

THE FIRST COLONIST FAMILIES OF THE NEWLY FOUNDED ESTERHAZYIAN SETTLEMENTS OF SAAR AND BOGLAR IN SCHILDGEBIRGE. (HUNGARY)

**An article concerning Donauschwabian Families and family research about the
movements within the Donauschwabian settlements
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From the beginning the Donauschwabian colonies and family research are integrally inter-related. One did not only want to discover when and where a village was established, but also the names of the actual first colonists. In most cases, only the name of the village judges and magistrates appear in the settlement contracts as leaders in the new community. Only very rarely are the names of the resident colonists mentioned. The bulk of the settlers, the individual families remain unknown.

As the community established itself, their names gradually came to light in the ordinary course and rhythm of life, from birth to death. This happened in the venue of the church, in using the entries from the church registers. From time to time, censuses were conducted on behalf of the state for taxation purposes, that is, (a census) of the farmers.

The greatest value of these records lies in their continuity. They encompass hundreds of years. The contracts always came about as a result of a particular pressing necessity, namely, concerns about regulating the relationship between the landlord and the community, that is to say, new agreements. The contracts involved only the heads of the households. Therein lies the obstacle for the recording of entire families or tying together of families.

Besides the registers and contracts, there is a third, no less important resource for making genealogical familial connections and these are the listings of the parishioners (*conscriptio status animarum*) which were conducted for a special purpose or because of a special order of the Bishop. In the following work I concern myself with the parish listings of two Donauschwabian communities in SCHILDGEBIRGE that lie between BUCHENWALD (north of the Plattensee) and UPPER BERGLAND.

Schildgebirge is the central part of southwestern Hungary, the central hills between Plattensee and the knee of the Donau. The new Donauschwabian settlements were exclusively driven by the private landlords; they already began in 1691 when Baron JOHANN VON HOCHBURG, received Csolako (Dohlenstein) as a royal gift. The resettlement of Schildgebirge however is practically in the sole purview of Count Esterhazy, whose seat was in Totis ("Tottes", "Dotes" etc. in Hungarian, Tata).

In 1727 Count JOSEPH ESTERHAZY VON GALANTHA acquired the Totis lands from Vienna Baron FRANZ JOSEPH VON KRAPFF, and he also received a royal charter. The far flung territories had no residents. As a staunch supporter of the Catholic restoration, he (Esterhazy) had the remaining Hungarian Calvinists, in part, moved to

other villages and in their places settled Catholic Germans or Slovaks. The German colonists had a good reputation with the Hungarian nobility in Kurs. In order to get German colonists out of the Reich, he sent his (land) agents as far as the head of the Rhein.¹

The first group of colonists out of the Rhein and Main areas had not yet arrived, when the Count arranged his empty possession of Saar² to be settled in 1729 with German settlers from Rothenburg (Vörösvár) in the Upper Bergland that happened to be part of his holdings. In the Theresian Urbarial act it specifically states: *Possessio Saaraestate anni 1729 impopulari coepta (est)*, that is, the settlement of Saar began in the summer of 1729. According to that, Saar is a secondary settlement of Rothenburg.

Boglar³ and Tarjan (Torjing) are the last (communities) to be settled in the Esterhazy settlement area in Schildgebirge. Boglar is my birth and homeland community. I give you my work⁴ as a gift. In the section dealing with the history of the settlement, (Pages 8-41) I focus in detail on the “Puszta Boglar” settlement. I trace the development of the village firmly based on the church archives to 1755-1760. On the basis of the many entries in the Banat church books pertaining to the colonists, who for a time stopped over in Boglar, that is, moved on into the Banat from here, I have to move this year (the founding year) back five years and date the establishment of Boglar precisely from 1750-1760. I will deal with the “Banat Wanderers” of Schildgebirge separately, later on.

Now to the following two, the people - settlers of Saar and Boglar. For what purpose were they settled there? The question can be clearly answered for Boglar. After March 28, 1760, when the contract was signed with Count ESTERHAZY, the parish was established in 1761. However, the viability of the community had to be first proven by a “status animarum” (a census), a survey of the number of people had to be conducted. As it is required, it seems to me, in Church legislation. The proposed church census was planned for 1763, but in fact the church registers were already started in 1761. In the same year the Count’s sheep barn was converted into a roomy rectory. On the inner page of the first baptism register from 1761 is the following entry: “Anno salutis Reparatae 1761 in Possessionem Boglar vocatus est primus parochus, nomine ABRAHAMUS REGULI”. (In the year 1761 Abraham Reguli was named as the first pastor of Boglar). Reguli was the Pastor of Boglar for ten years. We thank him for the subsequent list of names in the register.

