

OUR TSCHUDI ANCESTORS

INTRODUCTION

Most of us are interested in who our ancestors were. Some do something about it and get involved in Family History Research, also called Genealogy. In doing so we may encounter some ghosts in a closet, or, if we are lucky, trace our ancestry back to royalty. We all have heard people explain to us that they have an uninterrupted line going back to the time of Christ and, using the records contained in the Bible, even back to Adam.

And then there are those of us who struggle to get past our grandparents or great-grandparents. For instance, making the connection to our ancestors who left Europe and came to this country can present some major challenges. The spelling of names may have changed, and, more often than not, there simply are no reliable records about where our ancestors came from. And even if we have a place of origin for them, the vital records may have been destroyed by wars, floods or fires. Another stumbling block has to do with the fact that different countries started their record keeping at different times. And then there is the problem of language and old hand writings, let alone the need to travel to "the old country" with the associated expenses.

Happily for the members of the Zweifel family, many of these problems have been overcome by those who spent time and effort in doing research, here in the United States and back in Switzerland. We are all indebted to Robert and Ann Gillis-Zweifel, who have been pioneers in this effort. Much work has gone into this labor of love and much has been accomplished.

But, alas, we do not have royal ancestry. And, if it had not been for an ancestor by the name of Hans Zweifel, who married Maria Tschudi in 1597, all these efforts would have come to an ending point in the 16th Century. Hans probably had no idea when he courted his future bride, that his descendants would be overjoyed to have at least one connection to nobility, although not royalty.

It was Keith Wilding, who, at one of our reunions brought to our attention that at least one of our ancestral lines tied us to "some better folks". Picking up where Keith had left off, I decided to look into the matter further. With the help of Fridolin Tschudy, who is the author of "A History and Genealogy of the noble Family of Tschudy" and with his written permission, I was able to compile an abbreviated version of his work.

It is my hope that this short summary will clear up some misconceptions and increase our appreciation for those who have gone before us.

Werner Brutsch-Zweifel

AN ABBREVIATED HISTORY OF THE TSCHUDI FAMILY OF GLARUS

As indicated earlier in the introduction, this abbreviated history of the Tschudi Family is based upon a history compiled by Fridolin Tschudy in 2002.¹ It is used here with the written permission by the author, Fridolin Tschudy.²

The Tschudi family, originally called “the Tschudi of Glarus”³ is one of the oldest noble families in Switzerland. Their roots can be traced back to the 8th Century A.D. (anno domini = after Christ) in Glarus.⁴ A certified family tree (“Stammregister”) exist for this family going back to the 10th Century with a number of writers, soldiers and statesmen among this illustrious clan.

All of today’s members of families with the surname Tschudy, Tschudi, von Tschudy and von Tschudi, regardless of which spelling they are using, and where they were born or live, are descendants of the same ancestor: Joannes Schudin, Knight of Glarus. The old clan of the “Knights of Glarus” were originally residing in Glarus⁵, resettled in Zuerich, but eventually, in the 800’s, returned to Canton Glarus where they settled in Linthal⁶. At that time, the lands of Glarus belonged to a monastery⁷ through a bequest made by Saint Fridolin⁸. A number of members of the Tschudi family held the office of “Meier”⁹. Because of this very responsible office and others the Tschudis became one of the most important and best known families of Switzerland and abroad. Bearers of the name Tschudy, to a large extent, were responsible for the history of Glarus for many generations. They held the office of governor (“Landammann”) of the Canton of Glarus no less than seventeen times, more often than any other family. Another field of endeavor where the Tschudys were among the leaders in Switzerland was that of mercenary service¹⁰. An example of such a service which has survived to the present time is the Papal Guard in Rome¹¹. There were also a number of scholars among the

¹ Fridolin Tschudy / “Geschichte und Genealogie der Uralt Adelligen Familie von Tschudy, von Tschudi, Tschudy, Tschudi” / Zusammengestellt von Fridolin Tschudy im Jahre 2002.

² Permission to copy and translate portions of this history was granted by the author, Fridolin Tschudi of Glarus in a letter to Werner Brutsch on October 8, 2009.

³ Before the introduction of surnames members of the Tschudi family were called by their given names and the identifying term “von Glarus” (of Glarus) where Glarus indicates the place where they came from, in this case Glarus in Switzerland. As an example one of our ancestors was Rudolf von Glarus II and his father Ulrich von Glarus II (see Pedigree Chart / Chart No. 6).

