8th November 1307, at the Rütli, Werner von Stauffacher of Schwyz, Walter Fürst of Uri, Arnold von Melchthal in Unter­walden, each with ten companions, among whom was William Tell, resolved on a rising to expel the oppressors, which was fixed for New Year’s Day 1308. A few days later (November 18) the Tell incident takes place (described according to the *White* *Book* version), and on the appointed date the general rising. Tschudi thus finally settled the date, which had before varied from 1260 to 1334. He utterly distorts the real historical relations of the Three Lands, though he brings in many real historical names, their owners being made to perform historically impossible acts, and introduces many small additions and corrections into the story as he had received it. In particular, while in his first draft he speaks of the bailiff as Gryssler—the usual name up to his time, except in the *White Book* and in Stumpff’s *Chronicle* of 1548—in his final recension he calls him Gessler, knowing that this was a real name. Later writers added a few more particulars,—that Tell lived at Bürglen and fought at Morgarten (1598), that he was the son-in-law of Fürst and had two sons (early 18th century), &c. Johannes von Müller (1780) gave a vivid description of the oath at the Rütli by the three (Tell not being counted in), and threw Tschudi’s version into a literary form, adding one or two names and adopting that of Hermann for Gessler, calling him of “ Bruneck.” Schiller’s play (1804) gave the tale a world-wide renown.

The story was, on the ground of want of evidence, regarded as suspicious by Guilliman in a private letter of 1607, and doubts were expressed by the brothers Iselin (1727 and 1754) and by Voltaire (1754); but it was not till 1760 that the legend was definitely attacked, on the ground of its similarity to the story of Tokko (see below), in an anonymous pamphlet by Freudenberger, a Bernese pastor. This caused great stir; it was publicly burnt by order of the government of Uri, and many more or less forged proofs and documents were produced in favour of Tell. The researches of J. E. Kopp (*Urkunden zur Geschichte d. eidgenössischen Bünde,* 2 parts, 1835 and 1851, and *Geschichte der eidgenössischen Bünde,* vol. ii., 1847), first cleared up the real early history of the league, and overthrew the legends of the *White Book* and Tschudi. Since then many writers have worked in the same direction. Vischer (1867) has carefully traced out the successive steps in the growth of the legend, and Rochholz (1877) has worked out the real history of Gessler as shown in authentic documents. The general result has been to show that a mythological marksman and an impossible bailiff bearing the name of a real family have been joined with con­fused and distorted reminiscences of the events of 1245-47, in which the names of many real persons have been inserted and many unauthenticated acts attributed to them. Th. von Liebenau has, however, shown (in an article reprinted from the *Katholische Schweizerblätter* in the *Bollettino Storico della Svizzera Italiana* for 1899) that in 1283 the Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg gave the right of receiving the tolls for escort over the St Gotthard Pass to his sons, the dukes of Austria. The levying of these tolls gave rise to various disputes between the men of Uriand the bailiffs of the dukes of Austria, and by 1319 (if not already in 1309) the claim to levy them was silently given up. These facts show (what could not hitherto be proved) that at the time when legend places the rising of Uri, Tell exploit, &c., the dukes of Austria really had disputes with Uri.

The story of the skilful marksman who succeeds in striking some small object placed on the head of a man or child is very widely spread; we find it in Denmark (Tokko), Norway (two versions), Iceland, Holstein, on the Rhine, and in England (William of Cloudesley). How it came to be localized in Uri we do not know; possibly, through the story of the Scandinavian colonization of Schwyz, the tale was fitted to some real local hero.

The alleged proofs of the existence of a real William Tell in Uri in the 14th century break down hopelessly. (1) The entries in the parish registers are forged. (2) As to the Tell chapels— (*a)* that in the “ hollow way ” near Küssnacht was. not known to Melchior Russ and is first mentioned by Tschudi (1572).

