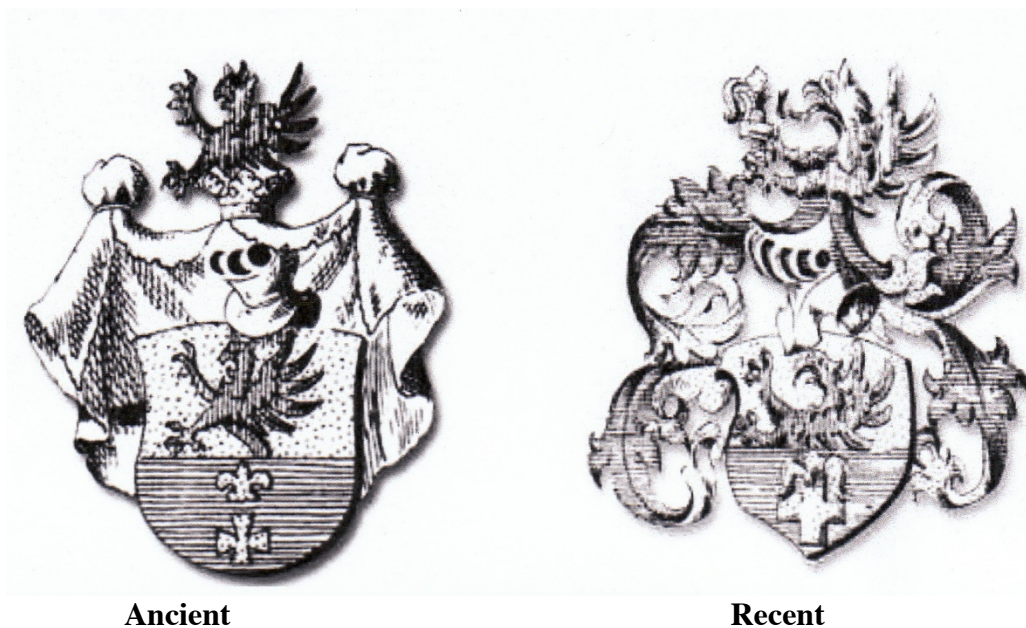
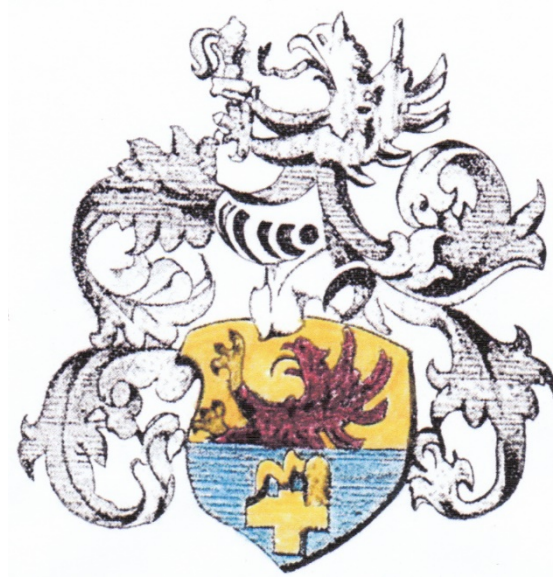


Origins of the Leisz Family Name



Ancient

Recent

Arms of Leiss

NOTE: This document was sent to us by Karyn Leisz-Foley on July 5, 2021. She is the daughter of Douglas Robert Leisz, who hails from a different branch of the Leisz family in Europe than we do. But way back when, we may be related. Fyi, Karyn is a first cousin of renowned musician Greg Leisz.

