

Family History Notes

Fall 2017

The Personal Account of John Durst

John Durst (1860-1960) of Santa Rosa, California celebrated his 100th birthday with friends and a cake on December 3, 1960. Less than two weeks later he passed away. John's story began with his birth in the Town of New Glarus a century earlier. His parents, David and Barbara (Schindler) Durst were immigrants from Canton Glarus who married here. The Durst land and log cabin home (pictured) were previously profiled (see Family History Notes Fall 2013). A



humble man, John Durst remarked on his life, "I never cut much of a swath while here on earth, and I want to pass on with as little trouble as possible". John captured the essence of his 100 years in the following autobiographical article. John's creative spelling and grammar both remain as he wrote it. Bracketed and non-italicized comments are my annotations.

I was born in Green county, Wisconsin, on December 3, 1860 from German Swiss parience born in Switzerland. They came to U. S. when mear children. My father's name was David Durst. Mother's madin name was Barbara Schindler. Thare parience settled in Green County, Wisconsin on adjoining ranches and engaged in farming. When my parence wer married they all settled on a rance close bey where I was Born. Being the oldest from a family of three. My brother William B. Durst was born

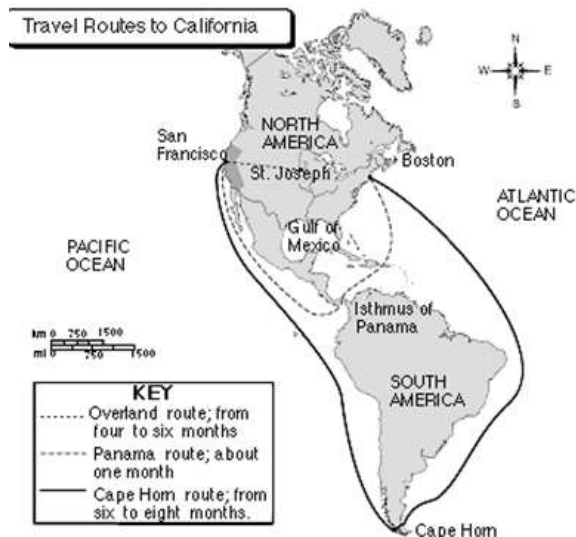
October 15th in the year 1863 and my sister Mary An was born March 4th in the year 1866. [The 1860 census below confirms that John's parent David and Barbara (Schindler) Durst, his maternal grandparents Balthasar and Anna Maria (Zweifel) Schindler, and paternal grandfather Johann Jacob Durst all lived in close proximity.]

7	1519 1652	David Durst	26	"		Farmer	1200	260	Switz
8		Barbara	20	"					"
9	1520 1652	Baltzar Schindler	70	m				800	"
10		Anna M	55	"					"
11		Anna	16	"					"
12	1521 1653	John J. Durst	70	m			1200	486	"
13		John	31	"					"

I being the oldest I was put to work quite young. My parence had to work hard to make both ends meet. They couldn't afford to heir help so at the age of eight I was tied on the seat of a reeper with bailing roap so in case I would drop off to sleep I wouldn't fall in the sichel. I must of ben a great temster. I gess the horses knew more than I did. I will never for git them – their names – Moley and Kait. They never seemed to know I was new at the business.

