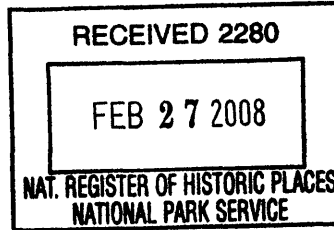


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**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name New Glarus Town Hall

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 206 Second Street

city or town New Glarus

state Wisconsin code WI county Green

N/A not for publication

N/A vicinity

code 045 zip code 53574

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_ nationally statewide X locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Krueger  
Signature of certifying official/Title

2/21/08

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_ meets \_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
  - entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain:)

*Edson H Beall*

4.11.05

*for*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> site		structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	objects
			0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources  
is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/city hall

SOCIAL/meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation stone

walls weatherboard

roof asphalt

other wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- \_\_\_\_\_  
Politics/Government
- \_\_\_\_\_  
Social History
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
1886-1957
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
1886
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

- \_\_\_\_\_  
N/A
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
N/A
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- X State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State Agency
  - Federal Agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - X Other
- Name of repository:  
New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property**     less than one acre

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	284598	4743730		3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing
2					4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing
						<input type="checkbox"/> See Continuation Sheet		

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

### 11. Form Prepared By

<b>name/title</b>	Trent Lowell Nichols	<b>date</b>	7/27/2007
<b>organization</b>	for the New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society	<b>telephone</b>	608-236-1390
<b>street &amp; number</b>	5325 Brody Drive #204	<b>zip code</b>	53705
<b>city or town</b>	Madison	<b>state</b>	WI

Name of Property

County and State

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society	<b>date</b>	7/27/07
<b>organization</b>	c/o Jim McQuire	<b>telephone</b>	608-527-5637
<b>street&amp;number</b>	206 Second Street	<b>zip code</b>	53574
<b>city or town</b>	New Glarus	<b>state</b>	WI

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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***Setting***

The old New Glarus Town Hall, built in 1886, is a large two story building of the front-gabled form with Greek Revival and Gothic Revival features. It sits in the Village of New Glarus, first settled in 1845 and incorporated in 1901. The Village is located within the larger Town of New Glarus, formed in 1850. New Glarus is located in the northern section of Green County, established as governmental unit in 1837, in southwestern Wisconsin.<sup>1</sup> The Town Hall faces west onto Second Street, which was originally platted as Enneda Street. This section of New Glarus was commonly referred to by residents as "backtown," while the area a few blocks away to the southeast was considered "downtown." The building sits close to the street near the center of a large rectangular lot, and when constructed in 1886, the two adjacent lots already had domestic buildings in place.<sup>2</sup> The lot includes a large grass yard behind the building, but virtually no other landscape features, besides a few trees near the street. A sidewalk runs in front of the building, with steps to the building's wooden platform leading directly from the sidewalk.

***Exterior***

The New Glarus Town Hall is a rectangular clapboard structure of front-gabled form with a forty-five degree pitched roof. The roof includes a raking cornice on its gable-side, over-hanging eaves, and a small open belfry placed close to the front elevation.<sup>3</sup> The belfry has a steep hipped roof and decorative wood lattice work, topped by a weathervane. A short chimney extends from the roof, close to the rear or east gable end of the building.

The window arrangement is symmetrical on all sides of the building. There are eight windows on each eave-wall side, four on the upper level placed vertically over the four on the lower level. The rear east wall has two on the upper level and two on the lower level. The front elevation has a three-ranked system, with three windows on the upper floor, with two below and the door in the middle. The windows are all double hung, two-over-two, with simple pediments. Currently both original and replacement shutters are in place on the front elevation with no shutters on the other walls' windows. A photo from around 1905 shows the front elevation windows including shutters. A photo from around 1910-15 shows shutters on the south wall's windows as well.

The limited ornament on the front elevation includes a small attic-level window in the peak of gable, in the shape of a simple Gothic trefoil, framed in a square molding, with a pediment, like the windows.<sup>4</sup> Simple pilasters mark the corners of the building on all sides. Currently, a new rectangular sign, noting the building's

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<sup>1</sup> New Glarus is about 16 miles north of Monroe, one of the largest and older towns (settled in the 1830s) in Green County and the County Seat. New Glarus is set within a shallow valley surrounded by rolling hills and near a branch of the Sugar River, which flows south through the eastern part of the County.

<sup>2</sup> Harrison & Warner, *Atlas of Green County, Philad[elphi]a* : printed by H.J. Toudy & Co., 1873.

<sup>3</sup> Currently, there is no bell in the belfry. Historic photos from around 1905 also do not show a bell. However, there is physical evidence to suggest that a rope for a bell was either once in place, or built with the expectation of installing a rope for a bell.

