

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

## V. THE LUCHSINGERS

[pg. 41-47]

At the beginning of the history of the Luchsingers, I will just mention that the well-known Glarner genealogist, Mr. Kubli-Müller, whom I already honored in the Introduction of the lectures *[see pg. 1 (pg. 1 of the SW translation)]*, completed the Engeler Luchsingers by means of various communications. He has been untiringly busy in the genealogy field for over 30 years already, and, in the completion of all the families of our canton, he has had to not only make use of all the archives and libraries in Switzerland, but also foreign countries had been of help to him with books and documents, simply because the Glarner went away from home in every direction and the records of all the places that are needed in the homeland are scattered. Thousands of letters from him have gone to America alone, and the information which was delivered from America was seldom satisfactory. The American Glarner seemingly have little or no appreciation for genealogy and precious little sense of family, their goal is the — d o l l a r!

Like the Blumers, our Luchsingers must also have stemmed from L u c h s i n g e n, although no more representatives from either of these families exist there today. This is just a similar phenomenon to those I have demonstrated with our very old Engi families in the Introduction *[see pg. 4-7 (pg. 4-6 in the SW translation)]*. Changing times!

With the Blumers, their origin from Luchsingen can be proven, with the "Luchsingers", only the name points to it, because, as far as documents exist, Luchsingen has never had "Luchsingers" as citizens. Their origin from Luchsingen must, in my opinion, go back at least into the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

After all, the very first known Luchsinger is the Rudolf Luchsinger named in a document in 1385, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March (see Document Nr. 100), then, in 1395, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July, Dietrich Luchsinger is named at the ransom of Canton Glarus from the Sächingen cloister<sup>a</sup>. The Sächingen property assessment register lists the Luchsingers as free *Gotteshausleute*<sup>b</sup>.

In 1444, in the battle at St. Jacob on the Birs *[Canton Basel]*, a Hansli Mürdi, called "Luchsinger", was named to us as killed in action.

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- a *Säckingen refers to a Baden 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 9<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. [SW]*
- b *Gotteshausleute - 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]*

In 1499, a Battli Luchsinger died in the Swabian War [*Canton Graubünden*], and, in 1513, a Lärg and Hans Luchsinger were found among the dead from Novarra [*Italy*].

In the council minutes of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, beginning fragmentarily with 1527, then fairly consistently from 1547, we find Luchsingers in large quantities, also Mürdis called Luchsinger; however, the place of residence and homeland is never, or seldom, stated. The cantonal secretary strives for the most remarkable brevity.

As early as around the year 1500, Luchsingers must have lived in Engi as citizens. Because a Hans Luchsinger from the Sernftal [*Sernf (river) valley*] was the only Sernftaler, in 1504, to participate in the international shooting festival and *Glückshafen*<sup>c</sup> in Zürich. About this festival, Pastor [*Gottfried*] Heer has observed in greater detail in his history of the Luchsingers<sup>d</sup>. — Then, in the 1525 tax roll of the Matt church, which we have already mentioned in the [*chapter on the*] history of the Martis, it is handed down to us that Fridli Luchsinger, in March, has to pay a Plappert (a type of money at the time) for his property "at the Wyden, which borders, on the one side, on Messchingen<sup>1</sup>, and, on the other side, on the Ueblibach", and, in May, a pound of grain and two Plapperts for the same property.

Of the many Luchsingers in the council minutes, the following could be determined with complete certainty to be citizens of Engi:

In 1555, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December and in 1558, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October, a Fridli Luchsinger from Engi. Furthermore, in 1562, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, a Thöni and Lärqi (Hilarius) Luchsinger<sup>2</sup> appeared before the council, because they struck somebody at the fair, and, therefore, had to account for themselves. In 1564, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November, Fridli Luchsinger from Engi appeared before the council once again, as overseer of the late Hans Giger's wife, and, in 1565, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, with a Rudi Büsser. The Büssers are, as I emphasized in the Introduction [*see pg. 5 (pg. 4-5 in the SW translation)*], an old civic family from Engi, which became extinct here in the male line in 1701.