The Saar settlement contract with the Tata landlords came into being quite early, that is already in existence in 1732. The church was built in 1735, which in the same year, (or a bit later) burnt, together with the rectory. The first parish records burnt to ashes. They had to be reconstructed by Father JOHANN LEBER, the author of the subsequent, ongoing church records. For the first ten years of its existence, Boglar was a filial parish of Saar⁵.

Also, very close relationships and connections existed between these two neighboring communities. In the settlement agreement of 1760 Saar was expressly noted.

In order to better understand the two (sets of) records, I would quickly like to mention the following. The Saar records: The parishioners of the village of Saar in the Weissenburg deanery of the Diocese of Weissbrunn in the year 1746/47, were compiled upon the request of Bishop Martin Biro and identified the following categories:

- 1: Current number of married couples;
- 2: Names of the married couples, their children and the entire household;
- 3: Their ages;
- 4: Whether practicing?;
- 5: Whether confirmed?;
- 6: Family status.

The parish list from Boglar covered 15 categories, namely:

- 1: The sequence of the houses or families;
- 2: The family status of all the listed persons;
- 3: The numbers of persons listed;
- 4: First and last names of the Catholic colonists, the denominations of various colonists as well as their children of either sex, as well as the entire household;
- 5: The number of Catholic couples;
- 6: The number of couples of other denominations;
- 7: Widowers and widows;
- 8: The number of children of both sexes;
- 9: The age of the listed persons;
- 10: The number of non-practicing persons;
- 11: The number of practicing persons;
- 12: The number of confirmed;
- 13: Unmarried females and males (youths of marriageable age);
- 14: Converts;
- 15: Fallen away from their faith.

The 13 -15 categories can be ignored since there are no totals (that is) information in respect to those questions.

The hand writing in both books is entirely different. The Saar records in the “visitation book” is written in minute script and since the copied handwriting even lost more of its definition, it can only be read with a magnifying glass. In contrast, the Boglar volume, except for certain parts, can be easily read. The spelling, interpretation, etc. of individual family names is a chapter unto itself, which cannot be dealt with in the context of this article. However, I would like to note that there is a marked connection between the Saar and Boglar family names, that is, because individual Saar families belonged to the first colonists in Boglar, and as well, 1) on the basis of being neighbors, and 2) having the same family names (HASENFRATZ, HERZIG, KOGEL, MALY, MACHER, etc)

It seems to me to be much more important to point out a sociological aspect of both records. Despite being kept for the church's purposes, the history of the Donauschwaben settlement can yield much valuable information.

The farmer, who is called a colonist in the Saar records and in a few places "hospes," on the other hand, is called "incola" throughout in the Boglar (account). So, there the colonist is a "guest," here, a "resident." However, both designations do not make any worthwhile distinctions. They are only technical terms.

Remarkably, in both records all or 99% of both villages are farmers. There are only 12 "inquilini" (landless tenant) in Saar, in contrast to only one in "inquilina" in Boglar (page 71). The relatively high portion of domestic servants, servants, and/or "famuli" (farm laborers) and "ancillae" (maids) is a logical outcome of the farming structure of both villages. In Saar their number is three times that of Boglar, namely, there (Saar) are 58, here (Boglar) 22. In Saar the ratio of laborers to maids is 29:29, perfectly balanced; in Boglar it stands at 16:6. The age of the laborers in Saar span from 12 to 28 years. The ages of the maids range from 9 to 20 years. A 55 year old laborer was the exception. In Boglar the youngest servant was a stripling of 7(!), the oldest, 33. Also in Boglar the eldest laborer was a sole 55 year old. Among the maids, the youngest is only 8 and the eldest is 40 years old. It is also worthwhile to note that under the house number 49 in Boglar five laborers are to be found. What could the reason for that be? By all appearances, it seems these hangers on established a communal house and worked for the farmers from there. Servants of school age could understandably only be used as shepherd boys, as well as shepherd girls.

It is not known why, in both accounts, trades people were not identified. For example, blacksmiths, wagon makers, shoemakers do not appear. That is inconceivable. Midwives were also present. This is obviously an omission of the records.

Single people: widowers and widows are scarce. These circumstances confirm the reality that those who stood alone did not have the prospect, and also not the chance, to be able to take the long road out of Hungary. Only the young, married couples with the support of family could take this route. The increase in the size of the families in both Saar and Boglar is remarkable. The composition of the families and households in both villages illustrate the additional increases.

