

Family History Notes

Winter 2020

Kilby in New Glarus: A Moveable Feast

Perhaps the most enduring of the traditions in New Glarus is the annual Swiss Reformed Church celebration of Kilby (pronounced KILL-bee). It is an annual celebration found yet today in various villages in Canton Glarus and usually tied to the anniversary of the dedication or consecration of their respective churches. In Switzerland this centuries-old observance is spelled *Kilbi* or *Chilbi*, and pronounced similarly to our pronunciation but with their distinctive back-of-the-throat “k” sound. Kilby is a derivation of the German word *Kirchweihe* meaning church consecration — *Kirch* = church and *Weihe* = consecration. (The German word for Christmas, *Weihnacht*, means consecrated or holy night.) And in this article Kilby will refer to the New Glarus celebration, *Kilbi* to most Canton Glarus celebrations and *Chilbi* to the celebration found in Elm.

In her book “*Lebendiges Glarnerland: Bräuche, Feste, Traditionen*”, Susanne Peter-Kubli has a chapter devoted to *Kilbi*. She writes that *Kilbi* is understood to mean the celebration with which a new church building was made a sacred space through its dedication or consecration. And in memory of this

consecration, a festival was held every year, either on the day of the consecration itself or on the feast day of the patron saint of the church.



Kirchweihe celebrations are found in various parts of Europe. In the Middle Ages, this church festival preceded a market and fair attended by great numbers of people, becoming both a religious and secular event. What we know in New Glarus as Kilby was known in other parts of Europe by numerous Germanic dialect names such as *Kerwe*, *Kirmes*, *Kilwe*, *Kemmes* and *Kirta*. The painting at left by Hans Bol depicts the revelry found at a 16th century Flemish *Kirmes* celebration.

The first Swiss Reformed minister, Reverend Wilhelm Streissguth, arrived in New Glarus on Sunday, June 23, 1850 following which the congregation was organized by community leaders on Tuesday, June 25 and the church was dedicated on Sunday, June 30, 1850. Kilby could have been celebrated the on Sundays which fell on June 30, or on the first Sunday following the anniversary date of June 30. But Kilby was officially set for the end of September. According to Steven Hoelscher in his book “Heritage on Stage” the celebration of Kilby was formally established by the New Glarus Swiss Church Constitution of 1859 to be held on the fourth Sunday of September.

Why this September date instead of a June date? It may be that tradition gave way to practicality and the annual Kilby celebration was moved to the end of September in order not to fall on top of Independence Day. The American 4th of July holiday, which was also celebrated in early New Glarus, would have occurred the same week as Kilby. And if Rev. Streissguth had taken a look ahead to the 1852 and 1858 calendars, he would have noticed that a Kilby celebration tied to the church dedication date of June 30 would have fallen on Sunday, July 4th!

Or perhaps Kilby was established in September remembering an effort in the late 18th century when the Canton Glarus Reformed *Landsgemeinde* had recommended a common *Kilbi* celebration in all communities on the same day – that being the first Sunday after the September 14 Feast of the Holy Cross. They had stated, “*im ganzen Land in allen unseren Gemeinden auf einen gleichen Tag und zwarn auf die ersten Sontag nach den Creuzmarkt*” According to historian Susanne Peter-Kubli, a common date for *Kilbi* never took hold and the Glarner communities retained individual *Kilbi* celebrations on various dates thus allowing the Glarner to partake in multiple festivals.

This September celebration of Kilby may have led to the assumption that this tradition is associated with the *Alpabfahrt* or *Alpabzug* -- the return to the village of the men, boys and cattle from the summer mountain pastures -- which does, in fact, occur in Canton Glarus at the end of September. As early as 1877, an article published in the Green County Herold reported by a non-Swiss Monroe visitor that, “the Glarner have a long-established *Kilwi* or *Kilbi* -- a celebration of the return of herds from the Alpine pastures.” This narrative seems to have gained ground in more recent years. In 1972, newspaper articles from the Wisconsin State Journal and Capital Times both coupled Kilby with the return of the cows from the summer pastures. Even recent New Glarus Swiss Church Kilby Dinner promotions have stated that Kilby is an annual event at which “a special meal” welcomed “church members back from their summer of farming in the high mountain meadows of the Alps.” It’s a charming narrative, but . . .