It is thus unequivocally proven that the Luchsingers are a very old-established Engeler family. Strangely enough, however, they have always lagged behind in their development; in the last century they even declined very rapidly. The Blumers and Baumgartners, who had first bought into Engi at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, had already far outdistanced the Luchsingers by 1750. On the basis of statistics, it is possible for me to give further information at the end [*of the book*] about the declining development of this family.

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c *Glückshafen (lucky pot)* - a kind of lottery in which considerable gifts could be obtained in exchange for a small contribution [SW]

d See pg. 50 in "The Luchsingers" chapter of G. Herr's book: On the History of the Glarner Families, Particularly Those of the Sernf Valley [pg. 2 of the SW translation] [SW]

1 Möschingen.

2 This Lärqi Luchsinger from Engi afterwards went to Glarus, and is now, as has been proven, the ancestor of all present-day, rather numerous Luchsingers at the chief city of Glarus.

About the origin of the name Luchsinger and its coat of arms, Gottfr. Heer has held forth in his history of the families of the Sernftal<sup>e</sup>, and we will, therefore, make no observations, although we may, in good faith, be of a differing opinion about this.

Although we have documentary proof of the existence of the Luchsingers as early as the year 1500, we find, with the beginning of the church books in the year 1595, only a single Luchsinger in Engi. This is Federal Councillor Hilarius Luchsinger, who is regarded as the ancestor of the Luchsingers, who died in 1622, owner of the outer Höfli, from which old Jacob Altmann, Höfli<sup>f</sup>, still has some documents today. He is mentioned to us as the son of *Landvogt*<sup>g</sup> David, who, in 1597, was *Landsgemeinde*<sup>h</sup> sergeant-at-arms and, in 1604, *Landvogt* in Werdenburg [*Canton St. Gallen*]. So Engi also furnished *Landvögte*! In my opinion, and also in the view of Mr. Kubli-Müller, this *Landvogt* David is the son of Fridolin Luchsinger, who was mentioned above as standing on several occasions before the council, since his son, Federal Councillor Hilarius, the ancestor, also again had a son, Fridli. As is well known, the children at that time always received the first names of the forefathers first.

Now this Federal Councillor Hilarius, who is considered to be the ancestor of the Luchsingers, had two wives: 1. Elsbeth Jenny, who died in 1607, who bore him a son, David, but he died young. In 1612, he married, for a second time, Barbara Zopfi from Schwanden, who died in 1622, 14 days after him. From this second marriage came three children: Fridli, Elsbeth, and David. The little girl, Elsbeth, died in 1624 at the age of nine. Fridli Luchsinger, 1613-1665 (Nr. 4) was a head of family, with a family of ten children. Also he was a federal councillor and a church steward. He was the secretary of our old goat-book and had kept the *Tagwen*<sup>i</sup> minutes. From his ten children came five heads of family: 1. Hilarius, Nr. 5, 1634-1686 (federal councillor); 2. Hans Melchior, Nr. 6, 1641-1674; 3. Hans Peter, Nr. 8, 1643-1704; 4. David, Nr. 7, 1645-1689; 5. Fridolin, Nr. 10, 1648-1711. Of the families of these five sons, only the eldest, Federal Councillor Hilarius, with three, and the youngest, Fridolin, with two, produced children, so together there were five heads of family. The other three sons, since they produced no heads of family, have no importance for the development of the Luchsinger family tree.

The youngest son of the ancestor, David Luchsinger, 1620-1690, moved to Glarus and bought himself in there as a citizen in 1638. Two descendants of his, grandson and great-grandson, were pastors in Glarus, or, to be precise, in Buchs.