⁴ Glarus is both the name of a Canton (“Kanton” = State) in Switzerland as well as that of a town (the capital city of the Canton of Glarus).

⁵ In the early middle ages (“Fruehes Mittelalter”).

⁶ Linthal is the town where our ancestors, the Zweifel family, originated.

⁷ Kloster Saeckingen am Rhein.

⁸ Saint Fridolin is the patron saint of Glarus. He ministered to the people of Glarus during his life. His image is shown in the crest of the Canton of Glarus.

⁹ Administrators. One of their responsibilities was that of collecting the tithes from the inhabitants and delivering them to the Abbess (Mother Superior) of the monastery.

¹⁰ “Soeldnerdienst” = Service in the armies of the various monarchs in Europe.

¹¹ “Paepstliche Schweizergarde”, which consists entirely of men from Switzerland. Their responsibility is to guard the Pope.

Tschudys, among them Aegidius (“Gilg”) Tschudy, who was the first author of a comprehensive history of Switzerland.

The origin of the surname Tschudi

As mentioned earlier, all bearers of the surname Tschudy, are descendants of Joannes Schudin, who was born around 870 A.D. and died in the year 936 AD.. It is also an established fact that around 800 A.D. the Knights of Glarus settled in Linthal, Canton Glarus. It is quite possible that the name of the Canton of Glarus had its origin in the designation given to this group of knights¹². There are several theories about where the name Tschudy originally came from. Of these, the most plausible one seems to be that it came from the term Judex (in Latin “Giudice”), meaning a Judge.

It appears that the name originally was used as a by-name as in “Joannes von Glarus, called Schudi”. As time passed the name “Knights von Glarus” was replaced by this by-name of “Schudin” or “Schudi”. As was common with surnames, this one also underwent some changes in spelling. It is possible that the term “the Schudy” was eventually abbreviated to “Tschudy”. One has to remember that for many centuries very few people were able to read and write¹³. As a result there was a great variation of spellings in use. Today, at least in Switzerland, there are only two ways the name is spelled: Tschudy and Tschudi.

“Die Adelsbriefe” (Letters or documents (declarations) of nobility)

As has been mentioned above, the ancestor (“Stammvater”) of all the Tschudys was Joannes of Glarus, named Schudi. According to documents still available today, this individual, in the year 906 A.D., was declared “free and noble”¹⁴ in Rottweil by the Roman King Ludwig III. Aegidius Tschudy, well known historian and governor of Glarus, received confirmation of this fact while representing the Swiss Confederation at the Court of Emperor Ferdinand I in Augsburg in 1559¹⁵.

¹² The naming of the Canton happened many years later than that of the Knights of Glarus.

¹³ Even the clergy in local parishes, who recorded events such as baptisms, marriages and deaths, often spelled surnames the way they heard them rather than in a uniform way of spelling.

¹⁴ “Frei und edel erklart”

¹⁵ The declaration reads “that he (Aegidius Tschudy) and all present and future persons bearing the name Tschudy, irrespective of their religious affiliation and their place of birth were free and entitled to use the title Knight or Baron (“Freiherr, Ritter und Baron”).

The Tschudi Crest (“Das Tschudiwappen”)

Although the Tschudi crest has a number of variations, it appears that the original crest consisted of a green fir tree, torn from the ground (with the roots), with a red trunk and nine red fir cones. The background of the crest is in gold.

The origin of the Tschudi crest is based upon an incident which is documented and historically proven. It is translated here in an abbreviated form.

“Knight Rudolf of Glarus”, also known as “Schudi”, who was born in 1257 and died in 1315, and who, because of his enormous size and strength was given the byname “the long Riebing”, became involved in an argument with Hans von Seedorf of Uri¹⁶ over an inheritance which the latter refused to relinquish. Hans von Seedorf was sometime referred to as “the Devil of Seedorf”, even by his own people. One day, while hunting in the mountains, Hans von Seedorf and some of his people approached Rudolf Schudi and his companions. In the ensuing battle between the two groups and after Rudolf had broken his hunting weapons, he tore a young fir tree out of the ground and killed nine of his foes from Uri and sent the rest running. Since then the Schudis, and later the Tschudis, in remembrance of the courage of their ancestor, use a green fir tree, torn out of the ground in their crest.”

Later variations of the Tschudi crest show an ibex¹⁷ together with the fir tree and still later only the ibex.

¹⁶ Uri is one of the original three Swiss Cantons (Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden) which formed an alliance in 1291.

¹⁷ Alpine Ibex, called “Steinbock” in German, is a species of wild goats that lives in the mountains of the European Alps.

