

T a t a ' s
T a t t e r e d
T a l e s

Part 1

George Berzsenyi

My Forebears and Kin

TATA'S TATTERED TALES

THE FAMILY FOREST OF MY FOREBEARS AND KIN

PART 1:

THEM AND US

PARTS 2A, 2B, 2C:

MORE ABOUT THEM

PART 3:

MORE ABOUT US

PART 4:

MORE ABOUT ME



EGYHÁZASBERZSENYI

BERZSENYI

**COATS
OF
ARMS**



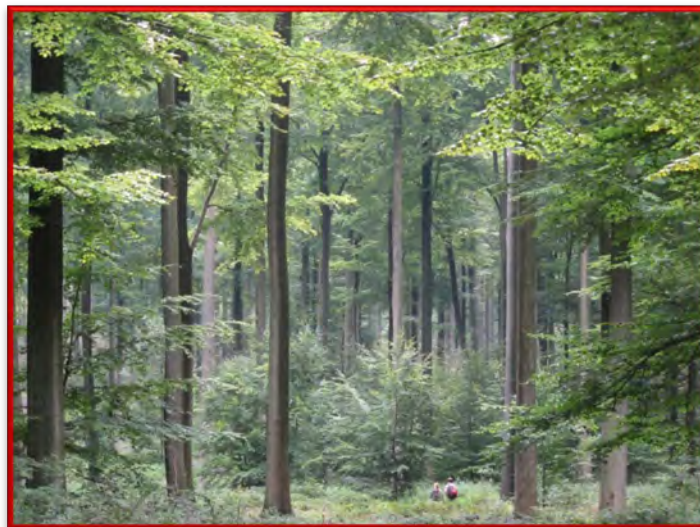
SZENTLÁSZLÓI & BALATONFÜREDI

VARGHA

PART 1

THEM AND US

**THE FAMILY FOREST OF
MY FOREBEARS AND KIN**



**BY
DR. GEORGE BERZSENYI**

2022

Part 1 Them and Us

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Preface

Tata's Tattered Tales is a collection of writings – some connected to one another, some not. They were written over two decades, and while both Mom and I made some efforts to make them time-independent, we probably didn't succeed. Here and elsewhere 'Mom' and 'your mother' refer to my wonderful wife, Kay of more than fifty-seven years, who not only proofreads nearly everything I write, but helps me with respect to content and style of delivery too. I should also add that the 'you' above (actually, the 'your') is a reference to my four grown children. The first, that is, the 0th Edition of 'Tata's Tales' was honoring you, Haba on your 40th birthday. And then, barely a month later I turned around in Xelpho's style and changed only the names I had on it, calling it 1st Edition and gifting with it all four of you, Kids. The 2nd Edition was also addressed to the four of you, since our grandkids were still too young for such stuff. But now, some years later, several of them are grown-ups, and hence my focus is shifting so as to include them too, when I am writing to 'you'. While, ideally speaking, I am writing these 'tales' for all of my future descendants too, it helps me as a writer to have a more easily imagined audience. Hence, the 'you' from now on includes my grown-up grandchildren too. And even more generally, since Tata is an ancient Hungarian reference to the respected old man of the family, I am addressing all my descendants.

Tata's Tattered Tales consists of four parts. The first part is

Them and Us

with a more telling subtitle,

My Forebears and Kin

to make it more intelligible. Parts 2 and 3 are entitled

More about Them and **More about Us,**

respectively, while Part 4 bears the title

More about Me.

Part 2 is also divided into two parts, with Part 2A being about '**Closer and further relatives**', and 2B about '**Berzsenyi relatives**', who are all further relatives, but there are too many of them to fit into Part 2A.

Part 1 consists of three parts. They are 'Pre-Notes', 'My Genealogy' and 'Post-Notes'. In the Pre-Notes, I tell you a bit about Hungary, Hungarian customs, and the people of that land too. In other words, I will try to give you some information about the places and times where and when my ancestors, and hence your ancestors and cousins lived/live. You will find that those notes are indeed 'tattered', jumping from one topic to another with overlaps and lots of omissions. After all, I must leave some work for a posthumous edition too!

The 'My Genealogy' part could have used a separate introduction, but it might suffice for me to tell you that it is about our ancestors, with special attention to my parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents and my first, second and third cousins – both in reverse order. I say a few words about my brother and myself too but leave plenty for Part 2 as far as my brother is concerned and Part 3 with respect to myself.

In the 'Post-Notes', I tell you about my methodology, the tools I used, the help I got, as well as about myself in a purposefully haphazard, but somewhat more delineated fashion. Hopefully, you

will find it informative enough to have some of you follow in my footsteps. From the discussions, you will learn that when I made my first moves in genealogical research exactly 20 years ago, I was very much of a beginner with lofty, yet fairly well-defined goals. I wanted to be able to identify all of my great-great-grandparents, all of my first, second and third cousins, as well as those relatives of mine whose accomplishments were notable. Naturally, I was interested in my earliest ancestors too, wondering how far I could go back in the various branches. On the whole, I was satisfied with the outcome. In view of the devastations caused by the Tartars, Turks, Austrians, Germans, British, Americans and Russians, as well as the newly created and /or enlarged neighboring countries of Hungary, it is a wonder that there are still some documents going back as far as the 16th Century concerning some of my ancestors.

With respect to **Part 2: More about Them**, I must apologize for the ‘lop-sidedness’ of the amount of materials written about the Berzsenyi versus all of the other ancestral families. I can blame several facts for it, starting with the importance of Dániel Berzsenyi, which cannot be compared to the fame of any other ancestor of mine, continuing with the tremendous amount of genealogical work done on the Berzsenyis in comparison to all others, as well to the fact that there were Berzsenyi reunions in the 1940s, while the reunions of the Vargha, Svastits and Juhász families are more recent with much smaller number of attendees. Getting to know many more of them led to a lot more correspondence with them and a lot more information about them too.

In this part, I also include the English equivalent of the articles published in *Matrikula* about my Berzsenyi, Vargha, Svastits - Csertán, Fritsch and Juhász roots.

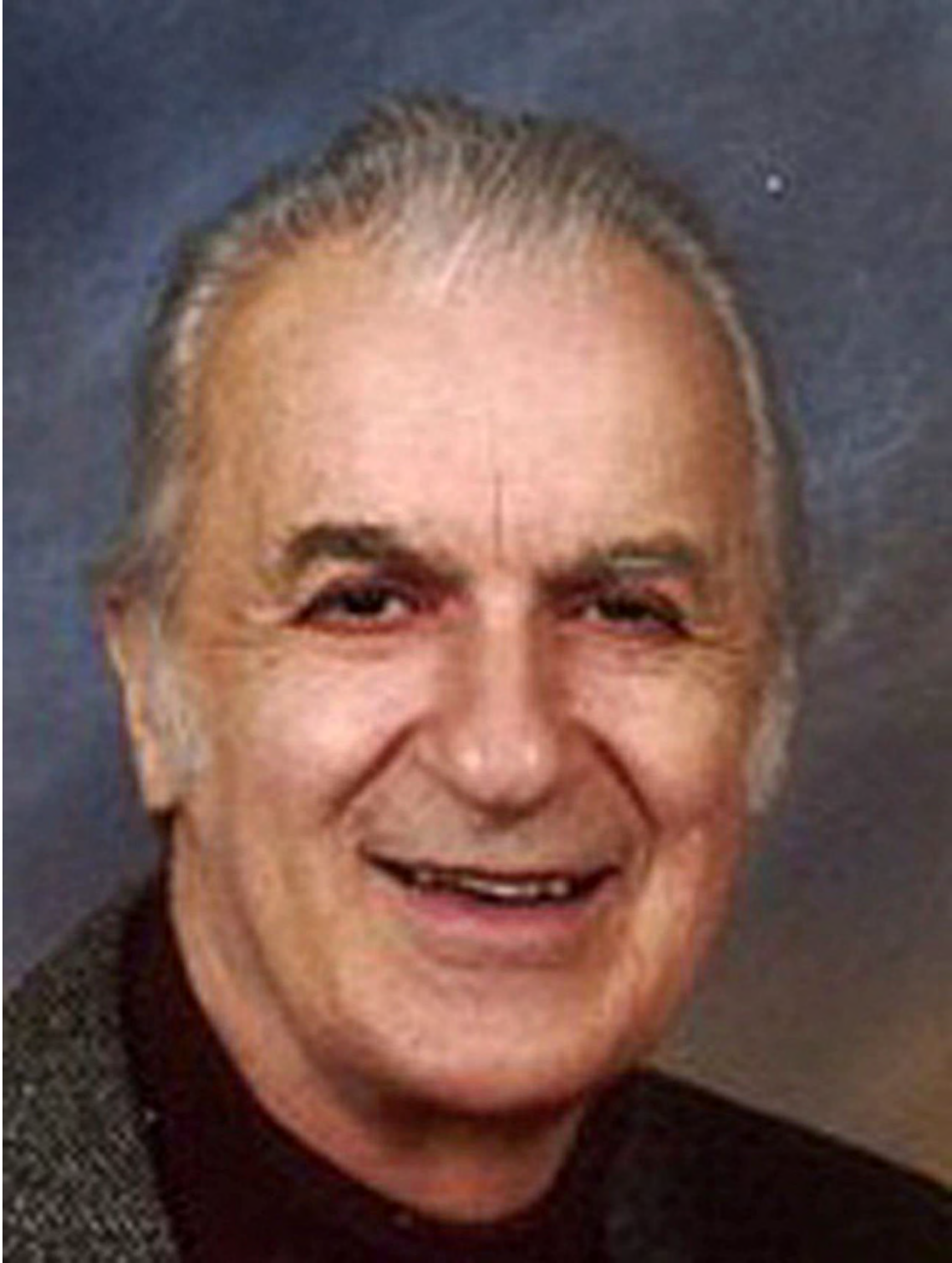
Part 3: More about Us is the autobiographical portion of my writings, with revised versions and continuations of the old autobiographical stories that appeared in the 2006 version, like ‘Growing up in Hungary’, ‘The 1956 Revolution’, ‘Crossing the Border’, ‘Growing up in America’, ‘The Monroe Years’, etc. I will also include my ‘Kay ÖrökKé’ write-ups, since upon rereading them, we found that they gave yet another window into our life over the decades. I will also have some stories about our excursions with the grandkids, our family get-togethers like the one in Florida in 2018, on my 75th birthday in Milwaukee, and back in 2012 in Denver.

Part 4: More about me will include some writings of mine about my mathematical programs, as well as a description of my career over the years. Thus, I will reproduce the Monthly article written upon my receiving the Gung and Hu Award from the Mathematical Association of America (MAA), the written version of the interview conducted by Joe Palca with me, as well as the English rendition of the “Mandiner Interview” conducted by Beáta Viola in 2016. I will also include my “Summa Summarum” piece, as well as various reflections on myself and my career.

Of course, I know that especially in genealogy, no task is ever totally completed. That is especially true for one’s writings, since usually just as much makes it into the desk drawer as into print. Nowadays some also gets lost in various folders on the computer. Nevertheless, I hope that most of the essential writings of mine are in these volumes.

Enjoy reading them!

Tata



TATA₁

Dedication

I hereby dedicate my work to the memory of my parents, who died 36 years ago – my mother on the 9th of November, and my father on the 25th of December 1986. My mother died in Marcali, while my father died in Budapest. I was not there, nor did I attend their funerals, but I visit their gravesite in Nikla whenever I go to Hungary. They were laid to rest in the crypt of the Berzsenyi family, which is recognized as a National Heritage Site, and hence it is under the Hungarian government's care. Thus, at least their remains are treated with proper dignity.

