

On the History of the Citizen Families of Engi and Their Development
[Zur Geschichte der bürgerlichen Geschlechter von Engi und ihre Entwicklung]
Public lectures

by
Martin Baumgartner, teacher in Engi.

Self-published by the author. Buchdruckerei Glarner Nachrichten, Rud. Tschudy, 1923
Translated by Sue Wolf

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

IV. THE HÄMMERLIS
[pg. 33-41]

We have been able to trace the three families we have spoken of up to now, the Martis, Blumers and Baumgartners, back to one ancestor, but that is not possible now, with the Hämmerlis from Engi. In the year 1595, when the church books were begun, quite a number of Hämmerlis were already resident in Engi, since, in this year, no fewer than 16 baptisms were recorded from the Hämmerli family, more than by most of the current larger families. In 1566, a Lienhard Hämmerli from Uznacherberg [*Canton St. Gallen*] bought himself the Glarner cantonal right for 40 Gl.. It is not possible for us to establish whether that was the only Hämmerli in Engi and, consequently, the ancestor, or, what is more likely, whether more Hämmerlis likewise arrived in Engi from Uznach on account of their faith, between 1530 and 1550. There were, of course, also Hämmerlis in Engi who, until 1834, belonged to the non-cantonal citizens but, nevertheless, acquired the Engi *Tagwen*^a right for themselves, that is, both the Hämmerlis and the Bräms in Engi were all *Tagwen* associates. We will learn later that, in the year 1822, this right was denied to them, that is, to some Hämmerli and Bräm families.

In the old *Tagwen* minutes, only one Hämmerli *Tagwen* right purchase exists, namely that of Gallus Hämmerli (Nr. 13 of the family tree), born in 1599, died in 1673, who bought, however, only for himself. The extract from the old *Tagwen* book reads as follows:

"On Our Lady's Day in March [*the 8th of March*] of the year 1651, thus the communal *Tagwen* citizens at Engi had accepted as a *Tagwen* citizen the same Gallus Hämmerli, accordingly, and of the kind, that he may use and employ the *Tagwen* right in the same event as any other *Tagwen* citizen, and that his life be long and enduring, when he, however, dies and his wife has survived, so may she herself use and employ the same her life long, as long as she remain unchanged (a widow) and, however, if she changes [*remarries*], then she gives up this *Tagwen* right completely, and, above all, also that neither their children nor their descendants shall seek or

a *Tagwen* - 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]

approach any *Tagwen* right title of their parents for any reason, for a brief time or at any time, but [*the title*] shall end with the above-mentioned persons, and he had, therefore, given 50 Gl. and 10 measures of wine." (=15 liters; 1 measure = 1 ½ liters.)

This Gallus Hämmerli had married two wives: in 1618, Dorothea Britt from Kerenzen († in 1662) and, in 1664, Margreth Luchsinger from Schwanden. From the first marriage he had seven children, of whom, however, none became older than ten years. In 1651, with his *Tagwen* right purchase, he no longer had any children. Five of them died in 1629 of the plague, a little girl drowned in the Sernf [*river*], and a little son died at three months old. His second marriage was childless, understandably, since, at the wedding, the bride was 49 years old and the groom 65.

Although, in the year 1595, therefore, several Hämmerli families existed in Engi, nevertheless, all of the H ä m m e r l i s f r o m E n g i can now be traced back t o o n l y t w o ancestors. All other Hämmerlis of that time (there were six families) probably, to some extent, had some children (as, for example, the Gallus Hämmerli who was mentioned), but no head of family who furthered the Hämmerli family tree. That is one of the first reasons why the Hämmerlis developed slowly and not very well at first, compared to the families discussed so far.

Whether the two ancestors of today's Hämmerlis were first cousins (they were determined to not be brothers), or were still more distantly related, that cannot be dealt with. One was Baschli Hämmerli (Nr. 4), thus recorded for Sebastian, married to Anna Marti. He had three children, a daughter, who, in 1629, died of the plague at the age of 28, and two sons, Jakob and Jost, both h e a d s o f f a m i l y with fairly extensive descendants. (The latter's first wife and four children also died of the plague in the year 1629). The other a n c e s t o r was Hans Hämmerli (Nr. 7), who died in 1650, the son of Lienhard who had bought himself in in 1566. Married to a Dorothea Dietrich, he had six children, two of them heads of family, Leonhard (Nr. 16) and Hans (Nr. 15). However, the family of the latter became extinct as early as with his grandson, *Tagwen* Official Fridolin Hämmerli (Nr. 29), 1648-1710, since his only son, Hans, died unmarried at the age of 20. From Leonhard, on the other hand, were descended, among others, the following families of today: that of old Innkeeper of the Schäfli Inn [*in Matt*] Johannes Hämmerli, and his two older brothers, and that of old Master Weaver Jakob Hämmerli and his four older brothers. These were the only families who were descendants of the Leinhard Hämmerli who was admitted into the cantonal right in 1566.