Our Tschudi ancestors

The following are short biographical sketches of our Tschudi ancestors, beginning with Maria Tschudi who married Hans Zweifel of Linthal, Canton Glarus. To better understand the relationship it is suggested that you use the "Pedigree Chart" enclosed with this history. The genealogical, historical and biographical information used was extracted from the History of the Tschudi Family, written by Fridolin Tschudi and is used with his permission.

In order to identify persons below with individuals on the Pedigree Chart the following identifiers are used:

[Chart no. / Individual no.] In the case of Maria Tschudi, who is Individual no.1 on Chart no.1, this identifier is [1/1].

(RIN) Corresponds to the Record Identification Number used by the PAF Program. In the case of Maria Tschudi it is (416).

Maria Tschudi [1/1] (416)

Born September 2, 1578 in Schwanden, Glarus. Married Hans (or Johannes) Zweifel about 1597. This couple had nine children. After the death of Hans Zweifel in June of 1621, Maria married Hans Elmer in October of the same year. Maria died in 1644.

Jost Tschudi [1/2] (675)

Born in 1540 in Schwanden. Married Elsbeth Vogel of Glarus in 1576. Jost had been married previously to another woman by the name of Vogel, who was a daughter of Jacob Vogel, Governor ("Landvogt") of Glarus. Jost was Governor ("Landammann") from 1589 – 1591 and served as a Judge in 1577 and 1585. He was a captain in France (probably in a company of Swiss mercenaries). He died in 1622 in Schwanden.

Johannes Tschudi [1/4] (905)

Born in 1500 and died after 1574. Johannes married Maria Sontag of Schwanden around 1535. Maria, his wife, is referred to as "Auslaenderin" (a person who was born and came from abroad). He served as a council member ("Ratsherr") and a Judge. Johannes became famous for his travels in other parts of the world. The couple had eight children.

Jost Tschudi [1/8] (1077)

Jost Tschudi was born in Schwanden on April 16, 1462, but resided in Glarus later in his life. Although his descendants converted to the reformed (or evangelical) church, he remained catholic until he died in May of 1525 in Schwanden. Jost Tschudi was Treasurer ("Seckelmeister") for many years, beginning in 1514 and Governor from 1521 to 1523. In 1516 he was a member of a delegation which brought about an "everlasting peace" between the Kingdom of France and the Confederation of Swiss States ("Eidgenossenschaft").

Heinrich (or Heinitzi) Tschudi [1/16] and [2/1] (1581)

Heinrich Tschudi was born in 1427 in Schwanden. He was married (name of wife is not known) and had a son Heinrich, who was born in 1461. Heinrich, the son, moved to

Glarus where he became Governor from 1509 - 1515. He remained single and died in 1525.

The younger of the two sons, named Jost, also became Governor. See Jost Tschudi [1/8] (1077) above.

Heinrich Tschudi von Glarus [2/2] (1519)

Heinrich was born in 1382 in Linthal and died after 1427. He changed his residence from Linthal to Schwanden. He married Katharina Netstaler around 1461. He was a member of the council and a judge. In addition he held a number of other responsible positions as mediator in conflicts. Through his move to Schwanden he became the forefather of all the Tschudis in Schwanden.

Heinrich Tschudi von Glarus [2/4] (1510)

He was born in 1356 and lived in Linthal. He was married to Ida Kilchmatter (possibly the daughter of Dietrich Kilchmatter. Heinrich was a member of the (town) council and a "Pannerherr"¹⁸ (also Bannerherr, so named because he carried the banner into battle). Heinrich had extensive land holdings in Linthal. Heinrich himself lost his life on February 22, 1388 in the "Mordnacht zu Weesen"¹⁹, together with his brother Hermann.

Heinrich Tschudi IV von Glarus [2/8] (402)

This ancestor, Heinrich IV, was born 1328 in Glarus, where he lived all his life. He married Katharina von Port, who was born in Milano, Italy about 1332. Her father, Anton von Port, a nobleman of Milano, had settled in (Canton) Uri (possibly in Fluehlen). He distinguished himself in the Battle of Sempach.

Heinrich was a member of the Council of the Lands of Glarus. His wife, Katharina, bore him two sons, Heinrich and Hermann, who both were killed in Weesen in 1386.