Both lived a hard life. Hence, it is no wonder that my mother's memories always went back to her youth. Even her last reminiscences were of her favorite horses, as if her adult life was not important enough for her to write about it. Only between 1967 and 1984 did she have a relatively settled life again – for the first 5 years in Ft. Worth, TX, and then in Nikla, Hungary. But the last few years were harder again as both were losing their grips on life.

My father's life was just as hard throughout the years. First, he never wanted to be a soldier, but was an excellent officer and his commanders talked him out of leaving the military. He fought through both world wars. His hard work on the left-over part of the old estate was not appreciated after WW II, and he could find no work, even at the lowest physical level, except occasionally. He ended up in deportation, and even after coming to America he had to work in low-level jobs, like a janitor prior to finding his calling as a teacher of English-style horseback riding, dressage and jumping during his last 10 years here. And even in retirement, he ended up stuck in Nikla, which brought back only bitter memories of his unappreciated successes and incredible losses 25+ years earlier.

Both my parents had a strong influence on me as far as my genealogical development was concerned. Mother kept up an extensive correspondence, mostly with relatives even during the worst years of communism, and there were several pieces of key information coming from my father, like the maiden name of Great-grandmother Franciska Hudeček. And I am sure that both would be pleased with the outcome of my work – not just in genealogy, but otherwise as well. And hopefully, they would be happy with my kids and grandkids too and would approve the choices I made over the years.

I know they would also approve of Kay and would be happy for my eternal happiness with her. They would like her loving concern for me and our family and would be pleased with the support she gives me in all my endeavors, including the present one. Hopefully, this final version will live up to their expectations even more.

Returning from the past to the present, I also want to dedicate the fruits of my work to super-editor wife and my great kids, in-laws and grandkids, who have always been so understanding towards my shortcomings when I dedicate myself to my work – be it mathematical or genealogical. I missed many a meal on account of my single-minded drive, and some baseball and tennis matches too. Sorry about that!

And finally, I am thinking of the lucky kid or grandkid or further descendant of mine, who will find my genealogical and/or mathematical endeavors fascinating enough to further everything by many a mile (or kilometer if s(h)e happens to be across the Pond). That kid or old (wo)man will have a ball, since I do leave behind a lot of treasures, but only the ones well-initiated can really value them all.

Preliminaries

In what follows I will address some of the shortcomings in my historical, cultural and genealogical writings, along with related issues, excuses and explanations whenever I have some. I will also comment on the software I am using, pointing out various shortcomings thereof. To be fair, I should also sing my praises thereof, but I leave that to the reader. Hopefully, the appearance of the finished product will speak volumes for itself.

- ▲ Rather than sharing with you a carefully selected portion of my writings, I chose not to be overly critical thereof, and included most of them in the hope that they all have some relevance.
- ▲ While some parts were written in the order in which they are presented, most of the material was organized only later to give that appearance. Some duplications and maybe even contradictions arose that way.
- ▲ Some of the duplications were intentional. For example, much of the content of my articles in *Matrikula* (i.e., the English renditions thereof) came from my methodical writings about my ancestors in Part 1. Nevertheless, I will include them in **Part 2C** partly on account of the other information presented therein, and partly because I wrote them with a different slant.
- ▲ At other times the duplications are less intentional, but I don't think they hurt. Removing them would have been too difficult.
- ▲ Some of the materials may appear 'helter-skelter', like the Pre-Notes in Part 1, where I tried to tell you a bit about Hungary and the Hungarians, its history and their culture. In spite of not being a historian or anthropologist, I could have written volumes on them; then the writing would have been smoother. Limiting myself to 'snippets' was hard.
- ▲ Neither am I a genealogist. Hence, most of the time I don't bother with exact data, and I am sloppy even when it comes to names, at times using nicknames in place of given names. My main excuse is that I didn't want to lose valuable time on editing my writings – possibly, at the expense of completing my work. Hopefully, nobody minds a bit of informality.
- ▲ I am fairly consistent in skipping the 'Dr' titles too; I hereby apologize for it.
- ▲ Such shortcomings appear in some of the family trees included, especially, if they were created earlier. To recreate them would have been time and labor intensive. Not being an expert on the *Family Tree Maker (FTM)* software, I had to make compromises.
- ▲ Initially, and at that time it seemed logical, I started with two separate trees, the Vargha and the Berzsenyi trees, and it was only later that I also created a "GeorgeAll" tree, where I tried to keep all of my information. Unfortunately, by then I had separate trees (databases) for many other ancestral families as well, not taking into account the many overlaps thereof. The overlaps of the trees would have required entering the same data on several of them (as well as in the GeorgeAll tree), which I failed to do time and again. Thus, depending on their origin, there may even be some contradictions in the information displayed in different trees; I hereby apologize for them.
- ▲ The *FTM* has its own shortcomings too, like not allowing for a question mark for the date of one's birth or death. Putting 'unknown' in place of '?' uses valuable space, which I couldn't afford most of the time. Moreover, it is an eye-sore to have a bunch of 'unknown's in a family

tree. The *FTM* also fails to print terms like ‘after’ and ‘before’ dates, that is, the entered ‘Bef, 1935’ and the ‘Aft. 1935’ both appear as 1935 in ancestor and descendant trees.

- ▲ Concerning the family trees, I should also mention that spouses are connected by double lines to one another, whereas a single line connects children and their parents. Unfortunately, in case of multiple marriages it is not clear at times who belongs to whom.
- ▲ Typically, the spouses appear next to one another, but at times I put them below one another to reduce the width of a tree and thereby make the entries larger and readable.
- ▲ I should also mention that some of the trees included in my writings are extremely trimmed of all limbs not essential to the discussions at hand, since otherwise they would be too huge and the lettering too small to read.
- ▲ I also had difficulties inserting Roman numerals I, II, III, etc. after the last names when appropriate in the English manner. Thus, György Vargha II is written as György II Vargha in one of the trees. Left it that way.
- ▲ I must also apologize for the use of several interlocking descendant trees in place of a larger one. I do so in order to assure that the names and dates are legible enough to the naked eye. Originally, I meant to have my work accessible only electronically, but the fast-changing world of informatics would have made it obsolete. In any case, the advantages of a printed version still outweigh the disadvantages. I sorely miss the opportunity of hyperlinking, as well as the ability to include the URLs for outside links, but the often-changing URLs would be bothersome too. Hence, I prefer to live without them.
- ▲ Neither am I an expert on the *MS Word* software. Using *MS Word* instead the *MS Publisher* was obviously asking for problems, but the alternative would have been more costly and more demanding in some ways. Hence the proper positioning of pictures may have suffered here and there.
- ▲ More importantly, the pictures could have used a bit more editing too, but at my age, I didn’t want to waste time on that either. Some couldn’t be improved anyhow, since I copied them with low resolution. That was the best I could do.
- ▲ Some of the pictures and other illustrations were ‘lifted’ from the internet, others from various *Facebook* or genealogy pages. Yet others from pictures shared with me by some of my relatives. Hopefully, nobody will get too upset by any of that.
- ▲ When it comes to family photos, my own collection was dismal. Most of what we had was lost during or after World War II. Fortunately, many of my relatives came to the rescue, and allowed me to scan their photos or share them via e-mail. Thus, I have many more photos than included in these volumes.
- ▲ Those extra pictures, as well as copies of vital records (of birth, baptism, marriage and death), death notices, relevant articles and other items are partially on my computer (in no discernable fashions) and partially in my Personal Archive, which is yet to be created and organized.
- ▲ One of the major shortcomings of these books is that there are no indexes to assist in ‘navigating’ in them. In their place, one can use the ‘Find’ function under ‘Edit’ in the PDF version, which I will make accessible within the family.
- ▲ Originally, these books were meant to be interlaced via hyperlinks, with some of those hyperlinks leading to up-to-date information on the internet. If time permits, I will illustrate that style of writing by including such a version of my *Summa Summarum* piece from Part 4.

- ▲ On the other hand, the writings might prevail better. The old Hungarian saying that spoken words disappear while the written words remain (A szó elrepül, de az írás megmarad) is true in spite of the possibility of recording one's words and can probably be applied to data on one's computer as well. When the time comes, along with most of my other belongings, my computer will also be discarded, and life will go on as it should!
- ▲ While I didn't often emulate her 'stream of consciousness' style, time and again I was influenced in my writings by my grandmother-in-law Katheryn Lass, whose *Less we forget* reminiscences I greatly admire.

This may be the best place to say a word about my strange notation for some relatives, which I use here and there. This **new measure and notation of relationship** is defined as follows:

First, I identify our common ancestors closest to me. At this point, I assume that it is a couple, rather than an individual.

Next, as a mathematician, I start counting with zero (0) for the parent, one (1) for the grandparent, and so on until I reach the closest common foreparents. Let's assume that I get up to the integer 'm' in the process.

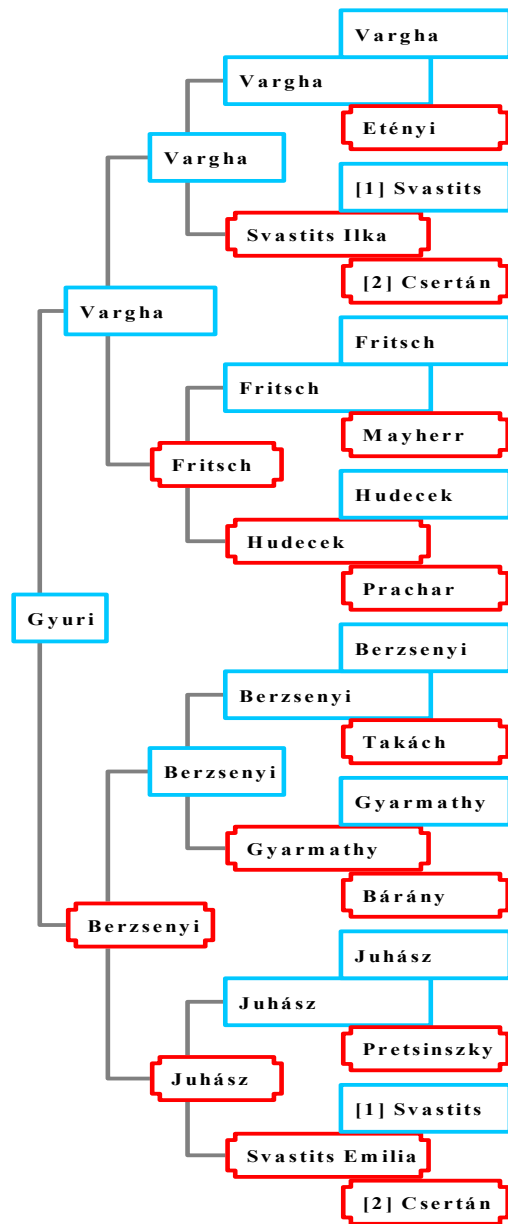
Next, I similarly count the number the steps for my relative to reach our common ancestors. If it is 'n', then I say that he/she is an [m,n]-cousin of mine or equivalently, I am an [n,m]-cousin of his/her.

In case we find an individual, rather than a couple as our closest common ancestor after m, respectively, n steps, then he/she is an [m,n]-half-cousin of mine.

It should be noted that by starting at 0, an ordinary 5th cousin would be a [5,5]-cousin, whereas 'a 5th cousin twice removed' would be a [5,3]-cousin or a [5,7]-cousin depending on the direction of 'removal'. It will be clarified by the notation hereby adapted.

