

Family History Notes

Fall 2018

The Oldest Glarner – *der Älteste Glarner*.

Previous newsletters have explored who or what is considered the oldest Glarner – *der Älteste Glarner*. In Canton Glarus the alpine wind and weather phenomenon known as the *Föhn* is the generally accepted answer.

It has been hypothesized that in New Glarus the oldest Glarner may be Johann Melchior Hässi (~1610-1653) whose portrait is hung prominently above the fireplace in the Chalet of the Golden Fleece. It has also been suggested that immigrant Oswald Baumgartner (1795-1879) may be our oldest Glarner since there is an actual photographic image of him. A photograph of an even older immigrant Glarner, Balthasar Schindler (1791-1870), has been found and is shown here. The Schindlers immigrated to New Glarus via New Orleans in 1848 later joining their family in California. Mrs. Schindler, born Anna Maria Zweifel, has been previously written about. While Anna Maria and her family were living in New Glarus in what was probably a simple log or frame structure, her first cousin, Elisabeth (Marti) Mann, was living in a luxurious home in Lübeck, Germany. That home is known today as the *Buddenbrookhaus*. Elisabeth Mann was the grandmother of German novelist Thomas Mann.



When Monticello native Anna (Marty) Balsiger (1889-2001) was living, she was likely the oldest Glarner in the world. She died in 2001 at the age of 112. And now it has been learned that Glarus-born Anna Elsa (Baer) Zopfi, age 106, has died in Rhode Island. Mrs. Zopfi (pictured left at 104) lived a long and full life which she captured in her autobiographical book, “Echoes of Our Lives”, published when Elsa was nearly 90. Elsa’s husband, Willy Zopfi, was also born in Canton Glarus where he was employed in the Canton Glarus textile industry. His talents brought him to America where he had enjoyed a successful career in New England’s textile industry. Elsa’s mother was a member of the Müller family, manufacturers of Glarner *Schabziger*. This iconic green cheese of Canton Glarus, first regulated by the Glarner *Landsgemeinde* in 1463, may be considered the “oldest Glarner” if one is referring to cheese.



Eddie Rickenbacker – America’s Ace of Aces

The 100th anniversary of the WWI Armistice cannot pass without a brief mention of one of the most famous Americans who fought in the war. Edward V. (Eddie) Rickenbacker (1890-1973) was the American flying ace who scored the most aerial victories and who is considered to have received the most awards for valor by an American in that war.

Eddie was the son of Swiss immigrants Wilhelm and Elisabeth (Lizzie Basler) Rickenbacher, natives of Zeglingen, Canton Basel-Landschaft. He was born in Columbus, OH, the third of eight Rickenbacher children. Eddie lived a hardscrabble and mischievous boyhood. But at the age of 12, his father died. Eddie became the family breadwinner and later recalled he quickly became “a young man serious beyond my age”. His life thereafter has been characterized as “a relentless marathon of achievement”.

After an assortment of jobs, a new opportunity presented itself in 1906. Eddie became a mechanic in the emerging automotive industry. This led to working as a mechanic on race cars followed in short time by actual car racing. He raced four times in Indianapolis and achieved a world speed record of 134 mph at Daytona.

In 1917 Eddie volunteered for WWI service despite a reported annual income of \$40K. It was about this time that he changed the Rickenbacher spelling of his family name to Rickenbacker,



thinking it sounded less Germanic. He was sent to Europe as a sergeant and became chauffeur to General William “Billy” Mitchell. Rickenbacker wanted to learn to fly. But he was two years older than the age maximum to enter pilot training. General Mitchell apparently pulled some strings and Rickenbacker was admitted.

In 1918, Eddie scored 26 aerial victories (later confirmed at 24.33) which was the highest of any American pilot. He went on to become an American hero, having contributed 300 combat hours (the highest) and 134 aerial enemy encounters. Eddie was dubbed the “American Ace of Aces” – a title he did not relish since the previous three named “American Ace of Aces” had perished one by one.