<sup>4</sup> As noted in Richard Perrin, *Historic Wisconsin Buildings: A Survey in Pioneer Architecture 1835-1870* (2nd ed., Milwaukee: The Milwaukee Public Museum, 1981), p.42-55, a mixture of the Greek Revival and Gothic Revival details was not uncommon in Wisconsin's mid-19th century buildings, particularly in church and civic buildings.

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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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affiliation with the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.), hangs above the center window and below the trefoil. This sign is of the same dimensions of the original granite sign which still exists and is kept in the building. Additionally, a new sign identifying the building hangs between the window and the door, and a third new sign noting the date of construction hangs directly above the front door, a modern metal door, with a mail slot in the center. A small modern message board is attached on the wall to the left of the door.

A limestone block foundation supports the building. It includes small rectangular windows on the north and south walls for the basement, placed predominately towards the east end of the building, as the site slopes down towards the east, increasingly revealing more of the foundation. Two of the windows on the south side closest to the east still have their original jail bars intact and a venting opening below them, as the building served as an early jail. The slope on the site exposes a full basement wall on the east end of the building, which has had a variety of modifications over the years. This includes the removal of a large portion of the foundation wall, now covered with two large wood doors that are attached at the top to a metal track that runs almost the entire width of the exterior. This track would allow the doors to slide open so as to expose a large opening in the basement wall. This opening would have allowed larger machinery to be stored in the basement after the jail was no longer used. There is also a regular sized modern wood door to the right of the large wood doors. The recent installation of the HVAC system includes a vent that projects from the wall, such that the large movable doors can no longer fully open on their track mechanism.

Other entries to the building besides the front and basement doors include an entry on the south wall, lower level, near the east end. This was originally the only entrance for the upper level and was served by wrap-around wood platform on the west and south wall. This door has a similar pediment as the windows. Currently there is also access to the upper level on the north wall, upper level, near the west end. The westernmost second story window has been altered to serve as an emergency exit door, with access by an exterior metal fire stair leading to the front platform. Today a restored wood platform exists on only the front elevation of the building, although new posts have been installed to receive a new platform on the south side as funds become available. Unlike the original wood platform, the current one has two guardrails and handrails, and a discreet handicap side ramp to the platform, but otherwise has no noticeable variation from the original as noted in historic photographs. Overall, the exterior of the building retains excellent integrity of setting, design, and materials.

***Interior***

The interior of the building is primarily one large single open room on both the main floor and the upper floor. The front entrance leads immediately into the large open lower level room. This room has wood floors, ceilings, and walls. All the walls include wood wainscoting, which rises to just below the windows.<sup>5</sup> The floor and walls are currently painted a cool, light-greenish color, while the ceiling is white. Modern incandescent lighting and ceiling fans have been added throughout the room, but old hooks used for the kerosene lamps that once lit the room are still extant, including an original lamp frame. A wood beam runs along the ceiling in the center of the

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<sup>5</sup> In a personal conversation with Mr. Jim McGuire on 14 March 2007, he suggested that the wainscoting is of the same wood as the exterior of the building and that the builders likely used left-over pieces from the exterior to avoid waste.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
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**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 3

New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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room, supported by two wood square posts.

The only variation to the room and wall arrangement is on the southeastern end of the room, where a secondary interior wall hides the presence of stairs. The original square, plastered and painted chimney is still extant as a bookend to this wall. A small piece of the remaining extending elbow ductwork is currently stuffed with insulation. As noted above, originally the stair was accessible only from the exterior south wall, but in the past five to eight years the interior wall has been opened to access the stair from the first floor. A modern bathroom has also recently been installed in this southeast corner of the main floor, using part of the space that was formerly a small storage area behind the interior wall. There is still a small storage area under the stair.

The northeast corner still retains the four narrow voting booths and a large wood box with four slots to deposit the voting materials. Near this area a simple metal railing was formerly installed into the floor and northern wall.

At the top of the narrow, one-run, wooden staircase is a simple four-panel wood door leading to the upper floor's northeast corner small vestibule, likely originally used for lodge functions and storage. The door from the vestibule to the main room is identical to the door from the stair. They both have large peepholes that would have originally been covered with metal discs, allowing the lodge members to "lock the room during lodge meetings but still identify visitors."<sup>6</sup>

The main room on the upper floor also consists of a wood floor and ceiling, but unlike the main floor, they are largely unpainted, and the walls are covered with what was likely the original patterned wall paper. This colorful, geometric patterned wall paper is currently mostly hidden behind another dark, paper-like material, which was likely applied when thick wall-board or homasote panels were applied to the walls, possibly in the 1920s. These panels have been removed in the past five to eight years, but the colorful wall paper has not yet been restored. There is a small area of the wall paper that was not covered by the dark material (in the northeast corner of the room), from which analysis of the wall paper and its pattern could be concluded.

