Schindler Families

According to the *Familiennamenbuch der Schweiz* the Schindler name (prior to 1800) was found in four Swiss Cantons – Bern, Luzern, Schwyz and Glarus. And in Canton Glarus it was found in four villages – Braunwald, Mollis, Rüti and Schwändi. The surname is found in other German-speaking countries. (Remember the German Oskar Schindler of "Schindler's List" fame?) The origin of the Schindler name is an occupational name based on the German word *Schindel* for shingle, and/or a habitational name based upon a place called Schindel or Schindeln. Centuries ago in Canton Glarus the Schindler family was also known as Wighus or Wiggiser and so in ancient documents you may find references to Fridolin Schindler *genannt* (also known as) Wiggiser or Fridolin Wiggiser *genannt*



Schindler. One of the three Schindler family coats of arms is pictured. Each of the variants features a *steigender Steinbock* – an ascending ibex.

There were Schindlers in New Glarus at the founding in 1845. Balthasar Schindler of Mollis, Canton Glarus arrived with his daughter Magdalena and Magdalena's fiancé, David Schindler. Balthasar and David drew nearly adjoining 20-acre lots (lots 47 and 49) in the August, 1845 drawing. David was the son of another Balthasar Schindler and his wife Anna Maria Zweifel also of Mollis. All of these people lived in New Glarus for a short period before moving to Galena and/or California, although a few descendants returned to live in Monroe.

The Abraham and Anna (Baumgartner) Schindler family originally from Schwändi, Canton Glarus were also among the original settlers. Abraham drew lot number 31, land which the family continued to own for many years. (There is more on this Schindler family in the next two articles.)

Original settler Abraham Schindler had two brothers who followed him here. The brothers were Fridolin Schindler, married to Elsbeth Schiesser, and Caspar Schindler married first to Sara Jenny and after her death to Josepha Senn. Fridolin Schindler was a blacksmith in Switzerland and farmed in Section 34 of the Town of New Glarus (on County Highway N just before entering the Town of Washington). The farm passed to his son Abraham (married to Menga Monsch or Montsch) and then to grandson Fred Schindler (married to Katharina Klassy and after her death to Katie Eichelkraut Zimmerman) before being sold to the Leonard Altmanns. Immigrants Fridolin and Elsbeth Schindler had another son, Fridolin married to Rosina Durst, who built the hotel and saloon generally remembered as the Four Corners and today known as Toffler's.

Arriving in 1847 with the New Bilten settlers was Johann Melchior and Anna (Heitz) Schindler of Rüti. They were accompanied by their mentally-challenged son David (noted in early census records as an "idiot") and their daughter and son-in-law Amalia and Thomas Kundert. The Kunderts farmed immediately north of New Glarus on what is now the Jim Hoesly farm.

Also living in early New Glarus were carpenter Andreas and Katharina (Knobel) Schindler. Andreas (also known as Andrew in America) had the distinction of having served in the brief Swiss Civil War known as the *Sonderbundskrieg* of 1847 as well as in America's Civil War.

Andreas Schindler's brother Heinrich and wife Anna Katharina née Zopfi lived in Monroe. This Heinrich Schindler family left Switzerland in 1845 in a small party which included Joshua and Barbara (Speich) Wild. Schindler had been occupied as a bleaching laborer (*Bleicheknecht*) in Glarus. Around 1850 Schindler and Wild set up a lathe shop in Monroe. Wild wrote, "We each bought two lots near the square with a poor house on it. On these premises we constructed a workshop and a show room and I installed a lathe. Of course Schindler had to turn it as we had not horse power. He soon got tired of this so our partnership broke up and I sold my share at a loss." The Wilds came to New Glarus and the Schindlers remained in Monroe.

Another Heinrich Schindler from Rüti was married to Verena Kundert. This couple and their large family farmed in the Town of Monroe and later lived in the Town of Moscow, Iowa County with son Thomas. They are buried in Blanchardville's Graceland Cemetery.

Joseph Schindler, a native of Rüti, and his wife Anna Barbara Bäbler of Elm farmed in Section 19 of New Glarus and adjoining Section 24 of York. They immigrated in 1867 on the ship *Bellona* traveling with numerous other Glarner families. The Joseph Schindlers had two daughters – Anna (Mrs. Samuel Christen) and Elsbeth (Mrs. Joshua Eichelkraut).

There was a Johan Heinrich Schindler (of probable but unknown Glarus ancestry) married to Anna Warth of Schwanden. They settled in Monroe after living in New Jersey – one of their daughters marrying Thomas Streiff, son of 1845 scout Fridolin Streiff.

Various immigrant women whose maiden name was Schindler also found their way to this area including Regula Schindler (Mrs. Peter Disch), Elsbeth Schindler (Mrs. Christian Leuzinger), Regula Schindler (Mrs. David Legler, Jr.), and sisters Margaretha, Elsbeth and Barbara Schindler (Mrs. Albin Indergand, Mrs. Caspar Zindel, and Mrs. Heinrich Schuler).

There are still Schindlers and Schindler descendants living in the area today, however it appears this old surname is no longer found in New Glarus.

“The value of history is only as good as what you make of it today.”

From the book “Inspiration” by New Glarus native Dr. Ruth (Hoesly) Marcus.
Ruth is a descendent of immigrants Fridolin and Elsbeth (Schiesser) Schindler

Cholera 1854

Fridolin and Rosina (Schiesser) Schindler, immigrants from Schwändi, hold an ill-fated place in New Glarus history as the people who brought cholera to the village in 1854. Once again Joshua Wild captured this history in his memoirs. “Fridli Schindler, wife and children came from Freeport happy and looking ahead with great dreams. He hired out to a man in Albany to work in the harvest, but in the night cholera overtook him, and he finally died after suffering a great deal. Twenty-two persons followed in the same manner.” Fridolin and daughter Rosina died of cholera. Mother Rosina died later that year and two-year-old son Peter followed her a month later. The only family member to survive was son Jacob, age 12. He was confirmed here in 1860, but nothing more is known of him.