After the war, Rickenbacker returned to the automotive industry. He created the Rickenbacker Motor Company and he was the majority owner in the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Rickenbacker became an executive in General Motors and later Eastern Airlines. While at Eastern he was a part of the rapid growth of commercial aviation as passengers started taking to the skies.

In an unlikely career twist, Eddie created a comic strip which was featured in newspapers across the country. “Ace Drummond” was based on Rickenbacker’s war adventures and was later serialized on film with 13 episodes released in 1936.



During WWII, Rickenbacker served as a volunteer advisor and analyst for American military aviation. While on an assignment to the Pacific, he and his fellow passengers were lost at sea for over three weeks. All but one survived. The survivors stayed alive by collecting rain water, catching fish and doling out the few oranges they were able to salvage from the plane. Rickenbacker endured sun burn, salt water ulcers and lost 60 pounds in the ordeal.

Eddie Rickenbacker’s lifelong adventures ended in 1973. He died while visiting Switzerland.

Rickenbacker Guitars

Adolph Rickenbacker, né Adolf Rickenbacher, was a Swiss immigrant and second cousin of Eddie. Adolph and business partner George Beauchamp were pioneers in the development of the electric guitar. Their California firm produced the world’s first. The list of musicians who have played Rickenbacker guitars includes iconic musicians such as Glen Frey, Tom Petty, Pete Townsend, and Beatles George Harrison, Jon Lennon and Paul McCartney. An impressive lot.

The Winteler's of New Orleans

In the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter at the corner of Bourbon Street and Ursulines is a somewhat shabby 24/7 deli, the kind of establishment frequented in the early hours by the party crowd. Unnoticed by most that enter the deli are the tiles embedded in the entry sidewalk which spell out "Winteler's" (see photo). Researching the name "Winteler" and "Ursulines" led to the discovery that in the 1920s, this was an establishment run by Oscar Winteler.



Further research into the Winteler family revealed that the grandfather of Oscar Winteler was Johann Heinrich (Henry in America) was a shoemaker who had immigrated to New Orleans in advance of his family. Henry's wife Ursula née Zweifel and their children including Melchior, Ursula, Henry and Jacob left Switzerland in 1852. Upon meeting the ship, the father Henry was reunited with his children but his wife Ursula had disappeared. The Canton Glarus records state, "*Bei der Ankunft des Schiffes am 18. Mai 1852 in New Orleans war seine Frau, eine bildhübsche Person, verschwunden und er fand nur die Kinder vor. Eine unaufgeklärte Begebenheit.*" Translated, "*on the ship's arrival on May 18, 1852, in New Orleans, his wife, a beautiful person, had disappeared and he [father Henry] found only the children. An unsolved story.*" It is assumed that mother Ursula had died at sea. But the comment about her beauty may suggest other possibilities. (Thank you Patrick Wild for pulling together the pieces of the Winteler family puzzle.)

Henry Winteler and his children remained in New Orleans. Son Henry Jr. was a shoemaker like his father. It was Henry Jr.'s son Oscar who had the establishment at Bourbon and Ursulines. Another son of Henry Sr. was Melchior, a soldier for the Confederate Army. After the war Melchior, like his father and brother, dealt in leather products. Melchior was a founder of the Swiss Society of New Orleans. He served as president of the New Orleans Swiss Rifle Club, referred to in French New Orleans as the "*Société Suisse de Tir*".

Melchior Winteler had a great-granddaughter by the name of Henrietta Winteler. Henrietta married George Oechsner Jr. and they had a son George III known as Sonny. George and Sonny Oechsner managed and then owned the most famous bar in New Orleans – Pat O'Brien's. George managed the bar for the actual Pat O'Brien and later bought him out. It was George and Sonny who took Pat O'Brien's from a local French Quarter pub to an establishment with a national, if not worldwide, reputation. Today Pat O'Brien's can also be found in Orlando and San Antonio. Sonny Oechsner died in 2012. His daughter Shelly Oechsner Waguespack (the 4th great-granddaughter of immigrants Johann Heinrich and Ursula (Zweifel) Winteler) is now running the Pat O'Brien businesses. Pictured here is Shelly holding Pat O'Brien's signature drink, the Hurricane.