It may, perhaps, be known to you that, until the year 1836, a portion of the Hämmerlis and the Bräms in Engi were only so-called new cantonal citizens, that is, they possessed only the *Tagwen* right from Engi, but belonged to the so-called non-cantonal citizens, since they did not possess the Glarner cantonal right. For the first time in 1836, owing to the *Landsgemeinde*^b decision of 1834, all these non-cantonal citizens, whose forefathers by this time had lived for centuries in the canton and possessed the *Tagwen* right of a commune, were granted the cantonal right immediately, in exchange for a relatively small purchase sum. With them were included, then, from Engi, in total, 54 Hämmerlis and 12 Bräms. With the Hämmerlis, it was, then, precisely, all the descendants of the first-named of the two ancestors: Baschli Hämmerli. The father of the other ancestor had, of course, as was already noted, acquired the Glarner cantonal

b *Landsgemeinde* - 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]

right in the year 1566 for 40 Gl., and his descendants have always been cantonal citizens, in contrast to those of the other family. The following Hämmerli branches, then, belonged to the non-cantonal citizens who were first recognized as such in 1836:

1. The family of old Heinrich Hämmerli in der Rütli^c and Johannes Hämmerli in der Engi and his brother.
2. The family of Weaver Fridolin Hämmerli, 1804-1869 (father of nine daughters), father-in-law of old Meinrad Marti, cooper, and Jakob Marti, Knie.
3. The Häm-merli family, Kummenberg.
4. The Josef Hämmerli family, Höftigen.
5. The Niederurnen Hämmerlis.
6. The family of Jakob Hämmerli, the grandfather of Cooper Oswald.
7. The Samuel Hämmerli family, Kleingädli.
8. The family of old Josef Hämmerli, Spicher.
9. The family of Sergeant-at Arms Bernhard Hämmerli, and his brother Josef.

Then, in the year 1822, the right of these Hämmerlis and Bräms who were not in possession of the cantonal right even to the *c h u r c h r i g h t* was contested on the part of the church commune, that is, they would have had the benefit of it unlawfully until then. Because, according to the church's 1710 decision, with a *Tagwen* right purchase they had to have paid 30 Gl. to the church for the purchase of the church right. That was never done by them. This matter then, in 1822, came before the *Schranken*^d of the high council. These appeared in the name of the church commune: Federal Councillor Jakob Marti from Engi, Federal Councillor Peter Wohlwend from Matt and *Tagwen* Official Dietrich Stauffacher from Matt. In the name of the Hämmerli and Bräm residents without the citizen right, acted as "committees": Jost Hämmerli (grandfather of old Kummenberg-Heinrich) and his three sons, Fridolin, Jost and Heinrich. A great number of his descendants live today in the Toggenberg [*Canton St. Gallen*]. They pointed out that the Hämmerli and Bräm families had already used and enjoyed the *Tagwen* and church rights unhindered for more than 200 years, that they all (thus, the referred-to Hämmerlis) were descended from Sebastian Hämmerli, who, according to the council's 1605 decision, was recognized as a *Tagwen* citizen from Engi, and that those referred-to were admitted to the 1763 church alpine register, as well as to the charity and Gulden registers, and, consequently, had carried the burden and complaints just like the rest of the church members. Also that the brother of Petitioner Jost Hämmerli, School Master Heinrich Hämmerli, was charity master of the Matt-Engi church commune, and so forth. The council then came to the following decision and judgment: the committees of the church commune were turned down in their request, mainly for the reason that, just before 1710, the Matt and Engi *Tagwens* were a joint *Tagwen*, and church and *Tagwen* must have been in the same relationship; so, with a *Tagwen* right before 1710, the church right were also included with it. Only after the separation of the *Tagwens* in the year 1710 was it decided that the church right also must be purchased along with the *Tagwen* right, for 30 Gl. extra. The so-called residents without the citizen right, however, had, of course, as already stressed, already been regarded as *Tagwen* citizens as early as 1605. (The purchase must,

c *Flurname* - field name. People with identical names were differentiated by adding their occupation or a descriptive term for the area where they lived [SW]

d *Schranken* – the chairmen [*Cantonal President, Cantonal Treasurer, etc.*] who occupy the seats of honor in the council chamber [SW]

therefore, have occurred previously and was not found even in the *Tagwen* books, since these began only with around 1620.)