I never had any schooling to speak of back est. I went to school two winters when the snow wasent to deep. I got as fare as the second reader in German. Then when I was nine years old we sold out and started for Oregon from New York. We embarked in an old sailing vesill which took us a round the Horn [South America's Cape Horn, a six to eight month journey] and after a long slow tiersom trip we arrived at Portland where my mother had a brother [Gabriel Schindler, a Swiss Consul and Portland furniture manufacturer] but our stay there was short for mother got home sick. Then after a bout three months we started for California where mother had another brother [David Schindler, who was present at the founding of New Glarus in 1845]. She was better satisfied for a while so father bought a ranch on Cache Creek, Yolo County but after while she got home sick agin so father sent her and us kids back and he was to stay till he could dispose of the ranch. But after mother got back home things didn't seem the same and she wasent satisfied so she wrote to father not to sell the ranch and in the Spring of 1871 we cam back and engaged in farming. [John Durst says his father had sent his mother and the three children "back". It may seem unlikely that they went all the way back to New Glarus considering the length of time it took to travel. But the 1870 New Glarus census confirms that Barbara and her three children were living with her parents in New Glarus. On their trips to and from New Glarus it is possible that Barbara and her three children avoided the long sailing trips by taking the new transcontinental railroad. If that were the case, John did not mention it in these memoirs. Husband and father David Durst is enumerated in the 1870 census in Yolo, California. David's next door neighbor in Yolo was Godfrey Rodolph of the Swiss immigrant Rodolf family who settled near Mineral Point, WI in the 1830s.] Then instud of gitting a chance to go to school I was put to work driving teem. Well bey that time I had forgotten all I had lurnt in German in fact I had noten where I couldent speak German or English but in winter they started me to school. But the kids made fun of me because I dident knaow any thing and they called me Dutchey. That settled it. So I put in the rest of the winter chopping cor wood for 75 cents a teer. That was about the first money I earnt and it wasent easy money.

Well, I bought me some books and started to study evnings but I was like most kids at that age I taught I knew enough I could drive 6 mules, swore and chu tobacco and that was enough. So that was about the extent of my schooling for that Spring my father took a bad cold whitch settled on his lungs and in 1881, October 10th he past on. So then every thing fell on me and it come in



handy being usto the work. We got along fairly well until my sister took sick. Then mother went all to peases. She lost all intrress in everything. She took my sister every where they taught the climate micht do her some good, but after a bout a years surfing she past on at the age of 19. We laid her to rest beside my father in the Cottonwood Semitery where we have a family plot. Her passing broke mother all up. We sent her to Oregon wher she had a sister [Mrs. Caspar (Anna) Becker of Woodburn, OR] but it was of no use, she lost all intrress in everything. She wasent satisfied eny where so in 1892 we sold out and went to Humbolt [Humboldt] County where we engaged in the cattle business.

In 1894 I married Ella Connors. We run the cattle ranch till 1900 when we sold the cattle and moved to Briceland and went in to the hotel business. Well it was a business I didnt like so Ella run the hotel and I got me a 6 horse team and went to work for Wagner Leather Co. I worked for them till 1906 when we sold out and came to Sonoma County and engaged in the dairy business. We followed that for a year. Well I couldnt git eny kick out of striping cows for the cows seemd to do all the kicking so I quit that. I have all ways bin wiling to trey a thing once so I went into the chicken busisness. Well I quit that with less money but wiser in the head. Well it begin to look to me like I was going from bad to worse. Well I remembered the old saying that every one is good for some thing. All you haft to find out what it is. So I bought me a team and went to work at eny thing I could git to do. Then in 1912 I went into the street contracting business with Giggy. I folod that til 1916 when I sold out and went to work for S. E. Adams. Then in 1918 Ella took a nochin to goa to Reno for her health. Then it struck me I was giting to old for this teeming and went to work for the Meachams hearing sheep. As the cow boys say I recon that is a bout the lat for acordin to thare way of thinkin that is a bout as low as you can git.

I stayed with that job till they sold the sheep. Then in 1925 my mother past on at the age of 84. We lade her to rest with her love ones that had past on before in the Cotton Wood Grave Yard near Madison, Yolo Co. Then in 1930 I came to Petaluma and made my home with the George family.

At hart I am not as bad as I look after you git to know me. I may take quit a while to git aquanted. Now when I look back over my life I can see where I have made some bad mistakes but its to late now so why worry. I have one concalation we all make mistakes some time. Thare ar many things that have hapend in my life, to numers to menschen hear. I have had my ups and downs (mostly downs) and mostley it was my own falt. God has been good to me. He gave me good health and a long carier but I wasent good to myself yet I have held my own. I cam into this world with nothing and when my time come go I am leaving nothing. I am taking nothing with me (quit even). I always treyd to lead an onest life and treat every one as near right as I could. Thare is one concalation I have when my time comes to leave hear – I am squair – I don't owe any one a nichel that I know of yet thare is one dept I never can pay. I owe the George family a dept I never can express my feeling in words. They have treated me like one of the family and the girls have bin like sisters to me. I owe them my everlasting gratitude. I never can express my feelings in words so the best I can do is to thank you all very kindly.