The upper floor has a small portion of its western end now walled off for additional storage, which create two small closet-like rooms. One local preservationist suspects that this wall was added with the wood that was formerly a raised platform in the room.<sup>7</sup> It is clear from markings on the floor and walls that originally the room included a raised platform about five inches high and about forty inches deep located on perimeter of the

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<sup>6</sup> Doug Erickson, "Heart of the town being restored: Group bought the 1886 town hall, and volunteers are fixing it up," *Wisconsin State Journal*, V.164, N.321, 11/17/2003, p.C1. These security devices were not unique. As described in Myron W. Sackett, *Early History of Fraternal Beneficiary Societies in America: Origin and Growth, 1868-1880* (Meadville, PA: Tribune Pub. Co., 1914), p.6, the original A.O.U.W. lodge room in Meadville, PA (where the A.O.U.W. was founded in 1868) also identifies them: "The wicket in the door that enters from the inner ante-room to the lodge room at once attracts the attention of the visitor. It is made of two pieces of sheet iron, with ends turned over and bolt inserted to make a hinge."

<sup>7</sup> McGuire, personal conversation.



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New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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room's north, west, and south sides, which was likely used for the lodge's special seating arrangements.<sup>8</sup> Also currently on this level are many of the lodge's original furnishings, including several painted pieces, such as a table, altar-like structure, pulpit or lectern; many simple, unpainted wood chairs; and even the original wooden toilet chair.

The eastern wall of the main room is an interior wall with the chimney running behind it. Original duct work extends from the chimney, through the wall into the room, but is currently filled with insulation. Just as there is a small vestibule in the northeast corner of the upper level behind the eastern interior wall of the main room, so in the southeast corner, there is a very small amount of hall space wrapping around the stair. This hall space's ceiling has access to the attic.

The basement is subdivided into several spaces, primarily by the original jail cell walls in the southeast corner. This corner originally had two jail cells, but the wall that divided them is no longer present. As noted above, the two cells' small windows still have the original metal bars. While not visible from the interior, this southern foundation wall also has a secondary interior wall a few inches from it. The space between the two walls allows for a shaft that would have vented the two in-ground latrines that were in each cell. The remainder of the basement space is open space, currently used as storage.

The interior and exterior of the building has been well maintained by both the town and the current owner, the New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society, a private organization that purchased the building from the town in 2002. The Society has been able to obtain volunteer labor and greatly discounted materials in its recent efforts of replacing the roof, upgrading the electrical wiring, installing a new HVAC system, and repainting most of the exterior.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Sackett, p.4, shows photographs of the original A.O.U.W. lodge room in Meadville, PA that reveals platforms at the center edges of each wall with a large wood chair placed on each platform. These platforms appear to be about four to five inches high and about four feet deep and seven feet wide, given the measurement of the width of the room of twenty feet. However, the text also notes that, "In the views given only a part of the furniture seen is that which originally belonged to the lodge room. The arrangement, of course, is the work of the artist [photographer]." (p.6)

<sup>9</sup> On 3 July 2007 the bell tower was struck by lightning, caught fire, and the top two feet of the tower were damaged. It will be repaired to match the original. Also during 2007, a replacement walkway on the south side of the building will be installed, to closely match the original that was removed many years ago.

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New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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In all of these recent changes to the building, there has been great care to treat them in such a way as to minimize any noticeable effect on overall integrity of the building's workmanship, feeling, and association. The building and site retains excellent integrity throughout.

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**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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***Statement of Significance***

The New Glarus Town Hall is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A at the state level for politics/government and social history. It is being nominated for politics/government because it is a superb example of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century rural town hall building erected for town government purposes. It is the most significant building related to government in the Town of New Glarus, having been the center of government activity for over 100 years, including use of electoral polling, the early town jail, and as a municipal court. It is being nominated for social history because the building also served a significant role in the social life of New Glarus. The construction of the building was a cooperative effort of both the town and the local lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.), a significant fraternal benefit society. The lodge held its business on the upper floor, and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century many other fraternal, civic, and community groups also used the upper floor. The period of significance begins with the construction of the building in 1886 and extends through the end of the historic period in 1957.