This council decision still exists in the original in the possession of Captain Hämmerli († in 1923).

A reason for the very moderate development of the Hämmerlis was also the fact that the plague, in the year 1629, affected the Hämmerlis especially severely. There were no fewer than 14 persons, mostly children, from this family who fell victim to it, and of them, five sons who could also have become heads of family. So there were 28 families to report in their family tree by 1700, 44 by 1750, and only 64 in 1800 (the Baumgartners had 12 in 1700, and 77 in 1800). They numbered 104 by 1850 (the Baumgartners had 154), 150 in 1880 (the Baumgartners had 220), 178 in 1900, and 210 now. With the same, more vigorous, development as the three families already discussed, they would number at least twice as many families. As we can see from the statistics [*at the end of the book*], the factor may also have contributed as well that, of the Hämmerli children, only 49% were sons, but with the Baumgartners, for example, there were 54% (the Gigers had the least, with 47%), and generally, on the average, a small number of children was produced, as there were 4.6 children per family, but with the Baumgartners, 5.4, as we have emphasized before.

Of the Hämmerlis only 340 persons = 29% emigrated; of them, 23% emigrated to North America, 4% to Brazil, 26% to other cantons (mainly into the Toggenberg) and 34% to other communes (mainly, Niederurnen and Glarus). The Hämmerlis thus, to conclude from the statistics, have remained the most faithful to our commune, next to the Giger family. Hence, it explains also that today the Hämmerlis are reported on with 45 enjoying the benefits of the *Tagwen* right, whereas the much larger family of the Blumers has only 38.

Their relatively modest emigration is also a reason that, of all their wives, 52% stemmed from Engi. Consequently, they exhibit the strongest marrying into our citizen families. They were distributed among these as follows: 32 = 25% into the Martis, 21 = 17% Blumers, 19 each = 15% Baumgartners and Hämmerlis, 13 = 10% Luchsingers, 6 = 4.9% Altmanns, 5 each = 4% Wysses and Bräms, and 1 each Gigers and Norders.

Significantly and distinctly prominent with the Hämmerlis is the inheritance of first names. Above all, 29 = 14% of their heads of family bear the name Leonhard, 28 = 13.5% Fridolin, 23 = 11% Hans or Johannes, 18 = 8% Jakob and Heinrich, 14 = 6.7% Jost, and 12 = 5.75% Josef and Samuel. Those are the most common Hämmerli names.

The offices they have filled present a small chapter with the Hämmerlis, because, since a large portion of them were residents without the cantonal right, they remained unconsidered with the filling of offices, and only since the 30's of the last century, with their final purchase into the Glarner cantonal right, have they increased considerably in their prestige.

Of federal councillors, the Hämmerlis provided only one, and that one was still living in Matt. That referred to Federal Councillor and *Tagwen* Official Fridolin, born ?, died in 1646 (Nr. 3). We can almost definitely assume that he was a son of the Lienhard Hämmerli who

received the cantonal right in 1566, since, of his two sons, he called the older one Leonhard, born in 1603, and the other one Jakob, born in 1610. The fate of both sons is unknown, they very probably fell victim to the plague in the year 1629, in the time when no pastor served in Matt, and, therefore, also, no entries were made in the church books. Of *Tagwen* officials of older significance, the Hämmerlis provided four, then one church steward, one inspector of weights and measures and one charity official. In the old military they were represented by one lieutenant and three sergeants.

The first two Engi schoolmasters were Hämmerlis. We have, indeed, already mentioned [see pg. 12 in "The Martis" chapter (pg. 5 in the SW translation)] that Engi only had its own school since 1779, and, to be sure, only as a very primitive schoolroom, as it reports in a 1780 statement: "our local school is only a room attached to another building." Indeed, most of us know where to look for this former school; it is the residence of Jost Altmann on the little Rigi lane which served as schoolroom from 1779 until 1832. — There, then, served the first schoolmaster, Heinrich Hämmerli, born in 1741, died in 1815, from 1779-1805, with a year's salary of 20-25 Gl.. Of course, he held only 18 weeks of school every year. He was a brother of the aforementioned Jost Hämmerli, who appeared before the council in 1822 in the name of the residents without the citizen right. Besides, he also occupied the office of charity official and directed the so-called singing school. Married to Anna Wyss from Engi (1739-1813), his marriage remained childless. His personal skills in reading, writing and arithmetic must, however, still have been pretty modest. Around the year 1800, in the time of the Helvetic Republic, when the high-minded Minister [*Philippe Albert*] Stapfer was endeavoring to lead the educational system towards better methods, the schoolmasters at the time of all the communes composed a report about the condition of their schools and replied to a questionnaire. This work was rather difficult for Mr. Hämmerli, just as it was, after all, for most of the schoolteachers at the time. First of all, he asked for advice from the pastor in Matt. His comments in this report read as follows:

"The village of Engi is so very scattered that it would be very difficult to answer the questions exactly as they are asked, since it is, therefore, impossible to say, so I will answer the above questions as much as possible in brief." And at the end: "Because it also permits me indulgences to make some comments, so will I still take the occasion to be of use. Our village is very populated, so that hardly the half part attend the local school. The causes of this are, however, because it is a very needy and poor commune."¹

His successor was again a Hämmerli, but from the other branch, which possessed the cantonal right. This one was Leonhard Hämmerli, born in 1770, died in 1835 (Nr. 65). Married to Eufemia Marti, daughter of Federal Councillor Johannes Marti from Engi, he only had a daughter, Anna, who married *Tagwen* Official Josef Blumer and migrated into the Toggenberg with him and his whole family. Schoolmaster Leonhard Hämmerli was, in addition to a church steward, also a lieutenant, and, indeed, he served as such in the foreign regiment of Salis-Marschlins from 1798-1801, and thus occupied a respected military position. From 1805-1833, he then worked in our commune as teacher. Naturally, also without any additional preparatory training, he, however, must have achieved far better results than his predecessor, in spite of it. Of his activities, it says in a report by Pastor Joh. Melchior Schuler, the noted historian, who also

1 G. Heer. *School History*.

worked as a school inspector: "To me, Engi is an admitted example of how, owing to an imaginative, effective schoolmaster and by means of administrators who promotes the better way, the morale of a commune improves, and, where there was previously antipathy towards improvement, now a disposition for it is planted. — The pastor, and, likewise, the administrators, visit the school diligently, also the administrators are very much in favor of improvement in the school conduct and expect guidance from the education council." — It is also reported that, in contrast to his predecessor, who held school only 18 weeks of the year, but also only received 25 Gl. salary for it, he now held school the whole year through and, for it, had good prospects of "42 Gl. and an undetermined donation". — He even followed the Pestalozzi method already, especially in the direction of the education of the mind.

The new, yet today, old, schoolhouse was built, in addition, with his efficiency, in fact, in the year 1832, for around 1350 Gl. The free supply of wood by the *Tagwen* and the cheerful work of the citizens were not computed into that. Relative to the poor communal people of that time, and compared with the old, confining local school, this new building signified not only an achievement, but a constructive ornament, of the *Tagwen*. It was actually the work of Pastor Jakob Heer, who collected no less than 950 Gl. for the building by begging, and tirelessly put all his energy into it.

The dignitaries of offices since 1850 from the Hämmerli family present the following numbers: one church president, one orphanage official, one communal councillor, one church councillor, two school administrators, two school councillors, three mediators and one communal secretary.

Seven Hämmerlis perished in foreign military services, that is, the following:

In 1638, in February, in the French service, Hans Hämmerli, born in 1607, single, grandson of the Sebastian who was an ancestor.

In 1743, on the 22nd of December, Hans Hämmerli, born in 1716, single, at Mons [*Belgium*] in the Dutch service under Company Captain Marti, in the Salis Regiment. He was a brother of the above-mentioned Schoolmaster Leonhard Hämmerli.

In 1745, in Brabant [*Netherlands*], Jost Hämmerli, born in 1706, single, and

In 1746, his brother, Jakob Hämmerli, born in 1706, single, as prisoners of war in the Dutch service under the Planta Army Regiment. They belonged to the family of the residents without the citizen right.

In 1781, on the 31st of October, Josef Hämmerli, born in 1752, single, at Leiden [*Netherlands*] in the Dutch service under First Lieutenant Weiss from Glarus. No more descendants from his father's family exist.

In 1809, on the 9th of August, Joh. Jakob Hämmerli, born in 1782, single, in the military hospital in Naples of the fever. He was a soldier in the 1st Swiss Regiment. From his father, likewise, no more male descendants exist.

In 1810, on the 20th of April, Joachim Hämmerli, born in 1789, a brother of the father of old Johannes, proprietor of "The Schäfli", and his brothers and sisters, departed as an enlisted soldier and remains missing. He was presumably killed under Napoleon in Russia in the year 1812. His brother, Fridolin Hämmerli, had also enlisted, but he was probably able to get released in some way. He died in 1848, single, in Engi.