Other Winteler's

The Glarner family name Winteler has not been commonly found in New Glarus. Mrs. Fridolin Zwicki, Washington Township, was born Rosina Winteler in Mollis. Immigrant Jacob Winteler of Matt was married to Anna Maria Speich, sister of Dorothea (Speich) Legler of New Glarus and Elsbeth (Speich) Stauffacher of Dutch Hollow. The Winteler's lived in Madison where he was found as Jacob Wentworth in the 1850 census.

Jost Winteler, a native of Filzbach, Canton Glarus, was mentioned in the Family History Notes Summer 2013 as the friend and mentor of Albert Einstein. Einstein's sister Maya married Paul Winteler the son of Jost.

The New Glarus Public Library holds five books (including the *Wappenbuch*) by Canton Glarus historian Jakob Winteler-Marty, all related to the history of Canton Glarus and all in German.

Dedications to Fred Wild

Fred Wild (1890-1964) of New Glarus was a custodian at the New Glarus Public Schools for over twenty years. The Class of 1947 dedicated their yearbook to Fred with the following declaration, "The Senior Class of 1947 in respectful admiration for the innumerable services which he has rendered for 21 year to this school, and thus to the community, gratefully dedicate this edition of the "Glarian" to Mr. Fred Wild." A wonderful tribute!



FRED WILD
Custodian

Fred was born on the Wild family farm in the Town of Adams to Hilarius Jr. and Anna Barbara (Zweifel) Wild. Fred was the grandson of original 1845 immigrants Hilarius Sr. and Anna (Hefti) Wild of Schwanden, Canton Glarus. He was a farmer early in life, living for a time with his brothers John and Edward in Redfield, Spink County, SD. Fred returned to New Glarus and married Lena Ming. They had one daughter, Gladys (Mrs. Harry Schuett).

Fred Wild (1911-1999; pictured below) of Sebring, Florida has school named for him. The Fred Wild Elementary School in Sebring was named in dedication to this Florida native and educator. Wild began his career as a teacher and rose to serve as the Highlands County School Superintendent. The Fred Wild Elementary (FWE) student body is known, appropriately, as the Wildcats. They have developed the following school values based on the Wild name: **Welcoming** and respectful, **Invested** in learning, **Leading** responsibly, **Determined** to succeed.



Wild is a family name commonly found within Canton Glarus and elsewhere throughout Switzerland. Wild/Wilde is also a name which can have German, English and Irish roots. The ancestry of Floridian Fred Wild is in fact Glarner. His immigrant great-grandfather, Heinrich (Henry in America) Wild belonged to a Wild family of Mitlödi, Canton Glarus. In 1882 Henry, a brewer by trade immigrated to America with his seven year old son Henry. In 1888 his wife and the remaining children immigrated. The Wild family farmed near Monticello in Florida's eastern panhandle region.

Fred Wild of New Glarus and Fred Wild of Florida, while both having Canton Glarus roots, are only distantly related. In fact one must go back nearly 500 years to the original Wild *Stammvater* (progenitor) in Canton Glarus, namely Klaus Wilhelm (later known as Wild), to find their common paternal ancestor. As many Wild descendants are aware, the wife of Klaus Wilhelm was Anna Zwingli, niece of Reformer Ulrich Zwingli.

The Wedding Bell Blues in the New Glarus Digital Photo Collection

The following six photographs are from the New Glarus local history digital collection – scanned photographs, maps and documents which are found online. The project to digitalize these items was a welcomed step to make historic items in the New Glarus Historical Society archives and Swiss Church archives readily accessible. It is a worthwhile visit to view these historic online materials. Here is a link: [New Glarus Digital Collection](#)

Unfortunately, a number of the photographs had been improperly identified. Two erroneous identifications – those of Fridolin Streiff the Civil War veteran being misidentified as Fridolin Streiff the village founder and New Glarus military hero Rear Admiral Walter G. Schindler being misidentified as Ray Kundert – have been corrected. But others mistakes persist.