There are various points to consider which do not support the case that Kilby is connected to the annual descent from the Alps. First is the simple fact that the word Kilby is derived from *Kirchweihe*, which means church consecration. Then consider that many Swiss and European villages which celebrate their form of *Kirchweihe* are not located in the mountains and thus have neither mountain pastures nor return of the cattle from alpine meadows. The Canton Glarus *Kilbi* celebrations in Elm, Glarus and Ennenda (which do have mountain pastures) are not tied to the descent of the cows. In the village of Glarus, their *Kilbi* is traditionally held on the Sunday on or following Roman Catholic feast day of *Mariahimmelfahrt* (the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin) on August 15. The Elm church dates from its



August 13, 1493 dedication and so Elm’s *Chilbi* is held on Sunday, August 13 or the first Sunday following that date. The *Kilbi* in Ennenda in 2019 was celebrated from Friday, August 30 through Sunday, September 1. Each of these Canton Glarus *Kilbi* celebrations is independent of the descent from the summer alps. And it is probable that the return from the summer alps did not occur on one single coordinated day culminating in a dinner, but on various uncoordinated days as farmers returned to their home villages from their respective mountain pastures on their own schedules and as dictated by the mountain weather conditions.

The descent from summer pastures has been a cause for celebration in two Roman Catholic cantons, Nidwalden and Obwalden, where the *Aelplerchilbi* or *Sennenchilbi* has been observed for centuries. This is a welcoming home celebration. And today *Alpabfahrt* festivities are becoming popular events in mountain villages throughout Switzerland. Cows are adorned with bells of all sizes and garlands of flowers. The farm families proudly lead their animals down the main street in a parade of beautiful Brown Swiss cows (*Braunvieh*). And these *Alpabfahrt* celebrations are held on the weekends in September and October to ensure their festivities are a draw for “city folk” and tourists seeking a colorful rural Swiss experience. In the village of Elm a local cheese market is held on the first Sunday of October which is preceded by a procession of cows led by the farm families. And this event is in addition to their August *Chilbi* (see following article). Pictured is the colorful *Alpabfahrt* in Elm, the cows just having passed the Gasthof Segnes.

Kilby was one of the traditions specifically cited in late nineteenth and early twentieth century articles written about the uniqueness of New Glarus and its maintenance of old world customs. The manner in which New Glarus Kilby was celebrated in its peak years (perhaps 1880 to 1940) was both religious and secular. A religious service was held on Kilby Sunday, the fourth Sunday of September. This included the roll call of all the confirmands in the congregation, which Rev. Walter J. Stuckey had noted served as both a re-dedication to the church and a reunion of the confirmation classes. During WWII it was reported that the 1943 Kilby service had 324 confirmands present with another 70 in active military service.

The church services were followed by a traditional Kilby meal in which mutton and honey were the customary foods. In the February 14, 1878 Chicago Times, J. D. Butler made the following observation, “The simple Swiss dish of bread and honey is never wanting, being considered as indispensable at *Kilbi* as pumpkin pie on a Puritan Thanksgiving Day.” Mutton and honey were the traditional foods served at a Canton Glarus *Kilbi*. Glarner records speak of buttered bread with honey (*Ankenbrüt mit Hung*) and cherry sauce (*Chriesimuss*), “without which no *Kilbi* can be celebrated” – “*ohne welche keine Kilbi gefeiert werden kann.*” The men provided a goat or sheep (*Kilbibock* or *Kilbischaf*), “a good part of which is consumed over *Kilbi*”. Apparently the cherry sauce did not make become part of the New Glarus Kilby tradition.

In 1944 the Wisconsin State Journal wrote about Kilby mentioning the traditional foods of mutton and honey. About the same time, Mabel (Luchsinger) Hamilton had reminisced about Kilby lamb stew served with bread with honey and butter. But by 1950, mutton had disappeared from the Kilby menu having been replaced by the Glarner veal sausage *Kalberwurst*. The Swiss Church Kilby dinner menu has been further updated by replacing *Kalberwurst* with *Kalberbälleli* (veal meat balls) and ham. Other Swiss sweet treats which are served today, such as *Birebrot* (pear bread) and a dessert called *Züribieter* (see Family History Notes Summer 2018), are traditional recipes but not historically tied to Kilby. And while the Swiss Church Kilby dinner is yet today an honored tradition, it has evolved from the days of mutton and honey to a fund-raising community event.

