

The following is from "A Condensed History of the Druidic Order", Compiled by C. A. Guglielmoni 1934

LIFE AND WORK OF FREDERICK SIEG

To properly portray the life of the founder of the Order in California, we think it advisable to reproduce here the eulogy of the late Brother M. Mayer, Past Arch of California Grove No. 1, delivered at the dedication of the monument that was erected over the grave of Frederick Sieg on July 24, 1892. Brother Mayer said in part: "It has been the custom in all ages to honor the illustrious dead, for the great deeds and valuable services rendered during their lifetime. Columbus, the discoverer of this continent, was cast in prison as a reward for his services, but his name will never be forgotten. "Fraternal organizations have heroes whom the members of the Order hold in high esteem. Look at the work of Thomas Wildey, the founder of Oddfellowship. The Masonic fraternity honors the name of one of the greatest architects who helped design and construct the Solomon temple. These men are not honored for victories on bloody battlefields, nor for deeds of national greatness, but for the love to their suffering fellow men, for their sympathy and help rendered to the sick and distressed, and for having cheered the brothers and sisters in time of adversity. "We, as Druids, are also assembled here today in honor of the founder of the Druidic Order in California, and to dedicate this monument erected to his memory by the brotherhood of this state, as a token of love and esteem for his labor of charity and the relief of the sick and distressed members of the Order he founded. "Brother Frederick Sieg was born in Saxony, Germany, in the year 1815. At an early age he was left an orphan and was taken in charge by one of his uncles, who apprenticed him as a baker. His faithfulness, honesty and industriousness made him beloved by his employer. Being in the years when life is most vigorous, he, like many young men of the Old World, bade farewell to the land of his birth, and crossed the ocean to seek a home in this land of the free and the home of the brave. He arrived safely in St. Louis, Mo., where he engaged in business and soon prospered as a result of honesty and good habits, but through the treachery and dishonesty of his partner was later financially wrecked.

"In the year 1850, he became a member of Teutonic Grove No.2 in St. Louis, by initiation. The members, recognizing his ability and fidelity to the Order, elected him Secretary of the Grove. Due to attention to his duties, the membership of the Grove was doubled in one year. "About the year 1853, when the rush to the gold fields was in full sway, which event was heralded since 1848-49 to the entire world, and which brought to these golden shores representatives from every part of the globe, we find our brother also among them, seeking a fortune in this state. After several successful years in the occupation of a miner, he settled in Placerville, and established himself in business, in which he prospered for many years. His trust in false human nature almost caused his financial ruin in later life. His hospitality and upright conduct were the bywords of his friends and acquaintances. The door of his tent was always open to a friend or brother in distress. But too often his liberality was shamefully abused by pretended friends. His

only fault was that he could never decline a request made upon him. He could never say 'no' when asked for loans or the endorsement of notes for others, he believing all men to be as honest as he was, but in that he realized too late to have been mistaken. "The first attempt at organizing- the Druidic Order on the Pacific Coast was made by P. A. Hayeden at Sacramento. He had secured the signature of 35 charter members, but as communications with the east often required from three to four months, progress was slow. During the transmission of the dispensation the city of Sacramento was laid in ashes. The applicants were scattered to every part of the state, and thus the first attempt to establish Druidism proved a failure. This attempt was made in 1851. The second one was made in 1852 by Brother Adam Keil, a Past Arch of Harmony Grove No. 5 of St. Louis, Mo. This brother arrived in San Francisco with the necessary documents for the establishment of the Order in that city, but as all attention was given to mining industries, he also failed. He met Brother Sieg two years later and told him of his failure to establish at least one Grove in San Francisco. "The third and successful attempt was made in 1859 by Brother Frederick Sieg. It was a hard task for him, but he never gave up until his work was accomplished and when the Grove was finally made ready to be instituted, his brothers of St. Louis sent him a transfer card, accompanied with their best wishes, and complimented him for his achievements. Brother Sieg caused notices to be published in the 'Mountain Democrat,' calling upon all brethren holding legal Druidic cards to forward them to him. In response two cards were sent in, one from Henry Wulff, who had been a life companion of the founder. (These two men are both united in death in the same grave.) The second card was from Brother Henry Lehrke. As the law of the Order required seven already made Druids to open a Grove, a dispensation had to be obtained to make four more petitioners Druids at sight, and thus the required number was obtained. On the seventh day of May, 1859, California Grove No.1 was instituted in Placerville by him, he having been appointed a special deputy by the Most Noble Grand Arch of the Grand Grove of the United States; such was the way the seed of Druidism was planted in this Golden State, which has grown to be a strong oak. Herman Grove No.2 was organized in the town of Coloma, where gold was first discovered by Marshall, and San Francisco Grove No. 3 was organized on March 27, 1864, in San Francisco. "These three Groves were organized and instituted by Frederick Sieg."

We are not in a position to give all the names of the brothers who were initiated at the institution of California Grove No. 1, but we are fortunate enough to be able to insert in this history the names of the seven Druids required by law in order to obtain the charter or dispensation. They were: Frederick Sieg, Henry Lehrke, Heinrich Wulff, George Nuss, Claus Heinrich Bumann, Xavier Kaiser, and Louis Van Geistefield.

Frederick Sieg died in Placerville, California, August 24, 1888.

Mrs. Sieg

We could not pass on without mentioning Frederick Sieg's devoted wife, who was left to mourn his death. Frederick Sieg, through his goodness and over-confidence in mankind, died a poor

man, and his wife, being very old, was placed in the Crocker Old People's Home, where she died May 11, 1904, at the age of 91.

The Grand Grove paid her a yearly allowance, and it was customary for every Noble Grand Arch to visit her during his incumbency. The gentle old lady was bed-ridden and totally blind for many years, yet she was always cheerful and spoke with reminiscence about her husband. I was the last Noble Grand Arch to see her alive. She died during the late George Beck's term of office, and at the expense of the Grand Grove the remains were taken to Placerville and laid alongside those of the man she loved in life and cherished his memory in death.