- ▲ I regret that I failed to use this notation and terminology consistently throughout my writings – thereby also missing my opportunity to advocate its use by others.
- ▲ Please note that an earlier version of this notation was introduced in my *Matrikula* article about my Svastits – Csertán ancestors and their family in Issue 4.4 (2014), pp. 1-11. There I wrongly advocated to start the counting at 1 rather than 0.
- ▲ Rather than using such novel terminology, I will continue to refer to those who share with me a Vargha ancestor as Vargha cousins/relatives and similarly to those who share with me a Berzsenyi ancestor as Berzsenyi cousins/relatives. At times I might name the couple through whom we are related, or a foreparent without the spouse, especially if the name of the spouse is not known, which is often the case with the feminine sex.
- ▲ As a final 'preliminary', I include here a family tree that is equivalent to the tree displayed in my passage about my 'Ancestral families' section on page 71 except for referring to myself via my Hungarian nickname and to my Svastits great-grandmothers via their first names.

- ▲ Subsequent to that section, I will introduce Lajos Vargha and Jozefa Etényi first, discuss their ancestry and children, and move on vertically to the Svastits and Csertán families to discuss their ancestry and family before marrying off their daughter, Ilka to Imre Vargha, the son of Lajos Vargha and Jozefa Etényi.
- ▲ Then we will discuss the family of Imre Vargha and Ilka Svastits, including their son, Jenő, my grandfather. In search of his wife, my grandmother, we will need to go back to my Fritsch – Mayherr great-great-grandparents, József Fritsch and Anna Mayherr and discuss their ancestors and their family, including their son, József, who will become another great-grandfather of mine.
- ▲ But first, we need to go back to my Hudecek – Prachar great - great - grandparents, József Hudecek and Anna Prachar. After discussing their ancestry and family, we will ‘marry off’ their daughter, Franciska to József Fritsch, for her to become my great-grandmother. Again, we will concentrate on their children, including their daughter, Anna, my grandmother, who married Jenő Vargha. My father, Miklós Vargha was one of their children, who had to wait till my mother emerged from the second half of the family forest on the right.
- ▲ By considering the descendant trees of my great-great-grandparents in conjunction with my ancestor tree on the right, I arrive at a community which I call a ‘family forest’. In it, by the process described above, I will find all of my [m,n]-relatives for all $m = 0, 1, 2, 3$, and $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$ -- hence identify not only my brother (a [0,0] – relative), and 1st, 2nd and 3rd cousins, but also other relatives. In particular, we can identify all those relatives who distinguished themselves in some fashion.
- ▲ In the present volume on pages 71-209, I will restrict attention to the family forest resulting from the ancestor tree shown above in conjunction with the descendant trees of the 7 different pairs of great-great-grandparents under consideration. In Part 2, I will widen the ‘forest’ and go deeper into it – partly in search of other distinguished relatives and partly to identify some further relatives of ours. Thus, for example, we will encounter 5th, 6th, and 7th cousins in the Berzsényi tree, without whose enthusiastic participation we could not have organized Berzsényi reunions. While we will not seek them out systematically, even in the present volume we will encounter further relatives of importance. Naturally, in such cases I will make proper introductions.



Introduction

My interest in genealogy dates back to my childhood days, but it was not until the start of the present millennium that I could start working in the field. It was made possible by a confluence of several events. The most important among them was my retirement at age 60, when I was still young, energetic, inquisitive and enthusiastic about working in a new field. By then computer software was also not only available, but user-friendly for recording family data. Thus, we put an early version of the Family Tree Maker (FTM) on our computer and transferred to it all the information I gathered on little slips of paper over the years. I was also fortunate to start into serious genealogical work only after the Church of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons, via www.familysearch.org) put a lot of the data they gathered onto microfilm and then the internet. With the availability of their incredible amount of information, I was in high heaven! A fourth event was my trip to Hungary in November 2000, when I could finally concentrate on meeting with relatives other than only my first cousins, and hence initiate my networking, which became essential in my later work. It was also during that trip that I managed to copy a collection of several dozen death notices, which were collected by a distant cousin of ours and were left to my brother upon the cousin's death. I always knew about the wealth of information on such announcements and was happy to incorporate it into the family trees on my computer. Finally, but most importantly, I must credit my wife, Kay for her encouragement and support throughout the years. Her own interest in genealogy was an important factor, and it was fun to work side by side with her on similar themes just like in the old days, when we shared our mathematical interests.

Nevertheless, I must emphasize that in spite of the above-mentioned favorable events, it was a daunting project to find my roots in far-away Hungary with only occasional and short trips there. Fortunately, I didn't recognize that at the outset. It dawned on me only recently that my unreasonable effectiveness was nearly miraculous. I must credit it to my extensive correspondence with relatives and friends, as well as my ability to fit in with people of different generations and backgrounds. For the former, I credit my mother, who also wrote a lot of letters, while for the latter, I thank my father, whose example I followed. They were both interested in genealogy too and proud of their ancestry, which I also inherited.

At this point I should emphasize that my genealogical interest is two-fold: I am just as much interested in my cousins and other living relatives as in my ancestors and long-gone relatives of earlier generations. Unfortunately, most of them are on the other side of the ocean, and brief visits, letters or even telephone calls can't bridge such a huge abyss. Naturally, it doesn't help either that too many years went by since I left Hungary in 1956; while I retained remnants of the old culture, there were many changes there. First, they had to cope with the brutal aftermath of our glorious, but lost revolution, then to adjust to the milder form of communism of the 1970s, and finally to accept and live with the present status quo of struggles in a nearly hopeless political and economic situation. They left their marks on my relatives too.

As promised in the Preface, I will address in the present Part 1 some general issues too, including my methodology, as well as my sources and various supportive materials. Moreover, I will write a bit about myself, in order to make the rest of the materials a bit more personal. And just as importantly, I will also tell you about Hungary's history and language to acclimatize you to the rest of the material in these volumes.

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 1

Prehistoric times

Few historians debate the fact that the forefathers of the Hungarians originally hailed from present-day Mongolia. In fact, my former teacher, Dr. László Bárdi retraced the path taken by them in several books of his, including *Őseink nyomában*¹ (published in 1993 in Pécs), in which he reported on his findings. Not only was there a ‘collective folk memory’ of the Hungarians who migrated to the West a couple of thousand years earlier, but there were unmistakable similarities of their customs to those of the Hungarians. Seemingly from there the Hungarians moved to Western Siberia and from there to the western slopes of the Ural Mountains. Originally, they were hunter-gatherers, but by then, they lived in well-defined communities, cultivated various crops and bred animals, like horses, cattle and pigs. By around 1500 B.C. the various nationalities became separated linguistically too.

The western movement of some of the Hungarians continued to the region called ‘Levedia’, north of the Black Sea, but others stayed back in the Volga region, Bashkiria, later dubbed Magna Hungaria. With no natural boundaries like mountains or rivers to protect them, some of them continued to move westward again to the eastern slopes of the Carpathians, while others (the Savard Magyars) moved south.



Their migration is illustrated by the map above, borrowed from the excellent treatise of István Lázár, *An Illustrated History of Hungary*.²

¹ In English, *In the footsteps of our ancestors*

² Published in 1995 by Corvina

The Carpathian Basin

Prior to the arrival of the Hungarians, many different tribes of Celtic, Frankish, Germanic and Slavic people occupied the land, including the Romans, who called the Western part Pannonia, while the area including Erdély (Transylvania), Dacia. I don't want to get into the history of the land, but I must call attention to the Roman ruins of Aquincum (in Budapest), Savaria (Szombathely), Gorsium (Tác), Scarbantia (Sopron), Brigetio (Komárom) and in many other cities, including Eger, Pécs and Székesfehérvár. The Romans must also be credited for the initiation of the culture of thermal baths, which were later cultivated by the Turks too during their occupation of much of Hungary in the 16th and 17th Centuries. Will have more about the baths later.



Of the other occupants of the Carpathian Basin I must also mention the Avars, who were possibly related to the Hungarians, and hence welcomed their arrival. Rather than oppose the invaders and the Moravians, whose leader, Svatopluk joined the Hungarians against the Germans. Svatopluk should also be credited for the bishoprics of Nyitra (now Nitra) and Pozsony (now Bratislava).

The Conquest

The arrival of the Hungarians into the Carpathian Basin was orchestrated via various routes including some passes through the mountains which were explored by them earlier. They came with their families and possessions, and hence it required careful planning to settle everyone properly in the new land, which comprised at first only the area east of the River Danube. The seven different tribes agreed to occupy specific areas and set up defenses along the borders of the territory. We call it 'Honfoglalás', which means 'The occupation of the homeland' and claim that it took place in 896.

The Blood Contract

As mentioned above, the Hungarians were in seven different tribes, whose leaders were Álmos, Előd, Ond, Tas, Huba, **Kond** and Töhötöm. Their first act was the 'Vérszerződés', best translated as 'Blood contract', which called for cutting their arms and letting a few drops of blood drip into a cup of wine, to be passed around afterwards. Thereby they 'sealed' their agreement to support one another in the new land and to defend it against possible enemy attacks.



The event was commemorated in a fresco created by the Hungarian painter, Bertalan Székely.

The Conquest and the Blood Contract are also commemorated in an archeological park in Ópusztaszer, where a huge panoramic painting is on permanent display in the main building, while some other structures exemplify the yurts that served as the homes for the Hungarians in those days. The pictures below are from the park, to be followed by scenes from the panoramic painting by Árpád Feszty, who prepared it for the Millennium celebrated in 1896. That painting is nearly 50 ft tall and close to 400 ft long.



The leader of the Hungarians was Árpád, the son of Álmos. His statue is at the top of the mausoleum shown above.

Next, I show the yurts which we visited in October 2019 with Magdi Szabari and her husband, Gerardo Ramirez. The yurts were not yet there when the family went to Ópusztaszer in 1978 on our way to Romania.



That first visit is most memorable to me since I never intended to stop there. But I saw a sign pointing to it and suddenly I remembered everything that I had learned about it 25 years earlier -- the 'Honfoglalás' (Conquest), the 'Vérszerződés' (Blood contract), as well as the names of the 7

leaders. And I knew that we must stop there to pay my respects to our forefathers. I wanted to do so again last year.

Next, as promised, I will show some scenes from the panoramic picture of Árpád Feszty about 'The Conquest'.



Unfortunately, in spite of two visits there, I have yet to see Feszty's famous painting. It was not yet restored when we were there in 1978, and there were too many visitors when we were there in 2019 and we didn't have the time to wait until the next group was let in to see it. Maybe 'the third time is the charm', and Adam and I will have a chance to marvel at it this year, in 2020.

Finally, I want to remind you that in Budapest, 'Hősök Tere' (Heroes' Square) was also established in 1896 to celebrate

the 'Millennium' of The Conquest. The statues there also show Árpád and the chieftains in the center of the square with a statue of Archangel Gabriel at the top of the column. In addition to



them, there are statues of Saint Steven, Saint László, János and Mátyás Hunyady, Bocskay, Bethlen, Báthory and other kings and outstanding statesmen of Hungary with carefully crafted reliefs depicting important events from their lives. We will meet many of them in my upcoming historical synapses.



There were huge celebrations of 'The Conquest' in 1996 too, with my favorite historian, István Nemeskürty in charge of them, but they were a lot more subdued. And while I didn't get to see the Feszty painting of the Conquest, my young friend, Márk Görbe recently published a wonderful volume about Feszty and shared with me the electronic version of his book, which I enjoy a lot.



People of the East

That was the title – in Hungarian, *Kelet Népe* – of one of Széchenyi's important and influential works, and similarly, László Bárdi, my former teacher wrote a book entitled *Kelet népe vagyunk* (where the Hungarian word 'vagyunk' means 'we are'). While Széchenyi's aim with his book was different, Bárdi's is to commemorate the many Hungarian explorers, who tried to answer the nagging question: **From where are we, Hungarians?**

Bárdi's excellent book discusses the travels and discoveries of eight of the most important explorers and writes briefly about the accomplishments of nine others. In view of his many trips to China and almost that many books about his own travels in the Orient, László Bárdi will probably be recognized among the very best also. Consequently, in the present 'book report' about his book, I have a paragraph about him too.