In the peak years of Kilby, and just like the *Kirchweihe* celebrations in the Middle Ages, the Sunday religious services were followed by the secular activities drawing throngs of locals and area visitors. Sporting activities and music filled New Glarus Kilby Sunday afternoon with traditional target shooting competitions, tug-of-war contests, ball games and band concerts. In 1923 it was reported that there was a parade, a water fight, and “burlesque” baseball – what seems to be a comedic ball game with locals dressed in outlandish costumes. In 1930, local baseball players defeated Happy Bingham’s All Stars, a “colored” team from Madison. In the mid-1930s the tug-of-war competitions were drawing in teams and spectators from numerous area villages. In 1935 the Town of York team won the State championship by defeating the team from Sun Prairie. Tugs-of war and baseball games were slowly replacing the more traditional shooting competitions.

Again in the peak years, Kilby Monday was a highlight of the secular celebration and centered on the dances held in the various dancing venues in the village. These dances were the subject of a February, 1907 "[Century Illustrated Monthly](#)" article about the Kilby dances in New Glarus. In 1935 Lienhardt’s Hall (New Glarus Hotel) and the Wilhelm Tell Hotel sponsored dances charging 25 cents and 40 cents, respectively. Music at the dances was provided by an array of area orchestras and dance bands, not polka bands as one might assume today. Among the orchestras performing were Tony Salerno and his Gypsy Melodians. Tony played violin with his “boys” playing saxophone, clarinet, trombone, cornet, piano and drums. Other orchestras who played for Kilby dances included the Peter Olson Orchestra, the Texas Bearcats and the Joey Tantillo Band.

By the early 1950s, when Dieter Brunnschweiler visited New Glarus to study life in this now century old Glarner settlement, he found that the awareness of Kilby by the younger generation was waning. When students were asked to define Kilby, various answers were given. Most recognized it was an event with some speculating it was the Swiss equivalent of our 4th of July or our Thanksgiving. Other students ventured that it was a Swiss harvest celebration, a time for merry-making, the day we eat honey or the day with a baseball game. Apparently no one mentioned the cows' descent from the mountain pastures!

Today the celebration of Kilby in New Glarus consists of church service including a confirmation class roll call and a church dinner. But despite the reduced format, Kilby continues to be celebrated. It is a bonafide tradition dating to the early settlement era with origins in the Canton Glarus *Kilbi*. As New Glarus has phased out many of its Kilby activities over the decades, two new September offerings have been introduced in recent years. The Grace Church sponsors its "Family Fest", a family-oriented Sunday which begins with a worship service and transitions into a variety of games, music and creative activities (sound familiar?). And on the on the last weekend of September the community celebrates a multiday Bavarian-inspired *Oktoberfest*. While it may be beer-oriented, it includes many other family-friendly activities, foods and music. These "non-Kilby" events offer the same sense of family fun and a spirited revelry as the Kilby celebrations of old. New Glarus is witnessing how old traditions become modified and perhaps even marginalized, while at the same time new traditions are created. We are all witnesses to changeable traditions and moveable feasts.

Chilbi and Kilbi in Canton Glarus

The village of Elm in Canton Glarus celebrates their Elmer *Chilbi* on the Sunday on or the first Sunday following August 13. The date of their *Chilbi* is tied to the church dedication which took place on



Landfrauen Elm
Trachtengruppe Chlytal
Männerturnverein Elm

Elmer Chilbi

Sonntag, 18. August 2013

August 13, 1493. In 2013, August 13 fell on a Tuesday, thus their *Chilbi* celebration landed on the following Sunday, August 18. Elm has the first such festival of the Canton Glarus *Chilbisaison*.

salads and raclette. Homemade ice cream is offered at the *Confiserie-Stand* and coffees at the *Kaffeestube*. Local Elm restaurants such as the *Sternen*, *Camperdun* and *Bergführer* offer a *Chilbimenu* of the traditional *Chilbi* lamb and sheep dishes. A shooting competition (*Chilbischiesen*) is found at the Wicheln area above the village at the end of the valley.

The family-oriented *Chilbi* is filled with activities. A family worship service begins the day at 10 a.m. From 2:00 p.m. on there is a variety of foods offered at Elm's village hall including *Fleischkäse*, grilled sausages,

Like Elm, the village of Glarus celebrates its *Kilbi* in the middle of August. And also like Elm, Glarus boasts a variety of stands and rides which provide a carnival atmosphere. Among the activities one can partake are *Pfeilwerfen* (breaking balloons with darts), *Kuh-Fladen* Bingo (cow pie bingo), *Wettsägen* (sawing contests), *Harass-klettern* (building a tower of milk/soda cases while suspended), *Büchsenwerfen* (knocking down pins/bottles) *Glücksfischen* (fishing for a prize) and a *Schiessbude* (shooting gallery). The photo above captures the carnival atmosphere of the Glarus *Kilbi* of 2018.



