

Family History Notes

Winter 2019

Traditions of New Glarus

New Glarus' identity is intimately tied to its Swiss soul. Since New Glarus' founding in 1845 residents have celebrated elements of its Swiss culture. The village website boasts, "*The village has retained its Swiss charm with Alpine-style architecture, ethnic festivals and Swiss delicacies.*" The New Glarus Chamber of Commerce echoes this sentiment saying "[New Glarus] *has retained its Swiss charm in everything from the Alpine-style architecture and colorful flower-filled window boxes down to gourmet food.*"

Indeed the village has used architecture, festivals and food to proclaim its Swiss heritage. But how authentic are these elements such as architecture, festivals, and food and how firmly are they rooted in our past? What elements of our culture and traditions have been "retained" from earlier days and which ones have been imported from Switzerland and elsewhere without being connected to our unique New Glarus past? Let's explore these elements.

The architecture of nineteenth century New Glarus consisted of log cabins, frame and stone structures, farm buildings and cheese factories. These were built in domestic or vernacular styles, which over the decades included Greek Revival, Italianate and Victorian styles. There was little or no hint of Swiss design expression. It could be said that some of the area's bank barns, characterized by ventilation louvers and fore-bays, could be remotely Swiss – but likely Swiss by way of the early Pennsylvania *Sweitzer* barns.



An exception to the vernacular styles was the decidedly old-country stone church (pictured) constructed in 1858. This building was the centerpiece of New Glarus. The stone church was situated on a knoll which allowed its graceful beauty to be appreciated from a mile or two away. The New Glarus stone church has been compared with the centuries-old *Burgkapelle* in Glarus, both churches possessing simple plastered walls, arched windows and a tower topped with an onion dome, albeit a less pronounced "onion" in New Glarus.

The stone church had a lifespan of only about 42 years when it was replaced in 1900 at the same site with the present neo-gothic red brick structure. This red brick church, while handsome and striking, is similar in its neo-gothic characteristics to countless other American churches of the same era. The features of the stone church were a unique tie to the old country which harkened back to the village of Glarus itself. The stone church was torn down. Tradition was replaced with something, while beautiful in its own right, did not architecturally stand for anything Swiss. It may have been a missed opportunity that the replica church constructed by the New Glarus Historical Society in 1952 was not the unique and authentically Swiss stone church, but rather the vernacular log church, a church which served as a place of worship for less than 10 years.

With the exception of the stone church, nearly the first hundred years of New Glarus, the village homes, commercial buildings and surrounding farms were based upon American architectural design. The introduction of the chalet-style architecture of New Glarus is generally traced to the 1930s and 1940s when Swiss-style buildings made their debut – Fred and Marie Bigler’s



Swiss Tavern, Edwin Barlow’s Chalet of the Golden Fleece, Ernst Thierstein’s chalet. The two residential chalets, designed by Swiss-born and trained architect Jacob Rieder, were based on Bernese Oberland and Emmental homes. In the 1950s and 1960s there was a flurry of activity to add chalet-style features to various main street buildings. Some of these included Strickler’s Market (pictured left), the Alpine Café, Glarner Stube, and the New

Glarus Hotel. The motivation for such Swiss design choices were likely rooted in the pride of Swiss heritage. But it also was driven by some ambitious Swiss immigrants who used the architecture as a draw for visitors. And it has been an effective strategy. While a number of the Swiss-style buildings have been built with an attention to detail, some of the Swiss-style architecture was merely a Swiss pastiche lacking authenticity.

Strickler’s Market (pictured above) added an attractive Swiss chalet gable to the front of its grocery store and meat market. The use of warm wood tones, a balcony, brackets and flowers added a decidedly Swiss feel to their entry. However, the upper floor and its band of seven large windows remained unaltered and non-contextual to the bottom half. Today the building (pictured right and no longer Strickler’s Market) does not appear to do justice to either its American or Swiss architectural pedigrees.



