

The History of the Glarus Families, especially 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)

By Gottfried Heer, 1920

Printing and publishing by Rud. Tschudy, Glarus, 1920

Translated by Sue Wolf

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

XXIV. The Heftis

[pg. 144-145]

"On 16 November 1634," as the church register of that place reported, the Elm commune "elected new leaders: 1. church steward: Kaspar Ellmer, of the council, instead of Hans Ulrich Ellmer. 2. charity official: Heinrich Elmer, beyond the brook^a, instead of Jacob Gyger. 3. *Tagwen*^b official; Samuel Höffti, instead of Jochum Sollman."

Samuel Höffti, who was the newly appointed *Tagwen* official (president and administrator), was the one who transplanted the Hefti family from Hätzingen to Elm. Married to an Anna Speich, he had brought a first child, Margretha, to baptism in the Elm church in 1632.¹ The godparents which were named on this occasion (Magdalena Erni from Zürich and Heinrich Erni, canon [of the Zürich Cathedral] and Sacred Scriptures theology professor) create the impression that Samuel Höffti belonged to a prominent family. Furthermore, that may also have recommended him to the Elmers for his promotion to *Tagwen* official. Obviously, he had also previously purchased the Elm *Tagwen* rights.

In 1742 Elm elected a Niklaus Hefti for its representative to the council. In the 1876 cantonal tax rolls the Heftis from Elm are reported on with 8 taxpayers and a property of 27,000 Fr. On the other hand, they have not forgotten their origin from the Great [*Sernf*] Valley, but, from time to time, have renewed their *Tagwen* rights in Hätzingen.

Besides in Elm, the Heftis in 1876 were represented in Luchsingen with 79 head-taxpayers, in Hätzingen with 69, in Schwanden with 43, in Ennenda with 33, in Haslen with 22, in Leuggelbach with 21, in Glarus with 11, and in Diesbach with 7; furthermore, 18 additional Heftis were found in 10 other communes.

With 311 head-taxpayers, they were the most numerous family of the canton. (As the second, the Zweifels, with 276 head-taxpayers, and as the third, the Jennis with 250.) However, I have already given a detailed account of the Hefti family in No. 15 of the "Historical Yearbook", pg. 75-90 (also a shorter addendum in No. 26, pg. 106-108). For this reason, I mention here merely that, according to J. J. Kubli-Müller's information, the Amden [*Canton St. Gallen*] anniversary book for the 15th and the beginning of the 16th centuries shows various Heftis as citizens and citizenesses of Amden; thus a Hans Hefti, who was married, in his first marriage, to Margreth Büsser, and, in his second marriage, to Agatha Roner. In addition, a Jakob Hefti, who was married to Barbara Thoma, whose son, Jakob, was married to Brigitta Krämer and, in his second marriage, to Margr. Schorer; a bailiff, Hans Hefti; and a bailiff, Michael Hefti. From Amden, then, members of the Hefti family, as followers of the "new faith", could have come to Hätzingen², where we met them in 1542, as a result of the Reformation, as the reac-

tion set in [*against the "new faith"*] in the Gaster [*the Canton St. Gallen district where Amden is located, which remained Catholic*] after the second Kappeler war [1531].

However, an Italian document, which has already been offered for purchase for 40 years, which traces the history of the Heftis back to the time of Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa [*Holy Roman Emperor, 1152-1190*] and to Hungary, and allocates high military positions to them, may be considered as a fabrication for speculative purposes.

^a Field name: people with identical names were differentiated by adding their occupation or a descriptive term for the area where they lived [SW]

^b Tagwen – an ancient 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]

¹ In 1634 a second daughter, Elsbeth, followed, and, in 1637, a head of family, Samuel.

² From Hätzingen the Hefti family also went to Norway in the 18th century, by means of Johannes Hefti (born in 1730, died in 1801), who, at first from Hätzingen, carried on a timber trade to the Netherlands, but then emigrated to Norway. There he established a timber business with his sons, Thomas, Fridolin and Heinrich, and later he added on a bank to it. Descendants of this Hefti still live today in Christiania. They have long since become Norwegians; nonetheless, they have not completely forgotten their Hätzingen origins (one of them requested a Hefti family tree from me about 30 years ago, which request I, however, could not satisfy at the time because of other work).