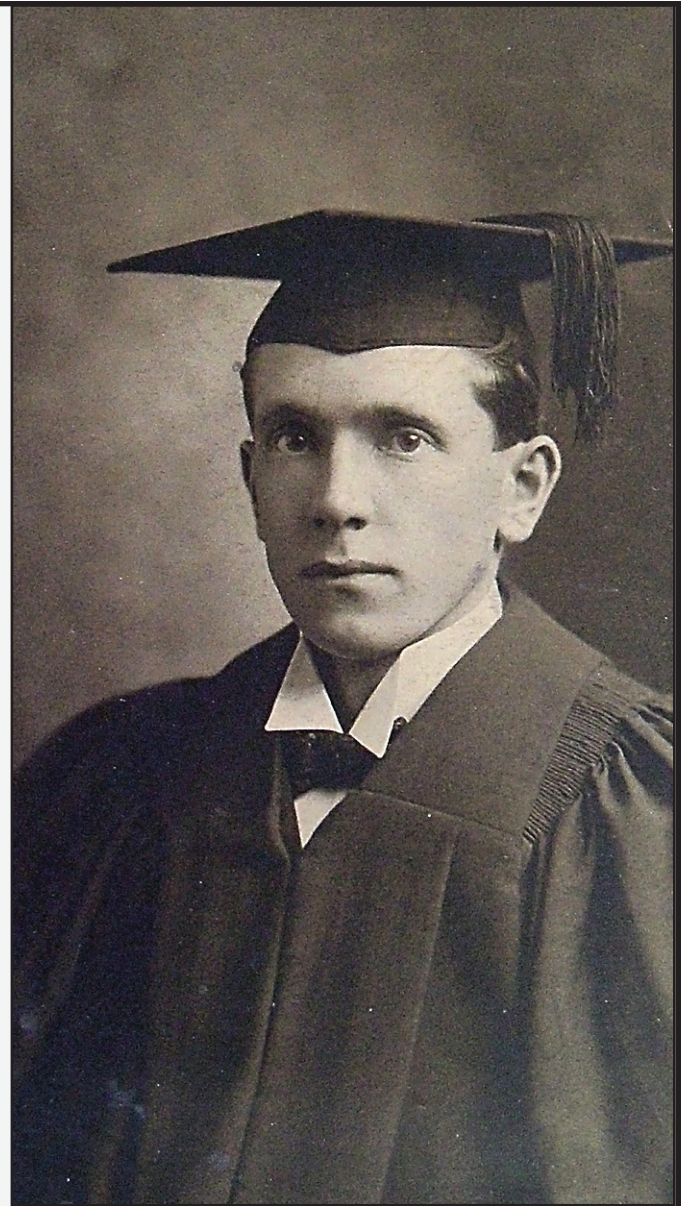


Historian Ubl discovers rare photos from New Ulm's past

By Elroy E. Ubl

While doing research to update history articles from two of my previous books (Historical Notes: A Glimpse at New Ulm's Past Vol. I / Vol. II.), I discovered several interesting pieces of information, and some rare photographs . . . some never before published, and that are directly / indirectly related to New Ulm's history. The original two volumes were compiled from articles published in The Journal, when I answered local history questions from readers. Here is a sampling of some of the items / photographs that will appear in a planned forthcoming book updating the two volumes mentioned above.

NOTE: All photos from collection of Elroy E. Ubl.



THE 1904 MURDER OF DR. LOUIS A. GEBHARDT

The historic 1904 murder of Dr. Gebhardt remains a local and state-wide well-known mystery because it is still labeled as being 'unsolved.'

Young Dr. Louis A. Gebhardt, age 29 years, was murdered in his dental office during the late evening of November 1, 1904. Circumstantial evidence pointed to another young dentist, Dr. George R. Koch, age 24 years, as being the murderer. Dr. Koch was arrested, and tried three times. The motive — professional jealousy. Nine months to the day after Dr. Gebhardt was murdered, Dr. Koch heard the clerk of court state "we the jury, find the defendant not guilty."