This photo identified as Fred Schindler, Sr. and Katharina Klassy Schindler has the following caption: *“this formal portrait may be a wedding anniversary portrait. Mr. and Mrs. Schindler were married in 1905. The date of this portrait is unknown.”*



The woman pictured is not Katharina (Klassy) Schindler. It is Katie (Eichelkraut) Zimmerman who became Fred Schindler's second wife in 1945. Katie's first husband, Fred Zimmerman, died in 1941 and Fred Schindler's wife Katharina Klassy died in 1943. In 1945 widow married widower.

Fred and Katharina (Klassy) Schindler farmed in the Town of Exeter. They had five children – Elizabeth (Mrs. Marion Rose), Fred, Jr., Wilma (Mrs. Gilbert M. Hoesly), Meta (Mrs. Melvin Wernkli) and Walter. The Schindlers also helped raise their oldest grandchild, Velma. Velma married Walter Waefler and

Velma's uncle Walt Schindler married Frieda Waefler, sister of Walter. Schindler niece and uncle married Waefler siblings. Fred Schindler, Jr. married a woman by the name of Anna Baumgartner. The mothers of both Fred Jr. and Anna were born Katharina Klassy. And in fact both Katharinas were first cousins – the granddaughters of early New Glarus pioneers Johann Peter and Barbara (Schiesser) Klassy. Katie Schindler, Fred Schindler's second wife, had no children. She and her first husband Fred Zimmerman lived on the corner of 2nd Street and 14th Avenue. The Zimmerman garage and lawn ornaments are known for their folk art mosaic decorations.

Proper identification of the Schindler photograph was verified by Fred Schindler's grandchildren David Hoesly, Ruth (Hoesly) Marcus and Sue Schindler-Frish.

The second photo is identified in the digital collection as *Herman Kubly and Wilma Luchsinger Kubly*. And the couple is in fact Herman and Wilma Kubly. But Wilma's maiden name was Elmer, not Luchsinger. Perhaps the confusion stemmed from the fact that two of Wilma's sisters, Elizabeth and Mathilda Elmer, married Luchsinger brothers, Sam and Waldo. By the way, Wilma (Elmer) Kubly and Katie Schindler (previous photo) were first cousins – both were granddaughters of German-immigrant Julius Eichelkraut and his wife, Schwanden native Anna Katharina Wild.





The third photo has been identified in the digital collection as *Leonard Arn and Lucille Hefty Arn*. This couple is Leonard and Lucille (Hefty) Walden. The proper identification has been verified by Walden granddaughter Kathy (Weiss) Miller. The probable source of confusion was that Lucille's sister Verena Hefty had married Palmer Arn. And there is a family connection between the Waldens and the Schindlers. Fred Schindler, Sr. (pictured on previous page) was the uncle of Lucille Walden.

The photo of German natives Henry and Heinricke (Schoierer) Schiffmann is correctly identified, although Mrs. Schiffmann was generally referred to as Heinricke and not Henrietta. The Schiffmanns were not married in 1900 as indicated in the database but around 1910. Heinrich (Henry) Schiffmann

immigrated to New Glarus in May of 1901 with his apparent fiancée Maria Schlumpf, a Swiss native who had relatives in New Glarus. They married in New Glarus in September of the same year. Henry and Maria Schiffmann had a daughter who was born and died in 1903. And apparently Maria Schiffmann also died. For in the 1905 census Henry is a residing with Fred J. and Barbara (Bauman) Marty of New Glarus. And in 1910, he is listed as a widower living with John C. and Louise (Moritz) Becker in the Town of Washington. Heinricke Schoierer immigrated to Wisconsin in 1910 and she married Henry around this time. They couple farmed a few miles west of New Glarus in Legler Valley.