One of the interesting tidbits found in John Durst's story is the fact that, when the family went to Portland, Oregon, they went by sailing "vesill" from New York around the Horn of South America. It may have been that the Dursts traveled to New York by rail starting from Monroe. There were three routes to the west at that time – by land, such as the Oregon Trail; by sea and land across the Isthmus of Panama; and by water around the Horn of South America. The Panama route was the quickest route – about one month. But the isthmus was a jungle plagued with insects, snakes and the danger of contracting malaria or cholera. The overland route took four to six months. The Horn route was the longest taking six to eight months with notoriously stormy seas near the Horn.

John Durst's uncle and aunt, David and Magdalena (Schindler) Schindler, were among the earliest Glarner to leave the New Glarus area for the gold fields of California. In 1849, the Schindlers took the isthmus route which was documented in David's 1886 obituary. The route west was forever changed in 1869 with the completion of the transcontinental railroad. A coast-to-coast trip dropped to only seven days and the cost of the transportation plummeted.

John Durst was laid to rest in the Cottonwood Cemetery, Winters, Yolo County, California near his parents and sister Anna Maria. John's grandfather Durst remained in New Glarus and is buried in the Swiss Reformed Cemetery. His Schindler grandparents went to California and are buried in the Cacheville Cemetery, also in Yolo County. John's first cousins who lived in New Glarus included brothers the Andrew, Jacob and David Hoesly, and sisters Elsbeth (Schindler) Streiff and Barbara (Schindler) Marty.

Swiss and Norwegian Skiing

A common passion shared by the Swiss and the Norwegians is skiing. And the development of skiing owes a debt of gratitude to each land. A four to five thousand year old rock carving found at Rødøy, Norway (pictured) attests to ancient skiing in Norway. Skiing was a method of transportation used for millennia by farmers, hunters and warriors. The sport of skiing was to follow but only in recent centuries. In the nineteenth century the Norwegians held some ski jumping competitions and races. But it was the Swiss who developed skiing into a sport and leisure time activity, with Canton Glarus playing an important role in that development.



Among the earliest recorded skis in Switzerland were brought to Canton Glarus by a Mitlödi native named Markus Wild. Wild lived in Norway and brought a pair of Norwegian skis back to his hometown in 1868. Some sources have referred to him as Konrad Wild – probably a misinterpretation of Konsul Wild since Markus Wild had served as a foreign consul.

But it was Glarus native Christof Iselin who was the driving force behind the development of skiing in Glarus. In the book, “Two Planks and a Passion: The Dramatic History of Skiing”, author Roland Huntford wrote, “Glarus became the cradle of skiing in Switzerland and Iselin its pioneer. What distinguished [Iselin] was a certain gift of turning ideas into action.” In the winter of 1891 Iselin experimented with skiing on a pair of primitive skis. And lest he become a target of ridicule, he made his trial runs only at night or during a blizzard. Iselin wrote, “For woe betide him who then presumed to practice on such particular implements.” Iselin sought out a Norwegian by the name of Olaf Kjelsberg. Kjelsberg was an accomplished skier in his youth who had moved from Norway to Canton Zurich. Iselin wanted to learn skiing from the Norwegians so he invited Kjelsberg and another Norwegian Ulrik Krefting to Glarus to demonstrate their skiing skills. In 1893 Iselin established a race over the Prugel Pass from Glarus to Canton Schwyz to prove what skis could do versus the traditional Swiss snow shoes. Although both skis and snow shoes performed well on the ascent, the skis clearly had the speed advantage on the descent. Later that same year Christof Iselin formed the Glarus Ski Club – the first such club in Switzerland. He was the president and a charter member of the club was Norwegian Olaf Kjelsberg.