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e See pg. 51 in "The Luchsingers" chapter of G. Herr's book: On the History of the Glarner Families, Particularly Those of the Sernf Valley [pg. 3 of the SW translation] [SW]

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

g Landvogt – an administrative and judicial official of a cantonal government in a vassal territory [SW]

h 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]

i 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]

Around 1615, according to the church register, a Fridolin Luchsinger got married to Barbara Jäger in Matt. However, he was a citizen of Glarus and only resident in Engi. Obviously he must have been a wealthy man, for, in 1614, he made a bequest of 10 Gl. to all the cantonal churches, but to the newly built church in Linthal, 20 Gl. He left behind no offspring (at least none that we know of).

By the year 1700, the Luchsingers in Engi had grown to 12 families, exactly as many as the Baumgartners (the Blumers had 20 families, the Hämmerlis had 28). In 1750, however, there were only 17 families (in contrast to the Baumgartner's 34 families, the Hämmerli's 44, the Blumer's 50, and the Marti's 55). In 1800, there were only 28 families. The cause of the very scanty development in this time-period lies in the fact that about 75% of the Luchsinger children died early. By 1850, they had increased to 57 families. In this time period of 1800-1850, they have developed favorably. On the other hand, in the 1840's and 1850's, the big decline in the Luchsinger family began, as a result of the extremely large emigration to North America and Brazil. By 1920, they had then increased only to 110 families, and they decline more and more in Engi. In the last *Tagwen* census, the Luchsingers were reported on with only 11 benefitting from *Tagwen* rights.

From the Luchsingers, a total of 244 people = 41% had emigrated. Together with the Blumers, who had 41.5%, the highest percentage of all of today's families. Of these, 64 = 26.5% moved to North America, 39 = 16% to Brazil, 50 = 20.5% into other cantons, 58 = 23% into other Glarner communes, and 30 = 12.3% whereabouts unknown. No other family of our commune has such a high percent of emigrants of whom their residence is unknown. 19% of all Luchsingers are actually missing. — These are numbers that illustrate the decline of this family clearly enough. Of the emigrants to other cantons and Glarner communes, of the former, the most reside in the Toggenburg [*Canton St. Gallen*] and in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, and of the latter, especially in the commune of Ennenda.

Of the 117 wives of the Luchsingers, 59 = 50.5% stem from Engi. These are distributed among the families as follows: 21 = 35.6% Martis; 14 = 23.7% Blumers; 6 = 10% Baumgartners; 4 = 6.8% each Hämmerlis and Luchsingers; 2 = 3.4% each Altmanns, Bräms, and Wysses; 1 each Gigers and Norders.

As expressed in the family, hereditary Luchsinger names are, above all, to be mentioned as follows: 19 = 17% each of all Luchsinger heads of family go by the name of Hilarius or Fridolin; 11 = 10% Jakob; 10 = 9% Adam; 6 = 5.5% Peter; 5 = 4.5% each David, Sebastian and Martin.

The Luchsingers produced few dignitaries with offices at the church and at the *Tagwen*. They are represented by three federal councillors, two church stewards and one treasurer. With the military of times past, they did not contribute any important figures. — The three federal councillors are, then, the ancestor, his son and grandson, who, at the same time, also held the other mentioned offices.

Therefore, the 1. L u c h s i n g e r f e d e r a l c o u n c i l l o r was the already repeatedly-mentioned ancestor, Federal Councillor Hilarius, who died in 1622.

2. His son, Fridli Luchsinger, 1613-1665, at the same time, also c h u r c h s t e w a r d.

3. This one's son, Hilarius Luchsinger, 1634-1686, likewise a church steward and treasurer. This Federal Councillor Hilarius is considered to be the builder of the present-day saw, according to the *Tagwen* minutes of 1684. A saw with mill must have previously stood on the other side of the Mühlebach, in the so-called Mühleschöschetli (Wintergen), which, at that time, belonged to a Mathias Marti. His son, Fridli Luchsinger, had then inherited the saw. The place where it stood, or rather, still stands today, however, belongs to the commune.

Later, we do not find any more Luchsingers as *Tagwen* or church officials.