Chronology of Early Records of the Leiss Family in the Inn Valley of Austria and in Caldaro/Laimburg in the Tyrol Region

- 1222-** Gebolfus Leiss was witness to an exchange of goods. The record, written in Latin, was found in Gorgen, Lower Austria.
- 1382-** Heindrick Leiss was a Judge of Rodenegg, near the town of Brixen.
- 1406-** Sons of Leiss A document states that an Estate called "Tulla", belonging to the sons of Leiss was situated at Prutz, on the Inn River.
- 1421-** Hans Leiss appears in the records of Prutz.
- 1422-** Leiss-A member of the Leiss Family was a practicing lawyer in Prutz.
- 1427-** Hans Leiss, with a wife and four children, were listed as free citizens of Prutz. A list of properties he owned is preserved in the Archives of Innsbruck. This family moved to Caldaro/Laimburg, in the Upper Adige/Etsch Valley.
- 1435-** Bartolomeo Leiss, Judge and landowner, died near Prutz.
- 1500-** Hans Leiss, probably the eldest son or grandson of the Hans above, was appointed Archduke of the Tyrolean government, and about this time two branches of the Leiss Family were recognized--that of the Leiss of Caldaro/ Laimburg and that of the Leiss of Appian/ Paschback.
- 1501-** Hans Leiss von Laimburg, on November 4, received the Title of Nobility and a Coat-of-Arms from Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I of the Habsburg Dynasty. The ruins of the ancient feudal Castle of Laimburg, built in the 12th Century to guard the Roman Road and the passage that crosses Monte di Mezzo between Vadena and Caldaro/Laimburg stood overlooking the Etsch Valley, a symbol of the history and power of the Habsburg Dynasty.
- 1591-** Archduke Ferdinand I, grandson of Maximilian I, reconfirmed upon Hans Leiss, descendant of the Hans above and his family the privilege of nobility and the fief of Caldaro/Laimburg. This honor opened a new world of opportunity for his descendants to enter into marriages with other families of Tyrolean Nobility, to further enlarge their estates and influence. The Elector of Brandenburg appointed Hans to positions of command, including that of Judge of Tyrol.
- 1624-** Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II, grandson of Ferdinand I, endorsed the Leiss Title, and declared that he wanted to reward the personal merits of Paul Leiss, as Accountant at Court, and those of his ancestors who had distinguished themselves with excellent services to the State. He not only endorsed all the privileges of the 1591 estate, but extended these privileges of nobility to Paul's two brothers, Wilhelm and Michael Leiss, and his five cousins, namely, Johann Crist of, Johann Caspar, George Johann, Giovanni Hans), and Paul Leiss, and beyond, to their offspring of both sexes, to infinity.

The information in this Chronology, was gathered from two sources:

1 <Leiss von Laimburg-Heraldik< <http://tiroler-adler.scene>>

2-LEISZ di LAIMBURG by Avv. F. Tuccimei, published in Rome in 1927.

In a few instances, the two sources disagree on dates. I have used the dates of the later, because Tuccimei's whole work is so well documented and comes with a page long bibliography, indicating that many of the records pertaining to the Leiss di Laimburg are preserved in the Archives of Innsbruck. Tuccimei also included a family tree descending from Giovanni (Hans) Leiss, cousin of Paul, in the 1624 record above and his wife Helena der Lanin, to their descendants in Italy, down to the year 1912.

In 1624, the same year that Emperor Ferdinand II von Habsburg reaffirmed the title of the Leiss Family, the title to Laimburg Castle and the lands surrounding it, were given to Paul Leiss, Constable of the Imperial Court, giving the Leiss Family the responsibility of the defense of the region. The Family Tree, from 1509-1684, shown on the following page, is all but illegible but the name at the bottom is Johann Nicolas Leiss von Laimburg and in the 4th line from the top, second from the left is Paul b. 1590. It seems possible that this is the Paul who became Lord of Laimburg Castle, in 1624.

I include the following German records in order to show how the double "s" in German print looks like a capital B. In old script, as in the family tree on the following page, the double "s" appears as a cursive "z".

Die Leiß stammen vermutlich aus dem Oberinntal, wo schon **Bartlem Leiß** (+1435) Anwalt zu Pruß (1422) war.

Johann Leiß, zur Zeit brandenburgischer Amtmann zu Kaltern in Tirol, erhielt von Erherzog Ferdinand, Graf zu Tirol, d.d. Innsbruck 16. Jan. 1591 den tiroler Adelstand nebst Wappenbesserung.