Something more about a c c i d e n t s and e v e n t s which affected the Hämmerli family.

In 1751, on the 28th of January, Sofia Hämmerli, born in 1702, daughter of young Jakob Hämmerli im Schlatt, from whom no more descendants exist, along with her unmarried son, Jakob Wild, was found dead in bed in the morning. They suffocated on the smoke of the stove. This Sofia Hämmerli had two unmarried children: 1. Jakob Wild, born in 1734, who suffocated with her. His father was Jost Wild from Schwanden, who had run away. 2. Maria Katharina Tschudi and Oertli, a little girl, born in 1738 and died in 1740. This child was acknowledged by two fathers: 1. the nobleman, Hans Peter Tschudi from Glarus, and 2. Josua Oertli from Ennetbühls.

In 1807, on the 6th of September, Sergeant and *Tagwen* Official Johannes Hämmerli, born in 1768 (Nr. 62), husband of Anna Baumgartner, fell to his death in the wild hay; grandfather of old Proprietor of "The Schäfli" Johannes and his brothers and sisters, and also great-grandfather on the mother's side of Teacher Hösli from Haslen and his brothers and sisters.

In 1801, on the 29th of April, Christina Hämmerli, the 10 year old little daughter of *Tagwen* Official Johannes, fell into the Sernf river at the Badkopf footbridge and drowned. Her dead body was never found. Pastor Kaspar Freuler wrote: "In 1801, on the 29th of April, Christina Hämmerli, an unmarried little daughter of *Tagwen* Official Johannes Hämmerli from Engi, died when she wanted to go across a bad footbridge in the Badkopf clearing, and had fallen off the footbridge and drowned, and, as yet, had still not been found, and there is little hope that such a child, who, in the 10th year of her life, was taken to everlasting life, will be found again."

"While such a sorrowful fate is terrible for everyone, though especially the fatherly and motherly heart must be saddened, so wise Providence should safeguard us in the future from such and similar afflictions." (Extract from the death book)

In 1825, on the 24th of September, Mathias Hämmerli, born in 1782 (Nr. 67), husband of Ursula Blumer from Engi, grandfather of Sergeant and Forester Fridolin Hämmerli and his brothers and sisters, and also of Wagoner Joseph Hämmerli and his brothers and sisters, fell to his death in the wild hay, up above in the Pulstern wash.

In 1830, on the 17th of June, Jakob Hämmerli, born in 1796, husband of Elisabeth Luchsinger from Engi, fell to his death while chopping wood on top of the Uebli valley summit. He was the

father of Master Joiner Leonhard im Hinterbach and grandfather of Cooper Oswald Hämmerli im Rigi, as well as, on his mother's side, of Carpenter Leonhard Wyss and his brothers and sisters.

In 1850, on the 6th of October, Joh. Heinrich Hämmerli, born in 1797 (Nr. 92), a son of *Tagwen* Official Johannes, who had been killed [*see above, in 1807*], was killed in Zizers, [*Canton*] Graubünden; grandfather of Teacher Hösli in Haslen and his brothers and sisters. He lived in Zizers, where he was married to his third wife, Anna Margreth Pantli.

In 1851, on the 7th of June, Leonhard Hämmerli, born in 1825 (Nr. 101), husband of Maria Zwicki from Mollis, drowned in the Linth [*river*]. A brother of Joh. Ulrich Hämmerli in Niederurnen. His corpse was never found.

In 1855, on the 10th of December, Jakob Hämmerli, single, born in 1836, a brother of old Kummenberg Heinrich, met with a fatal accident in which he was buried alive by a collapsing heap of dirt and rocks at the road-construction on the Altstafel wash. He had both legs broken.

In 1864, on the 27th of October, Blasius Hämmerli, single, born in 1840, a brother of Joseph Hämmerli, Höftigen, was buried alive on the Plattenberg and was only brought forth, seriously mutilated, after two days of digging.

Since the 1850's and 60's, many more accidents occurred which affected the Hämmerli family, which are, however, probably still familiar to most people. For example, in 1857, Leonhard Hämmerli, father of Mediator Joh. Heinrich, Lower House [*Councillor*] Leonhard and old Proprietor of "The Schäfli" Johannes and the other brothers and sisters.

In 1869, Dietrich Hämmerli, father of Captain Hämmerli and Communal Secretary Salomon Hämmerli. (Killed in the straw on the Eggenberg.)

In 1870, Joseph Hämmerli, father of old Wagoner Joseph, who was found dead in the Linth at Bilten.

In 1893, Joseph Hämmerli, Höftigen, and so forth.

These were all serious blows of fate which affected most large families.