(*b*) That on Tell’s Platte is first mentioned in 1504. The docu­ment which alleges that this chapel was built by order of a “ landsgemeinde ” held in 1388, at which 114 men were present who had been personally acquainted with Tell, was never beard of till 1759. The procession in boats to the place where the chapel stands may be very old, but is not connected with Tell till about r582. (c) The chapel at Bürglen is known to have

been founded in 1582. Other documents and statements in support of the Tell story have even less claim to credit. It has been pointed out above that with two exceptions the bailiff is always called Gryssler or Grissler, and it was Tschudi who popularized the name of Gessler, though Grissler occurs as late as 1765. Now Gessler is the name of a real family, the history of which from 1250 to 1513 has been worked out by Rochholz, who shows in detail that no member ever played the part attributed to the bailiff in the legend, or could have done so, and that the Gesslers could not have owned or dwelt at the castle of Küssnacht; nor could they have been called Von Bruneck.

In the *Urnerspiel* the name of the bailiff’s servant who guarded the hat on the pole is given as Heintz Vögely, and we know that Friedrich Vögeli was the name of one of the chief military officers of Peter von Hagenbach, who from 1469 to 1474 ad­ministered for Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, the lands (Alsace, &c.) pledged to him by Sigismund of Habsburg. Now Hagenbach is known to have committed many cruelties like those attributed to the bailiffs in the legend, and it has been plausibly conjectured that his case has really given rise to these stories, especially when we find that the Confederates had a hand in his capture and execution, that in a document of 1358 Hagenbachs and Gesslers appear side by side as witnesses, and that the Hagenbachs had frequent transactions with the Habs­burgs and their vassals.

In general see two excellent works by Franz Heinemann, *Tell- Iconographie,* Lucerne, 1902 (reproductions, with text, of the chief representations of Tell in art from 1507 onwards), and *Tell-Bibliographie* (including that of Schiller’s play), published in 1908 at Bern.

Among the vast number of books and pamphlets on the Tell story, the two most to be recommended are W. Vischer, *Die Sage von der Befreiung der Waldstätte* (Leipzig, 1867), and E. L. Rochholz, *Tell und Gessler,* with a volume of documents 1250-1513 (Heilbronn, 1877). Convenient summaries of the controversy will be found in any modern book on Swiss history, and more particularly in G. von Wyss, *Über d. Gesch. d. drei Länder—Uri, Schwyz, u. Unterwalden —in den Jahren* 1212-1315 (Zürich, 1858) ; Alf. Huber, *Die Waldstätte bis zur festen Begründung ihrer Eidgenossenschaft, mit einem Anhange über die geschichtliche Stellung des Wilh. Teil* (Innsbruck, 1861); Albert Rilliet, *Les Origines de la Confédération Suisse, histoire et légende* (Geneva, 2nd edition, 1869); and S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages,* ch. v. (new edition, London, 1884).

The setting up in 1895 in the market-place in Altdorf of a fine statue (by the Swiss sculptor Richard Kissling) of Tell and his son, and the opening in 1899 just outside Altdorf of a permanent theatre, wherein Schiller’s play is to be represented every Sunday during the summer months, show that the popular belief in the Tell legend is still strong, despite its utter demolition at the hands of a succession of scientific Swiss historians during the 19th century. A. Gisler of Altdorf (in his book, *Die Tellfrage,* Bern, 1895) has also made an attempt to rehabilitate it from the purely historical point of view. He is well acquainted with all the researches that have been made, but tries to save Tell’s refusal to do reverence to the hat, his leap from the boat in the lake, and his slaying of the bailiff in the “ hollow way.” To effect the rescue of these incidents, he boldly admits the forgeries in the registers, abandons all the traditional dates, throws over Tschudi’s account, and regards the shooting by Tell of the apple from his son’s head as an “ ornamental addition ” to the tale. Save a mention of the Tell chapel on “ Tellsplatte ” in 1504 (the first known before was that by Tschudi in 1572), and a proof that the pilgrimages to Bürglen and Steinen had nothing to do with “ St Kümmemiss,” as her images are preserved in the *parish churches* of those villages, whereas the pilgrims go to the *chapels* therein, he brings forward no new evidence. His book is a striking proof that the popular Tell legend cannot