

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.

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Translated by Sue Wolf

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

## INTRODUCTION

[pg. 1-7]

The present work in no way claims to be a rhetorical masterpiece, but is a part of the fruit of years of work, which I, following an inner urge, began almost four years ago, and which I always applied myself to full of joyful interest. This is the assembling of the *f a m i l y t r e e s* of the principal citizen families of our commune, which I was able to accomplish on the basis of the oldest church- and pastor-books and the civil registers. What sort of multiple difficulties I had to take into account in doing so, only those who have also done these, or similar, projects know, for example, colleague Dietrich Bähler, who assembled the family trees of the Matter families. Fortunately, the well-known genealogist, Mr. Kubli-Müller in Glarus, who had compiled the most extensive genealogical work in all of Switzerland, was able to help me through many difficulties and, in general, to bring the entire work to completion. I respect in him, however, also a man who, perhaps together with Pastor Gottfried Heer, devoted his while life's energy and time to the field of historical research in our canton like no other. He had assembled the family trees of all the present and extinct families of the entire Canton Glarus so far as it was possible for him, due to the beginnings of the church books. He had compiled the families of other cantons as well, thus, for example, the Redings in Schwyz, from the 12<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, with the help of the Schwyz and Arth church books and, in particular, also the documents and family works of the Reding family from times past, which, today, are still in the possession of old Cantonal President and Colonel R. von Reding, a grandson of the well-known defender of the fatherland Alois Reding, and descendant of Cantonal President Ital Reding the elder, who had played a major role in the Zürich Wars of 1444, in conjunction with our Cantonal President Jost Tschudi the elder.

You have probably obtained most of the history of the Sernf *[river]* valley families from Gottfried Heer<sup>a</sup>, in which the present citizen families of Engi are discussed in detail. As I, therefore, assume this content, and make relevant repetitions only where it is absolutely necessary, it shall be my aim to examine these families more closely in my work, based on the assembled family trees and with the aid of the statistics. Also, the relationships of individual families to each other shall be considered. Furthermore, what sort of a picture the distribution of

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a See G. Heer's book: On the History of the Glarner Families, Particularly Those of the Sernf Valley. [SW]

the *Tagwen*<sup>b</sup> and church offices reveals in the various families. The latter was mainly possible for me because I began to study the archives of the commune and the church for cultural-historical and local history purposes. Also, *[it is]* a project which I am capable of completing in just a few years. Many may, perhaps, shake their heads, and will not quite understand the benefits that I myself expect from this. Of course, materially, this work probably does not profit me much: all the more ideal and joyful it seems to me, simply because it is an inner need. We teach in school about the past of our canton, of Switzerland, and of other countries. The history of the home commune where we were born, where the destinies of our earthly ancestors were bound to the soil on which we stand and walk, is this history of our intimate home, however, supposed to molder in the archives? No, that should not be! — Each forest, each old weather-beaten house or “hut”, yes, all areas of every village bear some sort of witness! Here we are able to create ties, ties to home. The trees, rocks and paths become living witnesses which tell of the joys and sorrows of our ancestors. And one day they will tell of those who listen to them now. For all these things the bloodless expression stands in my lesson plan: local history! Also, the adults should do research into the mysteries of their native land. I believe people are bound to be more peaceable, better, if they themselves always keep in mind that they leave behind witnesses that retain their memories for centuries; they would be less indifferent towards their native soil. These are just a few thoughts which involuntarily imposed themselves upon me.

I have processed the following citizen families of Engi into family trees: 1. The Martis. 2. The Blumers. 3. The Baumgartners. 4. The Hämmerlis. 5. The Luchsingers. 6. The Altmanns. 7. The Bräms. 8. The Wysses. 9. The Gigers and 10. The Norders. Of the last family, the Norders, there are no more representatives in Engi, but a few Norders from Engi still live in North America. They were a not very common, but old and respected, Engeler citizen family. The older people can yet remember the last descendants of those who still lived in Engi. Since the church books, i.e., the pastors' offices' registers of baptisms, weddings and deaths, first begin with the year 1595, it was only possible to take the family trees back, at best, to the middle of the 16th century. Before 1595, i.e., in the years immediately preceding, undoubtedly no church books were kept, since all old registers, even those from Elm, begin with the year 1595. In my view, however, in the time before the Reformation [*i.e., before the 1520's in Canton Glarus*], such registers must have been kept by the respective priests, of course, since, in all Catholic church communes, these registers go back to the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. For Mr. Kubli-Müller, it was possible, as mentioned, based on those anniversary books and church registers of Arth, Einsiedeln and Schwyz which were placed at his disposal, to trace, back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Redings of Schwyz, who, by the way, came into close relationships through marriage with the well-known Bachmanns of Näfels, and also, in particular, with the Tschudis, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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b *Tagwen* - an ancient Glarner term, from at least the 6<sup>th</sup> 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]