Paul Leiß, kais. Hofbuchhalter, **Wilhelm** und **Michael**, die Leiß Gebrüder, und ihre Vettern: **Johann Christof**, **Johann Caspar**, **Gerorg Johann** und **Paul** erhielten d.d. Wien 22. Jan. 1624 eine kais. Bestätigung des dem **Johann Leiß** vom Erzherzog Ferdinand zu Österreich d.d. Innsbruck 16. Jan. 1591 verliehenen Adels als eines rittermäßigen Reichsadelstandes und resp. Ausdehnung auf dieselben, dann Verleihung des Prädicats "**von Laimburg**" und der Rotwachsfreiheit, des Freisitzrechts, Befreiung von allen bürgerlichen Aemtern, Bewilligung im Reich und den Erblanden Burgen und Schlösser zu bauen, und sich davon zu nennen.

Die tiroler Landstandschaft erhielt die Familie 1684. Laimburg, einst den "von Leiß" gehörig, ist ein jetzt verfallenes Schloß ob Kaltern gelegen.

"From the Upper Inn Valley of Austria, and South Tyrol, records show three lines of Leiss Family descendants, spreading out:

Line 1-To Pachbach, Oberbayern, Leys, Netherlands, Belgium, to London, Paris & Madrid

Line 2-To Innsbruck, Nuremburg, Oberbayern, Lower Bavaria, Wurzburg, Upper Palatinate, circling back to Vienna and to the Leiss of Laimburg.

Line 3-To Stellermark and Saxony, where the name became written as Leysser/Leisser.

Our Leisz ancestors are believed to have descended from Line 2, listed above.




From Tuccimei's publication, Leiss di Laimburg, we now know that there was a fourth line, well documented, that led south to Italy. It would be surprising if there weren't more, lines, knowing, that Paul Leiss, in 1624, was sharing his inheritance with two brothers and five cousins.

The ancestors of our immigrating ancestor **Jacob Leisz**, great-grandfather of **Douglas Robert Leisz**, are believed to have originated in the Upper Inn Valley, just over the crest of the Tyrolean Mountains from Laimburg Castle. Over the years, it is believed that they migrated to the Rhine and Main River Valleys. Naturalization records of Jacob Leisz show that his family came to America from Bavaria about 1830. Family tradition is that they were from Wurzburg, on the Main River in Bavaria. [See more in Part II]

In 1989, Doug and I took a Forestry Tour of Germany, sponsored by the World Forestry Center in Portland Oregon. We traveled from Frankfurt to as far to the east as Dresden, then back through Nuremberg, concluding the tour in Wurzburg. We had viewed many beautiful forests, but as we, dropped into the Main River Valley, the surrounding hills were covered with grape vines. [See appendix for pictures] As we had planted our vineyard about six years earlier, we were intrigued with this view. Doug's immigrating ancestor, Jacob Leisz, had been a cooper by trade in his youth. It seemed as if all the pieces were falling into place. We were disappointed, however, when we searched for records at the Lutheran Church and the City Hall, to find that all the records of Wurzburg were destroyed, when the British, bombed the city at the end of World War II, in retaliation for the Germans bombing of London.

We travelled on to Munich and found several pages in the telephone book of Leisz and Leiss, intermingled as if it was the same name. [See appendix for more details.]

Finding the Leiss di Laimburg publication has given me new hope that some early records of Leiss migrations to Bavaria and Wurzburg may still exist in the Archives of Innsbruck and the Furstenbau Museum in the Fortress of Marienburg.