Heinrich IV died in the Battle of Sempach on July 9, 1386.²⁰

Johannes Tschudi von Glarus [2/16] and [3/1] (1429)

Johannes was born in 1290, either in Glarus or Linthal. He became a judge and a council member ("Ratsherr"). He was married to Katharina von Seedorf of Uri in 1314. In 1315 he fought on the side of the Swiss against "Habsburg" in the Battle of Morgarten.²¹ His father, Rudolf, who was also called "der lange Riebing", was the one who battled Hans von Seedorf²². The latter was a brother to Katharina von Seedorf, the wife of Johannes.

¹⁸ Heinrich Tschudi became "Pannerherr" in 1386, after his uncle, Johannes Tschudi, who had held this position before him, lost his life in a battle by Ober-Windegg on July 4, 1386.

¹⁹ A few weeks after the battle of Sempach the "Habsburger" (Austrian) attacked the city of Weesen (by Walensee). Some of the citizens of Weesen who were sympathizers with the Austrians opened the gates to let them into the city. The "Eidgenossen" (Swiss army) were surprised in their sleep and were murdered, among them Heinrich Tschudi, the "Pannerherr".

²⁰ The Battle of Sempach is considered the high point of the battle for independence fought by the Swiss ("Eidgenossen" = brothers in oath) against the House of Habsburg (Austrian). The legend of "Arnold Winkelried" a hero who single handedly opened an entry through the heavily armed knights of the Austrian army, has its origin in this battle. It is well worth reading.

²¹ There were four major battles for independence between the Swiss and the Austrians. They were at Morgarten, Laupen, Sempach and Naefels. The Swiss were victorious in all four.

²² See the story about the battle between Knight Rudolf of Glarus and Hans von Seebach in the chapter about the "Tschudy Crest".

Johannes Tschudi was instrumental in the first alliance (“Bund”) between the original States of the Swiss Confederation (“Eidgenossenschaft”) and the people of Glarus (June 4, 1352). Johannes died in 1360.

Rudolf IV Tschudi von Glarus [3/2] (1326)

Rudolf the IV was born in 1257 in Glarus. Because of his enormous size and weight he was called “the lange Riebing”. (See also note 22). He married Judith von Windegg, the daughter of Diethelm (or Wilhelm) von Windegg. He held the office of “Keller” which gave him the responsibility to collect the tithes from among the people for the monastery in Saeckingen²³. Rudolf IV died in 1335.

Rudolf Tschudi von Glarus [3/4] (1312)

Born in 1222 and died in 1302. He was a Judge in 1253 and a Governor from 1265 – 1287. In 1250 he married Katharina von Buerglen (Uri). It appears that Johannes, the father of Rudolf, had been involved in a legal process with the monastery in Saeckingen over the loss of the “Meieramt”²⁴. In 1256 Rudolf continued the process but eventually lost. Later, the Abbess of Saeckingen must have felt that the Tschudis had been treated unjustly and bequested to them two parcels of land in Glarus to compensate them for the loss.

Rudolf Tschudi and his wife Katharina had a number of children. Mentioned in the Tschudi History are five sons. They are Herrmann (*1252), Johannes (*1254), Ulrich (*1255), Rudolf (*1257) and Heinrich (*1260).

Johannes V Tschudi von Glarus [3/8] (1765)

He was born in 1175 and died in 1256. Johannes V married Mechthild von Vennen. It is not known how many children they had beyond their son Rudolf (*1222) who is our ancestor. Johannes was given the title of “Baron” in 1239.

Johannes was involved in a legal process with the monastery of Saeckingen, when they withdrew the “Meieramt” from his family. He died in 1256 before a settlement was reached. His son Rudolf continued the process, but lost.

When the father of Johannes, Heinrich II, divided his “Lehen”²⁵, Johannes was the recipient of all the property his father had in Glarus.

It is of interest that Johannes V was the first of the Tschudis whose wife’s name was recorded.

Heinrich II Tschudi von Glarus [3/16] and [5/1] (3904)

This individual was also known as Heinrich von Flums²⁶. Heinrich was born in 1143. His death date is not known and neither is the name of his wife. Heinrich had several children, however only his three sons are recorded. They were Johannes V (*1175), Rudolf IV (*1180) and Heinrich (*1185).

²³ A monastery, originally both for monks and nuns, later only for nuns. It is located along the north shore of the Rhine River on what today is Germany.

²⁴ Office responsible for the collection of tithes in Glarus for the monastery of Saeckingen.

²⁵ “Lehen” = estate in fee, also “fiefdom”. The “Lehensherr” (owner of property) leased to the vassal portions of his land to use. In return the vassal had to perform certain services for his owner of the land.