For skiing to become popular among the Swiss, skis were needed. So Iselin, demonstrating his ability to turn ideas into reality, worked with two unrelated men by the name of Jakober to make some of the earliest skis manufactured in Switzerland. Melchior Jakober was a local Glarus carpenter and Josef Jakober was a local Glarus saddle maker. Melchior made the skis and Josef made the leather bindings. Skis were based on the Norwegian Telemark-style ski, designed for ski jumping and cross country travel. Norwegian Olaf Kjelsberg worked with Glarner Melchior Jakober to design a shorter, more maneuverable ski.



Beginning in 1902 Glarus was home to ski racing and ski jumping. A poster from the 1905 “largest ski race of Switzerland” is pictured at left. Spectators at these events numbered in the thousands. These Glarus events drew Norwegian skiers by the names of Thorleif Bjørnstad, Leif Berg, Thorvald Heyerdahl and Anders Holte.

Over the 20th century Glarner skiers advanced to world-class fame. In 1932 Rösli Streiff of Glarus won two World Championship gold medals in the slalom and the combined slalom/downhill events. Vreni Schneider of Elm is considered Switzerland’s greatest female skier of all time and is placed as the world’s third greatest female skier (after American Lindsey Vonn and Austrian Annemarie Moser-Pröll). Other Glarner skiers of note include Rico Elmer and Tobias Grünenfelder. Note: The book “100 Jahre Skisport: Ski-club Glarus 1893-1993” by Walter Tschappu is available for loan at the New Glarus Public Library.

And ski jumping came to the New Glarus area. A team formed of many Primrose-area men of mostly Norwegian ancestry. They constructed a 72 foot ski jump. The local team competed with other regional teams. Reporting on a 1936 ski jumping contest, the “Dubuque Telegraph Herald” of January 13, 1936 wrote that “New Glarus Entrant Soars 51 Feet Twice to Win Ski Jump”. The Primrose/New Glarus team was made of up of Orvin Slotten , Joe Herreid (who scored a 60 foot jump), Earl Ethridge , Rudy Rettenmund (the Swiss team member who fell all three times!), Ole Berge , Floyd Landmark , Ambrose Landmark, Harold Berge (junior division), Ole Anderson, and Peter Edwardson (who placed first). Primrose’s 72 foot ski jump tower was over two times the height of Dubuque’s 35 foot tower. This led to the Dubuque newspaper comment, “no wonder none of them [the New Glarus team] appeared nervous.” Three thousand onlookers attended the Dubuque contest. Does any know the location of the Primrose ski jump?

Glarner Rømmegrøt?

Peasant dishes found in the Swiss Alps and in rural Norway had interesting similarities. Both Swiss and Norwegian foods of the common folk were prepared with the most basic of ingredients such as milk, flour, butter and eggs. Two Glarner dishes, *Fänz* and *Kium*, bear interesting similarities to two Norwegian dishes, *Rømmegrøt* and *Fløtegrøt*.

A alpine dish called *Fänz* (sometimes spelled *Fenz*) was made by the men who took the cattle to the summer alps. The glossary found in the *Glarneralpbuch* says *Fänz* is an alpine food made of flour, whey and butter – “*Typisches, sehr feistes Älplergericht aus Mehl, Schotte und Butter*”. While cheese, bread and milk constituted the breakfast and the evening meal, lunch was the time for *Fänz*.

Fänz is prepared by lightly browning flour in butter (making a *roux*) in special kettle known as a *Fänzkessel*. Warm whey or milk is added to the *roux* along with a pinch of salt. The mixture is stirred with a wooden spoon known as a *Fänzloeffel*. As this mixture is heated it thickens into porridge. Some of the butter separates out and rises to the top. It is said that if the *Fänz* is not the proper consistency until it can be used to patch the roof -- “*Damit könnte man das Hüttendach flicken*”. When the dish is ready to be served, the *Fänzkessel* was placed on the table and everyone ate from it in a communal fashion. An alpine dish similar to *Fänz* is *Kium*. Unlike *Fänz* which begins with a *roux*, *Kium* is prepared by adding flour directly to heavy cream. The *Kium* thickens as the flour and cream mixture is heated. Today *Fänz* and *Kium* are only occasionally eaten at special events such as Elm’s annual *Alpchäs Märt*.