The Bears of Canton Bern

The bear has been associated with the city and canton of Bern for centuries. The figure of a bear is found on the Canton Bern flag and as well as that of the City of Bern. And a bear has been a heraldic image found on the city seal and coat of arms since 1224. Indeed it is difficult to separate the image of Bern without the image of the bear.



The city of Bern history dates its founding to the twelfth century. According to legend, Duke Berthold V of Zähringen (an ancestral uncle of many newsletter readers) decreed that the first wild animal met on a hunt was to decide the settlement name. And the first animal encountered was a bear, or *Bär* in German, which led to the name Bern. While this hunting tale is apocryphal and there are other reasonable etymological hypotheses as to the origin of Bern's name, there has been a connection between Bern and the bear for about 800 years.

In 1513 following the Battle of Novara (Italy), a bear was brought back to Bern as a souvenir of the battle by the victorious Swiss troops. And since then the city of Bern has the tradition of an enclosure to house and display bears. These Bern "bear pits" have been a popular sight for centuries. For many years (and as many readers will recall) the Bern bear pits were literally "the pits" -- sterile enclosures lacking little if any trace of a natural habitat. But in the 1990s, Bern's bear habitat was completely redone. The steep hillside along the Aare River adjacent to the former bear pits was enclosed by fences which allowed the bears to roam on a larger, more natural site.

While bears can be found living in the Bern enclosure, there are no wild bears in all of Switzerland since the last Swiss bear was shot in 1904. Occasionally a wild bear will wander into Swiss territory such as one in 2011 given the designation M13. This bear was sighted in the area of Poschiavo in Canton Graubunden. But bear M13 was becoming a nuisance by wandering into populated areas. And so in 2013, the bear was unceremoniously shot and killed. Many Swiss people reacted negatively to this action, questioning why the bear's life could have been spared by a more humane solution. Perhaps to make amends for past mistakes, the Swiss have recently established a bear sanctuary near Arosa in Canton Graubunden. The sanctuary's first resident was a Serbian circus bear named Napa, rescued from a circus cage and now freely romping on alpine soil and chomping on alpine plant life.

Around 2016 another bear, one thought to be known as M29, was spotted in central Switzerland. And M29 was believed to have wandered into Canton Bern — the canton's first wild bear spotted in 190 years! It may come as a surprise to newsletter readers that while Switzerland has no bears living in the wild, Wisconsin has a thriving population of 28,000 black bears. Granted, Wisconsin is about 4 times the area of Switzerland, but then the Wisconsin bears live primarily in the northernmost third of the state.

Have You Ever Noticed the Toblerone Bear?

Toblerone is the Swiss chocolate company founded in 1908 in Canton Bern by Emil Baumann and Theodor Tobler. The iconic triangular shape of the Toblerone bar was said to have been influenced by the shape of the Matterhorn. But according to Tobler's sons, the truth is that chocolate bar's pyramidal shape was actually influenced by a formation made by dancers at the *Folies Bergères* where they were observed by Tobler *père*. And when you look closely at the Toblerone logo, you will find a bear hidden within the Matterhorn.



The Bares of Canton Appenzell

Like Canton Bern, Cantons Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Appenzell Innerrhoden have a bear on their canton flags. But as the title says, it is the bares (not bears) of Appenzell who made news only a few years back when nude hiking became a



phenomenon. This new trend sparked newspaper and magazine articles (and photos!) drawing much attention to the normally conservative rural Appenzell region. And as is often encountered with emerging social phenomena which stretch the boundaries of societal norms, the Appenzeller opinions ranged from a “live and let live” attitude, to those which favored laws and restrictions to ban this activity.



And after the discussions were over, both cantons voted to ban nude hiking. And incidentally, the Canton Appenzell-Innerrhoden vote was by hand in their open-air *Landsgemeinde*. These bans were held constitutional by the Swiss courts. By the way, the hikers, who were mostly German naturalists, weren't literally unclad -- they wore shoes, socks and backpacks!