Sándor Csoma de Kőrös (1764 – 1842) was the pioneer among all of them, in spite of never managing to reach the northern regions of China, where he hoped to locate the 'cradle of the Hungarian nation'. Instead, he took the southern route via Alexandria, Baghdad, Teheran and Kabul and ended up in the Himalayas, as seen in the map below. In addition to familiarizing himself with the customs and religion of the people of Tibet, he put together the first English – Tibetan dictionary.



What is most important about kőrösi Csoma Sándor (that's how he is known in Hungary) is that his shining example was followed by several future explorers of Hungary, including my former teacher, László Bárdi, with whom I often exchange messages.

Unfortunately, Csoma did not document any of his travels and experiences, except for a detailed autobiography he had to submit to British authorities, who were sponsoring some of his travels. If it was not for that, we would know very little about him. Fortunately, that submission surfaced and hence it was possible to reconstruct the routes he traveled.

Ármin Vámbéry (1832-1913) was of humble Jewish – Hungarian origin, whose abilities were recognized early, and hence he could attend high school in Sopron, Pozsony (now Bratislava) and Pest and by the age of 16, he was fluent in Latin, French, German, Russian and English. He was also at home in the Scandinavian languages and added Turkish to his languages after studying Turkish literature and becoming fascinated by it while working as a part-time teacher and tutor. In 1857, upon receiving a scholarship from the Minister of Culture, József Eötvös, he went to Turkey, where he immersed himself in ancient Turkish historical accounts about the Hungarians, becoming convinced that the large number of Hungarian words identified by him as of Turkish origin, point to a common origin of the two nations as well.

Interestingly, his first publication was a Turkish – German and German – Turkish dictionary in 1858; his travels in Asia (shown in the map on the right) as a Turkish dervish took place between 1862 and 1864 in search of the

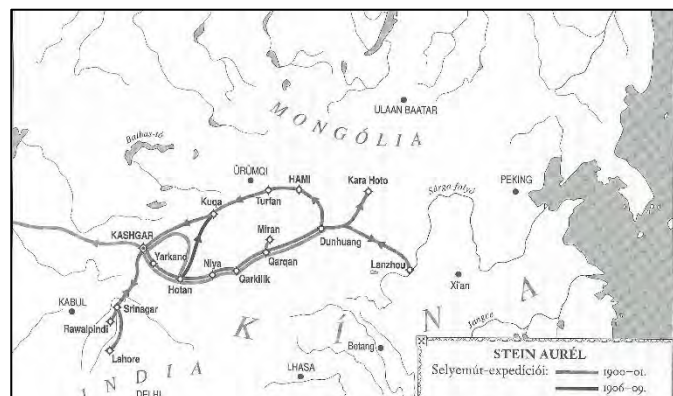
Hungarians' origin. Earlier he published in English and French too about his travels in Central Asia and Persia and was highly regarded both in Turkey and in England. While he did not deny the linguistic similarities of Hungarian and the Finno – Ugoric languages, he remained convinced of the common roots of the Turkish and Hungarian people. Interestingly, that belief is still strongly held in Turkey.



Sir Marc Aurel Stein (1862-1943) is best described as a British – Hungarian explorer, since he left Hungary and not only settled in England (becoming its citizen in 1904) but conducted much of his work with British support. Consequently, even though he donated his extensive library to the National Széchényi Library of Hungary, all of the incredible archaeological riches he gathered during his expeditions ended up in the British Museum.



They include the Tibetan manuscripts which are the earliest surviving writings in this language, offering an unparalleled resource for the study of early Tibetan history and religion. They comprise over 3,000 manuscripts from the library cave in Dunhuang, a further 3,000 wooden slips and paper fragments from Tibetan military forts on the Silk Road, and over 1,000 manuscripts from Kharakhoto and other sites in the Gobi Desert.



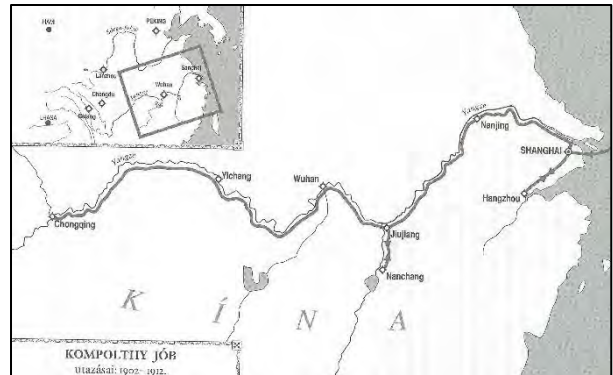
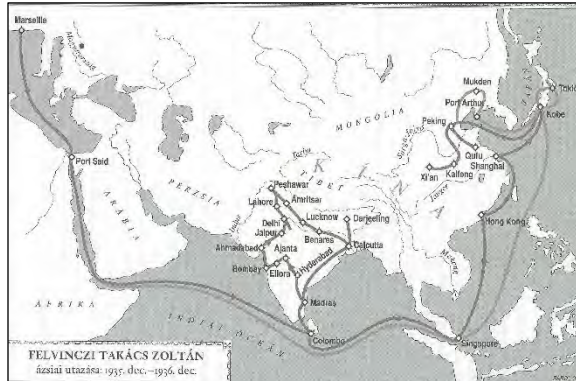
There are also over 20,000 items in Chinese, materials in other languages, as well as paintings on hemp and paper, artifacts of all sorts and over 10,000 photographs and slides taken in the Middle East and China. Stein was knighted for his services and he is recognized as the rediscoverer of the 'Silk Road'.

Below, I show similar maps from the aforementioned book of Laci Bárdi for the travels of

Zoltán Takács de Felvinczi

and

Jób Kompolti



But I leave it to you to read on the internet about **Ervin Baktay**, **Gyula Germanus** and **Lajos Ligeti** as well as about the following 9, about whom Bárdi also wrote in his book:

Benedek Baráthosi
Ildikó Ecsedy
Gyula Prinz

Gábor Bálint
Károly Gubányi
Vilmos Pröhle

Jenő Cholnoki
Lajos Lóczy
Antal Raguly

All of them are worthy of your attention.

Concerning my former teacher, **László Bárdi**, he taught at the high school level for 10 years and worked in administrative positions there until the 1980s, when his interests shifted towards Asian and in particular, Chinese studies. After getting his doctorate in 1971, he made a total of 31 exploratory trips in China, documenting his voyages and writing at least 16 books, 3 textbooks and over 320 articles about them. In addition, he is well-traveled in India, Mongolia, Nepal, Siberia and Turkey as well, intensely studying not only literary sources about the origins of the Hungarians, but the work of other explorers as well, including the ones named above.



I have and read several books of Laci and I am looking forward to seeing his latest ones, entitled ***Hunok – Székelyek – Magyarok*** (in English, Huns – Seklers – Hungarians) and ***Világok Vándora*** (in English, Traveler of the World). The first one was bought for me by Imre Gyimesi (using some funds I left with him), while the second one, Bárdi's autobiography, by my high school friend, Pista Molnár. I hope to pick them up on my next trip to Hungary.

Laci is 6 years and 3 days older than me, and he is still going strong. I wish him further successes both in the search for our original homeland and in his health and family life.

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 2

Our identity

It is natural for one to reflect on the questions:

“Who am I?” *“Where do I come from?”* and *“Who were my ancestors?”*
and even on the questions: *“Why am I here?”* and *“What is my destiny?”*

In a similar fashion, a nation must ponder on such questions too, especially if it finds no similarity in personal characteristics, customs and language to any of its neighbors, though many of them are clearly related to one another.

That was the case with the Hungarians, who found themselves surrounded by Slavic people, except on the West, which was occupied by Germanic tribes and nations and the Italian Peninsula, where the people spoke a language similar to the French.

At the outset, various legends connected us to the Huns, as well as to the Scythians, a warlike nation predating the Magyars (that’s our name for ourselves) and the Huns, but later we really wanted to know the answers. Hence, as described in the previous section, following the pioneering example of Sándor kőrösi Csoma (1784-1842), many Hungarian explorers set out to search for the original homeland of our people. My former teacher, László Bárdi, was one of them. His excellent books greatly influenced my historical outlook. My thoughts were also shaped by two other favorite authors of mine, Endre (Bandi) Czeizel, the geneticist historian and István Nemeskürty, whose writings enriched my knowledge and strengthened my old-fashioned Hungarian patriotism.

Returning to the original questions, most experts promoting the Finno-Ugric origin of our language assure us, nevertheless, that it doesn’t imply the common origin of our peoples as well. The same goes for the experts who claim that our language is of Turkic origin on account of the close to 400 basic Hungarian words that are similar to their Turkish equivalents. Thus, I continue to believe that those similarities to the words and grammatical peculiarities of other languages can be explained by close association with people of Finno-Ugric and Turkic origin for long periods of time. As to the origin of our people, I continue to believe that they are from the northeastern part of modern-day China.

At this point I should explain that the ‘linguistic distance’ between the Hungarian and the other languages discussed above is large due to the fact that our association with both the Finno-Ugric and the Turkic tribes took place thousands of years ago. On the other hand, the Romance languages split apart only a thousand years ago, and the Slavic ones were still undistinguishable until about 900 years ago. The English, German and the Scandinavian languages exhibit lots of similarities on account of their even more recent separation too.

Thereby, I must conclude that we Hungarians are unique in Europe at least with respect to our language. And, of course, being different is not necessarily to one’s benefit. That is the case in a classroom of boys (or girls) and they behave not much differently than the League of Nations.

The analogy holds for countries of the European continent as well. Fortunately, at the time of The Conquest, neither the Germans, nor the Italians were united; instead, they were still in city-states rivalling and fighting with one another and the Slavic nations didn’t yet form separate countries

either. Moreover, the Hungarians were strong, and their military style was in many ways superior. Hence, they flexed their muscles during the first 100 years in their new land.

The wandering era

In the nomadic world, every able-bodied man was a warrior, for otherwise he could easily end up in servitude. And the movement of the herds and thereby the yurts and associated households was relatively frequent, since one had to look for fresh pastures time and again. Thus, it was natural to have a group of warriors check out the surrounding areas, and they often ended up in skirmishes with those defending their territories. At such times the warriors would bring back spoils, including men and women captured, to be kept or sold as slaves.

By the time the Hungarians were ready to occupy the Carpathian Basin, they were organized into large tribes numbering 30-40 thousand people led by a military commander and a spiritual leader. Thus, it was possible for the various tribes to wage warfare separately with sizable forces of 5000 or more men on horses. Some of the tribes would also engage in warfare on the side of another tribe for a share of the spoils or some other agreed-upon price. And even before The Conquest, the Hungarians ventured into the area for just such reasons.

For example, in 881, a large force of the Hungarians battled against the Eastern Kingdom of the Frank Empire (which eventually became Germany) on behalf of Svatopluk of Moravia, and then turned around and in 892 they became mercenaries in the employ of King Arnulf of the Franks against Svatopluk. Then in 894 they were once again fighting against King Arnulf on the side of Svatopluk, who was obviously impressed enough by his Hungarian enemies to engage their help in his war against his Italian rival, King Berengár, whom they defeated in 899. By then, the Hungarians were in the Carpathian Basin and took advantage of the fact that King Arnulf died. Soon after the battle they invaded the areas west of the Danube as well as the Moravian kingdom, which was weakened by the back-and-forth struggles. Thereby, the occupation of the Carpathian Basin was completed.