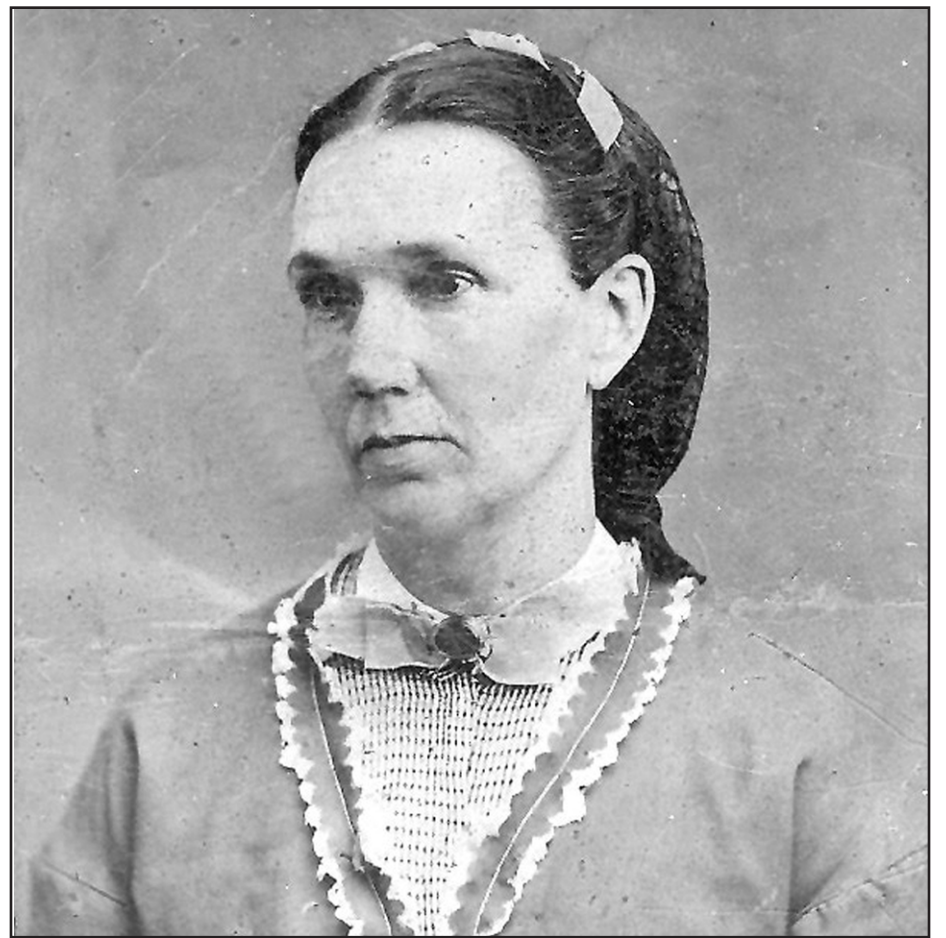
The Brown County Journal newspaper reported that the not guilty verdict "was first received in doubt by many, but 90 out of every 100 persons received it with a shock that it required some time to remove. To 90 percent of the people of New Ulm it meant an annihilation of justice and a mockery of the administration of law... a tendency to make good people lose faith in the human nature and courts of law when confronted with the power of money."

Anyone familiar with the Dr. Louis A. Gebhardt murder, will also talk of a second motive ... that of a woman.

Will the November 1, 1904, murder of Dr. Louis A. Gebhardt ever be forgotten? Probably not. Legally, it remains an unsolved murder case, and still draws attention... in fact, a retired Minneapolis homicide detective has contacted me wanting to do some DNA testing on the blood-soaked handkerchief (which I have) from the murder scene, to solve the crime. In the corner of the blood-soaked handkerchief were the initials 'G R K' said to stand for George R. Koch.

Dr. Louis A. Gebhardt was from Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and recently, while researching Dr. Gebhardt's family tree, and after making several contacts, I went to the Black River Falls area. I discovered several rare photos of Dr. Gebhardt, and pictured here are two of those photos, never-before-published. The first is a formal graduation photo of Dr. Louis A. Gebhardt from the Chicago College of Dental Surgery. Louis graduated from dental school in the spring of 1898, and came to New Ulm in the fall of the same year to open his dental practice. The back of the photo states: "Dr. Louis Gebhardt Dentist April 1898. Emma's. Murdered at New Ulm Minn. Never solved." Emma was a sister of Louis.