²⁶ Flums is a town in Canton St.Gallen, Switzerland. The Tschudi family were owners of Castle “Graepplang” by Flums.

When Heinrich II divided his land holdings, assets and titles, his oldest son inherited the title of “Baron”, his second son the “Meieramt”²⁷ and his youngest son the town of Flums and the Castle of Graepplang.

With the approval of Abbess Elsbeth of Saeckingen, Emperor Friedrich II bestowed upon Heinrich II the titles of “Chevalier and Baron of Flums”.

Rudolf III Tschudi von Glarus [5/2] (3907)

Rudolf III was born in 1123 and died in 1200. he was also called Schudi von Glarus. He had (at least) two sons who are mentioned in the historical records. The older was Heinrich II (*1143) and the younger Ulrich (*1163). Ulrich was a Knight. He was still alive in 1241²⁸.

Rudolf was named the “Meier” in 1170, a few years before his father Johannes IV died.

Johannes IV Tschudi von Glarus [5/4] (3909)

Born in 1097, Johannes IV died in 1175. Johannes IV is the first member of the Tschudi family who is mentioned as the owner of the “Vizthum Flums-Graepplang”.²⁹ He became “Meier” in 1149 (see Footnote # 27 above). His only son mentioned in the historical records is Rudolf III.

Heinrich I [5/8] (3910)

Heinrich was born in 1074 and died in 1149. He was the first of his family to be called “Schudi” or Tschudi. Heinrich had a number of children, but the only one whose name was recorded was Johannes (IV). He was the recipient of a “Lehen”³⁰ given to him by the Abbess Gertrud vel Gutta of the monastery of Saeckingen.

Hermann I von Glarus [5/16] and [6/1] (3911)

Born in 1050, Hermann died in 1128. He became the “Meier” for the monastery of Saeckingen in 1095. His only son mentioned is Heinrich I.

Johannes III von Glarus. [6/2] (3912)

Johannes was the son of Rudolf II. He was born in 1020 and died in 1095. He received the office and title of “Meier” in 1062. His son Hermann was born in 1050.

Rudolf II von Glarus [6/4] (3913)

Rudolf was born in 990 AD and died in 1062. He received the “Meieramt” in 1029 from the Abbess Bertha of Saeckingen. In the same year he acquired citizenship in Zuerich for himself and for his family. Some of his sons moved to Zuerich and numerous branches of Tschudis remain there to this day.

²⁷ “Meier”, collector of tithes for the Monastery of Saeckingen.

²⁸ Ulrich is mentioned as a witness at the sale of a parcel of land called “Hoeralp” in 1241.

²⁹ “Vice Dominatum” = “Schirmvogt” (Patron). The term refers to an owner of certain rights and privileges in connection with land ownership.

³⁰ “Lehen” = fief

Ulrich I von Glarus [6/8] (3914)

Born in 968 and died in 1029. During his time as a “Meier” there were some disputes over the boundary between Uri and Glarus³¹.

Johannes II von Glarus [6/16] and [1/7] (3915)

Johannes was born in 930 and died in 998 AD. He held the office of “Meier” from 967 to his death in 998.

Rudolf I von Glarus [7/2] (3916)

He was the son of Johannes Tschudi, the forefather of all the Tschudis of Glarus. Born in 898, he took over the “Meieramt” when his father died in 936. In 938 he fought in the battle with Hungary and in 955 and again in 957 against the insurgents in Italy. Rudolf died in 967.

Johannes Tschudi [7/4] (3917)

This individual represents the beginning (“Stammvater”), not only of the Tschudis of Glarus, but also of those of Canton Aargau, Basel and Zuerich. He was born around 870 AD and died in 936. He was referred to as Johannes of Glarus.

On June 11, 906, Johannes was declared “free and noble” (“frei und edel”) by King Ludwig (“the Child”), son of Emperor Arnulf. This event took place in Rottweil (Germany) in the presence of Dukes, Counts and Noblemen. In the same year he was presented with the highest political office in the Lands of Glarus by the monastery of Saeckingen. Together with the office of “Meier”³², Johannes, and his descendants were given the privilege of carrying the title “von Glarus” (of Glarus).

³¹ This was before the original confederation was formed between Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden on August 1, 1291. This date is accepted as the “date of birth” of the Swiss Confederation. Glarus did not join the confederation until 1352.

³² “Major Villicus” = Overseer or steward of an estate. As “Meier” he was entrusted with the collection of tithes in Glarus, which belonged to the monastery of Saeckingen.