

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]

III. THE LUCHSINGERS

[pg. 49-51]

While the Elmers are represented most strongly even today in Elm, the Beglingers, likewise, find themselves most numerous in the commune of Mollis as their home, and the Bönigers, as far as I know, all possess the citizen right in Nidfurn, with which the former hamlet of Bönigen has now grown together, the Luchsingers¹, one and all, have left their home commune, that is, among all those enjoying the *Tagwen*^a right of Luchsingen today there is not a single "Luchsinger"; other families, above all the Heftis, Speichs and Kläsis, have taken their place. They were represented in larger numbers in other communes to which they have dispersed, so that, according to the 1876 tax records, they had moved to the 8th place among the Glarner families in regard to the number of head-taxpayers, and, in regard to taxable property, to the 6th place. In 1876, in the entire canton, they numbered 182 head-taxpayers, with a taxable property of 3,633,000 Francs. Only the Heftis (311 head-taxpayers), the Zweifelers (276), the Jennis (250), the Leuzingers (227), the Höslis (204), the Dürsts (197) and the Stüssis (197) were more numerous represented at that time. In regard to property, only the Jennis (11,180,000 Fr.), the Trümpis (7,000,000), the Blumers (5,062,000), the Heers (4,963,000) and the Tschudis (4,786,000) went ahead of them. In 1876, the Luchsingers were most numerous represented in Schwanden, with 75 head-taxpayers and 207,000 Fr. of taxable property, in Mitlödi (23 taxpayers and 19,000 Fr. of property), in Engi (20 taxpayers and 23,500 Fr. of property), in Nidfurn (16 taxpayers and 23,000 Fr. of property), and in the capital of Glarus (15 taxpayers and 1,713,000 Fr. of property). At Sool and in Bilten they were represented with 8 head-taxpayers each. I have, however, given a detailed account about the history of the Luchsingers twice already (*Historical Yearbook of Canton Glarus*, no.

¹ The first mention of the Luchsingers is found in 1289 (see above, pg. 8 [in "The Elmers" chapter (pg. 3 in the SW translation)]). Regarding an earlier mention of a Werner of Luchsingen (about 1274) see note 2 [actually note 3] at the bottom of pg. 53 [in "The Beglingers" chapter (pg. 2 in the SW translation)].

^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]

XXIII, pgs. 28-41 and no. XXVI, pgs. 3-22).² That is why I must limit myself in this place, of course, to the Luchsingers of the Sernf valley, but, about these, there is not much to report.

The first documented report of the existence of the Luchsingers in the Sernf valley occurred in the year 1504. In this year, in Zürich, a great shooting contest that was not only intercantonal, but international, took place that lasted no fewer than 5 weeks — the 12th of August to the 16th of September — and a great multitude of people from many parts of the world were brought together in Zürich's walls. Thus, for example, 110 people showed up at the festival from Rottweil [*Baden*], a friend of the Swiss Confederacy, among them the mayor, Heinrich Fryburger with his family, and there were even 180 of them from Ravensburg [*Swabia*]; but marksmen and pleasure-seekers also showed up from still more distant places, in spite of the travel difficulties of that time; we encounter people there from Worms, Mainz, Frankfurt, Koblenz, Köln [*Germany*], from "the other side of the Bernhardsberg" [*i.e., in Italy*], even from Benedig [*Venice*].³

As with other occasions of this kind, a so-called *Glückshafen* was also connected with the 1504 free shooting contest, that is, a sort of lottery, in which, in exchange for a certain investment from those who "had luck", fairly considerable gifts could be won. The list of those who participated in this *Glückshafen* can still be found today, well preserved, in the Zürich state archives. Among them, according to information of Mr. Kubli-Müller⁴, we also meet over 500 Glarner men and women, above all from the midland and Näfels-Mollis. Many a family was obviously drawn to the festival with "child and bastard" and had also participated in the *Glückshafen*. On the other hand, the Sernf valley was represented by only one participant, whether it was because the inhabitants of the Sernf valley had less interest in such a thing, or had less superfluous money at their disposal, or because the trip was too laborious for them and it prevented them from taking part in their agricultural work.