A similar Norwegian porridge, known as *grøt*, also is made with dairy ingredients thickened with flour. Two versions of *grøt* are most popular. *Rømmegrøt* is made with sour cream and its cousin *Fløtegrøt* is made with sweet cream. (It is said that much of the *Rømmegrøt* made in



America is actually *Fløtegrøt* because sweet cream is generally used.) The Norwegian method gently heats a high butterfat cream into which sifted flour is slowly added. (This preparation is similar to Swiss *Kium* described above.) As the cream and flour is heated and stirred, the mixture thickens, and the butterfat separates out. This butterfat is spooned off of the porridge and saved for serving at the table. A utensil used to stir the *Rømmegrøt* is called a *tvare*. This Norwegian whisk is made from the top of a spruce tree. (See a *tvare* pictured on the following page.)

Rømmegrøt was served at farm tables as a simple meal. But over time the Norwegians seem to have evolved this dish from porridge to more of a sweet pudding. Cinnamon, sugar and melted butter are now used to top the *grøt* (pictured above). Because of its richness it has become more of a dessert or holiday treat than a simple farm meal

It is interesting that *Fänz* and *Kium* have become something of a rarity in Switzerland and likely long forgotten if ever consumed in New Glarus. And *Rømmegrøt* has become an indulgence -- often made during the Christmas season by Norwegian-Americans and found at Norwegian Lutheran church suppers across the Midwest.

There is an interesting parallel with the Glarner eggy pancake known as *Tschüchel* (see Family History Notes Spring 2014). *Tschüchel* is only occasionally eaten in America and Glarus. But its Austrian counterpart, known as *Kaiserschmarrn*, is a popular dessert found on restaurant and coffee house menus across Austria. It is curious why the Glarner *Fänz*, *Kium* and *Tschüchel* have become rare while their counterparts *Rømmegrøt* and *Kaiserschmarrn* continue to satisfy sweet-tooths?

Sveitserstil

Sveitserstil in Norwegian translates to Swiss-style. Swiss-influenced architecture was very popular in Norway in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The home at left in Frivoll is a good representation of how the Swiss-style was carried out in Norway. The gable, balcony/porch, brackets and decorative woodwork attest to the Swiss influence. In Norway these buildings are typically white or light colors, unlike the darker chalets found in Switzerland. Norwegian *Sveitserstil* may have found its way to New Glarus. The Glarner Lodge, with its light color and pointed gable ornamentation, is perhaps more suggestive of Norwegian *Sveitserstil* than it is of an authentic Swiss chalet found in Switzerland.



A Small Norwegian Presence in the Swiss Historical Village

In the 1930s when the Green County and New Glarus Historical Societies were being formed, an outdoor “village-style” museum was planned. The idea of open-air and living-history museums was innovative at that time influenced by the opening of Colonial Williamsburg and Henry Ford’s Greenfield Village in 1932 and 1933, respectively. And among the buildings found in the original New Glarus museum plan was a “Norway House”. Apparently it was felt by some in New Glarus that the story of the area’s immigrant Norwegians was also something to be preserved. But the Norway House did not materialize.



Yet a handful of Norwegian artifacts are found within the collection. One of the most interesting is the *tine* (pictured; pronounced TEE-nah) or small storage box donated by Carl Marty. The very colorful, hand-painted designs are indicative of the Os-style of painting, known for its flowers and bright colors. These Norwegian bentwood boxes were made since Viking times. The *tine* may have been used to store important household items or for storage of food items. The Norwegian words “*Med Fornøyelse*”, found on the front of the box, translates as “with pleasure”. [Click for Link to Tine Images and Info](#)

Other Norwegian artifacts found in the New Glarus collection include a *tvare* or wooden stirring stick which was used to whisk *Rømmegrøt*. The *tvare* is pictured here alongside a sausage stuffer. And a handmade piece of Hardanger embroidery is found in the log church. This beautiful handwork was made by Agatha (Streiff) Hoesly, not a *Norsk dame*, but a New Glarus farm woman of 100% Glarner ancestry. A large loom which belonged to the immigrant Funseth family of Primrose is found in the museum’s log cabin. Having this Norwegian family loom is a bit ironic considering it was the Glarner who came from a canton known for textile weaving.