Perhaps the oldest of the traditions found in New Glarus is the Glarner dialect spoken by the original settlers and the Swiss-German language spoken by other Swiss immigrants who settled in this area. Swiss-German was spoken widely and German used in the local church and newspaper. English was used early in the settlement for various documents and to communicate with non-Swiss neighbors and business associates but Swiss-German predominated for decades.

In the post-WWII years (then over one hundred years since the founding) when people from both sides of the Atlantic began to travel for leisure, it was not uncommon for Swiss citizens visiting New Glarus to be surprised and charmed by the locals who still spoke Swiss dialect on the street and in the homes and shops. Likewise New Glarus visitors to Canton Glarus fit in nearly perfectly as they spoke their mother tongue. My great-uncle, who was taking a cab in Zurich, spoke his version of the Swiss dialect and was immediately recognized as a Glarner. My uncle informed the cab driver that he was not actually a Glarner but a third generation Glarner-American.

And as fourth generation Herbert Kubly experienced, the New Glarner used old-fashioned (*altväterisch*) words or expressions seldom heard in more recent times in Canton Glarus. The New Glarus local dialect remained locked in time and as it co-mingled with English words and expressions. While over the same period of time, the Glarner dialect spoken in Canton Glarus evolved as languages do.

While there are some people in our area who still speak Swiss-German, the number of people who learned the old *Glarnertüütsch* passed down at the knees of their parents and grandparents is perhaps today only a mere handful. The few who speak Swiss-German are likely more recent Swiss immigrants or those who have studied, worked or traveled abroad. Many locals may know a word or two of Swiss-German, a quaint expression, or perhaps an expletive, but the ability to effortlessly converse with Swiss friends and visitors is a tradition mostly lost.

The earliest foods found in pioneer New Glarus consisted of dishes made from the simplest of ingredients – corn meal, flour, dairy products and eggs, fruits, berries, nuts and vegetables, various meats, game and fish. This list of ingredients found in early New Glarus would be comparable to those ingredients found in most any Midwest village of that time. And yet these basic pioneer ingredients bore such Glarner and Swiss recipes such as *Duerk* (corn meal mush), *Zogglä* (flour dumplings), *Tschüchel* (eggy pancakes), *Mehlsuppe* (flour soup), *Anggäzelte* (butter pastry), *Pfaklotz* (a creamed potato dish) and butter and cheeses made by the farm wives from milk supplied by their cows,. These dishes have likely passed from the historic memory of most and are seldom seen today in New Glarus home or restaurant kitchens. But thankfully, many of these recipes can be found in various local cookbooks and are awaiting opportunities for re-discovery.



The veal sausage known as *Chalberwurst* in Glarus and Kalberwurst in New Glarus is perhaps the strongest culinary link back to the homeland which yet exists in New Glarus today. It is made locally by a several sausage makers (Hoesly's Kalberwurst is pictured). *Schabziger* (also pictured), the iconic Glarner green cheese and one of the oldest regulated foods in the world, can be found in a couple of New Glarus shops today. However its culinary role in New Glarus is minimal at best.

Not found on the list of early New Glarus foods were Swiss foods such as beef or cheese fondue, Cordon Bleu, and Raclette. While these culinary favorites originated in

Switzerland, their popularity dates to more recent times. For instance, Cordon Bleu, a cheese and ham filled schnitzel, is said to date only to the 1940s in Switzerland and its first appearance in a cookbook was 1949. And yet it is mostly these latter newer recipes and menu items which the community today uses to celebrate our ethnic heritage. The Chamber's tourist booklet invites visitors to feast upon Swiss and European delicacies, specifically mentioning Wiener Schnitzel (of Viennese origin), Swiss Onion Soup (French Onion Soup with added milk or cream), Geschnetzelts [sic] (of Canton Zurich origin), Roeschti Potatoes (of Canton Bern origin), Raclette and Cordon Bleu (of Canton Valais origin) or beef or cheese fondue (of French/French-Switzerland origin). And thus most of the Swiss food offered in New Glarus today possesses neither a link back to our Glarner or pioneer heritage.



