

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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[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^a period, it occurs first for the Beglingers, Gigers, Martis, and Wysses by means of the 1525 tax roll which was mentioned at the beginning (above, pg. 6 [in the “Introduction” (pg. 3 in the SW translation)]). Accordingly, at that time, Hans Beglinger had to pay the Matt church “a quarter of grain and a Plappert [coin] for milk 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. Nevertheless, a previously reported note [see pg. 13 in “The Elmers” chapter (pg. 7 in the SW translation)] has already pointed this out 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 a 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. It was then certainly possible that, as a result of these reciprocal relations between the Sernf valley and Mollis-Beglingen, someone from Beglingen was prevailed upon to settle in the Sernf valley, particularly if then, in addition, perhaps a marriage with a daughter of the Sernf valley came with it.

^a *Säckingen 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 baptism book are found, among the 592 children who were baptized in 1611-30, four of them from the family of the Bifangers.

^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]*

On the other hand, the Beglingers never became very important 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 on the 4th of May in 1721), married an Ursula Bähler from Elm and settled in Matt, and also acquired the Matt citizen right, but, in 1707, had his Mollis citizen right 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-taxpaying Beglingers were found in Matt, and exactly the same was the number of Beglingers that the 1876 cantonal tax roll recorded for Matt and, likewise, the number of *Tagwen* rights which, in 1915, the Matt *Tagwen* roll reported as in the possession of the Beglingers.

For the entire canton, the 1876 cantonal tax roll fixed the number of head-taxpaying Beglingers at 48, with a taxable property of 293,000 Fr. With regard to the number of head-taxpayers, they stood in the 51st place among the Glarner families; with regard to the taxable capital, in 47th place. Of the 48 taxpaying Beglingers, 31, with 183,000 Fr. taxable capital, were found in the Mollis commune, 12, with 51,500 Fr. taxable capital, in the Glarus² commune, 3, with 45,000 Fr. taxable capital, in the Matt commune, and 1 each in Ennenda and at Riedern (14,000 Fr.). As the place of origin, thus, Mollis was, and remains for all times, therefore, the headquarters of the Beglingers (in 1763, Mollis numbered 36 head-taxpaying 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 the 14th of November in 1289, which has already been mentioned more than once (above, pg. 8 [*in* "The Elmers" chapter (pg. 3 in the SW translation)]), in which Nicolaus from Peglingen [*sic*] joined in, beside our "Overseer Elmer" and Walther Speich, etc., as guarantor and hostage opposite the estate owner of Walenstadt [*Canton St. Gallen*]. Likewise, Rudolf of Beglingen is found, in the document of the 5th of February in 1372, beside the Rudolf Speich who was mentioned above on pg. 41 [*in* "The Speichs" chapter (pg. 3 in the SW translation)] and Walther of Luchsingen, etc., as one of 30 federal councillors which the Glarner had contributed as hostages of the Abbess of Säkingen. Among the heroes from [*the battle of*] Näfels on the 9th of April in 1388, among whom the citizens of 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 establishing 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

² In the capital city of Glarus, in 1696, Nicholas Beglinger bought into the citizen right for 300 fl.

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 (above, pg. 11 [*in* "The Elmers" chapter (pg. 5 in the SW translation)]), *Yearbook for Swiss History*, vol. XVIII).

leading citizens. Also, among all the *Landvögte*^c which Glarus had sent out to the east and west, as well as to the south and north, is found one single Beglinger: Andreas Beglinger, who, in 1630, was sent as *Landvogt* into the Rheintal [*Canton St. Gallen*]⁴, which was governed by the member states of Zürich, Lucerne, Schwyz, Glarus, Uri, Unterwalden, Zug, and Appenzell. While today all of the Beglingers are Calvinist, 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 *Landvogt* to this circumstance, since, in proportion to their number of souls, the Catholics were more entitled to official positions than the Evangelicals (they were allowed to lay claim to a third of the *Landvogt* positions for themselves, whereas they amounted to hardly a sixth of the total population).

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

⁴ After the 1489 Rorschach [*Canton St. Gallen*] cloister attack, the Appenzellers were relieved of their lord's domain by the troops of the 4 protector old cantons of the Abbott of St. Gallen (Zürich, Luzerne, Schwyz and Glarus, which had gone into action with 1710 men, under Overseer Jost Kuchli). Uri, Unterwalden and Zug, which had gone to the aid of the four protector old cantons, "in order to also secure a share of the winnings themselves" (J. Dierauer, *History of the Swiss Confederation* II, pg. 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 *Landvogt* for a two-year term of office; moreover, according to the 1623 agreement, within the period of 48 years, 2 Calvinists and a Catholic took a turn.

⁵ A. Beglinger from Mollis, who already occupied the position of a *Landsgemeinde** sergeant-at-arms in 1622, was also married to a Catholic, Margaretha Gallati. J. K.-M. [*J. Kubly-Müller*].

* *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]*