

On the History of the Glarner Families, Particularly 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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With a Coat of Arms

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

XIV. THE BAUMGARTNERS

[pg. 121-124]

The families presented to us up to now are already documented as those of the Sernf valley before 1594, so now follow the ones who are first found documented to us as citizens of the Sernf valley after 1594, by which, of course, in no way is it said that no representative of this family already lived in the valley of the Sernf long before; only that no occasion was discovered yet for us to obtain documentary proof.

As the first of these families who appeared after 1594, we have presented the Baumgartners, because the baptism book of Pastor Jakob Ulrich¹, begun with the 2nd of April in 1595, presents as No. 2:

“Jacob Baumgartner, on the 5th day of *Brachmonat [June]* a son was baptized to Jacob Baumgartner and Madalena Bählerin, and named Jacob, and Hans Stäger, Agatha Suterin and Anna Stüssin stood sponsor to the holy baptism by Pastor Jakob Ulrich.”

However, Jacob Baumgartner, father and son, vanished in the Matt registers without further reports, that is, after 1595, no descendants of Jakob Baumgartner and Magdalena Bähler, nor of their son, Jakob, are found.

As the actual ancestor of today's Baumgartners of Canton Glarus and the Engi commune, Hans Baumgartner (who died on the 4th day of March in 1619, as the “old Hans Baumgartner”) appears at the forefront. About him the *Chronicle* of J. H. Tschudi (pg. 524) reports to us that, in 1595, Hans Baumgartner, together with his son, who were born in Gams [*Gams, Canton St. Gallen*], were accepted as new cantonal citizens.²

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- 1 Jakob Ulrich from Zürich, who began the first baptism book in this place, was pastor of Matt from 1595 on March 20th until 1588 in July.
 - 2 Steinmüller completes this report to the effect that Hans Baumgartner had obtained the cantonal right for himself, for his son and his brother's son and had paid 300 fl. for them.

In the year before (1594), the *Landsgemeinde*^a had accepted no fewer than 31 residents as new cantonal citizens, for the price of 100 Fl. each; that must then also have served to encourage Hans Baumgartner, who so far had contented himself with the *Tagwen*^b right from Engi, to register himself, likewise together with his son, for the cantonal right, and the *Landsgemeinde* also agreed with his application, in that they conferred the cantonal right on him and his son for 100 Fl. each.

However, what had caused Hans Baumgartner (or his father) to emigrate from Gams to the Sernf valley was probably the same thing that had persuaded the Hämmerlis to leave their farm on the Uznachberg [*Canton St. Gallen*] and move to Engi. While the communes of Sevelen, Buchs and Grabs [*Canton St. Gallen*], which were under the rule of the Glarner, became and remained Calvinist, in Gams, which was under the protection, “shield and shelter”, of the Schwyzers and Glarner, the old faith had won the day, and so it then wanted the Baumgartners, who had become Calvinist, to leave, like the Calvinist Martis in Näfels (see pg. 60 [*in* “The Martis” chapter (pg. 3 in the SW translation)]); the mood became too oppressive for them; they did not feel comfortable any more under the various taunts and reproaches of their Catholic countrymen and, for this reason, made use of any favorable opportunity for the sale of their farm, in order to move onward to a commune where they felt at home among faith colleagues.

In Engi, Hans Baumgartner and his family soon won a respected place. His son, the “young Hans Baumgartner”, married Ursula Brunner and became a member of the council, and his son (then, in 1642, again, on his part, referred to as the “young Hans Baumgartner”³) Hans, who was born in 1614, and married in 1642 to Barbara Schniderin, was designated as *Tagwen* official in 1653 and, thereby, as head of the Engi commune, in that, according to the custom of the *Tagwen* official at that time, he held not only the office of an administrator but also the position of president and registrar (clerk of the court).

In the 1763 cantonal tax roll, the Baumgartners appeared as the second-largest family of the Engi commune; of the 166 males over the voting age that Engi counted at the time, 39 — so almost a quarter — belonged to the Baumgartner family; the Martis numbered only one man more (40).

