

## OBEREN MISSISSIPPI SCHUETZEN BEZIRKS

Author's note: I have very little information on this organization. If anyone would have anything, newspaper articles, programs, results, etc. I'd very much like to see them. As always, I am much more interested in information than artifacts, so if you loan them to me I'd be happy to copy, photograph, scan, or take notes and return the original. (CWJ)

The Oberen Mississippi Schuetzen Bezirks (OMSB - translated as Upper Mississippi Shooting District) was formed in Davenport in 1871. There were five vereins involved in the formation of the OMSB with a total membership of about 350. The DSG had approximately 170 members at the time, half the total membership, so it was the largest of the five vereins.

In the hierarchy of organizations, a Verein was a local club, a Gesellschaft was a local club that was incorporated, a Bezirk was a small association of local clubs, and a Bund was an association of local clubs covering a large geographical area.

The primary function of the OMSB was to hold Schuetzenfests for the member vereins.

The organization of the OMSB was that a verein having been selected to host the next delegates' meeting or tournament would form the executive board consisting of a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Schatz Meister (Treasurer), and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Schuetzenmeisters from their members. Upon forming, the new board would inform the outgoing board to forward the records. This executive board would conduct all the business of the organization until the next delegates' meeting. The membership of the Bezirk consisted of the members of the affiliated vereins. Each verein paid dues based on the number of its members, who were then members of the Bezirk.

The OMSB grew until it had a total membership of 12 vereins totaling 881 mitglieder (members) in 1890. In 1896 there were 14 vereins with 706 mitglieder in the OMSB.

The vereins of the OMSB in 1896 and their number of members were:

Davenport Schutzengesellschaft	Davenport, IA	200
Dubuque Schutzengesellschaft	Dubuque, IA	89
Dyersville Schutzenverein	Dyersville, IA	52
Germania Schutzenverein	Fountain City, WI	25
Joliet Schutzenverein	Joliet, IL	87
La Crosse Sharpshooters Assn.	La Crosse, WI	20
Lyons Schutzenverein	Clinton, IA	17
Milwaukee Sharpshooters Society	Milwaukee	82
Monroe Schutzenverein	Monroe, WI	16
Monticello Rifle Club	Monticello, WI	15
National Rifle Club	Elgin, IL	12
North La Crosse Schutzenverein	North La Crosse, WI	12
Peru Schutzengesellschaft	Peru, IL	32
Winona Schutzenverein	Winona, Minn.	47

From various sources I have found evidence of the following Schuetzenfests of the OMSB:

		1871	Davenport	(organizational meeting)
June	27	1875	Dubuque	Business meeting
June	5	1876	Lyons, IA	Business meeting
June	24,25,26	1877		
June	8,9,10	1879	Lyons, IA?	
June	9 to 12	1881		
August	11 to 14	1883	Davenport	
June	3 to 5	1886	Dubuque?	
June	8 to 10	1888	Peru, IL	
June	26 to 29	1890	Davenport	
June	8 to 12	1892	Dubuque	
July	12 to 15	1894	La Crosse, WI	
June		1896	Winona, Minn ?	

This list is not complete. The tournament in Davenport in 1890 was the 10<sup>th</sup> Schuetzenfest of the OMSB. If the dates after 1877 are all correct, there would have been three ‘fests before 1877. The Business meetings of 1871, 1875 and 1876 may or may not have been associated with tournaments.

The dates for the 1877 and 1881 tournaments are mentioned in minutes of meetings of the DSG but as part of a report of a communication from the Executive Board of the OMSB. The minutes do not mention the locations of these tournaments, which would have been common knowledge at the time.

The OMSB had a meeting of delegates every year, but tournaments every two years according to its constitution. From the dates above, the every two-year rule was not strictly followed. The extra year between 1883 and 1886 could have been to adjust the schedule so the Schuetzenfests of the OMSB would alternate with the Schuetzenfests of the WSB. (See the next article.) There also could have been a missing tournament in the interim.

Lyons, IA was a town on the north side of Clinton that was annexed to Clinton in 1895.

At the tournament in La Crosse in 1894, the Davenport Schuetzen came home with quite a haul. The King was John Regennitter with a score of 214 rings in 10 shots (max. 250). Regennitter also was second on the Ehren Scheib (Honor target) with 65 rings of 75. Emil Berg was second in the Koening Scheibe (King shoot) with 213 rings. On the Union target C. W. Ranzow was second. Emil Berg was first on the Volks Scheib with 71 rings of 75 and in the number of bullseyes on the points target. Ed Berger was first on the Mann Scheib with 96 rings (of 100 in 4 shots). Davenport Schuetzen won four of the six first prizes. (Dvpt paper)

The accomplishments of the Davenport Schuetzen must have also been impressive at the schuetzenfest in Dubuque in 1892 as evidenced by the honor prizes and diplomas displayed in the photo “Davenport on a Hill” in the old photos part of this site. A

companion photo also shown on this site dates that photo to the schuetzenfest in Dubuque in 1892, and names the schuetzen in the Davenport contingent.

“In 1888, in Peru, Illinois, our George Cook won the King prize.” (JFB)

The photo below is of Regennitter’s winnings at La Crosse. The silver cup was for his win in the Koenig Scheib (King Shoot). The honor prize is framed. Various vereins would contribute honor prizes of various amounts to the tournament for the Ehren Scheibe (honor target). Rather than just giving the money, a framed display of the prize would be made for display during the tournament. These prizes would then be distributed in order of value to the winners in the honor target. The prize shown consists of 25 two-dollar bills fanned out to create the display. The text at the center reads:

Ehren Scheibe - Winona Scheuetzen Vereins - Winona Minnesota - Schuetzenfest des  
Mississippi Schuetzen Bezirks - La Cross, Wis. - von 12 bis 15, Juli 1894

Close examination of the original photograph shows the \$2 bills in the honor target have sequential serial numbers.

