

The History of the Glarus Families, especially Those of the Sernf Valley.

A Medley of Pictures from Past Days.

(Zur Geschichte glarnerischer Geschlechter, derjenigen des Sernftales insbesondere.

Allerlei Bilder aus vergangenen Tagen)

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[All lettered footnotes and information in brackets were added by the translator]

IV. The Beglingers

[pg. 52-54]

Whereas the Elmers and Speichs have provided evidence to us as families of the Sernf valley as far back as the Säckingen period^a, it occurs first for the Beglingers, Gigers, Martis, and Wysses by means of the 1525 sales tax list which was mentioned at the beginning *[of the book]* (see the chapter on the Elmers). Accordingly, at that time the church of Matt had to pay Hans Beglinger "a quarter of grain and a Plappert *[coin]* for mulch on its property on the Ruffi, bordering on Cläwigen Wash, on the other side by the church road".

Their name tells where the Beglingers came from into the Sernf valley: as the Elmers originated from Elm, the Krauchers from Krauch, the Schwendiners from Schwendi, the Walders from Wald, and the Bifangers¹ from the Bifang, so the Beglingers originated from Beglingen, the well-known hamlet above Mollis. How they came from there into the Sernf valley, to Matt, that I do not know yet. Nonetheless, a memorandum on it, which was communicated earlier, had already indicated to us that threads were spun between the Sernf valley and Beglingen: among the properties that Ulrich Elmer, the father-in-law of Cantonal President Jost Tschudi, bequeathed to his sons, and that Tschudi granted them as legacy, is found "house and estate at Beglingen". Likewise, a 1344 document shows that, at that time, those from Mollis found themselves in joint ownership of the Wichlen Alp with the *Tagwen*^b citizens of Elm. So it was then certainly possible that, as a result of this mutual relationship between the Sernf valley and Mollis-Beglingen, one from Beglingen was called forth to settlement in the Sernf valley, particularly if then, in addition, perhaps a marriage with a daughter of the Sernf valley came with it.

However, the Beglingers never became very numerous in the Sernf valley. Among all the 241 children that were baptized in the Matt church in 1595-1617, not a single one is found from the family of the Beglingers; it is even probable that, at that time, the Beglinger family had died out again in Matt. However, after that, in the second half of the 17th century, a new immigration occurred: Fridolin Beglinger, son of *Tagwen* official Balthasar Beglinger from Mollis and Anna Oertli (born in 1645, died 4 May 1721), married one Ursula Bähler from Elm and settled in Matt. He also acquired the Matt citizen's rights, but, in 1707, had had his Mollis citizen's rights renewed as well. Of his five sons, three died single; the other two, Balthasar Beglinger-Störi and Jakob Beglinger-Bähler were the ancestors of today's Beglingers from Matt. In 1763, three head tax-paying Beglingers were found in Matt, and exactly just as many was the number of Beglingers that the 1876 cantonal tax rolls recorded for Matt, and likewise the number of *Tagwen* rights which, in 1915, the Matt *Tagwen* rolls reported as in the possession of the Beglingers.

For the entire canton, the 1876 cantonal tax rolls indicated the number of head tax-paying Beglingers at 48, with a tax-paying property of 293,000 Fr. With regard to the number of head tax-payers, they stood in the 51st place among the Glarner families; with regard to the taxable capital, in 47th place. Of the 48 tax-paying Beglingers, thirty-one, with 183,000 Fr. taxable capital, were found in the Mollis commune; twelve, with 51,500 Fr. taxable capital, in the Glarus² commune; three, with 45,000 Fr. taxable capital, in the Matt commune; and one each in Ennenda and at Riedern (14,000 Fr.). As the place of origin, thus Mollis was, and remained so for all times, the headquarters of the Beglingers (in 1763, Mollis numbered 36 head-tax-paying Beglingers, Glarus 3, and Matt 3).