Outside of Engi, the Baumgartners in 1763 were only represented at Schwändi, and here only with 1 head-taxpayer. After 1763, 1 Baumgartner had also settled in Leuggelbach and had bought into the citizen right. The Luchsingen village book reported about it: “On the 21st of *Hornung* [*February*] in 1788 the *Tagwen* citizens of Luchsingen-Adlenbach and Leügelbach had allowed

a *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]

b *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]

3 The “old Hans Baumgartner, cantonal president and of the Glarus council, resident in Engy”, in 1643 on the 22nd of Oct., a year after the marriage of his son, once again celebrated “marriage with maiden Anna, formerly the surviving legitimate daughter of the late Caspar Eiseli (Iseli), who was also cantonal president and resident in Glarus”.

Johannis Baumgartner from Engy to purchase the *Tagwen* right or communal right for himself and his descendants, the same to use and to make use of with and next to other *Tagwen* citizens! and he shall pay, on the coming Martini [11 November, feast of St. Martin of Tours], 150 Fl.”

In the 1876 cantonal tax roll, the Baumgartners were represented for the entire canton by 85 head-taxpayers and a taxable property of 155,000 Fr. They stood, in regard to the number of souls, in the 28th place. At the same time, also in 1876, Engi (59 taxpayers with 81,500 Fr. taxable property), along with the Weissenberg (10 taxpayers and 12,000 Fr. property), formed the top quarter. Also in 1876, at Schwändi they numbered only 2 taxpayers (37,000 Fr. property), and in Leuggelbach 3. Three of them also lived in Bilten, 2 in Glarus, and 1 each in Haslen, Luchsingen, at Sool, Ennenda, Netstal and Bilten. However, all named Engi as the commune of their Glarner origin.

Of the citizens of the Baumgartner family who had served in high offices of the state or the church, I do not know anything to tell. On the other hand, an avalanche misfortune is still to be mentioned that befell a Baumgartner family, and, no doubt, aroused shock and sympathy in the remotest districts at the time. *The Picture of Canton Glarus* by Heer and Blumer reports about it (pg. 617): “From the west slope of the Gulderstock [*massif*] originate several dangerous runs (the Fittern runs and Speich runs) and avalanches, which cause the Engi commune great damage. On the 4th of February in 1738, with deep-fallen snow and severe storm weather, an avalanche came down from the Fittern Alp [*part of the Gulderstock*] and basically seized the house of Hans Baumgartner, in which 10 people were present. The house was smashed, and all lost their lives. The next morning, it was Sunday, the entire commune was busy searching for those who were buried in the snow, of whom 9 were found, namely Baumgartner's wife with their 4 children and her sister-in-law (Elmer), with her 3 children; on the other hand, they were first able to find the Baumgartner father of the family after 12 days. Only through an unusual stroke of fate was his brother-in-law (Elmer) saved, who, shortly before, had gone to the house of a neighbor and, from there, must have watched as his entire family was swallowed up by the avalanche.”

The Baumgartner coat of arms displays a fully-fenced-in orchard and signifies by it the family name, which belongs to that group of family names which refer to the dwelling-place of their ancestor (Bühler [*someone living in a place named Bühl = hillock*], Ambühl [*on the hillock*], Unterm Birnbaum [*under the pear tree*], Birnbaum, Weingarten [*vineyard*], etc.). Since orchards are present everywhere, the Baumgartner family also belongs to those who had originated in the most diverse regions unrelated to one another. I recall a Baumgartner from the Graubünden mountains who studied theology with me and became a professor (in America); in Canton St. Gallen, Cantonal President Gallus Jakob Baumgartner from Altstätten was such an influential personality in the 1830's and 40's that the radical *Glarner Times* occasionally called the Canton of St. Gallen “Canton Baumgartner”. However, [*Cantons*] Thurgau⁴, Zürich⁵, Unterwalden⁶, and Bern⁷, among others, also had and have their Baumgartners.

4 Pastor Dr. G. Baumgartner in Diessenhofen, Seminary Director O. B.

5 Composer Wilhelm B.

6 Cunrat von Baumgarten, who killed von Wolfenschiess, overseer at the Rossberg fortress, according to Eg. Tschudi's *Chronicle* (I, pg. 233).

7 The 1920 *Almanac of Pastors* records 3 Baumgartner pastors.