S e v e n L u c h s i n g e r s have lost their lives in f o r e i g n m i l i t a r y s e r v i c e s:

In 1689, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, Adrian Luchsinger, born in 1654, single, died in the service of the French. He was the son of Church Steward and Federal Councillor Fridli Luchsinger, and grandson of the ancestor.

In 1709, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, Fridli Luchsinger, born in 1685, single, fell in the bloody battle of Mons [*Belgium*] in the service of the Dutch under the Paravacini Company. He was the grandson of Federal Councillor and Church Steward Fridli Luchsinger. With him, two other Engelters also lost their lives in the same battle: Hans Marti, son of Church Steward Mathes, and Rudolf Blumer, of Jakob.

In 1740, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April, Fridolin Luchsinger, single, died at Monin in Flanders as a corporal in the Hirzel Regiment. His father, Hans Melchior, was an illegitimate son of Federal Councillor and Church Steward, Hilarius Luchsinger (Nr. 5)

In 1808, Martin Luchsinger, born in 1775, went forth as a recruited soldier from Engi and remains missing. Likewise, a year later, in 1809, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, his brother, Fridolin Luchsinger, born in 1788, who, as early as 1806, wanted to enlist as a soldier, but then he was found to be too young. Both brothers undoubtedly went to Russia under Napoleon I and perished there in 1812. They are brothers of the father of old Adam Luchsinger im Trog, and of Hilarius, the father of Peter Luchsinger im Spicher.

In 1809, in November, David Luchsinger, born in 1786, single, who was in the service of the Spanish, died in the hospital. No more descendants of his father live in Engi, as opposed to in the French-speaking Switzerland.

In 1854, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, Peter Luchsinger, born in 1826, single, died in Naples [*Italy*] as a soldier. His father, Adam, was a brother of Peter Luchsinger im Spicher, and had an accident in 1836 at Mühlebach; of this later.

A c c i d e n t s and e v e n t s concerning the Luchsinger family:

In 1710, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July, Martin, the three-year-old little son of Fridolin Luchsinger im Bergen, drowned in the Ueblibach at his father's saw.

In 1726, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, Magdalena, born in 1710, daughter of the just mentioned Frid. Luchsinger im Bergen, was killed by a rock on her way to Schwanden, near the "Sool bridge".

In the period between the 7<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> of September, in 1772, Verena Marti, wife of Sebastian Luchsinger, and her 2 children, Magdalena (aged 5) and Hilarius (aged 4) were carried away by dysentery. In 1783, this Sebastian Luchsinger, born in 1737, was killed in the Ueblital, in the so-called Lauizug [*avalanche bed*], by a beech tree; and, in 1799, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October, his only married son, Oswald Luchsinger, born in 1765, lost his life in the flood on the Mühlebach, as the husband of Elisabeth Bräm. Their only daughter, Elisabeth Luchsinger, 1797-1889, is the grandmother of Oswald Hämmerli, cooper im Rigi. This family, therefore, had much sorrow to endure.

In 1782, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, Jost Luchsinger, born in 1743 and husband of Susanna Blumer, died at the wild hay gathering on the Bergli summit. He was the grandfather of Jost Luchsinger im Hugeten,<sup>3</sup> the father of Kaspar im Linden and his brothers and sisters. Then also grandfather of so-called "Midwife Hilarius", as well as of old Jost Luchsinger im Sändli, father of the late Guard Oswald, and his brothers and sisters.

In 1799, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, Samuel Luchsinger, born in 1769, single, perished when, while searching for goats at the summit of the Ueblital, he slid on the frozen ground and plunged over the summit to his death. He was a brother of Hilarius, the grandfather of old Hilarius Luchsinger of the Allmeind.

In 1836, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, Adam Luchsinger, born in 1804 and husband of Anna Strub of Schwanden, perished in an avalanche on the Mühlebach. He was a brother of old Peter Luchsinger im Spicher. With him, Jakob Marti, father of Sebastian im Bergli, also lost his life, which we mentioned with the Martis [*see pg. 16 in "The Martis" chapter (pg. 9 in the SW translation)*].

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3 Or, to be precise, im Linden.