The next photo selected from the New Glarus digital collection is correctly identified as Caspar and Susanna (Disch) Zentner. However their six children are incorrectly named. The children of Caspar and Susanna were Euphemia (Famie; Mrs. Herman Z. Duerst – see following photo), Caspar, Nicholas, Kathryn (Mrs. Fred Pauli), Ernst and Werner. The online description omits Euphemia and Werner and incorrectly includes a son named Conrad. Cap Zentner was the son of immigrants Niklaus and Euphemia (Elmer) Zentner, both born in Elm. In 1894 Cap married Susanna Disch, herself an Elm



immigrant. Susanna had resided in Elm when the tragic landslide of September 11, 1881 occurred. Susanna lost a grandmother, uncles, an aunt and several cousins in the disaster.

Also found within the digital collection is the correctly identified 1914 wedding photograph of Herman and Euphemia (Famie Zentner) Duerst. (Euphemia was one of two children omitted in the description for the Caspar Zentners.) Herman is identified as Herman A. Duerst (Herman Albert) which is correct. But he was frequently referred to as Herman Z. Duerst – a local custom in which a man assumed a middle initial referencing the maiden name of his wife. For example, another Herman Duerst who was married to Barbara Wild was known as Herman W. Duerst.



Chicago's Zweifel Hardware

Occasionally during the two decades that I lived in Chicago, I would ride Amtrak to the east coast. Two miles directly south of Union Station the train passed over a non-descript street (W. 25th Place) which linked Chinatown with Bridgeport. The first building adjacent to the train viaduct was Zweifel Hardware. Catching a quick glimpse of the storefront always made me think of Zweifel friends in New Glarus. And it left a question in my mind whether there was any connection between the Zweifels of the hardware store and those in New Glarus. All these years later I finally learned more about the hardware store and the family who operated it.

The Zweifel Hardware history can be traced back to John Aye, a dealer in hardware in 1880s Chicago. Aye's daughter Clara married David J. Zweifel and upon their marriage, the Zweifels purchased the business from her father. David and Clara's sons Herman and David later operated Zweifel Hardware before passing it on to Herman's son David.



David J. Zweifel (the one married to Clara Aye) was the son of Glarner immigrants David Zweifel of Linthal (1848-1895) and Anna Wild of Schwanden (1861-1938). It does not appear there is a close family connection with New Glarus Zweifels. But Anna (Wild) Zweifel had a first cousin in New Glarus. That cousin was Verena née Schiesser Tschudy Urben. Verena was the mother of Molly (Tschudy) Frick and Jake Urben.

Sadly, the Zweifel Hardware store closed in 2014 after a 128 year run. Over the years the business was hemmed in by the railroad tracks, the Dan Ryan Expressway and I-55. Despite this location, the business reached its peak in the 1980s with 10 employees and sales over a million dollars. But the loss of neighborhood industrial customers, the advent big box home centers like Home Depot and Lowe's, and the country's financial difficulties after 2008 spelled the end of this family run operation. The employees were let go one by one. In the end, Dave Zweifel, the great-grandson of the founder, was the lone employee. And reluctantly Dave realized he needed to sell his building and liquidate his inventory to pay the bills.