The Battle of Novara and Baron Ulrich von Hohensax

As mentioned in the Bears of Canton Bern article, a bear was brought back to Bern from the Battle of Novara in 1513. The bears have remained on display in the city of Bern to this day.



The Battle of Novara has a family history connection. It was Ulrich VII *Freiherr* (Baron) von Hohensax, a direct ancestor of many newsletter readers, who led the Swiss troops to victory at Novara. Hohensax had been appointed supreme commander of the Swiss mercenary forces who were allied with the Milanese against the French. The Hohensax appointment as commander-in-chief of all Swiss forces was the first such appointment in Swiss history. The 1515 woodcut at left is said to depict Hohensax (center) surrounded by his troops armed with halberds and pikes.

Ancestor Ulrich von Hohensax (~1460-1538) was born at Forstegg Castle in strategic Rhine River valley above Lake Constance (today's Canton St. Gallen). He married Baroness Helena von Schwarzenberg und Hohenlandsberg. Three great-granddaughters of Ulrich von Hohensax and Helena von Schwarzenberg married Canton Glarus men -- Anna Maria von Hohensax married Hans Elmer,

Barbara von Hohensax married Tobias Tschudi and Dietrich Streuli and Cleophea von Hohensax married Bartholomäus Paravicini. These unions led to the tens or hundreds of thousands of Glarner descendants today. The Hohensax and Schwarzenberg ancestry provide today's descendants with direct genealogical pathways back to prominent Medieval ancestors such as William the Conqueror, Frederick Barbarossa, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, King of Germany Rudolf I of Habsburg and Eleanor of Aquitaine, the Queen consort in France and then England.

John Bringold

The story of the 1850 murder of John Bringold by Joseph Paine has been told before in various annals of Green County history. This was the same Joseph Paine who had taken part in the 1837 real estate rivalry with third generation Swiss-American Jacob Andrick to locate and name the eventual county seat of the newly formed Green County (see Family History Notes, Summer 2011).

The Bringold murder was, in short, the result of a dispute between Paine and Bringold over a rail fence at the Buckhorn Tavern, an inn which Bringold had recently purchased from Paine. The Buckhorn was located in Section 6 of the Town of Cadiz, in Green County on the Monroe-to-Wiota road, and was one of the earliest inns of the county. Joseph Paine claimed Bringold's shooting was accidental but nevertheless he was taken into custody and held in a Monroe jail. Shortly before his trial, Paine picked the lock and fled to California where he died in 1875. Paine was never extradited. In 1919, nearly seven decades after John Bringold's murder, an unexpected event occurred which set into motion efforts to locate Bringold's next of kin.

On April 6, 1919, a single man by the name of James Thompson died intestate in Amsterdam, NY, leaving a sizeable estate and no known next of kin. Thompson was actually the legitimate son of John Bringold and Bringold's wife Jane Thompson. Bringold had married Miss Thompson in New York State around 1840 and son James was born to them. Shortly thereafter, Bringold left his wife and son and ventured west. Mother and son remained in New York and both went by the name of Thompson for the rest of their lives. James Thompson's estate was valued at over \$159,000 which, after debts, death taxes and administrative fees, left a sum of greater than \$131,000 (about \$2 million in 2019 dollars).

The estate administrator was unaware of any Thompson relatives and so began a process to identify next of kin. Notices were sent to California where it was believed James Thompson's father, John Bringold, may have ventured



in the Gold Rush years. The newspaper notices announced that a sizeable inheritance was due to anyone who could prove kinship to this John "Brinco", "Brincoe" or Bringold. Pictured are two headlines from California newspapers from 1920 and 1921.

It was only a matter of months that long lost relatives came out of the proverbial woodwork. It appears 32 relatives from at least three states had petitioned for the Thompson estate in the early 1920s. Andrew Bringgold (note this alternate spelling) was able to prove that he was the last surviving sibling of murder victim John Bringold. Andrew, of Washington State, appeared to be the first heir to file a petition. Uncle Andrew was soon followed by 27 Bringgold nieces and nephews making their claim. These nieces and nephews were the children of John Bringold's deceased brothers Abraham and Jacob Bringgold and deceased sister Susanna (Bringgold) Walter all of Minnesota.

To make the matter of inheritance even more complicated, John Bringold had married Barbara Spangler in Green County in 1848. John and Barbara had two daughters, Mary and Sarah – Mary born about 1848 and Sarah born just months after the murder of her father. But John Bringold had not divorced his first wife Jane Thompson of New York, and thus in the eyes of the law, his Wisconsin marriage to Barbara Spangler was invalid and their two daughters were considered illegitimate.