Thereafter the various tribes, usually independently of one another, made a total of 47 forays into the western countries occupied by the Germans and the French, as well as into Northern Italy, returning with riches, including jewelry, gold and silver items, and even slaves at times, until the Westerners finally caught on to the strategies of the Hungarians and defeated their forces in two famous battles at Merseburg (933) and at Augsburg (955). Thereafter they made some such forays into the Byzantine Empire too until 970, when they suffered a defeat there also. From that point on they decided to strengthen their defenses in the Carpathian Basin against possible enemy attacks.

Military strategies

The Hungarians were people of the steppes, dressing lightly on fast horses and experts in the use of bow and arrow even from a galloping horse. After a first strike they would retreat, allowing the enemy to chase them, and then turn around and fight against the typically smaller number of soldiers who got close to them in the chase.

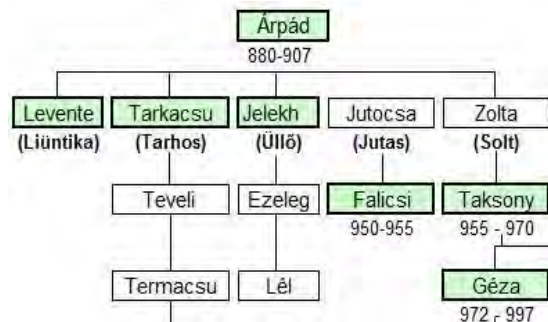
In comparison, the westerners wore heavy armor, and to carry them, their horses had to be stronger and were definitely slower too. Thereby, they were at a disadvantage against the fast-moving Hungarians, whose strength was unparalleled by any other nomadic nation of that time.

The Battle of Pozsony

Were the Hungarians behaving like barbarians robbing and killing and leaving destruction behind them with no justification whatsoever? Was their vandalism totally uncalled for? The western historians try to convince us of it without recalling the battle that was waged against the Hungarians by the Franks in 907, with the aim of annihilating them. The Franks gathered a huge army of close to 100,000 men and marched towards Hungary along the Danube near Pozsony, which in now called Bratislava (the capital of Slovakia) to be met by 40,000 Hungarians in defense of their land. They clashed on three consecutive days, the 4th, 5th and 6th of July, with a huge victory by the Magyars on each occasion. In a way, those victories assured them of the ownership of the entire Carpathian Basin. We should probably celebrate the Year 907 as the birthyear of Hungary, rather than 895 or 896 when they arrived there.

The rulers of the land

On the right I show some of the descendants of Árpád, highlighting the names of those who became the leaders of the land. It should be noted, however that while Géza managed to subdue most of his opposition during his rule of 25 years, there were still three chieftains resisting him: Koppány, the son of Termacsu, his wife's brother, Gyula who ruled Erdély (Transylvania) and Ajtony, who was supported by the Byzantine court.



Géza preferred association with Rome, and hence he and his entire family were baptized (that's when his son, Vajk became István), brought in priests and missionaries to spread the Catholic faith and changed the law of succession to assure his son's leadership after his death. By marrying his daughters to various Western leaders, he also forged alliances, and by forbidding military forays, he assured good will from his former enemies. Moreover, by arranging for his son to marry the sister of the Prince of Bavaria, he paved the way for the settling of craftsmen and knights and other Bavarians in Hungary. Thereby, he opened the door to Western influences.



Reflections

In the United States incoming presidents are initially judged by their performances during their first 100 days. In a nation's history, the first 100 years may be comparable to that; hence the above scrutiny of the situation in the Carpathian Basin from 896 to 997. While neither the Germanic people in the West, nor the Slavic ones surrounding us were happy with our presence in their midst, they had to recognize that the Carpathian Basin was ours and we fully intended to keep it. And we did keep it - more or less - for 1000 years, i.e., until the Dictate of Trianon in 1921.

Other Theories

The most popular and probably oldest legend among the people of Hungary is our common origin with the Huns of Attila, which is probably best evidenced by the continuing popularity of the name ‘Attila’. According to it, the two brothers, Honor and Magyar were chasing a ‘Miracle Stag’ and eventually separated to form their separate nations, that of the Huns and the nation of the Magyars. In fact, one of our greatest poets, János Arany wrote a beautiful poem about that quest, which prompted Ádám Makkai and his coworkers to call their two-volume anthology of Hungarian poetry *The Quest of the Miracle Stag*. I have its first volume of 964 pages, which I show on the right and which I strongly recommend to all of you. It has some translations of Dániel Berzsenyi’s poetry too, and hence I will return to it later. For the present, I want to suggest that at some point in time, you should all look into this book of mine.



At this point, I should emphasize that the Hungarian historians did not paint Attila evil like the Western historians. We recognize that not only was he an able leader and conqueror of the world, but a superb organizer of his empire who settled the warring German tribes. When it comes to Rome, it was not some superstitious fear that kept him from sacking it, but an expression of civility. He spent several years of his youth there and had no animosity toward Rome. The Hungarians are proud of the association with him and have several legends about him. Unfortunately, since there are no records about the language of the Huns, not much can be done to prove or disprove our relationship with their unknown language and there are no remains that would allow for comparing the Huns and the Hungarians, whose name in English, French and some other languages also suggest a connection to the Huns. I collected on the right the translations of ‘Hungarian’ in a variety of languages which use our Phoenician alphabet.

Brazilian Portuguese: húngaro
Croatian: mađarski
Czech: maďarský
Danish: ungarsk
Dutch: Hongaars
European Spanish: húngaro
Finnish: unkarilainen
French: hongrois
German: ungarisch
Italian: ungherese
Norwegian: ungarsk
Polish: węgierski
European Portuguese: húngaro
Romanian: ungar
Latin American Spanish: húngaro
Swedish: ungersk
Turkish: Macar
Vietnamese: thuộc nước/người/tiếng

By the way, several of the legends about Attila (his sword, his coffin of gold, silver and iron, etc.) have been handed down from generation to generation in Hungary.

Being of nomadic origin of the Russian steppes, the Hungarians also have legends that connect them to the Scythians of Siberia, whose power flourished during the millennium before Christ and the Hungarian term ‘szittyá’ has been applied to them at times. Indeed, on their way to the Carpathian Basin they have been close to various Iranian tribes and even in Levedia some of them, the ‘Savard Magyars’ went southward rather than continuing towards the west. Some scholars found linguistic similarities between the language of the Persians and the Hungarians.

Even more similarities seem to be there between Sumerian and Hungarian terms, leading some researchers in that direction. It is also of some interest that the legend of Nimrod is part of the Hungarian mythology, where he is a kind and helpful, all-powerful king, rather than the evil despot described in the Bible.

Similarly, one finds connections between Hungarian and ancient Turkish languages – probably on account of sharing the same areas with one another and close commercial ties during those times of their migration westward. Therefore, there were advocates of closer similarity of Hungarian to Turkish than to Finno-Ugrian languages, like the Finnish and the Sami language of Lapland. The controversy resulted in the ‘Ugric-Turkic War’. That war is still on to some extent.

Concerning the connection to the Finno-Ugrian languages, it seems that the idea was first proposed by János Sajnovics (1733-1785). As a Jesuit priest interested in Mathematics and Astronomy, he was an assistant to Maximillian Hell, the director of the Viennese Observatory. In 1869, in order to observe Venus as it was passing in front of the Sun, they went to the Island of Vardo to make measurements, and he used the opportunity to study the language of the native people of nearby Lapland, observing similarities between it and Hungarian. He published a book about it in 1770, but it was not welcomed warmly by the Hungarians, who much preferred the legendary Huns as their close relatives to the lowly Sami, who made their living by fishing. The statue of Sajnovics is shown on the right. It is in his hometown of Tordas.



The ideas of Sajnovics were further developed by Sámuel Gyarmathy (1751-1830), who was a medical doctor and the founder of comparative linguistics in Hungary. In addition to publishing the first comprehensive Hungarian grammar book, he published a systematic study of the Finno-Ugric languages based on Sajnovics’s earlier work in 1799; it became the basis for all subsequent work in the area. A picture of him is shown on the right. It could be that he is a Gyarmathy relative of ours, but I can’t prove or disprove it. While we know that a branch of my great-grandmother’s family moved to Erdély (Transylvania) and that he was born in Kolozsvár (now Cluj-Napoca, in Romania), our genealogical searches did not extend that far in the case of the Gyarmathys.



Concerning the Hungarian language, its richness is not equaled by any of the languages to which it may be related. That is partially due to the possible appendages one can apply to nearly all the basic root words that make up the language. Assuming only 2050 such root words – a number I read somewhere – and 500 different endings of which many can be applied to many of the root words (again, I read somewhere the number 500), leads to a huge number of possibilities. Some of them you wouldn’t find in a dictionary, but they are nevertheless understood by anyone whose native language is Hungarian.

Admittedly, I am a bit partial about my native tongue, which I still speak fluently. In fact, an enriched version of the language in view of the fact that from early childhood on throughout high school we had to memorize hundreds of excellent poems by superb poets, and hence one learned the language from the very best. I can still recite many of those poems.

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 3

The Rule of Saint Stephen

I reproduced on the right Gyula Benczur's painting of the baptism of Vajk, who took the name István, and became the first crowned king of Hungary in the Year 1000.

Since the crown (more precisely, its upper half) was a gift from Pope Sylvester, the kings of Hungary were 'apostolic', and they ruled in the name of the crown. It was the crown, shown here, that united, at least in spirit, the different nationalities.

By accepting the crown from the Pope, despite reserving the right to name his own bishops, István clearly aligned his nation with Rome. Unfortunately, we continued to choose the West rather than the East throughout our history.



Even before his coronation, István had to face his first rival in Koppány, who ruled the area South of the Lake Balaton, and who should have succeeded Géza according to the old customs and agreements among the various tribes. At the cost of the death of lots of Hungarians on both sides, István won with the help of many Germans fighting at his side. Those knights had to be rewarded with huge land grants --- thereby inviting more foreign influence in Hungary.

Next, he dealt with Gyula, who was the leader in Erdély (Transylvania), where he continued to practice the old faith of the Hungarians. And finally, near the end of his rule, István was victorious over Ajtony too, who was the leader in the Southeast and did not recognize István as the legitimate ruler either.

After subduing his rivals, István, who is shown in a co-dex picture on the right, ruled the country till his death in 1038. During his rule several bishoprics and monasteries were established, and churches were built throughout the country, which was divided into the 30 provinces which are shown on the next page. Each province (in Hungarian, vármegye, or nowadays simply megye) was governed by a governor, appointed by the king and a lieutenant governor elected by the nobility of the province. The provinces were further divided into counties (in Hungarian, járás), to be governed by constables, with legal training and in fact, well versed in the law.

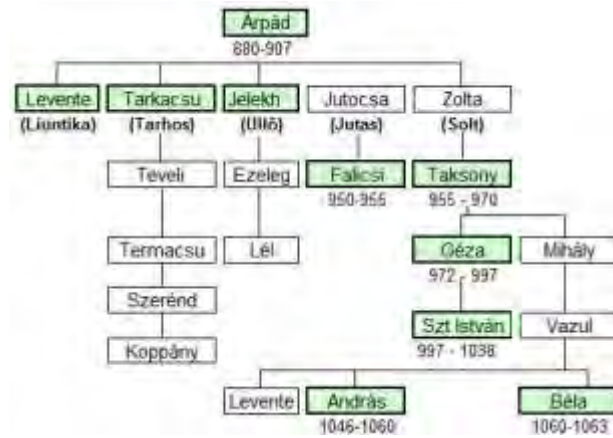


In spite of the fact that his sister's son, Péter Orseolo was chosen by him as his heir, there was a rivalry for the throne as soon as István died. I skip over those years and show the next two kings of the House of Árpád in the chart on the right, noting that Koppány was a 4th cousin of István.