New Glarus Hardware Stores

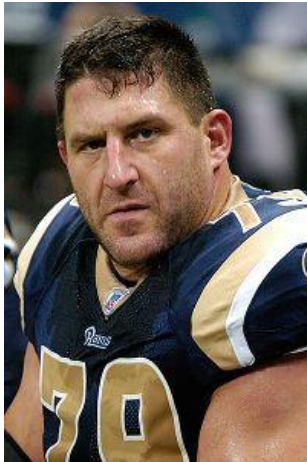
It wasn't that long ago that New Glarus had three family-operated downtown hardware stores. Disch Hardware was operated by Jacob S. and Bertha (Streiff) Disch, son Gerald Disch and son-in-law George Hartman. The Hoesly Hardware was operated by Henry B. Hoesly, son Henry, Jr. and son-in-law Frank Ehinger. The New Glarus Hardware was operated by father/son partners Joshua and Kenneth Hoesly and Fred and Eugene Stuessy. Albert Schlatter had also been a partner in the New Glarus Hardware prior to his death in 1933. The Hoesly, Stuessy and Schlatter families lived in the apartments above their ~1913-1914 store building (pictured). The New Glarus Hardware was sold to the Disch/Hartman families and later to Glenn Kramer, the final owner. There is a New Glarus True Value Hardware today, located on Highway 69, but is not related to the previous business known as New Glarus Hardware.



Earlier New Glarus hardware businesses included the tinsmith Abraham Kundert-Hoehn who also dealt in hardware. The Kunderts left New Glarus for Monroe in 1881. Kundert's son Edward T. Kundert was a long time Monroe hardware retailer. Hoesly brothers Jost and Rudolf sold hardware and implements in a frame building on First Street near Fifth Avenue. George H. Itten and Henry J. Klassy operated a hardware business around 1920 which then was sold to Charles Tollefson and Robert Marty. Marty sold his share to Wilbert Hefty and the firm became known as Tollefson and Hefty.

It's Déjà Vu All Over Again

In Spring 2018 newsletter the name Zach Strief appeared. Strief (pronounced streef) was a recently retired 6'7", 320 pound tackle with the New Orleans Saints. It was determined that his immigrant ancestors, Fridolin and Adelheid (Staub) Streiff had immigrated to Ohio from Canton Glarus. And Zach's story led to a discussion on the variety of spellings (Streiff, Strief, Strieff, and Streif) and pronunciations (strife and streef) found in this Glarner family name in America.



Now the name of Todd Steussie (pronounced STEW-see), a retired 6'6", 320 pound NFL tackle begs the same questions of his ancestry. And yes, Steussie, a California native, is of Glarner background. Todd's great-great grandparents, Thomas and Maria (Vögeli) Stüssi, left Linthal, Canton Glarus for America. They ended up in Milwaukee. Todd's great-grandfather, Thomas Jr., used the spelling Steussie which has stuck to this day. And yet another spelling of the name Stüssi has been found. Other versions include Stüssi, Stüssy, Stuessy, Steussy, Stussy, Steesy, Stacy, Stucy, Stussie and now Steussie.

Thomas Steussie (Todd's great-grandfather) registered for the WWI draft in 1917 and his registration form can be found in the "Family Search" database. These registration forms were signed by the registrant and also by a local businessman or local official. Steussie's form was signed by Milwaukee businessman, John W. Disch. Disch was also of Glarner background. His father William (originally Wernet) Disch was born in Elm.

Melchior Legler

William (Bill) and Marilyn Leglar of Peosta, Iowa wondered how their Legler/Leglar family was related to the New Glarus Leglers. Bill recalled how his father Herbert would drive elderly grandfather Joe Legler of Benton, Wisconsin to New Glarus for visits with relatives. But the links and connections had been long forgotten.

The name of Bill's grandfather John Joseph (Joe) Legler was found in on-line records. This led to the discovery that Joe's father's name was Melchior Legler and both were buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery in Benton. Find A Grave lists Melchior's birthdate as December 28, 1817. It so happens that original New Glarus immigrants Fridolin and Barbara (Hefti) Legler had a son named Johann Melchior born in November 23, 1817. (It is possible that on an old worn tombstone that November 23 looked like December 28.) This Johann Melchior was recorded as immigrating to America in the company of his parents Fridolin and Barbara and his younger brothers Fridolin Jr., Niklaus, Andreas, George and Johannes (John) with the group of original immigrants in 1845. But data on Melchior Legler, at least within New Glarus family history circles, had appeared to end there. There has been little or no recent knowledge of him.