***Historical Background***

New Glarus was settled by a community of over 100 immigrants who, sponsored by the Swiss government, traveled together from Glarus, Switzerland in 1845. Seeking an escape from the harsh economic conditions of the time, they sought out a place in the Midwest United States which would meet specific criteria for successful agricultural settlement. While there had been limited Swiss settlers elsewhere in the Wisconsin territory earlier (such as Sauk County), the success of the initial Glarner's colony attracted successive Swiss additions around it in Green County, which ultimately proved to be the dominant area of Swiss settlement in Wisconsin throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The importance of the New Glarus establishment of the Swiss in Wisconsin can not be overstated.<sup>10</sup>

Wheat was the initial cash crop of choice for many settlers in southern Wisconsin during the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and allowed the New Glarus settlement to become established. However, by the 1870s the dairy industry and cheese making confirmed the Swiss immigrants' ultimate success in Green County. Some Swiss Americans could lean upon their prior experience in Switzerland in the cheese making and dairy industries. Moreover, many were already making their own cheese at home. Thus as wheat production capacity gradually decreased, cheese production gradually increased to the point that it became the predominant commercial industry.<sup>11</sup> In the 1880s Green County was the second largest Wisconsin county producing cheese. Moreover, nearly all of those companies producing cheese in Green County were run by Swiss or those of Swiss origin. Cheeses were

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<sup>10</sup> Frederick Hale, *The Swiss in Wisconsin* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1994), p.7-10. By 1890 the Wisconsin Swiss population is led by Green County (with 1,866), and followed by Buffalo County (860), Milwaukee County (764), and Sauk County (346). Hale further notes that "on a percentage basis ... Wisconsin is arguably the most Swiss state in the Union ..." Swiss immigration to the United States crested and then decreased after the 1880's (p.11).

<sup>11</sup> Millard Tschudy, *New Glarus, Wisconsin: Mirror of Switzerland, 1845-1995* (New Glarus: self-published, 1995), p.24-26. For example, in 1873 New Glarus established its first cheese factory, New Glarus Cheese Corp. By 1884 New Glarus had eighteen cheese factories. By 1890 Green County as a whole had 200 cheese factories and creameries with an annual production of 10,000,000 pounds.

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Continuation Sheet

New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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exported across the country and even to Britain and Switzerland.<sup>12</sup> New Glarus' commercial success was greatly aided when the town obtained its own railway service with the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul line in 1887, increasing its ability to import and export goods.

As this success allowed the town to grow and prosper, it also created the need for a separate town building. At the same time, a prominent fraternal group was also seeking better meeting quarters.<sup>13</sup> The Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.) was the largest nineteenth century fraternal benefit society in the United States, with 125 Wisconsin lodges in 1888, perhaps in part because it "welcomed all workers, particularly craftsmen and their journeymen and apprentices."<sup>14</sup> In a small rural community like New Glarus, and with the popularity of the A.O.U.W., a partnership was easily formed that would allow both the town and the lodge to meet its growing space needs.

***Site-Specific Information***

The construction of the building was decided to be a cooperative effort of both the town and the lodge. The town purchased the land and built the basement and up to the floor of second story, and the A.O.U.W. lodge paid for the rest of the building. As described in the Town Clerk's record book:

Special Town Meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of May 1886. Resolved:

To build a Town hall in partnership with the Helvetia Lodge of A.O.U.W. – The Township to pay for the site, build the basement and first story up to and with the floor of the second story, the rest to be built and paid by the lodge. Provided always, that the upper story to be used only for the purposes of the lodge. The Town hall if deemed fit for lectures and other decent and useful purposes, and in case the lodge should dissolve or in any other cases, the upper story can not be sold but to the town, for a price to be stipulated and made out by three or five upright and disinterested men. This Resolution was carried by 26 against 14 votes. The work to be given away by contract and must be completed at the end of the month of Sept. '86. The building committee consists of the Town board, and Fred. Kundert, Jacob Ott Sr., and Andrew Hoesly.

It was almost unanimously resolved to buy Lot 6, Block 12, Vil. Of New Glarus of Fred. Kundert for the sum of \$200 as a site.

Duly recorded by Christ. Luchsinger Town Clerk.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p.24-26; Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986). Settlement (Central European) and Agriculture (Industrialized Dairy Production) chapters.

<sup>13</sup> Elda Schiesser and Linda Schiesser, *The Swiss Endure: Year by Year – A Chronological History: 1845-1945* (New Glarus: self-published, 1994), (n.p.). The A.O.U.W. lodge had organized in 1883, and had been meeting in the second story of Gabriel Schindler's wagon and blacksmith shop.

<sup>14</sup> Ancient Order of United Workmen-Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, A.O.U.W.* (La Crosse, WI: The Grand Lodge, 1877-1895, 1899, 1901, 1903, 1905), p.17 of 1890; Wyatt, *Social and Political Movements (Fraternal Organizations)*. The A.O.U.W. provided insurance for themselves and their families.

<sup>15</sup> New Glarus Town Clerk Record Book, 1881-1950, p.37, Personal Collection of Mr. Kim Tschudy, New Glarus, WI.