Pastor Heer informs us, in the introduction of his history of the citizen families of the Sernf valley, on pg. 4 in the footnote<sup>c</sup>, that the pastor's registers of Matt and Elm show gaps at the beginning. That is correct; not only in the year 1611, as he states, but especially in the year 1629, in the year of the plague, when the pastor at that time, Wolfgang Bedrosius, also fell victim to it. The plague, which, at the time, rampaged frightfully in all of Switzerland, in 1629, in the church-commune of Matt-Engi alone, claimed 74 persons, that is, this many are recorded in the death register. After the soul-caretaker's death, from the 26<sup>th</sup> of September until the end of 1629, the commune had no pastor and, also, no baptisms or deaths were recorded. However, the plague had not died out in the least, and it is, no doubt, to be assumed that during this period still quite a number of deaths were added. Four of his children also preceded Pastor Bedrosius in death. In the Hämmerli family Nr. 11, the mother, together with four children, died within 14 days, from the 5<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> of September in 1629; and to Gallus Hämmerli, Nr. 13 of the family tree, five children, from 2-11 years in age, died within two days. Four to six dead were placed in one grave without a coffin. If one compares the number of deaths in the normal years before and after, then one can imagine, even more so, what enormous gaps the plague made in the population of our church commune, which was small anyway. In the year 1627, in Matt and Engi together, only three deaths occurred, in 1628, five, in 1630, seven, in 1631, two. Unfortunately, the Matt anniversary book has been lost, which, undoubtedly, could give us further information about that unhappy time.

It might, perhaps, interest you to learn the names and years in office of all the pastors in Matt, from 1595 to the present.

1. 1595-1598 Joh. Jakob Ulrich, of Zürich.
2. 1598-1604 Niklaus Strasser, of Zürich.
3. 1604-1612 Samuel Hauser, of ?
4. 1612-1621 Zacharius Schörlin, of Zürich.
5. 1621-1622 Andreas Frischmann, of Basel.
6. 1622-1629 Wolfgang Bedrosius, of Schanfs, Engadine [*Canton Graubünden*], who, as mentioned, died of the plague on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September.
7. 1630-1636 Joh. Melchior Wyss, of Zürich.
8. 1636-1637 Emanuel Wenk, of Basel.
9. 1637-1650 Joh. Bernh. Hammann, from the Zweibrückischen [*Germany*].
10. 1650-1665 Abraham Wild, of Schwanden.
11. 1665-1671 Joh. Rudolf Tschudi, of Glarus.
12. 1671-1707 Joh. Rudolf Wyss, of Glarus, d e a n [for] 20 years (1687-1707); more about him and his family later [see pg. 57-58 in "The Wysses" chapter (pg. 3-4 in the *SW translation*)].
13. 1707-1748 Abraham Elmer, of Glarus, t r e a s u r e r.
14. 1748-1782 Jacob Steinmüller, of Glarus; 34 years of ministry, also t r e a s u r e r. During his service to the church, 1,196 children were baptized in Matt.
15. 1782-1794 Jacob Zollikofer, of St. Gallen [*Canton St. Gallen*].
16. 1794-1796 Abraham Trümpi, of Glarus.
17. 1796-1806 Karspar [*sic*] Freuler, of Glarus.
18. 1806-1810 Peter Valär, of Jenatz, Prättigau [*Canton Graubünden*].

<sup>c</sup> See pg. 4, footnote 1 in the "Introduction" of G. Heer's book: On the History of the Glarner Families, Particularly Those of the Sernf Valley (pg. 2, footnote 1, in the *SW translation*). [*SW*]

19. 1810-1813† Hilarius Zopfi, of Schwanden, died at the age of 22.
20. 1813-1817 Joh. Bartolomä Oertli, of Teufen [*Canton Appenzell Outer Rhodes*].
21. 1817-1842 the very well-known Jakob Heer, of Glarus.
22. 1842-1847 Emanuel Schiess, of Herisau [*Canton Appenzell Outer Rhodes*].
23. 1847-1876 Fridolin Zweifel, of Glarus and Basel, *Fahrt*<sup>d</sup> preacher in 1864, whom the older people can still remember.
24. 1876-1887 Fridolin Leuzinger, of Mollis, Glarus and Zürich, *Fahrt* preacher in 1886, † on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April in 1887.
25. 1887-1891 Georg Bühler, of Stetten, Canton Schaffhausen.
26. 1891-1895 Albert Rothenberger, of St. Gallen [*Canton St. Gallen*].
27. 1895-1907 Hermann Mooser of Maienfeld [*Canton Graubünden*], Mels [*Canton St. Gallen*], and Matt.
28. 1907-1910 Samuel Fridolin Heer, of Glarus, then pastor in Lucerne, now in Basel.
29. 1910-1917 Gustav Adolf Müller, of Basel; went to Neftenbach [*Canton Zürich*].
30. Since 1917 Heinrich Bruppacher, of Zollikon [*Canton Zürich*].

