

**The Casper Glattfelder Association of America
100th Annual Reunion
July 29, 2005
Heimwald Park
Glatfelters PA**

Dear Richard Glattfelder

Dear members of the Board of Directors

Dear George and Arthur Glattfelder

Dear fellow Glattfelters from near and far

I have the privilege and the pleasure to be with you today for the celebration of the one hundredth reunion of your Glattfelder families association.

This is very certainly a great day and important event for all of you and I am very proud to have been invited to join you in your joy and to be able to convey to you the best wishes of all the inhabitants of my Glattfelden across the ocean.

Some of you may have visited your place of origin and may already be very familiar with our village, but for most of you this is more or less an unknown spot in a country far away.

So let me introduce Glattfelden a little bit to you.

As a matter of fact this year we could have commemorated, should we have so wished, our 875th anniversary because Glattfelden was for the first time officially mentioned in a document in the year 1130. It can be assumed that our village is over 1000 years old.

From historic documents we learn that in the middle of the 13th century the whole village consisted of seven courts or farmyards, all of them owned by noblemen or cloisters, of one church and one mill.

Some 250 years later the village had grown to such an extent that whoever wanting to settle in Glattfelden had to pay an important amount of money and at a later stage had to invite all other citizens to a public feast with soup, meat, bread and wine.

For many centuries agriculture, including wine-growing, was the major source of income for the people living in our village. Just as an example, in the year 1860 there were over 200 farmers breeding cattle.

Emigration from Glattfelden to America took place twice, in the years between 1738 and 1743, when a total of 53 persons looked for a new home place in the colonies of North America, and around 1850, when some 100 persons immigrated to your place of living.

Your ancestors, as you know better than I, were among the first group that left Glattfelden. In the chronicle of our village it is written that because of the work of Dr. Charles Glatfelter it is known that a group of eleven people travelled to Rotterdam on the river Rhine and boarded the ship "Francis and Elizabeth", bringing them to Philadelphia in Pennsylvania on a seven to 12 weeks boat trip. From the records it would appear that the journey was rather dangerous, because only eight people out of eleven seemingly arrived safely in Philadelphia.

The industrialization in our village started some fifty years after the departure of your ancestors to America. In the year 1783 a silk mill was put into operation, but already in 1795 production was stopped. Sixty years later a cotton spinning mill was opened, followed by a second one in 1806. One year later also a weaving mill commenced production.

Because of the growing international competition and eroding margins most of these mills had to be closed at the end of the 1970ies.

At this point in time one cotton spinning mill is still in use and an other mill situated at the outskirts of our village has been classified as a historical monument.

Our region has one major resource, gravel. Due to this fact in the late 1920ies the first gravel pit was taken in use. The quarrying of gravel including the production of concrete as well as the recycling of building material continues and will certainly continue for many more decades.

After this very short look back, let me describe you our village as it is today.

The municipality of Glattfelden covers about 3'051 acres of land.

The population amounts to almost 4000 persons in over 1700 households. Some 20 per cent are of foreign origin.

As a comparison, in the year 1729 Glattfelden counted 750 inhabitants in 166 households.

During the last 30 years the population has grown by about almost 15 per cent.

The place of work of the majority of the gainfully employed is away from Glattfelden, be it in the nearby cities of Zurich and Winterthur or at the Zurich airport. However, we still have a good number of small commercial enterprises and workmen in our village.

Agriculture continues to play a certain, but clearly very minor role. There are almost two dozens of farms left, out of which about half of them make their living only from farming. The growing of wine is also cultivated again and one very initiative farmer produces a white Riesling wine and two red wines.

During the last few years Glattfelden has become a mini-Hollywood, or Glattwood. In a part of the former cotton spinning mill the production of television programmes was started.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am proud to be able to say that we have a very attractive village.

We are situated in the midst of a charming and peaceful landscape, surrounded by small hills with a lot of forests. The river Glatt flows along one side of the valley, in which our village is embedded, to then joint the waters of father Rhine.

This landscape with many different paths, tracks and trails, away from all traffic, invites for walking, jogging and biking.

The middle of the village is formed by many ancient, well maintained houses, an idyllic place to stroll around.

We have a number of attractive sights to be visited. Two of them relate to electricity. There is a small power station which was built on the river Glatt, before it hat do be corrected in order to avoid further flooding. It is today a very interesting museum around and about electricity.

We have the great brother, a still productive power station in the river Rhine, which is listed in the national inventory of culturally historical constructions.

Our biggest pride is our place of cultural interest built in memoriam of Gottfried Keller, one of the most important writers and poems in the German language of his time. Having spent many years of his life in Glattfelden, this place was built to always remember his works and to host a permanent exhibition on Gottfried Keller.

I invite all of you that have not yet found the way to their place of origin to visit us rather sooner than later.

Now back to this day and this event.

It has always been and is still always said, that Switzerland tries to keep tradition high.

But I have to say that we can learn from you. Your reunion today and during the next two days is the best proof of what family ties can do, of what tradition is. You have kept to it also through rough seas and you can now proudly meet for the one hundredth time.

All I can do is to just express to you my admiration for having been doing so and to express my wish that this may continue well over the next one hundred years.

I have not come here completely empty handed and in order to prove my words about the attraction of our village I have brought with me six plates, each of them showing a picture from our village.

I hope you will find a suitable place in your pavilion so that you and your descendants will always be reminded about where the roots of their families can be found.

Let me thank you for having been listening to me and let me close my address in a somewhat unusual way.

Kamerade wämmer sii, immer zäme hebe.

Nid nu bime Glesli Wii, nei au suscht im Läbe.

Wänns Der einisch nid rächt gaht, bruchsch en Fründ wo zue Der staht.

Wänns Der einisch nid rächt gaht, bruchsch en Fründ wo würekli zue Der staht.

Comrades we all want to be, always hold together.

Not only with a glass of wine, no also during daily life.

If at one time sad are you, you need a friend who cares for you.

If at one time sad are you, you need a friend who really cares for you.

24. Juli 2005