Another cultural element dating from the early days of the settlement and which continues today is the presence of the Swiss Reformed Church community (today's Swiss United Church of Christ). This religious body was the result of the Swiss reformation movement of Ulrich Zwingli nearly 500 years ago. Establishing a church and school were early priorities in the formation of the settlement. And once the church had been dedicated (which it was on June 26, 1850), the centuries old and annual celebration of *Chilbi* (or Kilbi) could be practiced. *Chilbi* is both a religious and secular festival celebrated yet today in Canton Glarus. Now known in New Glarus as Kilby, the event has become a yearly church service and dinner. The roll call of Swiss Church confirmands constitutes a re-dedication to the church and annual the Kilby Dinner is both a church dinner and a fund raiser. The once traditional New Glarus Kilby fare of mutton and honey has long been abandoned in favor of other dishes such as veal balls and ham. At its peak in the early 20th century Kilby was a two-day (Sunday-Monday) religious and secular festival which drew hundreds, perhaps thousands of visitors from the surrounding area. The secular aspects which once were legendary have disappeared. (More on Kilby in an upcoming newsletter article.)

While ethnic and other festivals punctuate the New Glarus calendar, only Kilby is an authentic celebration dating to the early days. Well-established local festivals like *Volksfest* (a celebration of Swiss National Day and dating to the 1920s) and the Wilhelm Tell Festival (dating to 1938) demonstrate the staying power of the ethnic festivals. And yet these two, while sustained by community commitment and passion for our heritage, have experienced declines in attendance and notoriety. The Wilhelm Tell Festival in particular was once a celebrated event attended by thousands of visitors and marked by late night revelry by area residents. Today both visitor attendance and local merriment have declined. In the January 17, 2019 issue of Madison's Isthmus newspaper, an article on the New Glarus brewery proclaimed "the Swiss enclave, once better known for its annual Wilhelm Tell re-enactment and a thriving polka and yodel scene, has for 25 years been the home of the New Glarus Brewing Company." The article's title suggests it was "the [New Glarus brewery] beer that made New Glarus famous."

It is said that the New Glarus festival now drawing the largest audience is Oktoberfest. This beer-oriented festival native to Munich, Germany is now known and celebrated worldwide. In New Glarus it is all about food, music, *gemütlichkeit* and, of course, New Glarus beer. Oktoberfest, being Bavarian in nature, bears a certain similarity to Swiss culture. Oktoberfest organizers and participants are likely to be clad in *Lederhosen* and *Dirndls*. Even the cover photo of the 2019 New Glarus Chamber tourist booklet features a Lederhosen-clad German-American (pictured) standing in front of the Swiss Historical Village. Swiss friends will quickly inform you that *Lederhosen* and *Dirndls* are fundamentally Bavarian and are not Swiss. Bavarian celebrations and donning non-Swiss costumes may serve to blur the cultural lines.



It appears that many of the elements which are used to celebrate Swissness in New Glarus today are not based on our own history and traditions, but rather newer Swiss (and now even Bavarian) cultural expressions unknown to our ancestors. Forty-five years ago New Glarus historian Millard Tschudy was commenting on the advent of some new Swiss tourist ventures planned for New Glarus. He said, "[It] may be authentic Swiss, but it won't be authentic New Glarus Swiss." Let's not lose that which is authentically New Glarus Swiss. And let's strive to understand the differences and distinctions!

Strickler's, Bart's Tap, Rexall and the New Glarus Post Office

The commercial vernacular brick building pictured on page 2, which many will remember as Strickler's Market, was built in 1904 by Marcus F. Hoesly, the grandson of original 1845 colonists. If you look closely at the upper picture of Strickler's you will see a small vertical sign on the far right of the building. This sign points the way to Bart's Tap, a basement pub operated by Myron Bartle. The right side of Strickler's Market was once home to Robert E. Bartlett's Rexall Drug store and later the New Glarus Post Office.