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Before we move on to the discussion of the actual topic, you may, perhaps, be interested in what citizen families existed together with today's for three to four centuries, and now, for the most part, have died out. These are, mainly, the following: 1. The Buchmüllers; 2. the Büssers; 3. the Heuwers; 4. the Solmanns; 5. the Simons; 6. the Härtzis; and then, besides, the Mettlers, Wilds, Winteler, and Wursters. Of these, the Buchmüllers, Büssers, Heuwers and Solmanns are counted among the very old Engeler families.

The Buchmüllers lived in Engi until 1725, and had then died out in the male line. They were also called "Wild", why I do not know. However, they compare with the Stauffachers, who were also called "Murer", and the Kublis, who were also called "Zopfi"; likewise, the Luchsingers, called "Mürdi", and the Aeblis from Ennenda, who bore the surname "Kilchmatter".

From 1595-1700, the Buchmüllers were represented by 13 families. A Hans Ruedi Buechmüller had bought himself into Engi as a *Tagwen* citizen in the year 1651, according to the oldest *Tagwen* minutes, and, indeed, only for himself, but not also for his descendants, for the sum of 50 Gl. and 10 measures of wine! That is a peculiarity, since we, of course, know that the Buchmüllers were certainly Engeler citizens. However, it could be similar to the Hämmerlis, with whom the one bought for himself and his descendants, and another o n l y f o r h i m s e l f.

According to the 1642 *Tagwen* minutes, one Ruedi Buechmüller was a standard-bearer and owner of the Mattbrunnen<sup>e</sup> property. A non-citizen would never have become standard-bearer! — It is possible that, in the Rhinetal (Wartau-Gretschins) [*Canton St. Gallen*], descendants of this Buchmüller still exist, since a family emigrated there in the year 1650.

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d *Fahrt* - the 9 Apr 1388 Battle of Näfels memorial pilgrimage, which is held annually on the first Thursday of April. [SW]

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

The Büssers, undeniably also a very old family of Engi, were represented by 14 families in the period between 1595-1700, and were found in the council minutes even earlier, thus, frequently in the years 1527-1584. In the number of baptisms from 1595-1617, the Büssers were represented by 12 (the Buchmüllers by 18); on the other hand, the Martis, who are now the largest family, were represented by only 7.

The Büssers died out in Engi in the year 1701.

The Heuwers, originally also called Heuw, were, from 1595 on, recorded with only five families, and were probably dying out even then. The last family, Fridli Heuwer, moved out of the canton in the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the year 1679, in March, the second wife of this Fridli Heuwer died in the borderland [*now in Canton Schwyz*], and was taken to Niederurnen, because of her religion, and buried there. Since then, we are not aware of any more reports about the Heuwers of Engi. Already in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Heuwers from Engi had also bought into Glarus, but then they called themselves H e u b e r g e r.

The Solmanns were also an old Engeler family, but they were present only sparsely even as early as at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the period from 1595-1620, only six children were baptized to the Solmann family of Engi. They were also represented in Elm, and did not die out there until later, in the year 1682. They belonged to the free *Gottshauleute*<sup>f</sup>. On the Murder Night at Weesen [*Canton St. Gallen*], in February 1388, a Heini Solmann, who was known to be from the Sernf valley, lost his life. Among the fallen at Novarra [*Italy*] in 1513, Thomen Solmann from the Sernf valley was also reported to us. Whether this one was from Engi or Elm cannot be determined. Today the Solmanns, also called "Salmen," are only still in Bilten; whether these are descendants of the Sernf valley Solmanns also cannot be ascertained, presumably it is possible.

The other families that were mentioned had bought themselves into Engi only after 1600, and then had also soon died out again. Thus, in the year 1642, Jacob Mettler (or Möttler) of Wattwyl [*Canton St. Gallen*] bought himself the *Tagwen* right in Engi for 100 Gl., and Läri Simon (or Simen) for 80 Gl., both for themselves and their descendants. Twenty Gl. were exempted to the latter, since his ancestors were already residents without the citizen right in Engi. According to the *Historical Yearbook* 24, Folio 32, the Simens must have already been in Engi in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, since it is reported there that, in 1527, in the late autumn, a child of Hans Simen from the Sernf valley was killed<sup>1</sup> Today the Simons are still present sparsely in Glarus and Niederurnen.