In due course, daughter Sarah Bringold married Benjamin Michael. They had a number of children of whom two sons and two daughters were living in 1919 -- Lewis, Francis, and Emma Michael and Alpharetta (Michael) Richardson. It was these four children who also petitioned for what they felt was their rightful inheritance from their half-uncle James Thompson's estate.

Court cases took place in the 1920s and 1930s to adjudicate this unusual inheritance case. In the end it seems that a settlement was reached by all parties, splitting the James Thompson inheritance among Uncle Andrew Bringgold of Washington, the numerous Bringgold cousins in Minnesota and the "illegitimate" grandchildren of John Bringold of Wisconsin.

John Bringold was said to be a German in the 1884 Green County history. But John Bringold was a Swiss immigrant and a native of Diemtigen, Canton Bern, Switzerland. According to an on-line family tree, John was the eldest son of Johannes and Magdalena (Bruni) Bringold of Schwenden-bei-Diemtigen. It appears John immigrated as a young man and was followed by his parents and siblings in subsequent years. Brother Abraham Bringgold was said to be the first settler in the Town of Milton, Dodge County, MN which soon became a settlement site of many Swiss immigrants from cantons Bern and Glarus. The settlement is still known as Berne and is home to one of only a handful of churches named "Zwingli" in the United States. The Berne, Minnesota country cemetery, like many cemeteries in Green County, is predominantly made up of Swiss immigrant families and their descendants. Parents Johannes and Magdalena Bringgold, while not buried in the Berne cemetery, are found in the nearby Pine Island Cemetery of Pine Island, MN.



There is a New Glarus connection with the Bringgold family of Minnesota, Lura Mae Bringgold, a granddaughter of Abraham Bringgold and daughter of Christopher Bringgold (one of the Bringgold cousins who petitioned for the James Thompson estate) married Henry Alfred Aebly, the son of New Glarus natives Jacob Aebly and his wife Anna Barbara Ott. Jacob Aebly and his family were mentioned in the Family History Notes Fall 2019 newsletter regarding their abrupt 1908 departure from New Glarus and relocation in the Dodge County, MN area.

A New Look at the Wild and Zwingli Family Connection

The Wild families of New Glarus and those of Canton Glarus have long been aware of the connection between the Wild family and the Swiss Reformer Ulrich Zwingli. This historical connection was made nearly 500 years ago when Anna Zwingli married Claus Wilhelm (later known as Wild). Anna and



Claus, both natives of the Toggenburg village of Wildhaus (now part of Canton St. Gallen), were the progenitors of the Canton Glarus Wild families. Anna provided the link to the Swiss Reformer. It has been long communicated that Anna was the much younger sister of Ulrich. This brother/sister relationship can be found documented in the Kubly-Müller records held in Glarus, Switzerland. And this relationship has been repeated in many family histories, including that of the Joshua Wild descendants of New Glarus.

But the brother/sister relationship was always suspect because Anna would have been younger than her older "brother" by a span of approximately 30 years – a span not typically be found within a single family. An uncle/niece relationship would have been more likely. And in fact, according to Patrick Wild's "Wild Family Chronicle" (found within his [Glarus Family Tree](#) website), at least one document in the Zwingli museum in Zurich provides the proof that Anna was indeed the niece of Ulrich and not his sister. Anna was the daughter of Ulrich Zwingli's older brother Niklaus (Claus) Zwingli.

A 1544 parchment document with seal from Ulrich Seiler, the bailiff (*Landvogt*) of the Toggenburg region, recommended that Claus Zwingli and his son-in-law Claus Wilhelm of Wildhaus be accepted as peasants in the Canton of Glarus. The documentation is as follows: *1544, Dinstag nach Mittfasten. Mannrechtsbrief von Ulrich Seiler, Landvogt der Grafschaft Toggenburg, für Claus Zwingli und seinen Tochtermann Claus Wilhelm, von Wildhaus, und Empfehlung derselben an Glarus zur Aufnahme als Landleute.* Claus Wilhelm/Wild received his Glarner citizenship in 1550. Pictured on the previous page is the fifteenth century Zwingli family home in Wildhaus, considered to be one of the oldest surviving farmhouses in Switzerland.