Glarners in Norway

Canton Glarus had a relationship with Norway long before the Glarner immigrants encountered their Norwegian immigrant counterparts on the outskirts of New Glarus. There were Glarners who immigrated to Norway in the 1700s. In Norway these Glarner immigrants became laborers, businessmen, bankers and politicians. These Glarners comprised a web of fathers, sons, grandsons, cousins and in-laws (see accompanying “Glarner in Norway” chart).

The very first issue of “Family History Notes” (Spring, 2005) reported on members of the Disch family of Elm who went to Norway. Many of the Dischs remained there and their descendants continue to live there – descendants with names such as Trygve, Thorlief and Valborg Disch. According to Norwegian-American Asbjorn Lageraen, his ancestor Heinrich Disch received a medal from the King to honor Disch’s role in introducing Jarlsberg cheese to Norway.

One Glarner who established an early Scandinavian presence was Melchior Ott (1686-1779; Kubly-Müller #6 of Schwanden). Ott founded a business in Horsens, Denmark which sold Glarner goods including cotton fabrics. Melchior’s son Samuel Ott (#14 Schwanden) became an important entrepreneur in Christianssand, Norway where he operated a store, saw mill, dealt in lumber, built ships and engaged in shipping.

Over a period of about 150 years various Glarners operated the Ott enterprises. The second generation included Samuel Ott’s nephews Hans Jacob Ott (#21 Schwanden) and Melchior Luchsinger (#195 Schwanden), and later Melchior’s son Rudolf Luchsinger (#257 Schwanden). Hans Jacob Ott was also assisted by his brother-in-law, Samuel Blumer (#149 Schwanden). Samuel Blumer’s nephews by marriage, Caspar Wild (#93 Mitlödi) and Johann Heinrich Wild (#110 Mitlödi) became engaged in the Ott firm. And these Wild brothers were succeeded by two of their nephews both men named Marcus Wild. The first Marcus Wild (#115 Mitlödi) was first a Dutch consul prior to becoming part of the Ott Company in Norway. He was the man who brought skis to his hometown of Mitlödi in 1868. His brother-in-law, Marcus Wild (#129 Mitlödi) was the last of the Glarners to operate the Samuel Ott Company. The Ott firm was sold to a family by the name of Balchen in the late nineteenth century ending nearly 150 years of Glarner operation.

The most prosperous Glarner immigrant story in Norway is that of the Hefti family. Thomas and Katharina (Tschudi) Hefti left Canton Glarus for Norway, taking citizenship in Christiania (Oslo) in the 1791. Thomas Hefti of Hätzingen, Canton Glarus (#169 Schwanden = #218 Betschwanden) became Thomas Johannessen Heftye in Christiania. Early on Heftye was a merchant in partnership with Peter Blumer (#129 Schwanden). (Peter Blumer was a brother-in-law of Fridolin Ott.) In 1818 Heftye founded a commercial bank Thos. Joh. Heftye & Søn. The Heftye bank, one of the first in Norway, played a major role in the city’s financial life for more 100 years. Thomas’ sons Henrik and Johann Thomassen Heftye were employed by the bank. And Thomas’ daughter, Elsbeth (known as Bertha), married Mogens Thorsen, a Norwegian, who became Norway’s largest ship owner.

Notes: Two of the founders of the Bank of New Glarus were named Thomas Heftye. Johann Jacob Ott (#22 Nidfurn) who immigrated to New Glarus -- and whose tombstone is found in the museum cemetery -- was a great-grandson of the aforementioned businessman Melchior Ott (#6) who sold Glarner merchandise in Denmark.