150 Years of Green County Cheese Factories

It has been said that the introduction of the cheese factory system of producing cheese was the Wisconsin equivalent of the cotton gin in the South and the grain reaper in America's



breadbasket. Cheese and dairy continue to be a driver of the Wisconsin economy and the imagery of Wisconsin -- think Cheese Heads, America's Dairyland license plate and the wheel of Swiss cheese on the Wisconsin quarter.

2018 marked the 150th anniversary of Green County's first cheese factory – the 1868 Limburger cheese factory begun by Nicholas Gerber on the farm of Albrecht and Anna Barbara (Voegeli) Babler in the Town of New

Glarus. And 2019 will be the 150th anniversary of Green County's first Swiss cheese factory, located on the farm Dietrich and Verena (Elmer) Freitag in the Town of Washington.

Swiss-born Nicholas Gerber (1836-1903) immigrated to America in 1858, first settling in Boonville, Oneida County, NY, an early cheese making area. In fact America's first commercial cheese factory was founded in nearby Rome, NY in 1851. Gerber came to Green County with the knowledge of the cheese factory system. In 1868 Gerber's first Green County factory pooled milk from five farms – those of Albrecht Babler, George Legler, Andreas Hoesly, Balthasar Kundert and John Caspar Blum. The “factory” was a cheese hut with



John Pfund as cheese maker. John Pfund was to become the brother-in-law of Gerber when the widower Gerber married Pfund's sister Katharina. John Pfund was the grandfather of Herman Pfund and great-grandfather of Harveda (Benkert) Knobel – both former New Glarus residents.

Nicholas Gerber approached Dietrich Freitag about setting up a Swiss cheese factory on the Freitag farm. The Freitags had just purchased the farm from Fridolin and Anna Katharina (Blumer) Streiff. The Streiffs had built a new home in 1862 and it was their vacated log cabin which was used as the 1869 Swiss cheese factory. Milk was obtained from the Freitag cows along with those of neighbors Dietrich Stauffacher, Jost Voegeli, John Blumer and Melchior Schlittler. Sam Rubi was reportedly the first cheese maker. All of the above participants in these two cheese factories were Swiss immigrants – Gerber, Pfund and Rubi from Canton Bern and the farmers all from Canton Glarus. The sites of both Gerber factories were marked in 1939 with metal plaques (pictured above) by the Green County Historical Society. In 1999 Gerber was honored by a Wisconsin Historical Society plaque on Highway 69 in Monticello. It appears that no area historical society or cheese group marked the 150th anniversary of this significant local history event. Perhaps this omission will be corrected in 2019.

Willow Weep for Me

The weeping willow tree is a symbol which has been found carved on tombstones across America since the late 18th and throughout the 19th centuries. The weeping willow motif symbolizes grief and sadness. Some say that because of the willow's propensity to grow, it can also represent rebirth and immortality. Some gravestones bearing a willow also include an urn, column or obelisk. If one of the latter objects is partially hidden by the willow, it may represent a life cut short and not fully lived.



There is beautiful example of a carved willow in the Swiss Historical Village cemetery (pictured). And this representation of the willow includes an obscured obelisk. This is the tombstone of Anna (Streiff) Egger (1836-1865). Anna was the sister of the 1845 scout Fridolin Streiff. She was only 8 years old when her big brother Fridolin left Canton Glarus in March of 1845 to locate a settlement site in America. In 1854, 17 year old Anna married Fridolin Egger, a native of Netstal, Canton Glarus in New Glarus. Egger arrived in New Glarus as a colony advisor who later became

a partner with J. J. Tschudy in a general store. During Anna's marriage she gave birth to 9 children in 11 years. Five children survived to adulthood. Anna died only months after the birth of her last child and without having reached her 30th birthday.

