



**“Raise One” for the Kappenmann Legacy of San Rafael**  
**By Scott Fletcher**  
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Brothers, Joseph and Attilan Kappenmann came to San Rafael when it was “little more than a hamlet” and owned and operated numerous drinking establishments over the years. The German-born Kappenmanns immigrated to the United States in the early 1870s and ran Germania Hall, a saloon and billiard parlor that was formerly the Golden Gate Saloon. A few years later they were listed in the 1882-83 Business Directory and Gazetteer of the West Coast of America as operating a “liquor saloon and billiard parlor” at the Albion House, one of San Rafael’s earliest hotels. Joseph, known to his friends as ‘Joe’, is one of the men pictured above at his Tivoli Bar on the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and C streets. My guess is he’s the tall, well-dressed gentleman as he was in his late 50s or early 60s at the time this photograph was taken. The small sign behind the bar, is encouraging patrons to “VOTE NO!” on a State-Wide Prohibition initiative which dates the photograph to approximately 1914. Kappenmann and his wife, Margaretha lived above the saloon and raised a family of four sons and one daughter. Through the years, newspaper articles also referred to the establishment as the Tivoli Café, Tivoli Hall and Kappenmann’s. He was a well-known and respected businessman, active in the many German clubs in Marin and San Francisco and served as both a volunteer and officer of the San Rafael Volunteer Fire Department. He died in 1915 after a long bout with cancer and is buried in Mt. Tamalpais Cemetery in San Rafael alongside his wife.

Attilan Kappenmann also owned a number of saloons and a boarding house in downtown San Rafael. Besides Germania Hall, he managed two other drinking establishments: The Sheppard House and Mulberry Saloon. He and his wife Dora were also the proprietors of the New England

Villa, a large boarding house that could host up to 200 guests with numerous cottages for families that rented by the day, week or month. The Villa had playgrounds for children and a tree-shaded picnic area for playing croquet and lawn-bowling. Boarding-house guests and local residents could also wine and dine in a first-class restaurant and tavern. The couple had four daughters and one son and lived on 4<sup>th</sup> street in San Rafael. Eventually, the family moved to San Francisco where Attilan became a distributor in wholesale liquor. He died in 1927.

Although census records list their immigration arrivals as differing by one year, it's likely they crossed the Atlantic together, as Attilan was just 14 and Joseph only 19. Remarkably, within ten years they had both become prosperous and well-known businessmen and citizens in their new home of San Rafael...well-worth raising a glass in remembrance!

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