The picture below the chart shows the coronation of András I in 1046; it is a painting by Bertalan Székely. The new king's most important actions included the strengthening of the Catholic Church in Hungary and the defeat of the Germans in 1051 and 1052. The Germans also tried to subdue Hungary in 1030, but István defeated them; clearly, they didn't learn their lesson then and had to be taught again! Our kings used the 'scorched earth' tactic to deal with them; i.e., they evacuated the population and destroyed all food supplies in front of the coming armies, constantly irritating them with small skirmishes along the way. They also drilled holes in their supply ships on the Danube.

The next notable kings of the House of Árpád were László I, who became known as Saint László (Ladislav) and his nephew, Kálmán I (Coloman, the Learned). They ruled from 1077 to 1095 and from 1095 to 1116, respectively, and were among the most enlightened rulers of the land. Under their leadership Hungary acquired Croatia and Dalmatia and strengthened Catholicism throughout the country. They also made the laws stricter. In particular, those laws codified the protection of the female sex and defined the responsibilities of higher dignitaries. Saint László also secured the sainthood of István¹ and his son, Imre.

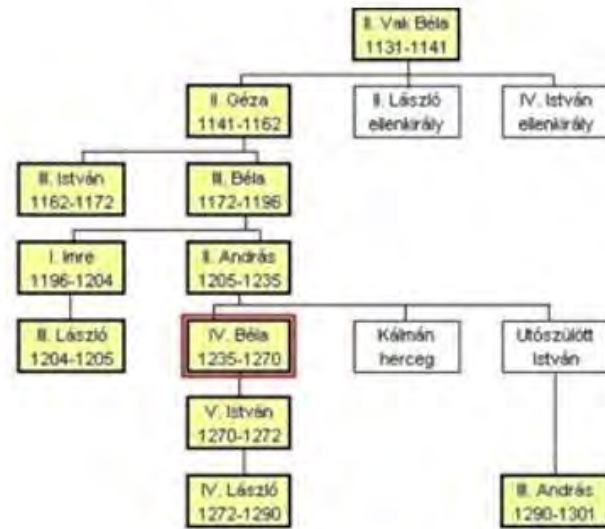
Béla III (1172-1196), whose picture is shown on the right was another great ruler of the land; under his rule Hungary's prestige equaled that of all other rulers of Europe. He was followed by Andrew II (1205-1235), whose 'Golden Bull' of 1222 paralleled England's Magna Carta. They are shown in the final segment of the family tree of the House of Árpád on the next page.



¹ Interestingly, in 2000, on the 1000th anniversary of István's coronation, Bartholomew I, Patriarch of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople canonized him too, making Saint Steven of Hungary the first saint to be so recognized since the Schism of 1054

Béla IV (1235-1270) was given special attention in this tree in view of the fact that he is often referred to as the second founder of Hungary, while Saint Steven is recognized as the first.

Béla IV is mostly remembered for his reconstruction of Hungary after the Mongolian invasion following the Battle of Muhi Puszta (Plain of Muhi), where Batu Khan defeated the Hungarians in 1241. The subsequent destruction of Hungary, remembered as the ‘Tatárjárás’ (Tartar destruction), during which nearly half of the Hungarians died, ended when the Chief Khan of the Mongols suddenly died, and Batu Khan rushed back to Asia in the hope of succeeding him.



In 1301 the last male descendant of Árpád, András III, the 24th king of Hungary died. At that point the House of the Anjous took over starting with Charles Robert, who was a descendant of Árpád via the feminine line. In fact, to my knowledge, from that point on all but one of the kings of Hungary were descendants of Árpád via the feminine line. That exception was King Mátyás, the son of János Hunyadi, whose victory over the Turks in 1456 at Nándorfehérvár (the present Belgrade) saved the world from the Ottomans for 70 years.

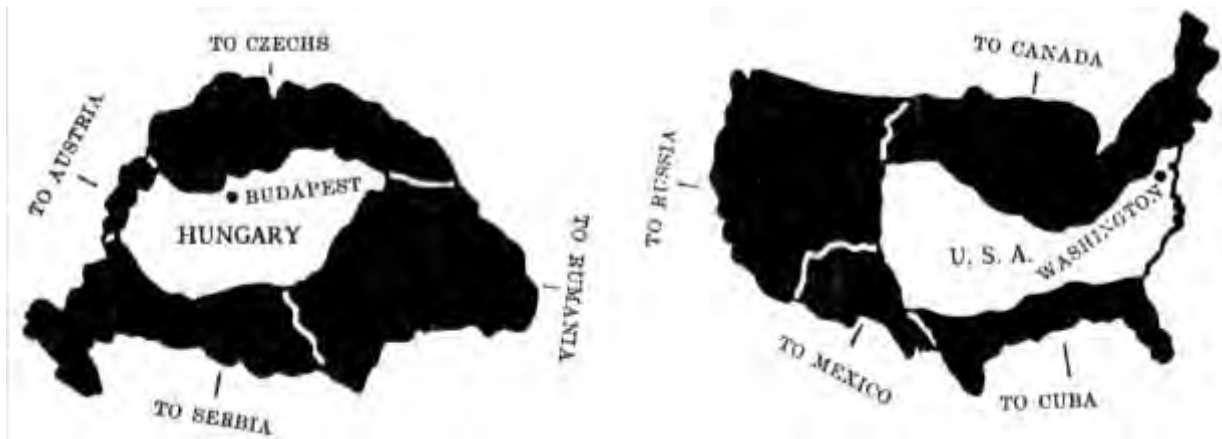
I close this section with yet another map of the historic Kingdom of Hungary, along with the outline of present-day Hungary. This is the map that is on everyone’s mind when they think of the ‘homeland’ left behind; all of my ancestors came from this ‘Greater Hungary’ too.



The Hungarian language

Concerning the Hungarian language, (i.e., magyar; such words are not capitalized in Hungarian) it is easier to say what the language is not, than to claim what it is. In particular, it is not a Slavic or Germanic/Anglo-Saxon, and neither is it a Romance language. It is referred to as a Finno-Ugric language, but I am far from certain of that. Neither am I sure that it belongs to the Uralic language group as it is claimed nowadays. Advocates of the Finnic-Ugric origin of the Hungarian language usually divide the people into the Finnic and the Ugric groups, with Finnish (4 M), Estonian (1.5 M), and Lappish (30 T) in the first, and Hungarian (16 M), Mordwin (1.5 M), Permian (.8M) and Cheremies (.5 M) in the second group, with the number of people speaking the language parenthesized (where 'M' stands for million and 'T' for thousand).

Naturally, the 16 million Hungarian-speaking people include those Hungarians who live in the Hungarian-speaking areas of Rumania, Slovakia, Serbia, etc. which were forcefully given to those countries, as well as those of us who were forced into emigration. To appreciate the effects of the Dictate of Trianon of 1921 even more, I show below an illustration of how a similar dictate would reduce the United States. Clearly, it would be devastating.



At this point I also want to point out that among the 6,000 languages spoken worldwide today, Hungarian is the 30th in 'popularity'. However, it is also true that

nyelvében él a nemzet,

meaning

a nation lives through its language,

which is also believed

by the Irish, who say:

tir gan teange tir gan anam,

meaning:

land without language is land without soul

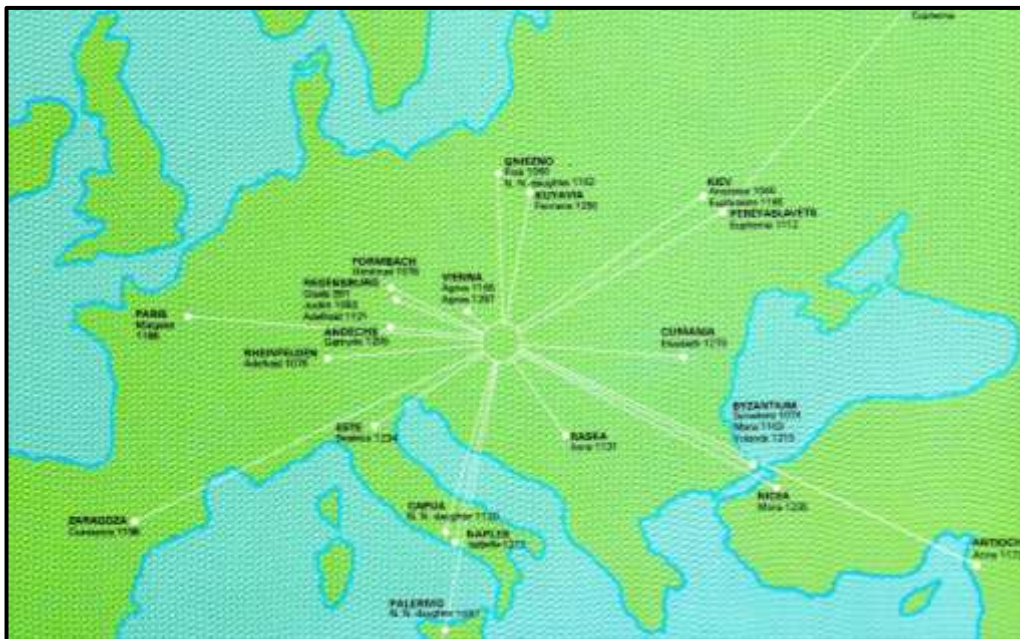
Therefore, it is extremely important to keep the language of our ancestors alive!

On the other hand, one must remember that Hungarian is one of the most difficult languages to learn. And not many of us are as good as Daniel in learning languages.

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 4

European Connections

Even before the era of Géza and Saint Stephen, the rulers of Hungary saw to it that their family should be connected to the royal and other ruling families of the civilized world of their time. The map below shows the origin of the Hungarian queens during the rule of the House of Árpád. There were a similar number of connections established via the daughters of Hungarian kings and princes marrying into foreign royalty. Thus, there were always several rightful aspirants for the throne of Hungary, especially during times of peace and prosperity.



Kings of other Houses

The first among them were the kings of the House of Anjou, starting with Charles Robert of Naples (Károly Róbert, 1301-1342), who was a descendant of the House of Árpád, but only on the female line. He was remembered as the one with the Golden Touch. His first act was the reorganization of the country's defenses, which remained in force for centuries afterwards. He also established a system of taxation and duties, which made his Kingdom rich. Therefore, when his son took over as king, he inherited a rich and powerful country. He became Louis the Great (Nagy Lajos, 1342-1382), whose kingdom touched four seas (the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, the Black and the Baltic Seas), but more importantly, he was aiming to secure his control of the Adriatic Sea by incorporating Naples into his power. His struggles with the Neapolitans were unsuccessful in the long run, and he recognized that he would have to station strong forces there in order to keep them subdued. He decided against that partially on account of the Black Plague that was devastating Europe at that time, but his hope to obtain an opening towards the western seas was kept alive by some Hungarians for another century or so.

The map on the right shows the empire of Louis the Great, including the Kingdom of Naples, whose possession was unstable from the outset, and the Kingdom of Poland, whose loyalty was manifested by the fact that after his death his daughter, Saint Hedwig inherited Poland's throne.

Hungary's throne was inherited by Mária, Hedvig's sister, and eventually by Zsigmond (1387-1437), who ruled over the Holy Roman Empire as well. His portrait by Albrecht Dürer (of Hungarian heritage¹) is shown below on the right.

Zsigmond was well aware of the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans, and he fought against the Turks in several battles, but with little success. Neither was he able to secure Western alliance to his cause. Moreover, much of his energy and final years were spent fighting against the Hussites, in which, fortunately, he was more successful.