LEIS = LEIß = LEISS = LEISS OF PASCHBACH = LEISS OF LAIMBURG... etc		
<i>It visualizes the genealogia (clicca where it finds the icona)</i>		
LEIS	Like in heraldry, the simpler outline is <i>nearly</i> also <i>sure</i> most ancient	
LEIß	Version deriving from the plurale in grafia south wind-German	
LEYSS	Version deriving from the plurale in grafia south wind-German	
LEYß	Version deriving from the plurale in grafia south wind-German	
LEIß	Version deriving from the plurale in grafia south wind-German	
LEIZZ	Version in grafia south wind-Hungarian-Czech-Slovak	
LEIZZE	Version in grafia south wind-Hungarian-Czech-Slovak	
LEISSER	Version in grafia south wind-Hungarian-Czech-Slovak	
LEISE	Version adapted to the Italian language	
LEISA	Version adapted to the Italian language	
LEISS	Plurale version in grafia Mediterranean	
LEISSA	Version deriving from the plurale in grafia Mediterranean	
LEISSE	Version deriving from the plurale in grafia Mediterranean	
LEISS OF PASCHBACH	Bestowal of titi it nobiliare better not specified in 1556 (perhaps already in 1487 and 1491)	
LEISS OF PASCHPACH	Modification due sure to the amanuensi in the writing of actions	
LEISS OF LAIMBURG	Bestowal of titi it nobiliare better specified in 1624 (you do not see Castel Passage in Tirolo)	
LEISS OF LAINBURG	Modification due sure to the amanuensi in the writing of actions	
LEISS OF LEIMBURG	Modification due sure to the amanuensi in the writing of actions	
LEISS OF LEINBURG	Modification due sure to the amanuensi in the writing of actions	

From <<http://www.laimburg.bz.it/46d330.html>>

The Laimburg Estate Today

In 1975, the Province of South Tyrol established the Laimburg Agriculture and Forestry Research Centre, The Laimburg Province Winery and The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle.



Laimburg Agriculture & Forestry Research Centre

“In addition to the management and administration of all provincially-owned areas of agriculture production, the Laimburg estate management is also in charge of the management of the finances of the Research Center. The provincially owned farms represent either single sites or joined production units, The Laimburg Winery, several workshops, gardening, the fish hatchery “Passer,” and the Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle also belong to the estate managements area of work. All the extended holdings are located at 100 to 200 meters [approx. 450 feet] above sea level at various sites in South Tyrol. The different altitudes and microclimates allow for cultivation of all agricultural plants found in South Tyrol, and thus for research that is performed in order to increase competitiveness of South Tyrolean farmers. The agriculture and forestry areas function primarily as sites for research activity. They are also available to the students of the Laimburg technical school for fruit growing, viticulture, and gardening for the practical training. The income generated on the areas not used for research helps to finance the research activity. Produce from these sites is cultivated according to the guidelines of organic farming and covers all areas of agricultural production like dairy farming, apiculture, mountain agriculture with the cultivation of medicinal and aromatic herbs, fish farming, gardening and vegetable cultivation, fruit growing and viticulture. The most popular production of the Laimburg estate Management is the Laimburg Winery. It produces 2,500 hectolitres of wine annually. Some 15 different wines are included in its assortment, all made from grapes taken from proprietary vineyards. In the “Fellsenkeller”, in a stone cellar adjacent to the Laimburg land holding, events and wine tastings are organized in order to promote wines of South Tyrol, as well as wine culture. In addition, it provides an ideal atmosphere for presentation of South Tyrol as a wine country, as well as a reception hall for the provincial government.”



The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle

Located in Meran/Merono, South Tyrol, about 35 miles north of Bolzano.

“On the sunny slopes above Meran, where Austria’s Empress Elizabeth once strolled, today you will find the flowering gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle. This unique garden area features some 400,000 species of plants and in its centre the former Habsburg residence, now houses the Province’s Museum of Tourism. The gardens are operated as one of the Laimburg Estate holdings.”

Empress Elizabeth Christine was the wife of Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI von Habsburg who reined from 1711 to 1740. He was the great-great grandson of Ferdinand II, who conferred upon Paul Leiss the Laimburg Castle.

During World War I, Austria lost South Tyrol to Italy, but today it is an autonomous province. In 2005, the Garden of Trauttmansdorff was voted Italy’s most beautiful garden, and the next year it was placed on the Europe’s Top Ten Gardens List, voted number six.

To give a little historical perspective to family history, Paul Leiss became Lord of the Laimburg Estate, while the ancestors of Douglas Robert Leisz, through his mother, Dorothy Winifred Pratt and her ancestors, the Pratts, the Aldens, the Soules, the Rogers and others were struggling through their first few years of survival in Plymouth Colony, a fantastic contrast between the Old World and the New!