Walking the Walk

California native Michael Gmur can claim to have acted in the same movie as such Hollywood stars as Candice Bergen, Jane Fonda and Diane Keaton. Playing a Segway cop in the 2018 movie “Book Club”, Gmur chased Fonda and Don Johnson out of a fountain. Michael has acted in various other film projects, but a recent and significant achievement has been his 2019 Walk Across America.

In June, 2019 Michael set out on a quest which would take him from Portland, ME to San Diego, CA, on foot. Michael’s Walk Across America was his effort to raise funds and increase awareness to combat homelessness among veterans. Michael’s “Go Fund Me” page has garnered an impressive amount of donations to date. Please consider helping Michael achieve or surpass his goal by clicking [Go Fund Me for Homeless Vets Link](#).



Michael served in the U. S. Marine Corps from 2006 to 2010, the last year in Afghanistan with the Marine Special Operations Command. And two of his brothers were also veterans. Gmur family military service runs deep. Michael’s grandfather Dorral Gmur and Dorral’s brother Gordon served in WWII. And Michael’s great-great Gmur uncles of New Glarus served in both WWI and WWII (see Family History Notes Fall 2013).

Michael is the son of Scott and Jacqueline Gmur and the youngest of six. And Michael is the great-grandson of Arthur (Boogie) and Vera (Hilton) Gmur, both New Glarus natives. (Michael has a brother Arthur and a sister Vera.) The ancestry of the New Glarus area Gmur families is linked to the village of Amden, Canton St. Gallen, just a few miles outside of Canton Glarus. Michael also has Berner and Glarner ancestry from the Jordi and Geiger families who settled in New Glarus. His New Glarus Hilton family roots can be traced back to Maine (see Family History Notes Fall 2009).

Remembering Herman Pfund



Reading of Herman Pfund’s 2019 passing at the age of 99, reminded me of the last time I had a chance to visit with him. Herman was sitting at the front end of Puempel’s Tavern and I grabbed a bar stool next to him. I happened to have the circa 1908 cheese factory photo pictured here of cheese maker Adolph Bischofberger, wife Mary née Hefty and her sister Rosa (later Mrs. Jacob H. Zweifel). Herman immediately recognized the factory which at the time of the photo was known as the Adolf Bischofberger factory located on the farm of Bischofberger’s father-in-law, David Hefty.

The first commercial cheese factory in Green County (1868) was located on this very same farm, then the Albrecht Babler farm – Albrecht Babler being the father-in-law of David Hefty. All three men of three successive generations -- Adolph Bischofberger, David Hefty and Albrecht Babler -- would all pass away within the two year period of 1912 and 1913.

Herman went on to relate that it was his Berner immigrant grandfather, John Pfund, who was the cheese maker in this first Green County cheese factory. The Limburger cheese factory on the Albrecht Babler farm was the first of several area factories established by Nicholas Gerber and it was Gerber who had trained John Pfund. Gerber had lost his first wife, Katharina née Galli in 1868. He then married John Pfund's sister Susanna Katharina Pfund in 1870, thus making cheese pioneer Nik Gerber the great uncle of Herman Pfund. While these connections to these Green County cheese pioneers were not mentioned in Herman's obituary, these were pieces of Green County history in which he took great pride.

Not that many years ago, Herman was asked by a travel reporter visiting Puempel's Tavern why the Swiss card game *Jass* had a deck of only 36 cards instead of 52. His wry reply appeared in The New York Times -- "Because the Swiss don't play with a full deck." RIP Herman.

Scroll Wood Craft Goes High-Tech

The September issue of the New Glarus Historical Society newsletter featured the late Lloyd Babler's scroll woodcraft found in the museum's collection – most notably the two large and lacy church/cathedral structures. These designs are known by scroll saw hobbyists as the "Chimes of Normandy" and the "Dome Clock". These beautiful items did not arise organically out of Babler's imagination, but were created based upon patterns which can still be purchased today. And there are many online photographs of contemporary woodcrafters standing in front of their own projects based on these same two designs.

Scroll woodcraft tools have advanced from hand-held coping saws to foot pedaled scroll saws to today's variable-speed two-directional scroll saws with built-in illumination and dust collection. Recent technologies have taken the construction of these scroll saw projects to yet another level. 3D printing is now being used to print the very same scroll woodcraft projects as those built by Lloyd Babler. While plastic is the most common material used in 3D printing, scroll woodcraft projects can actually use wood filaments.