About six months after Anna's death, her widower Fridolin Egger married Anna Katharina (Zweifel) Hottinger. Anna Katharina's first husband, Heinrich Hottinger, had died at sea during their emigration to America (see Family History Notes Fall 2016). The Egger family left New Glarus for St. Clair County, Missouri where Fridolin Egger became a successful businessman.

The Ricola Gardens

There are about half a dozen gardens located in various Swiss cantons which have a particular significance. These are the Ricola herb gardens. The one picture here is found in Pontresina, Canton Graubünden. These compact herb gardens have been planted with the 13 herbs which



make up the famed Ricola cough drop formula. These 13 herbs are Horehound, Burnet, Marsh Mallow, Yarrow, Speedwell/Veronica, Lady's Mantle, Elder, Mallow, Peppermint, Sage, Cowslip, Plantain and Thyme. Ricola has entered into purchase agreements with about 100 Swiss farmers to grow these particular herbs. The U.S. formula has only 10 herbs. Six of the herbs -- Horehound,

Elder, Mallow, Peppermint, Thyme and Sage -- are found in the Swiss formula and four ingredients -- Lindon Flowers, Wild Thyme, Hyssop and Lemon Balm -- are unique to the United States version.

A Ricola herb garden even took root in London near the iconic Tower Bridge (pictured) with 13 raised bed containers. The famed Ricola alphorns appeared outside of Covent Garden on Swiss National Day (August 1) to further promote their products.

An American advertising campaign used the Swiss-German word “*Chrüterchraft*”, a rare occurrence that a Swiss-German word has been broadcast on national television. *Chrüterchraft* means “herbal power” or “herbal strength” and is the dialect version of the German word “*Kräuterkraft*”.



Ricola is a Swiss company founded by the Richterich family located in Laufen, Canton Basel-Land. The name Ricola was derived from using the first two letters of its formal name Richterich Companie Laufen. In 1993 the Ricola company purchased Disch AG of Othmarsingen Canton Aargau. Disch AG was founded as a cookie and confectionery company in 1903 by Jakob Disch, an Elm, Canton Glarus native. Ricola had a need for Disch AG’s production capacity for the manufacture of their own pharmaceutical confectionary products (i.e. Ricola cough drops). Although Disch AG was sold to the Alrupa Finanz Holding in 2015, Ricola continues to utilize the manufacturing lines at the Disch factory in Othmarsingen.

Jakob Disch’s mother, Katharina (Rhyner) Disch, and all his siblings immigrated to the New Glarus area. Katharina is buried in the Swiss Church Cemetery in New Glarus giving New Glarus a curious link to Ricola.

Swiss Chocolates in America

Rudolf (Ruedi) Hauser was born in Glarus, Canton Glarus during the WWII years. He had a passion for cooking and baking which led to a chocolate-making apprenticeship in French Switzerland. His culinary career included a stint with the Holland-American Line and jobs in New Orleans, Florida and New York City. Ruedi and his wife Lucille opened a bakery in Connecticut which opened the door to making chocolates. The Hausers built a chocolate factory which now occupies 18K square feet with 15-20 employees. The operation, known as Hauser Chocolatier, is located in Westerly, Rhode Island, with Rudi Hauser Jr. now at the helm.

Hausers Chocolatier is well known for their lines of high quality, upscale chocolates.

They have invested in state-of-the art production equipment, many of which individually cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. And some of the equipment, such as the “Knobel One Shot” is imported from Switzerland. The Knobel One Shot both makes and fills the exquisite truffles made by the Hausers. The Hauser business has recently expanded to welcome two other New England chocolatiers – Tom and Sally’s and Dan’s – into the Hauser Brands family.



Down the east coast in Timonium, Maryland, another Hauser son, Ben, and his wife Jenny have opened Glarus Chocolatiers. Like the operation run by Ben’s father and brother, Glarus Chocolatier specializes in high end chocolates. Both Hauser operations have on-line shops where their confections can be ordered.