While Charles Robert, Louis (the Great) and his daughter, Mária were from the **House of Ajou**, Zsigmond was viewed as Sigismund of the **House of Luxemburg**. Following his reign, the first ruler of the **House of Habsburg** appeared in King Albert (1437-1439), via his marriage to Zsigmond's daughter, Erzsébet. Albert died young and his infant son, Louis V inherited the throne, but his rule from 1440 to 1457 was interrupted from 1440 to 1444 by Ulászló I, who was the son of the older sister of Louis V and King Kazimír V, King of Poland and of the Lithuanian **House of Jagello**, whose support evaporated after his defeat by the Turks at the Battle of Várna. Thereafter János Hunyadi, who was chosen as the palatine of the country ruled in the name of King Louis V.

The advance of the Turks in the Balkans was halted only by the victory of János Hunyadi in 1456 at Nándorfehérvár (now Belgrade). The significance of that victory was recognized by the pope, who ordered the ringing of the church



¹ His father, named Albert Ajtós was a goldsmith near the Hungarian town of Gyula, but moved to Nuremberg in 1455, where he changed his name to Dürer. Ajtó, meaning door translates to tür in German; ajtós is an adjective based on ajtó, which might have suggested 'türer' as its translation. It became Dürer somehow.

bells at noon every day to celebrate that victory. Nowadays hardly anyone remembers the reason for the tolling of the bells at that time.

Though Hunyadi died shortly after the battle, soon afterwards his son, Mátyás (Mathias, 1452-1490) was elected to the throne. He is remembered as ‘Mátyás, the Just’, and for his powerful mercenary ‘black army’, the ‘Fekete Sereg’. Moreover, he is well regarded by the fact that his court became one of the important cultural centers of Europe. In particular, his court was famous for its library, including the ‘Corviniana’ as his beautifully decorated codices were called.



On the right I show the title page of one of them along with a picture of Mátyás, who was not only well-prepared for the throne as a military leader, but also with respect to languages, including Latin, German, Czech and Romanian. He loved to read, in particular

about the military maneuvers of Hannibal and Alexander the Great and was at home in the doctrines of the Church, as well as in the laws of the land – all by the age of 15. Later his greatest joy was conversation in Latin with the scholars he gathered in his court.

He recognized that even with his strong army (10,000 in the cavalry and 5000 soldiers on foot), Hungary alone can't drive the Turks out of Europe. Hence, he made huge efforts to get elected as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, which was accomplished by only one king of Hungary, Zsigmond (Sigmund) of the House of Luxemburg during the last 4 years of his rule of Hungary (1387-1437). King Mátyás became king of the Czechs, prince of the Austrians, and made Vienna his home base, but failed to secure the support of the German states. He also failed to assure the support of Hungary's nobility for his son, János Corvin, who was born out of wedlock, but was legitimized by his father in time for him to inherit his throne. Therefore, upon his death, his mercenary army disintegrated and consequently, the country was no longer prepared to withstand the Turkish advances.

Here I must mention the efforts of Tamás Bakócz, whose father was a maker of cartwheels and yet he managed to become the Primate of Hungary and the Patriarch of Constantinople – thereby the second highest ranking priest after the pope in the Catholic Church. He was the only Hungarian who had serious chances for the papacy in 1513, promising that upon his election he would use his considerable wealth to finance a crusade against the Turks. When Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici was elected in his place, he returned from Rome with a papal bull for organizing his crusade.

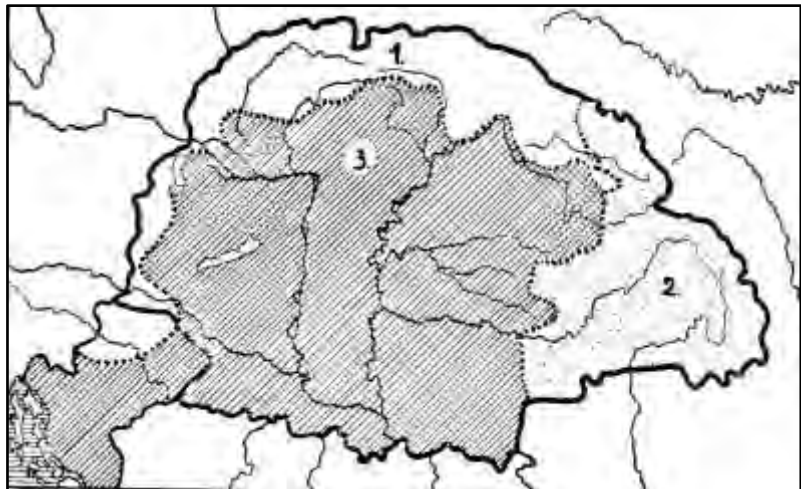


More than 40,000 nobles, peasants and priests gathered for the crusade, which was to be led by the nobleman and distinguished warrior, György Dózsa. Unfortunately, there was hesitation by Bakócz and the upper nobility concerning the crusade, attempts to call it off and subsequent unrest among those who gathered. Their resistance to be disbursed led to a nationwide bloody peasant revolution in 1514, whose cruel crushing was followed by new laws to restrict the movements of the serfs even more. Thus, when the need was the greatest for the country to unite against the Turkish advances, Hungary was at its weakest point.



The battle of Mohács in 1526

In that battle the Turks nearly annihilated the Hungarian forces. The king also died and subsequently the Turks kept a large part of Hungary under their occupation for the next 150 years. From then on, apart from fighting over some forts and small raids, a status quo was maintained as shown in the map on the right, where the area ruled by the Austrians is marked with a '1', Erdély by a '2', and the Turkish-occupied part by a '3'.



From then on until the end of World War I, the throne of Hungary was occupied by the Habsburgs (whose name I often spell with a 'p' in place of the 'b'), starting with Ferdinand I (1526-1564). Only locally and in Erdély (Transylvania) were the Hungarians in control of their destiny. I will tell you about Erdély and her able leaders, but first, I want to tell you a bit about some of

the famous defenders of the forts.

There were several famous battles fought against the Turks over the centuries of Turkish menace and occupation of Hungary. I mentioned already the Battle of **Nándorfehérvár** (Belgrade) of 1456, where János Hunyadi's victory delayed the Turkish advance towards Hungary by 70 years. Our defeat at **Mohács** in 1526 was followed by a victory, the defense of the Fort of **Kőszeg** in 1532 by Miklós Jurisics, which was fortunate for the Austrians since it stopped the Turkish advance towards Vienna, at least for the time being. Instead, the Turks took **Buda** with relative ease in 1541; that date is usually considered as the beginning of their occupation of Hungary. However, the Turks still had to be content with victory at Eger, whose heroic defense by István Dobó and the women of **Eger** in 1552 was the subject of *Egri Csillagok* ('Eclipse of the Crescent Moon', available from Amazon), a wonderful novel by Géza Gárdonyi. The heroic defense of **Szigetvár** (1566) by Miklós Zrínyi also became the subject for an epoch by his grandson bearing the same name, whose poetry is usually taught right after the poetry of Bálint Balassi (1554-1594) and right before Dániel Berzsenyi in the high schools of Hungary. This might be a good time to mention

that both Balassi and Dániel's great-great-grandfather, Benedek Berzsenyi distinguished themselves in battles against the Turks, particularly well in the Battle for **Nagykanizsa** in 1674. Our first known Svastits ancestor, György Svastits was the captain of the Fort of Körös, whose first-born son, Ferenc died alongside Zrinyi at Szigetvár, whose fort we (Mom and I) saw in 2017.

It should be noted that some of our ancestors had to flee the Turks, whose style of occupation was characterized by taking the young girls into their harems and the young boys into the armies (after carefully training them), killing the others and burning the village. Many of the noble families lost their documents, as well as other possession too, and hence some could not even reestablish their nobility. As you will see, our ancestors were among the lucky ones, losing only their sheepskins.

The Golden Age of Erdély

While the term is usually applied only to the first part of the 17th century, I consider the rule of István Báthory (1571–1581) and of István Bocskai (1605 – 1606) just as successful as the rule of Gábor Bethlen (1613-1629). Báthory was also elected king of Poland in 1576, and he is remembered as one of their greatest kings. In particular, he defeated the forces of Russia's Ivan the Terrible at Pskov, securing Poland's eastern borders. Pictures of Báthory, Bocskai and Bethlen are shown below in that order.



One of Bocskai's great accomplishments was the settling of the 'hajdu's in Erdély, giving them nobility in exchange for their services in the military if the need arose. Originally, they were guards of cattle in the mountainous areas. With their help Bocskay was able to push back the Austrians beyond Pozsony (now Bratislava), at least temporarily. Bethlen was a truly royal ruler, whose court was the home for artists, scientists and musicians. He valued education and made elementary school a requirement even for the children of serfs in Erdély. He gave scholarships to talented students, enjoyed beautiful buildings and great horses. And he even reduced taxes during his realm. He was followed by György Rákóczi I, shown on the right, who also turned out to be a great prince of Erdély. We should also remember that György Rákóczi I was the prince who gave the titles of 'lófő' (equivalent to baron) and 'literati' to our ancestor, György Vargha I in 1635 in recognition of his military bravery.



Following the retaking of **Buda** by combined Austrian – Hungarian – Polish troops in 1686 (which is considered the end of Turkish occupation), the Austrians considered the recaptured area of Hungary as if it was theirs, and rather than resettling there the former landowners, they divided the properties among themselves. This practice and their many other excesses led to continuing conflicts, including the famous defense of the Fort of **Munkács** in 1688 by Ilona Zrinyi against the Austrians. Her second husband, Imre Thököly fought the War for Independence against them, while Ilona Zrinyi's son, Ferenc Rákóczi II from her first marriage continued the struggle of the Hungarians against the Habsburgs from 1703 to 1713, but he was defeated too. By the way, Ilona's father, Péter Zrinyi was beheaded after a failed conspiracy against the Austrians, and her uncle was the poet mentioned earlier, who also wrote an excellent guidebook for the military.

Below I show a picture of Thököly, who was a dashing man in his prime, Ilona Zrinyi, who was supposedly most beautiful, and Ferenc Rákóczi II, whose picture was painted by Ádám Mányoki.



Interestingly, Rákóczi was exiled to Rodostó in Turkey, where he was allowed to have several of his former officers with him in relative comfort. Below I show the house where he lived along with the many ribbons with Hungary's colors that were left there by those who paid pilgrimage to the site.



Recently, I also learned that there were close to 10,000 Hungarians who also fled to Turkey after our failed 1848-49 Revolution against Austria. Seemingly, the Turks are sympathetic to our causes in spite of our many conflicts with them over the previous centuries. They are also very welcoming to Hungarian tourists nowadays, but we have yet to take advantage of that.

Names and forenames

Names in Hungarian are written in reverse order.

That is, Last Name first and First Name last.

Thus, George Berzsenyi becomes Berzsenyi György,

where I also used the Hungarian equivalent of ‘George’.

Throughout this writing I will follow the English / American way of writing the names of people.

When it comes to Hungarian first names, many of them have English equivalents, like

György = George János = John István = Stephen Mária = Mary Anna = Ann

Erzsébet = Elizabeth Gergely = Gregory Erik = Eric Lidia = Lydia, etc.

But there are names for which there is no English equivalent, like

Zsolt, Zoltán, Kolos, Virág, Hajnalka, etc.

just like the American Kay, Collin, Jackson lack Hungarian versions.

In the ‘olden days’ it was customary to give several names to the children, and thus my mother had three, Zsuzsanna Kornélia Györgyike, of which she used mostly the second and third ones in addition to her nickname, ‘Donci’. Nicknames were in general use, as well as a variety of shortened forms like Miki, Mikó, Micu, etc. for Miklós (= Nicholas) in daily use.

