



### Glarus, a canton of migration



Read this text carefully and try to answer the questions.

Around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, hundreds of people left Glarus. Every twelfth inhabitant emigrated. The reason for this were the poor circumstances they were living under. They had to work under terrible conditions in the factories, their salaries were low and even children had to work there. In addition, hundreds of people starved to death<sup>1</sup> because of a potatoes' disease which had destroyed most of the crop<sup>2</sup>.



People saw no more hope for better times in their home country and moved to America. Some moved to the state of Wisconsin, where they founded the colony of New Glarus. For these people the long journey paid off<sup>3</sup>. There was enough land where they could build up a new living.

But for others, above all for older and invalid people, the situation just got worse. Like other cantons, Glarus supported the migration of poor people with financial help. The canton of Glarus often paid part of the journey. In this way they could get rid of<sup>4</sup> people who needed expensive care<sup>5</sup> and didn't have to look after them anymore. An example was 18-year old Samuel Fässler, who came from a poor family and was caught stealing several times. Glarus paid a lot of money to a navigation corporation in order to ship him away to America.

1. How many people left Glarus in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

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2. Why did people from the canton of Glarus leave their home country?

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3. Take an atlas and look for the town "New Glarus" in the State of Wisconsin.

4. Why did the canton Glarus support the migration of poor people?

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<sup>1</sup> starved to death

died of hunger

<sup>2</sup> crop

Ernte

<sup>3</sup> paid off:

was successful

<sup>4</sup> get rid of

become free of something that causes one annoyance or trouble

<sup>5</sup> care

welfare (Fürsorge)