The first documented consideration³ of their existence (not for the Sernf valley, but for the canton) finds the Beglingers in the document of 14 November 1289, which has already been mentioned more than once (in the chapter on the Elmers), in which Nicolaus from Peglingen [*sic*] joined in beside our "Overseer Elmer" and Walther Speich, etc., as guarantor and hostage in opposition to the estate owner of Walenstadt [*Canton St. Gallen*]. Likewise, Rudolf from Beglingen is found in the document of 5 February 1372, beside the Rudolf Speich who was mentioned in the chapter on the Speichs and Walther from Luchsingen, etc., as one of 30 Federal Councillors which the Glarner had contributed as hostages of the Abbess of Säkingen. Among the heroes from Näfels on 9 April 1388, among which the citizens from Mollis, as neighbors, were especially numerous, was mentioned to us: Chuoni Beglinger from Mollis, and among those who honored the memory of this battle and the victory won by them by the establishment of a Näfels chapel are found also Fridli Beglinger and "his wife and his mother", who gave for it "a sheep and a tablecloth".

On the other hand, we are not aware of any representative of this family among all the cantonal leaders - cantonal presidents, bannerets and banner-carriers, cantonal treasurers and cantonal leading citizens. Also, among all the cantonal administrative governors which Glarus had to send out to the east and west, as well as to the south and north, is found one single Beglinger: Andreas Beglinger, who was sent as cantonal administrative governor in 1630 into the Rhine valley⁴, which was governed by the old cantons of Zürich, Lucerne, Schwyz, Glarus, Uri, Unterwalden, Zug, and Appenzell. While today all of the Beglingers are Reformed, according to Christ. Trümpi's Chronicle Andreas Beglinger was Catholic⁵, and it is also very possible, according to the denominational proportions at that time, that he had owed his selection as cantonal administrative governor to this circumstance, that, in proportion to their number of souls, the Catholics were more entitled to official positions than the Protestants (they were allowed to lay claim to a third of the cantonal administrative governor positions for themselves, whereas they amounted to hardly a sixth of the total population).

^a Säkingen refers to a Baden, Germany Benedictine cloister which was located on an island in the Rhine river near Basel, Switzerland and was founded by St. Fridolin. It owned Canton Glarus in the 9th - 13th centuries. [SW]

¹ In the Schwanden baptismal book are found among the 592 children who were baptized in 1611-30, four of them from the family of the Bifangers.

^b An ancient Glarner term, from at least the 6th century A.D., which is still used today in Canton Glarus to denote the commune of the citizens, i.e. those who have inherited or purchased the *Tagwen* rights (this may only partially coincide with the political commune). It is derived from *Tage Wann*, meaning the work someone could perform in one day in the commonly-held fields, pastures and forests. Over the years the number of *Tagwen* in the canton has varied considerably, with the present-day number being 29. Also its duties have changed – from jointly working on and enjoying the benefits of its common property, to administering all the commune's public interests, to (today) administering and enjoying the benefits of its common property. [SW]

² In the capital city of Glarus, in 1696, Nicholas Beglinger purchased the citizen's rights for 300 florins.

³ Were the document in question authentic, then there would be an Albertus de Beglingen mentioned 15 years earlier than this (in 1274), in which Albertus de Beglingen should have taken part in an agreement between the Abbess of Säkingen and the Overseer Rudolf Tschudi from Glarus. However, the document forms part of the old fragments which Aegidius Tschudi fabricated (see in the chapter on the Elmers, Yearbook for Swiss History, Vol. XVIII).

⁴ After the Rorschach [*Canton St. Gallen*] monastery attack of 1489, the Appenzellers were relieved of their authority by the troops of the 4 protected cantons of the Abbott of St. Gallen (Zürich, Luzerne, Schwyz and Glarus, which had gone into action with 1710 men, under Overseer Jost Küchli). Uri, Unterwalden and Zug, which had gone to the aid of the four protected cantons, "in order to also secure a share of the winnings themselves" (J. Dierauer, History of the Swiss Confederation II, page 313), were also allowed to join in the government. Since 1500, a share in the government control was also granted to the Appenzellers, in the province formerly ruled by them alone. As a result, every 16 years the Glarners had to select a cantonal administrative governor for a two-year term of office; moreover, according to the Treaty of 1623, within the period of 48 years, two members of the Reformed Church and a Catholic took a turn.

⁵ A. Beglinger from Mollis, who occupied the position of a *Landsgemeinde*^c sergeant-at-arms as early as 1622, was also married to a Catholic, Margaretha Gallati. [*Footnote by*] J[ohann] K[ubly] - M[üller].

^c The Popular Assembly, which is the Glarus cantonal legislative body. It is made up of all the citizens of the communes who have full citizenship rights. [SW]