The second image is a rare photo of Dr. Louis A. Gebhardt in his 'new' New Ulm dental office located on the 2nd floor of the Schoch-Ottomeyer Building, 5 North Minnesota Street. This second photo was probably taken in late 1898, shortly after he came to New Ulm to open his dental practice. According to the New Ulm Review newspaper of October 26, 1898: "Dr. L. A. Gebhardt, a graduate of the Chicago College of Dental Surgery, arrived here last week from Black River Falls, Wisconsin. He found the outlook satisfactory and therefore concluded to locate." The photo was probably taken to send home to his family. He appears to be quite proud and professional, wearing a tie, and white medical / dental jacket. Dr. Gebhardt was murdered in the very same room as shown in the photo. The door in the background leads to his dental laboratory. Again, these photos have never been published.



WILLIAM J. DULEY AND LAURA DULEY

After the 1862 U.S.-Dakota War, 38 Dakota Indians were executed in a mass hanging in Mankato on December 26, 1862, for their part in the conflict. William J. Duley was the man who cut the rope to release the single trap door to execute all 38 simultaneously.

During the U.S.-Dakota War on August 20, 1862, the Dakota Indians attacked Lake Shetek. Laura Duley witnessed the killings of her 10-year old son, Willie, her 4-year old daughter Isabella (Belle), and many of her friends and neighbors. Laura (who was pregnant at the time) along with her other children, Jefferson, Emma, and six-month-old Francis, were taken captive by the Dakota. William, Laura's husband, had become separated from them during the attack, when the settlers fled into the tall grass of a marsh that later became known as "Slaughter Slough."

William survived the attack, but for several months, would not know the fate of the rest of this family. On November 19, 1862, after a journey of several days, a small group of women and children were rescued by some Dakota Indians known as 'Fool Soldiers' on the Missouri River near present-day Mobridge, South Dakota. Laura and William were reunited with their surviving children. Six-month-old Francis, who was taken captive with his mother and other two siblings, was killed by the Dakota while in captivity. Date of death and burial is unknown. Laura Duley, who was pregnant at the time of her capture, miscarried due to repeated assaults by the Indian men. It is said that Laura was sold or traded for goods four different times, and Jefferson Duley was at one time traded for a gold watch. Both Willie and Isabella (Belle), who were killed at Lake Shetek, are buried under the Lake Shetek Monument.

While researching and updating information on the burial location of William and Laura Duley, it again became evident that no photos of William had ever been found and / or published (photos of Laura Duley after her release have been published). The hanging of the 38 Dakota Indians has the distinction of being the largest mass execution in U. S. history — and the one person who cut the rope, seemed to be lost in history. I eventually contacted a distant relative of William and Laura Duley to see if they had any photos of William and Laura. Much to my surprise they had a family photo album that had been handed down through several generations. They provided me with a number of different images, including the two shown here, along with photos of William and Laura in their later years, and photos of Jefferson and Emma Duley a few years after their release from the Indians.

They also provided a number of articles written by William J. Duley sharing his reminiscence of the 1862 Indian Uprising. The photos of William and Laura show here were taken about the same time period, probably between September 1862, and February 1865. William's image is a glass-plate photo of him wearing a military jacket, and the photo of Laura appears to have been taken a few years after her release.

William was born on March 30, 1819, and died on March 6, 1898. Laura was born on April 24, 1828, and died on March 2, 1900. William J. Duley helped build the scaffold/gallows in Mankato, and received the 'honor' to cut the single rope to release the trap door to execute the 38 Sioux Indians in Mankato, Minnesota, on December 26, 1862. All 38 Indians fell simultaneously. Many people from New Ulm witnessed the execution, including Richard Pfefferle, and Mr. and Mrs. John Hauenstein, Sr. Mr. Pfefferle, many years later, remembered that the day of execution was rather cold, it being about 15 degrees above zero. Despite this, more than 1,000 soldiers kept order over the large crowds of people assembled to witness the hanging. These photos of William and Laura Duley have never been published. In fact, I am not aware of any photos of William Duley that have ever been seen (other than family), published or shared. These indeed, are rare photos.