Melchior Legler, this long-forgotten brother of original immigrants Fridolin Legler, Jr., George Legler and John Legler all of New Glarus, has been identified. And Melchior's many

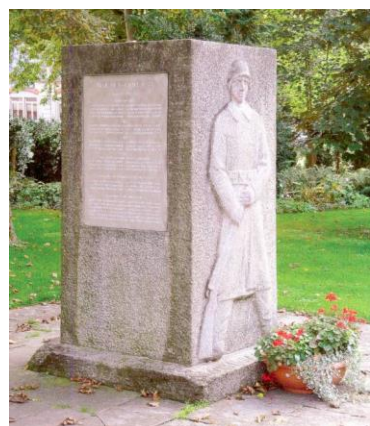


descendants can now be linked to one of the original immigrant families. One interesting aspect of this newly identified Legler branch is that they were Roman Catholic. It may have been that Melchior's German-born wife, Maria Elizabeth, was of that faith. Melchior Legler descendants are found buried in Catholic cemeteries in southwest Wisconsin villages such as Benton, Hazel Green, Cuba City, Kieler and Darlington. And Melchior can count at least one priest and one nun among his descendants.

The original immigrant parents Fridolin and Anna (Hefti) Legler, whose tombstones (pictured above) can be found in the "cemetery" of the Swiss Historical Village, had 10 children spanning 21 years. Their oldest grandchild, Fridolin Legler of Diesbach, Canton Glarus, was born in 1840. Their youngest grandchild, Herman Legler of New Glarus and later of Robinson, ND, was born in 1887. Thus there is a span of nearly 48 years between the two first cousins.

100 Years Ago: Glarner Military Victims of the Spanish Influenza

Switzerland maintained a state of armed neutrality during the WWI. The Armistice ending the war was signed on November 11, 1918. The following day, November 12, 1918, a general



strike was called throughout Switzerland, a result of class and labor tensions which had simmered for years. Labor movements and socialists called the strike and 250,000 individuals participated. Switzerland was paralyzed. The Swiss Army was mobilized to maintain order. The mobilization included a large number of Glarner men. Many of these soldiers were not to return home. The Spanish Influenza – known in Switzerland as *die Spanischer Grippe* – raced through the military barracks killing soldier after soldier. The Glarner troops were particularly hard hit. A sober memorial in the Glarus *Volksgarten* pays tribute to the many Glarner men who died of the flu while serving their country. Many victims had New Glarus connections, including:

- Jakob Kubli, a married slate miner of Elm. Kubli had five siblings living in the New Glarus area – brothers, Werner, Heinrich and Balthasar and sisters Barbara (Mrs. Jacob Rhyner) and Rahel (Mrs. Jost Rhyner). Kubli's widow, Ursula née Babler, was the first cousin of J. U. Babler of New Glarus.
- Kaspar Rhyner, a married farmer of Elm. Rhyner's wife was Barbara née Geiger. Barbara was the first cousin of Anna (Rhyner) Strahm of New Glarus. In 1926, Kaspar's widow Barbara married Heinrich Dietrich Kubli of Elm. They were to become the maternal grandparents of Olympic skier Vreni Schneider.



- Heinrich Bräm, a married slate miner of Engi. Bräm was the brother of Margaretha (Bräm) Altmann of New Glarus and thus the uncle of Roy and John Altmann.
- Kaspar Hauser, an unmarried farmer of Elm. Hauser was the nephew of Elm native and immigrant Johannes (John) Hauser of Monroe.

The November, 1918 obituaries (*Totes Anzeige*; pictured on previous page) include the names of Heinrich Bräm, Kaspar Hauser and Kaspar Rhyner as well as several other Glarner flu victims.

Glarus Attacked by Pirates

This is a true story. The tragic events occurred on September 22, 2018. A criminal gang of modern-day pirates destroyed key Glarus communication systems and claimed 12 Glarus hostages.