The peak of the Heftye family wealth and power came in the third generation with Johann Thomassen's son Thomas Johannessen Heftye (pictured left). He was considered the most



powerful man in Norway. This is confirmed by Wisconsin's own Rasmus B. Anderson, a University of Wisconsin professor, who visited Christiania in the 1870s. Anderson wrote, *"the most prominent business man in all Norway at that time was the banker, Thomas Johan Heftye. His ancestors had come from Switzerland and he represented Switzerland in Norway 1873 as consul. He owned the finest mansion in the city, a fine country seat, "Sarabråten", on the east side of Christiania, and another on the west side called "Frognerstæteren". Ole Bull had recommended me to him most cordially and he entertained me most royally. In fact, he was looked upon as Norway's viceroy, performing the social duties of king when the real king was in Stockholm. He took me to "Sarabråten" and to "Frognerstæteren". He entertained me at his palatial residence in the city."* Heftye also arranged for Rasmus Anderson to accompany Norway's Prime Minister and Crown Prince Oscar (who became that same year King Oscar II of

Sweden and Norway) to Haugesund for the 1000 year anniversary celebration of Norway's unification under King Harald Hårfagre (Fairhair) in 872.

Heftye's city mansion, known as Villa Frognæs (pictured), stood on 30 acres of country land which sloped down to the fjord. The home was built in 1856 through 1859 in a transitional period between neo-classicism and gothic revival. It was considered Oslo's finest private residence. The Heftyes were lavish entertainers and among their notable guests at Villa Frognæs were Kings Carl XV and Oscar II of Sweden and Norway, the England's Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), and then-former President Ulysses S. Grant. Today the Villa Frognæs serves as the residence of the British Ambassador.



Thomas Heftye loved the outdoors and outdoor activities. He purchased two extensive country estates outside of Oslo. Sarabråten was about 10 miles to the southeast of Oslo's center. He entertained numerous guests here including Ole Bull and Henrik Ibsen. Ibsen's visit to Sarabråten in 1874 was his first appearance in Norway in about a decade. About 10 miles northwest of Oslo was Heftye's other country estate, Frognerstæteren. Both properties were later sold by the Heftye heirs to the city of Oslo and both areas remain popular outdoor recreational areas today. Heftye's interest in outdoor activities led to the formation of the Norway Trekking Association (NTA) which maintains mountain trails and cabins. Thomas Heftye is considered its founder and served as its first president. It is curious to speculate that formation of the NTA was influenced by Heftye's knowledge of the formation of the Swiss Alpine Club in 1863 and its first mountain hut in Canton Glarus. (Next issue: Trümpi and Tschudi families in Norway.)

Family History Tucked Between the Pages

The archival collection of the New Glarus Historical Society contains a number of (perhaps about 2 dozen) Bibles. Most appear to be Luther Bibles printed in German in the 19th century. A few were published prior to 1800. Generally old Bibles have little monetary value. Book dealers do not seek out old Bibles. One book dealer stated she would not buy a Bible unless it was printed prior to 1550. Several of the Bibles in the New Glarus collection belonged to local families. And therein lies their value to those who appreciate local and family history. But even one family's Bible likely holds little interest to descendants of other families.

Bibles and songbooks donated to the museum bear the following names: Hilarius Wild, Anna Elmer, Dietrich Freitag, Burkhalter family, Eufemia Elmer, Margaret Itten, Anna Luchsinger, John Henry Schmid, Eva Stuessy, John Theiler of Faulensee, Barbara Elmer, John Zahler, Hilarius Klassy, R. Vollenweider, Fred Stettler, Regula Glarner, John Kundert and Robert Kubly. Three large family Bibles belonged to three Wild sisters. These Bibles belonged to Johann Heinrich Julius and Anna Katharina (Wild) Eichelkraut, Fridolin and Barbara (Wild) Streiff and David and Elsbeth (Wild) Hoesly. These latter three Bibles contain handwritten family data including their children's names, birth dates and other family milestones.