Ruedi Hauser's ancestry lies in the Roman Catholic Hauser lines found in Näfels and Glarus. In addition to his Hauser roots, Ruedi's ancestry includes distinguished old Glarner families like Tschudi, Freuler and Jakober. The Hauser family crest (*Familienwappen*) is found on the Hauser Chocolatier logo. The crest consists of a crescent moon with a face atop three mountains -- *Gesichtete Mondsichel auf Dreierberg* in German heraldic parlance.

Located in a different realm of the chocolate quality spectrum are the chocolate candies produced by the Elmer Candy Company of Ponchatoula, Louisiana. Elmer's is a manufacturer of seasonal boxed chocolates often sold in retailers such as Walmart and Walgreens. The boxes of Elmer's chocolates are particularly visible before Valentine's Day and Easter. These are tasty chocolates but nowhere near the quality (nor the price) of the chocolates produced by the Hauser family. The history of the Elmer Candy Company goes back to Christopher Miller of New Orleans who started the firm in 1855. It passed to Miller's son-in-law, Augustus Elmer, and later to Elmer's five sons. Augustus Elmer was the son of Jacob Elmer, a native of Bilten, Canton Glarus who settled in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Emma

A local family inquired about their ancestors Conrad and Emma (Stuessy) Babler. Conrad Babler was born in Matt, Canton Glarus and immigrated to New Glarus in 1867 with his parents Fridolin and Maria (Elmer) Babler. The Babler family farmed the land upon which both the



public schools and the New Glarus hilltop brewery were built. Emma (Stuessy) Babler (pictured) was born to Jacob and Katharina (ZumBrunnen) Stuessy on the Stuessy farm immediately east of the New Glarus Woods. The Bablers and Stuessys had nearly adjoining farms and both families were members of the Evangelical Association Church.

Conrad Babler and his siblings were named after their grandparents and parents following centuries-old Glarner naming traditions. Conrad Babler was named for his maternal grandfather, Konrad Elmer, who in turn was named for his grandfather Konrad Wohlwend. The name Konrad in this family can be traced back to Konrad Wohlwend born about 1570.

But where did Emma's name originate? There were no women in the Stuessy family tree named Emma. And the name Emma was not one of the traditional female names found in Canton Glarus. Centuries-old Glarner women's names such as Margaretha, Magdalena, Elsbeth, Katharina, Barbara, Verena, Euphemia, and Anna Maria were nearly exclusively used in nineteenth-century New Glarus. But despite tradition the name Emma started to emerge in the mid-1800s in New Glarus and elsewhere.

There were medieval women named Emma including Emma of Normandy (born c. 895) who became queen consort in England, Denmark and Norway. And there had been some use of the name Emma in those same countries over the centuries. Jane Austen's novel, "Emma" dates from 1815. Gustav Flaubert's novel "Madame Bovary" was published in 1856 and became a fast seller. Madame Bovary's given name was Emma. There was a Queen Emma who assumed the throne of Hawaii in 1856 as the bride of King Kamehameha IV.

Emma remained a popular American girls name from the mid-1800s until about 1910 when it started to fade and by 1930 it was seldom used. The name Emma remained rather unpopular across America until the year 2000 when it re-emerged as number 17 on the list of popular girl names. In 2010 it had risen to number 3 and in recent years it has become the most popular girl's name. Even in Switzerland the name Emma is popular. In French Switzerland it is the #1 girl's name (2014). And in German and Italian Switzerland Emma is ranked #3 (2014) behind Mia and Lara, and Giulia and Sophia, respectively. And in Norway Emma vies with Nora as the most popular name.

Perhaps the first Emma to live in New Glarus was Emma (Hartmann) Vidal. Emma, born in Lucerne in 1830, was the wife of the Austrian druggist (*Apoteker*) Eugen Vidal. The Vidals lived in a small frame house immediately north of the New Glarus Hotel. Emma and Eugen Vidal were the great-grandparents of writer Gore Vidal.