This attack took place, not in the village of Glarus or the canton of Glarus, but on the merchant vessel MV Glarus. The Swiss-owned bulk carrier was transporting wheat in Nigerian waters when boarded by the band of pirates. The ship was flying the Swiss flag although no members of the kidnapped crew of the Glarus were Swiss nationals. The Swiss daily newspaper “Blick” has reported that since Swiss nationals were not involved, the Swiss foreign affairs ministry did not provide consular assistance or financial aid. The ship owner negotiated the October 28 release of all hostages.



For Sale: Historic Homes in Glarus

Recently some interesting historic properties have been offered for sale in Canton Glarus.

At the south end of the *Grosstal* in Linthal is a duplex home dating from 1750. Its numerous rooms are situated on five levels. The home, listed for approximately \$295K, has apparently been sold. Prospective buyers were able to inspect the house using new 3D imagery technology known as a “doll house” model in which the viewer can see the entire house and rooms as if looking

at a doll’s house.

While inspecting the various rooms, a large hand painted marriage chest (pictured right) was seen in the living room (*Wohnstube*). It was dated 1834 with the names Gabriel Zweifel and Elsbeth Stüssi.



And indeed Canton Glarus records confirm the marriage of these two Linthal individuals



A Mitlödi jewel, the *Schiffmeisterhaus* (pictured left; written about in Family History Notes Summer 2016), is listed for sale. This house dates from 1759 and was built by Ship Master Fridolin Wild. The house is also known as the *Schönenbergerhaus* referring to a Schönenberger family who lived in the house. The asking price is “by request” which may mean “if you have to ask, you can’t afford it”!

An apartment in the historic *Grosshaus* in the village of Elm is also listed for sale. The realtor uses adjectives such as “*Einzigartig und Einmalig*” to indicate this property is unique and one of a kind. The *Grosshaus* is said to date from 1564.



The home offers striking wooden cabinetry and massive interior entry door, although its low ceilings at 7 feet 2 inches may present a challenge for some. The *Grosshaus* unit is selling for approximately \$330K. A sixteenth century bed from the *Grosshaus* was obtained by Edwin Barlow many decades ago. He donated the object to the *Freulerpalast* museum in Näfels where it is on display

Also listed for sale is the oldest known house in the village of Glarus. The house dates to 1459 making it nearly 560 years old. The property is located on *Eichenstrasse* in an old corner of Glarus known as Eichen. This was an area of



Glarus which was not destroyed in the great fire of 1861. The house offers about 2300 square feet of space in two separate living units and with 2400 square yards of land. The houses and land had a listed price of \$650K.



An interior picture of the *Stube* shows a trunk (pictured left) bearing the name Elsbeth Zentner. Elsbeth Zentner (1883-1958) was born in Elm and married Cosmus Beglinger of Glarus. A descendant of Elsbeth and Cosmus is the seller of this historic Glarus home.

Pictured below is a historic home found in Elm. It is located a few houses away from the *Grosshaus*. This particular home is the only residence mentioned in this article which is not listed for sale. But it is included here due to its similarity in size and features to the 1459 Glarus house dating pictured above. A plaque on the Elm house says was built by Ulrich Elmer around 1427, which makes it about a generation older than the similar house in Glarus. Ulrich Elmer's male descendants, if any, have not been recorded. But Ulrich's daughter Margaretha married Glarner Landammann Jost Tschudi. Their descendants of note include Swiss historian Gilg Tschudi, Reformation priest/pastor Valentin Tschudi and Johann Melchior Hässi, whose portrait is found in the Chalet of the Golden Fleece in New Glarus.



This Elm home is a historical gem but is perhaps overlooked due to the imposing *Suworowhaus* next door. It is curious to consider that this diminutive wooden house was already more than 400 years old when the organized groups of immigrants started to leave Canton Glarus in 1845! And thus the 1427 *Elmerhaus* of Elm may be in the running for “oldest Glarner” if one is referring to Glarner homes.