Occasionally interesting pieces of history have been tucked between the pages of Bibles. In the New Glarus collection there are pressed roses, four leaf clovers and newspaper clippings. In the family Bible of Julius and Anna Katharina (Wild) Eichelkraut there was an obituary handwritten in German by Anna Katharina following the 1900 death of her husband Julius. Also tucked into the Eichelkraut Bible was a fragile paper memorial (pictured) to Anna Katharina's sister Maria Wild who died of scarlet fever in 1852 at the age of only 1 year, 3 months and 20 days.

In his autobiography Joshua Wild wrote the following about Maria. "The terrible epidemic of scarlet fever covered the entire country. Many children died. Our own dear little Maria also was a victim of the terrible disease. Before that time she was a very healthy child. We were sad but when we had to see her suffer with convulsions 2 ½ days we gladly gave her into the arms of the Lord."

In 1853, the Wild family had another daughter whom they named Maria. This second Maria lived only two months. Again in 1854 the Wilds had another daughter whom they named Maria. This third Maria lived, married Fridolin Kundert, and gave birth to twelve children. Fridolin and Maria (Wild) Kundert had around 29 grandchildren, only one of whom is still living. And she is Mary Louise (Klassy) Hustad of New Glarus. In fact Mary Lou is the last surviving great-grandchild (out of about 132 great-grandchildren) of Joshua and Barbara (Speich) Wild.

Don Voegeli Remembered

Our local PBS television station has recently been airing a program remembering the musical career of late Donald Voegeli. The program (link below) features Don's son James Voegeli who provides an intimate look at his father's life and music. Don Voegeli, a Monticello native, had a lifelong association with the University of Wisconsin and Wisconsin Public Radio. He was a pianist and composer of classical jazz and experimental music. Voegeli's theme song for "All Things Considered" was written on a synthesizer and has been heard daily on National Public Radio continuously (with various modifications) since 1971.

Don Voegeli was the great-grandson of immigrants Jost and Barbara (Oprecht) Voegeli who are buried in the EUB Cemetery on the western edge of New Glarus.

[Watch Don Voegeli Video](#) [Listen to Don Voegeli Composition "Cock O' The Walk"](#)

A Tragic Ending

Madisonians were stunned on the morning of June 27, 2017 to learn of the overnight death of a then-unnamed area contractor. This contractor and his crew of three were laying tiles at a Culver's restaurant in the early morning hours. Around 3 a.m. two masked men gained entry with the intent to rob the Culver's safe. The contractor was forced to help open the safe with his tools. And in the process he died of a heart attack. Due to the circumstances, this death was considered a homicide.



The contractor's name was released in the days after the murder. He was Christ Edward Kneubuehl age 56 of Twin Lakes, WI and a native of Brodhead. Christ, known as Chris, was a self-employed master tile installer.

And his skill was such that he was known as the "Picasso of Tile". Tributes after his death attested to a fine family man. And several recalled the basketball prowess of six foot seven Chris at Brodhead High.

The Kneubuehl (Kneubühl) family originated in Canton Bern. And behind Christ's name was a multi-generational legacy. Christ Kneubuehl had a great-great grandfather, great-grandfather, grandfather, father and a son all named Christ Kneubuehl. That is six generation legacy. The first generation Christ Kneubuehl of this particular line lived and died in Canton Bern. His son Christ (born 1872) immigrated to the New Glarus area around 1893. In 1899 immigrant Christ married Crescenzia (known as Grace) Haegele of New Glarus. Grace was one of the Haegele triplets. Christ was a cheese maker and Town of York farmer. After moving to New Glarus worked at Engler's Store. The Kneubuehls lived in the home which stood at the corner of Railroad Street and 4th Avenue.

Christ and Grace Kneubuehl had a family of five children including a son Christ (born 1901). And this third generation Christ had a son Christ (born 1933). And this latter Christ was the father of Christ who died in 2017. And the sixth generation Christ Kneubuehl is a teenager.

Christ and Grace Kneubuehl of New Glarus also raised two granddaughters – Betty (Kneubuehl) Vetterli of Monroe and the late Grace Ann Disch of New Glarus.