The following are some of the Emmas who were born to area families or became area residents:



Born late 1850s: Emma (Weissmiller) Elmer and Emma (Eichelkraut) Elmer (my great-grandmother pictured here with great-grandfather Caspar Elmer)

1860s: Emma (Stuessy) Babler (pictured previous page), Emma (Bloom) Voegeli, Emma (Baumgartner) Hoesly, Emma (Babler) Hoesly, Emma

(Zimmerman) Theiler, Emma Ott, Emma (Iseli) Wenger, Emma (Schaeren) Theiler

1870s: Emma (Blumer) Blumer, Emma (Legler) Klassy, Emma (Benkert) Kundert, Emma (Marty) Arn, Emma (Bloom) Knudson, Emma (Tschudy) Kubly, Emma (Klassy) Blum, Emma (Jenny) Elmer, Emma (Klassy) Jenny, Emma (Ott) Stuessy Pierce, Emma (Salmen) Kleinschmidt

1880s: Emma (Disch) Fritz, Emma (Altmann) Kubly, Emma (Jordi) Freitag, Emma (Eggimann) Hofer, Emma (Schindler) Hefty, Emma (Streiff) Streiff, Emma (Streiff) Wohlwend

1890s: Emma Katharina (Kundert) Zweifel, Emma (Blum) Dahler, Emma (Tasher) Koch, Emma (Freitag) Bagley, Emma (Zimmerman) Luchsinger, Emma (Disch) Lamboley, Emma (Hammerli) Klassy, Emma (Hauser) Grimm, Emma (Augsburger) Pfund

After 1900: Emma (Schär) Krauss, Emma (Schneider) Marty, Emma (Roethlisberger) Stauffacher, Emma (Kaltbrunner) Zemp, Emma (Bandi) Kaderly

Women named Emma could also be found outside of the Swiss community in surrounding French, Norwegian, and German households of this same late 19th century era. These Emmas included Emma (Gehin) Colony, Emma (Emberson) Olson, Emma (Feldt) Babler, Emma (Anderson) Hauser and Emma (Hustad) Ophaug.

The Trimpi Family of Newark, NJ

At one time there was a Newark, New Jersey family named Trimpi who also lived and owned land near the small central Florida village of Yalaha. There is a Trimpi Road in Yalaha yet today, perhaps the only reminder of this family. These New Jersey and Florida Trimpis belonged to the family of immigrant Jacob Trümpy (1829-1864) of Ennenda, Canton Glarus and his German-born wife Sophia Holzhauer. The American spelling of the name Trimpi is a near phonetic spelling of the Glarner family name Trümpy. Those Trümpy families who came to Green County have spelled their name Trumpy with a pronunciation “TRUM-pee”.

Jacob and Sophia Trümpy/Trimpi had six children – three daughters and three sons. The father Jacob, a tailor, died at age 34 leaving Sophia with six small children under the age of 10. But despite their loss, the family prospered and contributed over the years to American society.

The oldest Trimpi child Anna Katharina married Albert J. Hahne (pronounced Hayne). Albert was the son of Julius Hahne who founded what was to become Newark’s largest department store. Anna Katharina (Trimpi) Hahne died at a young age. The widower Albert Hahne then married his sister-in-law Martha Trimpi. In 1911 the Hahnes built a department store with 441K square feet of retail space on five levels. The store center was dominated by a glass atrium/grand court (pictured below as it looks today). The store operated under various owners until 1987 when it closed its doors.

In the past few years, the Hahne Building has been renovated into 160 apartments, a restaurant, banking space and a Whole Foods Market.



Wilhelm (William) Werner Trimpi was one of the sons of Jacob and Sophia. He became associated with the Newark Rivet Works and

climbed his way up the ladder to become president of the firm. The Newark Rivet Works produced rolled and stamped metal hardware, umbrella parts and of course rivets. William was named on an 1898 patent for a self-closing umbrella. His brother August Heinrich Trimpi was associated with the food manufacturer E. S. Burnham. Like his brother, August Trimpi, rose to become president of the Burnham firm. The E. S. Burnham Company was a producer of grocery items including canned clams (dug at a then remote Marco Island, FL), canned clam chowder, and an early gelatin dessert named Hasty Jellycon. Hasty Jellycon did not survive on the market largely due to an upstart product named Jell-O. William and August also partnered in developing suburban real estate tracts in New Jersey and owned property in Florida.