Saar/Boglar Households: (number in household)

7 persons	15 / 11
8 people	10 / 4
9 persons	2 / 1
10 persons	1 / 1
12 persons,	0 / 1
13 persons	1 / 0

In Saar 29 persons lived in an extended family, in Boglar, on the other hand, only 18 because it was a younger settlement.

Saar/Boglar Age Brackets:

45-50 years	15 / 24
51-60 years	19 / 21
61-65 years	3 / 6
66-70 years	0 / 1
71-75 years	0 / 0
75-78 years	0 / 1

In Saar there were only 37 persons over 45 years of age, in Boglar 53. There is no explanation given for this.

Nevertheless, the population density of both villages in general must have been daunting, the so called age pyramid would also have been perceived as healthy.

The numbers concerning the religious situation are peculiar and not without more investigation being required: In Saar in particular, there is an unusually high number of persons not confirmed. That requires additional attention.

Non-confirmed in Saar/ Boglar:

Saar		Boglar	
15-20 years	32	15-20 years	12
21-25 years	8	21-25 years	9
26-30 years	4	26-30 years	3
31-35 years	6	31-35 years	0
43 years	1	39-48 years	4
54 years	1	60 years	1

Non-confirmed adults in Saar 52, in Boglar only 29.

It is likely that the statements in the Saar (parish) visitations, as well as that of the priest from Boglar made some errors. So accordingly, (Nr. 64) a nine year old in Saar and an unbaptized 10 year old were already confirmed (Nr. 69). In Boglar, (Nr. 9) the priest allowed the confirmation of a nine year old and a 22 year old mother is supposed to have a 16 year old daughter.

According to the settlement plan of the Tata rulers, the Puszta Boglar was to have been assigned 150 residential plots, that is, 100 sessions for farmers and 50 for small holders⁶. "An unusually large investment for a private investor" wrote SCHUNEMANN in a letter

to me⁷ on March 22, 1936. Only 72 half sessions were given out and of the 61 earmarked small holding places almost none were utilized, as the above information demonstrates. In short, there was a lack of colonists. The holes could only be filled in time, this being made difficult by the additional fact that the overwhelming majority of the first colonists did not stay in the places and plots assigned, but migrated to the regions to the south, mostly to the Banat.

A comparison of the following persons listed (below) to the land census of 1828, the last census before 1848, gives evidence of the huge influx of colonists in the Donauschwaben settlement area.

The causes for the onward migration can be found in two different reasons. 1) Dissatisfaction with the terms (of settlement) with the Esterhazyian rulers in Tata, and 2.) the pull of extended family. Regarding the first point, I found clear evidence in Friedrich Pestys' village name list of the year 1864. Under point 6 of the above-mentioned work it indicates that the first colonists from Boglar did not increase the amount of land being cleared, so they abandoned their already completed houses and fled "by night and fog". Those who resumed the Donauschwaben research after the First World War in part rediscovered their names. Regarding point 2, it is worthwhile to note that it is understandable, that for human reasons, the migrating relatives and acquaintances would close ranks and be drawn together.

Footnote:

1. I was concentrating my specific focus on the German settlement of the Schildgebirge and that is why at this point I, because of lack of space, have foregone dealing with other issues.
2. In documents and Gazetteers the village commonly appears in the German Form. On the "generalkarte" 1795 (in the vestibule of the House of the Donauschwaben in Salzburg) by F.A. Schraembl "Schaar" remains.
3. Until 1886 the community was called only so (Boglar). Since that time it has been called Vertesboglar (Boglar in Schildgebirge) to distinguish it from Balaton Boglar. (Boglar on the Plattensee).
4. Vertesboglar. Egy hazai német település leírása. (Boglar in Schildgebirge An account of a German settlement in Hungary). Budapest (Ofenpest) 1940, 205 pages.
5. Both communities belonged to the Weissbrunner diocese until 1777. In that year the Stuhlweissenburger diocese was established out of the Weissbrunner diocese to which it has belonged since then. The most recent "Schematismus venerabilis cleri almae dioecesis Albaregalensis anno Domini 1967" "(Stuhlweissenburg 1967) also presents a short parish history in the Hungarian language. The

information regarding Szar agrees with the above extraction. The settlement of Boglar (P.45) is however erroneously stated as being (settled) in the 1740's

6. KONRAD SCHÜNEMANN: Austrian Population Policy under Maria Theresia. Berlin (1935), Page 222.
7. Boglar in Schildgebirge. The Account of a German Settlement in Hungary, Page 18.