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**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

New Glarus Town Hall  
New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin

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Also noted in the Town Clerk's record book is a detailed list of the expenses of the various construction materials used in the building, and the names of those who provided materials and were involved in the labor of the building. Many of these individuals were town residents and many of the building materials came from town businesses or were provided by town residents.<sup>16</sup>

***Area of Significance - Politics/Government***

The New Glarus Town Hall is historically significant at the local level because its construction represents a culmination of the town's growth and development, and because it was used for its original governmental purpose with virtually no changes for over 100 years. Moreover, when the Village of New Glarus was established in 1901, that municipal body also used the Town Hall for its annual election of village officers until at least 1909.<sup>17</sup>

In 1849 a log structure was built which was used as the first church and also used for school and town purposes. This was razed in 1858. Town business was then likely carried out at the school house, the Sunday School building, or possibly the town officers' homes.<sup>18</sup> In Wisconsin town government has two primary elements: the town meeting and the town board. All qualified voters can participate in the town meeting, which historically was the most significant activity of government. As the town grew, a larger and more permanent meeting space was required to allow for an effective town government and annual meeting. According to the 1885 census, New Glarus' population was 1,136. If even a quarter of these came out for the annual town meeting, the importance of a functional town hall building is immediately evident.

Not only would the New Glarus Town board conduct its business in the Town Hall for the remaining 19<sup>th</sup> century and most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the building also likely served as the town courthouse with the basement used for the early New Glarus jail. Voting activity is evidenced by the several early voting booths still installed and in good condition in the northeast corner of the main floor. The long service of the New Glarus Town hall for these varied political and civic functions demonstrates its significance to New Glarus political life.

***Area of Significance - Social History***

The New Glarus Town Hall is historically significant at the local level because of the primary role the building served in the social history of New Glarus and because it illustrates the larger trend of the popularity of fraternal organizations in United States history.

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<sup>16</sup> New Glarus Town Clerk Record Book, p.41-42.

<sup>17</sup> Village of New Glarus Record Book, 1901-1912, The New Glarus Historical Society, Inc. Library, New Glarus, WI.

<sup>18</sup> Mr. Kim Tschudy, personal conversation with the author on 2 February 2007. It is interesting to note that the Sunday School building's (1868-1923) dominant architectural features suggest it may have provided a model for the construction of the Town Hall. These include the basic form of the building—a front gabled, clapboard-sided building, with very similar windows and window hoods, and a belfry and chimney located in nearly identical positions.

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Fraternal Societies and the A.O.U.W.

Fraternal organizations in the United States are broadly categorized into two types. One primarily served recreational or social purposes. The other was defined as "instrumental," that is, they exist to accomplish specific goals, such as moral reform, or providing life insurance. Recreational societies were both more numerous and founded earlier. Recreational examples include the Masons, Elks, Moose, International Order of Odd Fellows, and Shriners. The most common instrumental societies were fraternal benefit societies, or those which provided some form of life insurance to their members. Examples of these include the A.O.U.W., the Catholic Order of Foresters, Sons of Norway, and Independent Order of Foresters. Other instrumental societies include the Good Templars, devoted to temperance and prohibition, and the Patrons of Husbandry (or the Grange), seeking certain benefits for farmers and rural residents.<sup>19</sup>

Fraternal organizations witnessed a staggering period of growth during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>20</sup> In Wisconsin the number of fraternal associations and lodges peaked from 1866-1910, due largely to increased immigration. It was also during this period that fraternal benefit societies increased in popularity. For many immigrants fraternal groups provided a wide range of social, cultural, and economic benefits. But for working class immigrants in particular, the fraternal benefit society helped provide at least some small degree of economic security in an era devoid of governmental social security programs, labor unions, and inexpensive life insurance.<sup>21</sup>

The Ancient Order of United Workmen was founded by John Jordan Upchurch in 1868 in Meadville, PA. It soon came to be known widely as the first fraternal benefit society to provide fraternal life insurance to its members. Each member was to initially pay \$1 to the insurance fund. "After a member died, his beneficiaries received \$2,000. Depleted funds were to be restored by each member contributing another \$1. This procedure was to be repeated each time the fund required restoration."<sup>22</sup> To offer workingmen the opportunity to purchase low cost life insurance was an innovative idea, especially as the large commercial life insurance industry was less than twenty years old, and many of these firms had fallen into bankruptcy during this period. In comparison, the fraternal benefit society was able to keep overhead expenses low and the A.O.U.W. offered double the common \$1,000 life insurance offered by many other fraternal benefit societies.<sup>23</sup>

Another distinction of the A.O.U.W. was that in 1886 it helped organize the National Fraternal Congress (NFC). The NFC was an association of fraternal benefit societies that sought to have all fraternal benefit societies adopt sound actuarial methods and establish a reserve fund system. The NFC continued to grow in

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<sup>19</sup> Alvin J. Schmidt, "Fraternal Organization," *Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Institutions*, N.3. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), p.4-7; Wyatt, *Social and Political Movements (Fraternal Organizations)*.