William Trimpi liked his “toys”. In the early 1900s he owned both Packard and Studebaker touring cars. At the age of 77 William purchased a yacht. His was not just any yacht but one from esteemed yacht designer John Trümpy (a biographical sketch of John Trümpy can be found in “Glarner in America”). John Trümpy belonged to a family of Norwegian ship builders. But although Norwegian, their Trümpy ancestry, like that of the Trimpi family, was Glarner. The Trimpi christened his yacht the “Blue Heaven”. But sadly William Trimpi passed away just three months after taking possession of this ship. The Blue Heaven was sold and rechristened the “Flying Lady”. The Flying Lady recently came up for sale with an asking price of \$950K.

Subsequent generations of Trimpis have made their mark in America. August Trimpi had a grandson Robert L. Trimpi, who became an internationally recognized authority in fluid dynamics, a branch of physics which examines the movement of liquids and gases. This scientific specialty led him to a career with NACA (the National Advisory Committee for Aerodynamics) and its aerospace successor NASA. Trimpi contributed to the Mercury, Viking, Apollo and Space Shuttle programs and was a special consultant to the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, CIA, Atomic Energy Commission, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Department of Energy and National Research Council.

William Trimpi had a grandson Dr. Wesley Trimpi who was an expert in English Renaissance lyric poetry and ancient classical literature. Dr. Trimpi was an educator at Stanford University for 40 years and also recognized as a scholar, poet and author. Another grandson of William Trimpi was Dr. Howard D. Trimpi, a medical doctor and Associate Professor of Surgery specializing in colorectal medicine.

The Gettysburg Cyclorama – Pickett’s Charge on Canvas

Albert Hahne, the Newark retailer who married sisters Anna Katharina and Martha Trimpi, made an unusual purchase in 1910. He bought the 377 by 42 foot “cyclorama” painting of Pickett’s Charge at Gettysburg. The 1883 painting was originally displayed in a circular building in Boston to a ticket-buying public. But as moving pictures increased in popularity, customers lost interest in the cyclorama. Albert Hahne had the idea to display the mural in the grand court of his Newark department store. Later Hahne supported the move of the cyclorama to Gettysburg, helping fund a new building for its display. Today the cyclorama is a prominent exhibit in the Gettysburg Museum and Visitor Center. Hahne’s foresight in having photographs taken of the painting while in his possession proved an invaluable tool in later cyclorama restoration efforts.

Pickett’s Charge was considered the “high water mark” of the Confederacy. It was the northern-most penetration of Robert E. Lee’s troops into a Union state. Defending the very epicenter of the Union lines was the 69th Pennsylvania Infantry known as the “Irish Volunteers”. Among the 69th was a third generation Glarner-American Lieutenant Colonel Martin Tschudy (pictured right). Tschudy was wounded on July 2 but heroically fought with a bandaged head on July 3 when he was killed during Pickett’s Charge. Despite staggering losses of about 55% to the Irish Volunteers, the 69th fiercely defended their position “in a melee of rifle fire, bayonets and fists.” (A biographical sketch of Lieutenant Tschudy can be found in “Glarners in America”.)



Representative John Dingell

American politician John Dingell died February 7, 2019 at the age of 92. Dingell’s obituaries and tributes noted that he held the record of being the longest-serving member of the U. S. House of Representatives and the U. S. Congress. Dingell represented Michigan for over 59 years! What his obits likely do not include is that Dingell’s ancestry was one quarter Swiss. His great-grandparents, Samuel and Susanna (Kislig) Bigler, were nineteenth century immigrants from Canton Bern, Switzerland. The Biglers settled in Tuscarawas County, OH, an area known for Swiss and German immigrants.