

The Schuetzenfest and King Competition

Davenport, Iowa

21. June 1883

There's an old saying among the members of Davenport's Schuetzen (Marksmen) Society: when the Schuetzenfest and King Competition are held, it never rains. This year the saying proved once again true. While yesterday's and the day's before weather weren't exactly sunny, but sort of grey, and the sky was cloudy, it still didn't rain. That kind of weather, in which the sun doesn't beat down hotly from the sky, is the best and most easily supportable weather for holding summer celebrations. Thus, the Schuetzenfest and King Competition couldn't complain about too few visitors. Sunday morning bright and early the marksmen assembled in the Turner Hall, headed from there toward the house of last year's king, Mr. Alfred Steffen, picked him up and marched with music back past the Turner Hall, where the Turners joined them following the program's established route to the corner of 3rd and Fillmore Street from which they took streetcars to the Schuetzen Park. There the arrivals, many of whom had already had a good bit to drink, were welcomed by the President of the Schuetzen Society, Mr. John C. Boehl, with the following words:

"Dear Guests and Brother Marksmen (Schuetzenbruder)! A hearty welcome to you all to today's celebration. A little over a year ago, as we gathered here to enjoy our annual King Celebration, there was a major stumbling block on the minds of all free-thinking citizens of this land. With an insolent hand they tried to attack that inalienable right of every person to individual liberty; yes, it went so far that on the 27th of June it was successfully achieved to threaten us with a ban on holding all Sunday celebrations here. Thank God a provisional stop to the irrational machinations of these fanatics was accomplished through the common sense of the people. Even if this didn't conclude in exactly the way we would have wished, it's still a postponement which gives time to reconsider and negotiate; and as time was won, I hope that all will be won. So consoled, my friends, let us begin today's celebration with fresh courage, glad appreciation and carefree warm feelings,

and with diligence let's strive for the highest prize that is within the power of this society to award, namely the King's prize and the King's crown. I am bound by this opportunity to give a short look back on the origin and development of our society. On the 16th of December 1868 a small group of men came to an agreement to establish a new Schuetzen association. The many impediments that they had to overcome and the large financial risk which they had to accept would have frightened off many others, but they never thought to give up. The success of this enterprise was the celebration of the opening of your Schuetzen Park on the 12th of June 1870 in a place that then was almost a wilderness. And what do we see now? If we compare the shooting with then and now, then the progress in this area is quite noticeable. If then a shooter got 60 rings in three shots, that was a real achievement; yet now if one doesn't shoot anymore than that, and it comes time to hand out the prizes, he is content to get one of the last prizes, for he could have easily not gotten any. This success, my friends, we've achieved by freely and as men exchanging our mutual opinions at every opportunity when it is in the association's interest, and once having arrived at a decision, even if not viewed as correct by each of us, we have supported it as one man and brought it to fruition. Let us therefore go forth on this taken path and I believe that I can assure you that the time will come when each one of us will proudly say: 'I, too, am a member of the association.'"

Loud applause followed the speech and the marksmen left for the shooting galleries. The shooting went on until the onset of the evening, but many hours later the remaining visitors from the hundreds and thousands who had come to the Schuetzen Park for the afternoon were still happily talking during the dancing and the music. Yesterday morning, the marksmen busily started up again to shoot the disks and delayed the prize competition until four in the afternoon. Afterwards the shooting lists were assembled and the prizes handed out. The first prize for the King's disk, and thereby the honorary position of King for next year, to Hr. Heinrich Schroeder Senior.

Mr. H. J. Rohlf's conducted the coronation and greeted the King with a witty speech. For the other targets the following happy and skillful marksmen won prizes. The end of the fine celebration was followed in the evening hours by fireworks and a lighting up of the park as well as by a large party ball that lasted, with undamped cheerfulness until midnight.

Honor-Targets

Prize, King Hch. Schroeder, Sen.

Prize: Ed. Berger

C. Rochow

J. F. Gilman

H. Schroeder jr.

J. B. Meier

J. Hassler

E. Warnebold

H. W. Schmidt

C. Burmeister

Ernst Winter

J. F. Bredow

Dr. Cowden

Chas. Ranzow

Sam Hoffmann

C. F. Meier

Herm. Pape

H. F. Mueller

H. Brockmann

Walt. Chambers

J. Brockman

Dr. Matthey

H. Heitmann

H. Berg

H. F. Muhs

John Hill

Louis Schmidt

H. Brand

F. Vollstedt

Oswald Schmidt

Jens Lorenzen

Alf. Steffen

Math. Riehle

F. Wagner

John Rath

M. Bittenob

John Bruegge

Pet. Schlueter

B. J. Paulein

Chas. Wolf

‘Ab Aug und Hand fürs Waterland’

Train eye and the hand for the Fatherland

Ten-Shot-Targets

G. Berg 221

J. F. Bredow 208

J. B. Meier 205

H. Berg 192

Eb. Berger 190

Hch. Schroeder jr 190

Sam Hoffman 189

Walter Chambers 184

C. Rochow 183

S. F. Gilman 182

Stich-Targets

Peter Schlueter

J. B. Meier

Chas. Wolf

Dr. Matthey

Jul. Hassler

Alf. Steffen

G. Berg

John Hill

H. Schroeder Sen.

Bernhard Otto

F. Wagner

Chas. Ranzow

S. F. Gilman

C. F. Meier

Sam Hoffmann

Men's-Targets

J. B. Meier 91

S. Hoffmann 89

G. Berg 88

Dr. Matthey 87

Eb. Warnebold 86

John F. Bredow 86

Ed. Berger 85

Hch. Schroeder Sen. 84

John Bruegge 84

C. Burmeister 84



Women's-Targets

Frau Goos, Queen

Frl. Kate Berg

Frl. E. Schmidt

Frl. A. Eckhardt

Frau Rochau

Frl. Hulda Mueller

Frau A. Schmidt

Frau Raible

Frl. Brandt

Frau C. Eckhardt