<sup>20</sup> Schmidt, p.3.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p.17; Wyatt, *Social and Political Movements (Fraternal Organizations)*. Wyatt notes that some fraternal benefit societies also formed along occupational lines and evolved into trade unions.

<sup>22</sup> Schmidt, p.357.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p.17.

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prominence and established a number of policies that by the 1910s became “the fraternal law of the land.” It is surmised that “without an association like the NFC the entire fraternal benefit system would probably have collapsed.”<sup>24</sup>

Finally, the A.O.U.W. was unique as it grew to become the largest fraternal benefit society in 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>25</sup> As noted above, this may have been due in part to the fact that membership was open to any number of professions, and not just one type or just labor. In 1895, it boasted membership of 336,531, up from the 1887 membership of 185,000, and the 1885 membership of 145,000, which even then had membership in every State and Territory of the United States and Canada.<sup>26</sup>

During the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many fraternal groups stopped growing. In fact, “many fraternal benefit societies were ruined due to weak financial structures based upon informal and often irregular assessments. Most of those that managed to survive reorganized along sounder contractual and actuarial lines, and this often meant the loss of the fraternal aspect.”<sup>27</sup> The A.O.U.W. was a surviving organization during this period. In fact, it lasted up until 1952, when it dissolved or merged with various state societies. Washington was the only state where it continued to exist beyond this date. Other states frequently merged or converted to mutual insurance companies.<sup>28</sup> In Washington, the A.O.U.W. went defunct sometime between 1990 and 2000. It was last based in Bellevue, WA.<sup>29</sup>

In Wisconsin, the A.O.U.W. established the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin in 1877, and “by 1879, having a sufficient number of members in the State was able to pay its own death losses, was set aside as a separate beneficiary jurisdiction.”<sup>30</sup> The period of growth of the A.O.U.W. in Wisconsin roughly matches that nationally. In 1879 fifty lodges had been established in Wisconsin, with a total membership of nearly 2,000. By 1888, there were 125 lodges throughout all regions of the state and a total membership of 6,736.<sup>31</sup> However, in 1908, the Fidelity Trust Company, Trustee of the Wisconsin Grand Lodge, sued the A.O.U.W. Supreme Lodge for nearly \$75,000 alleged to be due to the Wisconsin Grand Lodge as relief under the Guaranty and Fraternal

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p.11.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p.358; Wyatt, Social and Political Movements (Fraternal Organizations).

<sup>26</sup> “Ancient Order of United Workmen: Meeting of Grand Lodge in Milwaukee-Statistical Information.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 6/20/1887; William A. Fricke, *The Ancient Order of United Workmen: Its Aims and Objectives / presented by Madison Lodge No. 66, A.O.U.W., Located at Madison* (Milwaukee, WI: H.H. Zahn & Co., 1885), p.1; Ancient Order of United Workmen-Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, (n.p.), statistical note card from the Wisconsin Grand Recorder on inside book front cover.

<sup>27</sup> Wyatt, Social and Political Movements (Fraternal Organizations).

<sup>28</sup> Schmidt, p.358.

<sup>29</sup> “Ask the Globe,” *The Boston Globe*, 10/20/2000, p.C12.

<sup>30</sup> Fricke, p.2.

<sup>31</sup> Ancient Order of United Workmen-Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, 1878, p.48 and 1890, p.17; Wyatt, Social and Political Movements (Fraternal Organizations).

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Aid Fund laws. Following the court decision in 1911, which awarded Wisconsin \$10,000, the Wisconsin Grand Lodge dissolved. In 1912 the Iowa A.O.U.W. Grand Lodge secured jurisdiction of Wisconsin's A.O.U.W. membership.<sup>32</sup>

The A.O.U.W. in New Glarus was founded on August 25, 1883, as the Helvetia Lodge, or Lodge #102, by C. R. Schneider, who was the A.O.U.W. District Deputy for Green County at that time. As he described in the "Report of District Deputies" at the Wisconsin A.O.U.W. Grand Lodge meeting in 1884:

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1883, I organized Helvetia Lodge No. 102, at New Glarus, with 26 charter members, all healthy young men. They were all well pleased with the work of the order. It was hard work to get this lodge started, as other orders tried hard to get the prize. On the 15<sup>th</sup> day of September, I attended the funeral of Bro. Oswald Elmer, Foreman and a charter member of Helvetia Lodge, and was accompanied by a large delegation of members from Germania Lodge of Monroe [Wisconsin]. This action did a good deal of good for the Order in this section. I also installed the officers of this lodge at the first meeting in January, and granted 12 dispensations for the M. W. degree. Also visited the lodge six times during this term.<sup>33</sup>

During the remainder of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the lodge regularly sent representatives to the annual (and subsequently biennial) Wisconsin Grand Lodge meetings. Those who went more than once included Oswald Babler, the last surviving original settler of New Glarus and the last surviving Civil War Veteran from New Glarus; Melchior Schmid, the most frequent lodge representative during this time, he also belonged to a prominent New Glarus family and participated in the New Glarus shooting club and New Glarus band; T. C. Hefty, one of the founders of the Bank of New Glarus; and S. A. Schindler, a New Glarus merchant who went on to become the Wisconsin Assistant State Treasurer, may also have been a founder of the Bank of New Glarus, and served as the first New Glarus Village President when New Glarus became incorporated in 1901.<sup>34</sup>

Also during this period of 1883-1905, the New Glarus lodge experienced a period of growth, plateau, and finally, decline. In 1885 membership had increased to thirty-six, and then to forty-four for 1886 and 1887. Records are not included for individual Wisconsin lodge memberships again until 1892, when New Glarus' lodge had jumped up to seventy-five members with fourteen having been initiated from June 1, 1891 to March 31, 1892. Records are again omitted until 1901, with a membership of sixty-two, and a 1903 membership of sixty-three, but then a significant drop to twenty-seven in 1905. Total Wisconsin A.O.U.W. membership also made a significant drop around this same time, going from 8,574 in 1903 to 5,631 in 1905.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> P. E. Thomas, *History of the Various Grand Lodges* (Fargo, ND: no publisher, 1943) (n.p.).

<sup>33</sup> Ancient Order of United Workmen-Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, 1884, p.37.

<sup>34</sup> Ancient Order of United Workmen-Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, 1884, p.6; 1886 (n.p.); 1887, p. vii; 1888, p.7; 1889, p.8; 1890, p.8; 1892, p.5; 1893, p.5; 1894, p.8; 1895, p.8; 1901, p.6; 1903, p.7; 1905, p.6; Mr. Kim Tschudy provided the summary biographical information on these individuals through an email exchange on 24 July 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Ancient Order of United Workmen-Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, 1885, p.25; 1886, p.35; 1887, p.12; 1892, p.28; 1901, Exh. I; 1903, Exh. M; 1905, Exh. O.



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New Glarus Social Life and the New Glarus Town Hall

Although the New Glarus A.O.U.W. lodge paid for and built the upper level of the New Glarus Town Hall, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century many other fraternal, civic, and community groups also used the building for their meeting spaces, including the upper level. These include the Women's Relief Corp, the G.A.R. auxiliary; the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.); Sisters of Rebeka, the I.O.O.F. women's auxiliary; the Gegenseitige Unterstützungs Gesellschaft Germania (G.U.G.G.), a German/Swiss women's fraternal group, active until the 1990s in New Glarus; the Wilhelm Tell Guild, an early shooting club; the New Glarus Maennerchor, the Swiss men's choir; the Edelweiss Stars, the Swiss choir; the Cub/Boy Scouts; and the local 4-H club. The Town Hall has also hosted community potlucks, balls, and local school classes. These meetings and community groups helped shape the culture of New Glarus, and thus the building held a significant role in New Glarus' social history.<sup>36</sup>

As the seat of town government and the home of an important local fraternal organization, the New Glarus Town Hall played an important role in the life of the local community. Throughout the historic period the building served as the center of governmental life of the Town of New Glarus as the location of town meetings and for voting. In its early years it also served as the Town jail. During the peak years of fraternal membership in the state, the upper floor of the building was the home of an important local fraternal organization, the Ancient Order of United Workmen. As indicated above, the building also provided meeting space for other community groups.

Since the town sold the building in 2002 to the New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society, a dedicated group of twenty members, the condition of the building has been enhanced while retaining excellent integrity, as noted in Section Seven. The active ongoing interest in this building over its 121-year history, suggests that this building has historically, and continues to be, highly valued and respected by the people of New Glarus.

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<sup>36</sup> Tschudy, personal conversation; Schiesser and Schiesser, (n.p.); Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office National Register of Historic Places Nomination Questionnaire submitted in 2002 by Mr. Kim Tschudy; Mr. David Zweifel, personal conversation with the author on 19 March 2007; Wisconsin State Journal, 17 November 2003, p.C1.