One of the local cholera victims was Abraham Schindler, the original colonist. Schindler descendants tell that tale that Abraham had traveled to Monroe but did not return. When the family became concerned, oldest sons Andreas and Abraham went to Monroe to locate their father. They discovered he had contracted cholera and soon father and the two sons were all cholera casualties.

Cholera was rampant worldwide in the years 1852-1860. In 1854 Chicago lost 3500 people – 5.5% of its population. In 1854 Johannes and Maria (Blumer) Marty (originally Marti), immigrants from Engi, Canton Glarus and their four children were living in Chicago. Marty children Barbara and Caspar contracted cholera and soon died. Then the father Johannes died followed just five minutes later by mother Maria. Only sons Fridolin, age 12, and Johannes, age 3, lived. The orphaned boys were sent to live with other Marty families who had settled in Minnesota.

One Schindler Family

Gabriel Schindler (1847-1923) was the son of original settlers Abraham and Anna (Baumgartner) Schindler. Gabriel was an early blacksmith who later opened a dry goods store called the Peoples Cash Store. He married immigrant Barbara Hefty (1851-1912; originally Hefti) in 1869. Mrs. Schindler was recorded as a dressmaker, milliner, and according to one reference, sold confections. Their home was a handsome stone structure seen in the stone church photograph on page one. Schindler’s wagon and blacksmith shop is presumably the small building barely seen in the photograph just to the right of the white picket fence. In 1881-1883 he built a larger building which later became the family’s mercantile store. In 2011 this building, then operated as Kleeman’s Bar & Grill, was completely destroyed by fire.

In approximately the 1890s, the Gabriel Schindlers built a new home on the western edge of the village. This land had originally been part of the 20 acre parcel drawn by Abraham Schindler on August 20, 1845. The new Schindler home was an exuberant Queen Anne style complete with gingerbread-trimmed porch, a turreted roof, scalloped shingle detailing and stained glass in the windows.

Gabriel and Barbara had two daughters and a son. The son, Sebastian A. Schindler (1871-1931), was a New Glarus merchant with his father at their Fifth Avenue store. When the Village of New Glarus was incorporated in 1901, he was the first Village President serving four terms. The Schindler mercantile business was sold around 1912 to Leo Gmur and Arthur Marty. Schindler then worked in the Bank of New Glarus and from 1913 to 1917 served in the Wisconsin Assembly.

In 1927, the Wisconsin State Treasurer Sol Levitan named S. A. Schindler as Wisconsin Assistant Treasurer. (Glarus records list Schindler as Wisconsin's *Hilfs-Stadtsschatzmeister*.) He held this role until his sudden death of a heart ailment at the age of 60. (Upon the death of Schindler, Levitan appointed George F. Zwicky to the Assistant Treasurer post. Zwicky was the grandson of Canton Glarus immigrants Michael and Anna Katharina (Zwicky) Zwicky of Mollis.)

S. A. Schindler married his cousin Anna Wohlwend, a milliner like his mother. She was the daughter of Pittsburgh, PA dry goods merchant Johannes Wohlwend, a native of Matt, Canton Glarus and Sibilla Hefti. (Sibilla (Hefti) Wohlwend was the sister of Barbara (Hefti) Schindler.) S. A. and Anna had three children – Walter Gabriel, John Albert and Marion Irene. In 1911 the Schindler family engaged the Madison architectural firm of Claude and Starck to design and build a stately Tudor-style home immediately to the west of Gabriel and Barbara's Queen Anne. Some years later, they sold their Tudor home to Emil Kaeser, Manager of the New Glarus Pet Milk plant. The Schindlers then built the attractive blond brick home immediately to the south of the Gabriel Schindler residence. Sadly, Anna Schindler died in 1929 at the age of 54, just 22 months before her husband's death.

Schindler brothers Walter G. (1897-1991) and John A. (1903-1957) are among New Glarus' most notable native sons. Walter Gabriel Schindler, a highly decorated naval hero, was a graduate of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis and rose to become a Vice Admiral. He was a participant in the 1942 Battle of the Coral Sea where he was said to have been the first (or one of the first) naval officers to shoot down a Japanese Zero. For his WWII heroism he was awarded the Navy's second and third highest honors – the Navy Cross and the Silver Star. In addition he received two Legion of Honor awards – one for WWII and one for Korea. At right is a circa 1942 photograph of Walter G. Schindler (center).



John A. Schindler received his medical degree from Washington University, St. Louis, and practiced in New Glarus for a short period. He then relocated to Monroe, WI where he co-founded the Schindler-Gnagi Clinic which grew and evolved into the Monroe Clinic. He is remembered for his highly successful self-help book "How to Live 365 Days a Year". The book remained on the best seller list for two years, sold over one million copies and was translated into 13 languages. Dr. Schindler's book stressed living a full and positive life and introduced the concept of how emotional stress could lead to illness. The book remains in print today.

The Schindler family supported local history. In April of 1940 it was announced that the brothers John and Walter Schindler, as well as the other heirs of the Gabriel Schindler estate, donated four acres of land, located between the Schindler homes and the Swiss Reformed Cemetery, to the newly organized New Glarus Historical Society.

Dr. Schindler died in an automobile accident in 1957 while on a rural house call. Vice Admiral Schindler died in 1991 at the age of 93 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

1940 Census Data Released Online

After the customary 72 year waiting period, the National Archives has just released the 1940 census data. The data can be accessed online via the National Archives website. A searchable database is anticipated by the end of the year.