The only Sernf valley resident who tried his luck in the lottery had registered himself as "the young Hans Luchsinger from the Sernif [*sic*] valley". When he called himself the y o u n g⁵ Hans Luchsinger, it probably provided proof that, at that very place, in the Sernf valley, an older Hans Luchsinger (perhaps the father) was also found, since only by means of this distinction was this designation as the young necessary. These two, Hans Luchsinger the young and the old or older, are shown to us in this way to be the first representatives of the Sernf valley Luchsingers. Twenty-one years later, in 1525, we find displayed then, in the previously (pg. 6 [*in the Introduction (pg. 3 in the SW translation)*]) mentioned tax rolls (excerpt from the unfortunately burnt anniversary book): Fridli Luchsinger, who, in March, was obliged to a Plappert [*coin*] "for milk on his property in the Wyden, which borders on Moschingen,⁶ and, on the other side, on

² Concerning Konrad (Kunz) Luchsinger, about whom I spoke in detail in the above-quoted places, I must add an amendment that he had already become a citizen of Zurich in 1501, so he no longer lived in Glarus at the time when Zwingli was pastor of Glarus. On the other hand, he remained in close contact with his Glarner home, particularly because his brother and other relatives lived here (*Yearbook for Swiss History*, vol. XI, pg. 299). For this reason, he came to know, nevertheless, in addition, Zwingli's work in Glarus and, therefore, to champion his appointment to the great cathedral in Zurich.

³ *Zürich Notebook* for the year 1882, pgs. 219-236

⁴ *Yearbook of the Historical Society of Glarus*, no. XXXVI, pgs. 63-96.

⁵ From Glarus were participating, among others, the o l d Rudi Luchsinger, the young Rudi Luchsinger and the youngest Rudi Luchsinger, probably father, son and grandson.

⁶ The "Wyden house" and Möschingen are surviving names today for places in the vicinity of the Engi common land.

Ueblebach and on the common land, and, in May, a pound of grain and 2 Plapperts for milk on his property in the Wyden, forming part of 2 loaves of bread for a secular priest and 2 loaves for the sexton, and which again borders on Moschingen, on the other side on Ueblebach, and on the third side on the Weidg... and on the common land".

Among the 241 baptized people of the Matt church in the years 1595-1617, the Luchsingers accounted for but only 3 children, and stood, thereby, only in the 19th place among the families of the entire Matt-Engi church commune. In the 1763 cantonal tax roll, they number 8 taxpayers in Engi⁷ and stand, thereby, in 6th place in Engi itself and in 8th place for Engi-Matt. In 1876, 20 taxpayers are found in Engi itself, promoting them to 5th place, only surpassed by the Martis, Baumgartners, Hämmerlis and Blumers. On the other hand, they seem to have retreated since then: while, in 1876, they numbered 20 among the 283 taxpayers of the Engi commune, consequently, amounting to 7% of the total number of taxpayers, in 1915, they owned among them only 10 out of the 288 Engi *Tagwen* rights, consequently, only 3.5%. About the reasons for this rapid decline, I must, however, abstain from any conjecture.

The Luchsinger coat of arms shows a lynx. If, at that time, in the 1887 *Historical Yearbook* (pg. 41), I had still regarded the derivation of the Luchsingen name that was set forth there as a not entirely unlikely one, so I now confess that I can no longer advocate this view. The preference for coat-of-arms animals had suggested that interpretation. That is certainly why the Otts have also put an otter on their coat-of-arms and the Martis, a marten, although the family name of Ott, as is, of course, self-evident, is derived from Ott[o], and that of the Martis goes back to Martin, and has nothing to do with a marten. So also Luchsingen does not mean the place of the lynxes, but the home of the Luxes, as Benzingen means the small estate of the Benzes, Fischligen that of the Fischlis, Zusingen that of the Zusos. We still encounter the name Lux, which, of course, is forgotten today in Canton Glarus, in 1542, in the closest vicinity of Luchsingen, in that the 1542 Betschwanden church land assessment register of Pastor Fridolin Brunner mentions to us a Lux Streiff from Adlenbach.

⁷ The ancestor of all of today's Luchsingers from Engi is Federal Councillor Hilarius Luchsinger, *Landvogt** David's son, who later, in 1597, became cantonal sergeant-at-arms, and then, in 1604, *Landvogt* in Werdenberg [*Canton St. Gallen*]. From his second marriage with Barbara Zopfi from Schwanden originated 2 sons, Fridli and David. The first, Fridli, was church steward and federal councillor in Engi and had 6 married sons, the second, David, bought the Glarus *Tagwen* right in 1638. The first-named Church Steward and Federal Councillor, Fridolin Luchsinger, and his wife, Anna Brunner from Netstal, are the progenitors of all the Luchsingers in Engi.

A grandson of the David Luchsinger who emigrated to Glarus is Pastor and Dean David Luchsinger in Glarus, who had been a deacon and pastor in Glarus for 48 years, and died on the 4th of July 1735. Also, his son, Hans Peter Luchsinger, was a pastor (in Buchs, Werdenberg). J. K-M. [*J. Kubly-Müller*]

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