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Oral History Interviews (Personal Communications all conducted by the author):

Tschudy, Mr. Kim (president of the New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society, native, and current resident of New Glarus). In person conversation, 2 February 2007. Email exchange, 24 July, 2007.  
Location of Transcript: In possession of the author.

McGuire, Mr. Jim (vice president of the New Glarus Town Hall Preservation Society, native, and current resident of New Glarus). In person conversation, 14 March 2007.  
Location of Transcript: In possession of the author.

Zweifel, Mr. David (Editor of the Capital Times Newspaper and native of New Glarus). In person conversation, 19 March 2007.  
Location of Transcript: In possession of the author.

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*Verbal Boundary Description*

The boundary of the New Glarus Town Hall is a rectangle consisting of Lot 6 of Block 12 of the original village plat in the Village of New Glarus.

*Boundary Justification*

The boundary of this building has been its historic site since its original construction in 1886 and continuing during the period of significance to 1957. It includes the building and its setting.

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**New Glarus Town Hall**  
**New Glarus, Green County, Wisconsin**  
**Photos by Robert Neperud, April 14, 2007.**  
**Negatives at the Wisconsin Historical Society.**

Views:

- 1 of 8: Exterior, West Elevation
- 2 of 8: Exterior, Northwest Elevation
- 3 of 8: Exterior, South Elevation
- 4 of 8: Exterior, South Elevation (with out belfry)
- 5 of 8: Exterior, East Elevation
- 6 of 8: Interior, Main Floor, Looking East
- 7 of 8: Interior, Main Floor, Looking West
- 8 of 8: Interior, Upper Floor, Looking West toward non-original interior wall

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY New Glarus Town Hall  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WISCONSIN, Green

DATE RECEIVED: 8/27/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/10/08  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000286

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 9.24.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Additional Documentation Accepted**

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 9.24.08

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

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***Statement of Significance***

The New Glarus Town Hall is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A at the local level for politics/government and social history. It is being nominated for politics/government because it is a superb example of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century rural town hall building erected for town government purposes. It is the most significant building related to government in the Town of New Glarus, having been the center of government activity for over 100 years, including use of electoral polling, the early town jail, and as a municipal court. It is being nominated for social history because the building also served a significant role in the social life of New Glarus. The construction of the building was a cooperative effort of both the town and the local lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen (A.O.U.W.), a significant fraternal benefit society. The lodge held its business on the upper floor, and throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century many other fraternal, civic, and community groups also used the upper floor. The period of significance begins with the construction of the building in 1886 and extends through the end of the historic period in 1957.

***Historical Background***

New Glarus was settled by a community of over 100 immigrants who, sponsored by the Swiss government, traveled together from Glarus, Switzerland in 1845. Seeking an escape from the harsh economic conditions of the time, they sought out a place in the Midwest United States which would meet specific criteria for successful agricultural settlement. While there had been limited Swiss settlers elsewhere in the Wisconsin territory earlier (such as Sauk County), the success of the initial Glarner's colony attracted successive Swiss additions around it in Green County, which ultimately proved to be the dominant area of Swiss settlement in Wisconsin throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The importance of the New Glarus establishment of the Swiss in Wisconsin can not be overstated.<sup>10</sup>

Wheat was the initial cash crop of choice for many settlers in southern Wisconsin during the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and allowed the New Glarus settlement to become established. However, by the 1870s the dairy industry and cheese making confirmed the Swiss immigrants' ultimate success in Green County. Some Swiss Americans could lean upon their prior experience in Switzerland in the cheese making and dairy industries. Moreover, many were already making their own cheese at home. Thus as wheat production capacity gradually decreased, cheese production gradually increased to the point that it became the predominant commercial industry.<sup>11</sup> In the 1880s Green County was the second largest Wisconsin county producing cheese. Moreover, nearly all of those companies producing cheese in Green County were run by Swiss or those of Swiss origin. Cheeses were

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<sup>10</sup> Frederick Hale, *The Swiss in Wisconsin* (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1994), p.7-10. By 1890 the Wisconsin Swiss population is led by Green County (with 1,866), and followed by Buffalo County (860), Milwaukee County (764), and Sauk County (346). Hale further notes that "on a percentage basis ... Wisconsin is arguably the most Swiss state in the Union ..." Swiss immigration to the United States crested and then decreased after the 1880's (p.11).

<sup>11</sup> Millard Tschudy, *New Glarus, Wisconsin: Mirror of Switzerland, 1845-1995* (New Glarus: self-published, 1995), p.24-26. For example, in 1873 New Glarus established its first cheese factory, New Glarus Cheese Corp. By 1884 New Glarus had eighteen cheese factories. By 1890 Green County as a whole had 200 cheese factories and creameries with an annual production of 10,000,000 pounds.