Jason Preuss (pictured) is a woodworker who has built scroll woodcraft items in the past using traditional means. After taking a 3D print and design class, Preuss wondered if scroll woodcraft patterns could be scanned and used to 3D print a clock. Jason set out to scan his patterns, and after months of trial and error, he developed the skills to 3D print what is known as the "Dragon Clock". After completing that project Jason set his sights on the "Dome Clock" (pictured), one of the most advanced of the woodcraft designs. It took him months to scan the pieces, 345 hours to print the component pieces using over 12 pounds of wood filament. Assembly of the 4 foot high and 2 foot wide dome clock was completed over one weekend.



3D printing technology has expanded into the manufacture of complex machine and car parts, firearms, delicate food and confectionary items, and even body parts. Entire homes are now "printed" with mortar, saving on construction time and costs.

As mentioned in the NGHS newsletter article, Lloyd Babler was the grandson of original immigrant Oswald Babler, a trained cabinet maker. Oswald Babler learned the carpentry trade during a three year stint (1856-1859) with O. C. Buck & Company of Madison. Oswald married Sarah Kundert in 1860 and the settled down on the home farm southeast of New Glarus to raise their family. But in 1872, Oswald and his family left New Glarus for Chicago where Oswald helped rebuild that city after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. He built wooden window sashes and door frames in structures which were now being built of Chicago brick. Oswald Babler and family returned to the home farm where he was engaged in dairy farming, breeding horses, and in his “spare time” carpentry and painting. A cradle made by Oswald for his farm neighbors, the Jacob Stuessy family, is in the Swiss Historical Village collection.

The 1856 O. C. Buck & Company advertisement in the Wisconsin State Journal indicated that their location was on [East] Washington Avenue, and east of the American House hotel. In the late 1850s, the

O. C. BUCK & CO.,
MANUFACTURERS & DEALERS IN
CABINET FURNITURE,
Chairs & Upholstery
ON WASHINGTON AVENUE,
East of the American Hotel,
MADISON, WISCONSIN.
KEEP constantly on hand everything
wanted in the furnishing line. Buying all our
goods in the Eastern market, we can of course
SELL CHEAPER
than establishments purchasing of Western Jobbers.
Beds and Bedding,
of all kinds and qualities.
Mattresses, Hair, Excelsior, Buck and Sea Grass -
Take your choice, as we can suit all tastes
Sofas, Chairs, Center-Tables,
Bedsteads, Lounges, Ward-
robes, Bureaus, Side-
Boards, Looking-
Glasses, &c.,
together with innumerable articles too small and numer-
able to be mentioned, and too useful to be overlooked.
We are now prepared to supply orders at
Wholesale,
as well as Retail as heretofore. Country Merchants will
take Notice.
Look out for the Big Sign, on Wash-
ington Avenue, East of American
Hotel.
O. C. BUCK, WM. HAWLEY, C. C. CHURCH.
Madison, April 3, 1856.—wtf

American House hotel was owned and operated by John Wayles Jefferson, assisted by his brother Beverly. They were the sons of Eston Hemings Jefferson who had been born a slave, the son of Sally Hemings, at Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello. Most historians are now in agreement that President Thomas Jefferson was Eston’s father – Eston being born in 1808 during the Jefferson presidency.

Eston Hemings had been trained in woodworking and carpentry by his uncle John Hemings, the master woodworker at Monticello. Eston was freed in 1827 under the provisions of Jefferson’s will. He married and relocated to the free state of Ohio, and in 1852 Eston relocated again to Madison, WI to establish a safer distance from the slave south. In the process of moving to Madison, the family changed their surname from Hemings to Jefferson. Eston pursued his trade as a cabinetmaker and the family successfully lived as whites in Madison society. Eston, himself was 87% European ancestry, his wife was 75% European, and thus their children were 81% of white European ancestry. Eston Hemings Jefferson had died January 3, 1856, the same year that Oswald Babler went to Madison. The Jefferson family gravesites and tombstones can be seen in Madison’s Forest Hill cemetery.

It is fun to speculate that Oswald Babler, who learned his carpentry trade at O. C. Buck & Company just to the east of the American House, might have “rubbed elbows” with the John W. and Beverly Jefferson – perhaps at the hotel bar where Beverly was known to bartend and where a free lunch was served. Oswald was the same age as John Wayles Jefferson and just a few years older than Beverly.