In 1652, Fridli Härtzi, who, in 1651, was married to Verena Bräm, great-granddaughter of the Bräm ancestor, bought himself into Engi for 100 Gl., likewise for himself and his descendants. However, in 1680, this Härtzi bought himself out again and received 60 Gl. back from the *Tagwen*. They had moved to the borderland, and there apparently became Catholic.

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f *Gottshausleute* - God's house people. Refers to people attached to a religious establishment for protection, usually as serfs. They could buy their freedom, for example, with the purchase of church land. [SW]

1 From the journal of Valentin Tschudi: "At the time when they used to dig out marmot, a child of Hans Simen from the Sernf valley fell into the hole."

A year later, in 1653, Jacob Wild, the late Kaspar's son, bought himself in for 100 Gl., and 5 Schillings to each *Tagwen* citizen. However, the Wilds were represented more in Matt. No more purchases occurred in Engi until the year 1714. In 1714, Kaspar Winteler of Mollis, the subsequent *Tagwen* official and federal councillor, acquired the *Tagwen* right of Engi for himself and his descendants for 180 Gl. and 3 Schillings "to each *Tagwen* citizen thus 16 years old and older". There were six families in Engi, as descendants of this Federal Councillor Kaspar Winteler, who is supposed to have been a man of excellent reputation, and they died out in 1896, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November, in the male line.

We also still want to mention the other purchases before 1850. There are two of them. In 1823, in May, the subsequent church president and communal councillor (grandfather of the present church president), Adam Blumer of Nidfurn, 1805-1876, had bought himself in for 200 Gl., and, indeed, so cheaply for this reason, because he lived in Engi from his youth, grew up with his cousin, Federal Councillor Blumer, and his mother, Anna Baumgartner, came from Engi. — In the year 1837, Jacob Wurster, a tailor who came from Württemberg [*Germany*], bought himself in, for himself and his sons, Adam, Jacob and Martin, and, indeed, for the following sums: since his father, Adam, already lived in Engi, for 100 Gl., the sons, Adam and Jacob, who had both emigrated to America, upon their marriage, should pay 400 Gl. each, and the youngest son, Martin, 200 Gl. — Likewise, the *Wursters* had already died out in Engi in the 70's. Descendants are still in North America.

All these old families which have been discussed do not exist for Engi any more. It could also go the same way for particular present citizen-families. The "Weisses", or Wysses, a venerable Engeler family, are close to dying out. So it also went, as already said at the beginning [*see pg. 2 in the "Introduction" (pg. 2 in the SW translation)*], with the *Norders*, whom we discuss later [*see pg. 62 in "The Norders" chapter (pg. 1 in the SW translation)*]. I have even forgotten the family line of the *Speichs* of Engi, whose latest generations also just live in North America and who came from Matt to Engi about 1650.

I would now like to try to set forth, in the following, how, of the present citizen families of Engi, the one has developed so strongly and the other, rather, has declined.

The largest family by far are [*sic*] the *Martis*. Since the *Matter Martis* belong to the same family (more about them further back! [*see pg. 8 in "The Martis" chapter (pg. 1-2 in the SW translation)*]), those from Engi and Matt are combined in the same family tree. Up to now, the *Martis* of both communes number 630 families; of which the Engeler *Martis* account for 480. In second place stands the *Blumers*, with 370 families; 3. the *Baumgartners*, with 335 families; 4. the *Hämmerlis*, with 210 families; 5. the *Luchsingers* and *Altmanns*, 110 families each; then follow the *Bräms*, with 48, the *Wysses*, with 46, the *Gigers*, with 41 and the *Norders*, with 20 families. The total number of individual families of all<sup>2</sup> the citizen families of Engi, in the time period between 1590-1920, therefore, in 330 years, amounts to 1770 families; i.e., those families who had settled in America and could not notify me are not included in it.

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2 All present citizen families.

With several families, it was possible to trace the family tree back to a s i n g l e ancestor, thus with the Martis, Blumers, Baumgartners, Luchsingers, Bräms and Norders. With the other four families: Hämmerlis, Altmanns (in part), Wysses and Gigers, in the year 1590 there were already several representatives in Engi. Yet, especially the latter have always lagged behind in their development, whereas the Martis, Blumers and Baumgartners have increased tremendously in number.

(See the table at the end *[of the book]!*)

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