In the USA, normally everyone has a middle name, and one is expected to use it too on various forms. Mine was Sándor (= Alexander), but I ‘left it behind’ when I changed my last name from Vargha to Berzsenyi. More precisely, I changed from ‘de Vargha’, since I used the ‘de’ as my father did to indicate nobility in the French or more precisely, Latin manner. Originally, its meaning was ‘from’, indicating the place from which the family hailed, like in the name “Döry Benedek de Jobaháza”. Later it was Hungarianized to “jobaházi”, meaning “of Jobaháza” and ended up as the ‘forename’ of the Döry family. (The ‘i’ at the end of a noun usually makes it into an adjective.)

In a similar fashion, most noble families of Hungary used forenames to indicate their original habitats, which villages were often given to them along with their nobility by the king. Thus, for example, my Vargha ancestors used the forename ‘szentlászlói’ and later the forename ‘balatonfüredi’ too, since they originated from the villages Szent-László and (later) Balatonfüred. In fact, my father’s right to use both forenames was reaffirmed in 1935.

When the family name is relatively common like the Varga (bootmaker), Juhász (shepherd), Kovács (blacksmith), etc. signifying occupations or Vörös (red), Fehér (white), Fekete (black), etc. meaning various colors, Nagy (big), Kis(s) (little) etc. referring to sizes, etc., then it is particularly helpful to separate noble families by their forenames. Thus, for example, our ‘egyházberzsenyi’ branch of the Berzsenyi family differs from the nagyidai Berzsenyi family, which lived in the eastern part of the country.

In the case of the Juhász family, I found the forename ‘kislapási’ paired with ‘hajas’, ‘hajas’ paired with ‘pánfalvi’, and ‘pánfalvi’ by itself too, indicating that most likely they were all designating the same branch of the family, but at different eras and in different parts of the country. Hence my conclusions in a latter chapter about my Juhász ancestors.

At times, even within the same branch of the family there were huge variations in the forenames used. For example, my Berzsényi grandfather used the forename „egyházás-nagyberzsényi”, whereas his distant cousin, Dénes Berzsényi coined the variation „enderszegi és csáfordi egyházás nagyberzsényi”, which was justifiable, since the “letter of donation” of 1559, which reassured the Berzsényi family in its earlier established nobility, also vested the family with the villages of Enderszeg and Csáford (in addition to Egyházásberzsény). Thus, it was reasonable for the organizer of the 1941 family gathering (Dr. Zoltán Berzsényi), to request that we all use the same forename (egyházásberzsényi).

I should also mention that at one time it was decreed by some central authorities that forenames are to be capitalized. In not doing so, I am following a fairly common practice in recognizing forenames as adjectives, which are **not** capitalized in Hungarian. In that respect the Hungarian language is most reasonable as compared to the German, which capitalizes nearly everything and English, which declares certain nouns and adjectives to be “proper”, whose definition is most ambiguous.

In general, forenames are rarely used nowadays, except in genealogical settings when one wants to distinguish two or more different noble families like the egyházásberzsényi and the nagyidai Berzsényis, the rendesi and the szeniczei Báránys, or the 190 different Nagy families of the nobility listed in Nagy Iván’s excellent 7-volume book (with a supplement) on Hungary’s families (*Magyarország családai*, published in 1860).

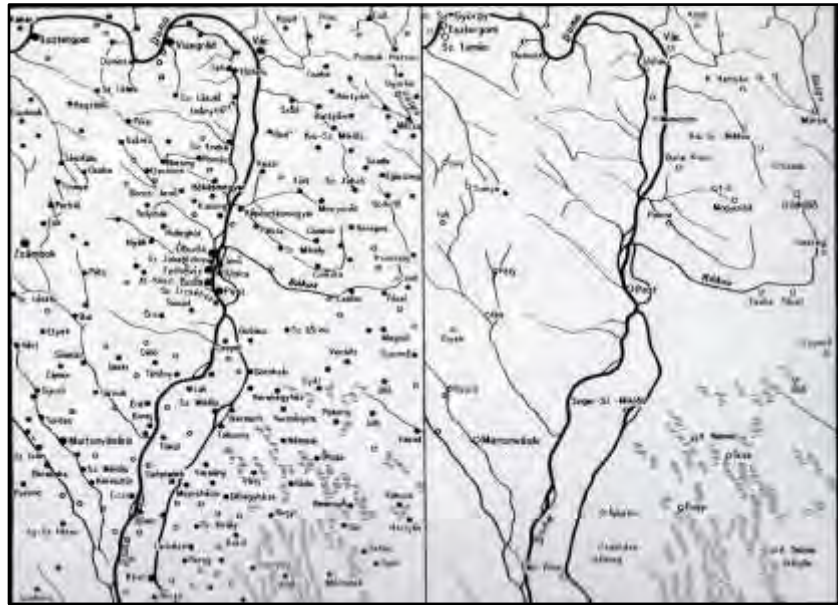
Finally, I should mention that there were also a number of noble families which never had a forename or bothered with such. The Thulmon, Foky, and Etényi families come readily to mind.

In closing, I include a list of the forenames of some of my ancestral families. The list below is far from complete. I also introduced ‘forename’ as a ‘fact’ in my Family Tree Maker program and included the forenames of many relatives there.

Family Name	Forename(s) of		
	Individual	Our Branch	Others
Barcza	Anna	nagyalásonyi	
Bárány	Mária	rendesi	szeniczei
Borbély	Sámuel	roffi	
Döry	Jozefa	jobaházi	
Gyarmathy	János	rádóczi	
Pogány	Mihály	csebi	
Svastits	János	bocsári	csecsényi
Szelestey	Ilona	felső-szelestei	
Takách	Zsuzsanna	dukai	péteri
Tallián	Krisztina	vizeki	
Török	Magdolna	telekesi	enyingi
Vittnyédy	Magdolna	musai	

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 5

The maps below show the density of villages in a small part of the country around Budapest before and 100 years after the Turkish occupation¹. Clearly, their devastation was enormous. Even more importantly, even after the country was freed from the Turks by a combination of Polish, Austrian and Hungarian forces, Hungary was never independent again except for the period between World Wars I and II and supposedly, since 1990. Unfortunately, during the 1920s and 1930s, it was a hugely deformed country, reduced by the Treaty of Trianon (which was, actually, a Dictate), and currently Hungary is fast becoming a colony of 'The West'.



According to some sources, as a result of the Turkish occupation, the country's population slipped from 4 million to 1½ million, and to add insult to injury, after the withdrawal of the Turkish forces the Austrians considered Hungary as if it was an occupied territory and treated the Hungarians accordingly.

The Rule of the Habsburg Dynasty

Strictly speaking, while most of the emperors of Austria had themselves crowned as kings of Hungary, we were under Austrian domination of rulers from the House of the Habsburg for the next 400 years. Erdély was the only exception; it managed to keep its independence to some extent for some time. Only the fact that 'a nation lives in its language' saved us from oblivion. Recognizing that, the Austrians made several attempts to make German the language of Hungary too, but they failed. Just like we failed in our glorious fights for freedom (Thököly's and Rákóczi's movements, the 1848-49 Revolution, etc.) and even in our Compromise of 1867. Nevertheless, the Spirit of Hungary was alive and well, even if our existence was not recognized by others. And in poetry, music, mathematics, science, and other areas of intellectual accomplishments we stayed very much alive. And many of our ancestors were not just part of the crowd but distinguished themselves.

Thus, for example, Dániel Berzsenyi became the nation's celebrated bard during the era of enlightenment in Hungary, and the music of János Svastits was also reflecting the pride in our musical heritage. And many of our ancestors took an active part in the 1848-49 Revolution against the Austrian despotism too. But first I want to say at least a few words about

¹ Borrowed from Stephen Sisa, *The Spirit of Hungary*, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 1983

the Reign of Maria Theresia,

Hungary's only ruling queen, who treated the Hungarians with proper respect. Rightly so, since at a time in 1741 when none of her other subjects came to her defense against foreign aggression aiming to dethrone her, the Hungarians stood by her side. Since they didn't want to accept a woman as emperor, most other countries of Europe formed an alliance with the aim of defeating the Austrians and dividing among themselves the Habsburgs' Empire. At that point Maria Theresia, decided to appear dressed in black, with her infant son on her arms at the all-male Hungarian Diet in Pozsony, and made a desperate plea to the Hungarian nobles for their help. The Hungarians, who could not win their freedom from Austria under the leadership of Thököly and Rákóczi just a few years earlier, gallantly accepted the challenge. Within a month a Hungarian army of 80,000 was put together to begin the counter-offensive. The united Bavarian-French forces were driven back, General Hadik took back Berlin, and another Hungarian general pushed back the Prussians from Bavaria. With victory after victory by the Hungarians, her power was restored, and as a consequence, she managed to restore the Hungarian spirit in return. By establishing the Hungarian Noble Bodyguard, she attracted many young noblemen to Vienna, offering them an opportunity to better themselves. Some of our young poets and other reformers came from their ranks, thereby strengthening the development of literature in Hungary and bringing about movements for reforms.

The painting on the right by Bertalan Székely depicts the moment when the Hungarian noblemen at the Diet vowed "Our life and blood for the Queen". Their spirited actions assured her rule for 41 years.



Nationalism on the rise

In spite of the fact that the attitude towards Hungary didn't remain positive after the death of Maria Theresia, the awakening of nationalism could not be stopped. There were those who worked on reforming the language, others were advocating more manufacturing and commerce. Poets, like Dániel Berzsenyi, our famous ancestor were recalling past glories and instilling pride in the nation. Still others, like István Széchenyi and Miklós Wesselényi gathered information about institutions in France, Italy and England, and advocated for their adoption by the Hungarians. Later, as the court-appointed secretary for transportation, Széchenyi alone managed to reform the country to a huge extent. The first bridge across the Danube, the Lánchíd (Chain bridge) was just one of his many accomplishments. He richly deserved the "Greatest Hungarian" epitaph coined by Lajos

Kossuth, who was also an early reformer, but became more revolutionary. Interestingly, Széchenyi and Berzsenyi had a very high respect for one another and influenced each other a lot. So much so that one of my favorite little books, Nemeskürty's "Vallani és Vállalni" is almost as much about Berzsenyi as it is about the subject of the book, Széchenyi. I got it from Egon Svastics, who lectured about it at the 2011 Svastics family reunion, which he held in my honor.

Below I show a representation of some of the many accomplishments of Széchenyi, including the National Academy of Sciences, the Széchenyi Library, the taming of the River Tisza, making the Danube navigable through the 'Iron Gate', his influential books (Hitel, Világ, Stádium, Lovakrul and Kelet Népe) and pamphlets (including a very important one about the founding of a National Theater that came into existence too), establishing the National Bank of Hungary, starting horse racing as a pastime, and of course, the Chain Bridge, which is not even included in the illustration.

Unfortunately, his approach was less appealing to the hot-blooded Hungarians than Lajos Kossuth's revolution, which was partially forced upon the Hungarians by the actions of Vienna, i.e., the Habsburgs. Fearing a revolution in Budapest following the revolutions in Paris, Vienna and other cities, and learning about the demands of the youth of Pest on the 15th of March 1848, the Austrians called upon the Croatian general Jellasics to go to Pest and restore order there. Marching through the countryside with less than well-disciplined soldiers he was met with resistance, and finally a quickly recruited volunteer army of Hungarians defeated him at Pákozd. My great-grandfather, Imre Varga (he always wrote his name without an 'h') was there as a young officer, and I think his brothers, Sándor and Izidor were with him too. But let me get back to the days prior to the Revolutionary War for a bit more back-ground information prior to discussing the War itself.



Lajos Kossuth

While most history books brand him as a revolutionary, in reality he started out as a parliamentary lawyer, whose written reports of the happenings at the Diet in Pozsony (now Bratislava) eventually led to the formulation of 12 basic demands of the Viennese Court. He delivered those demands in person, but with a large entourage to Emperor – King Ferdinand, who agreed to those demands. They were:

1. Freedom of the press and abolition of censorship
2. Appointment of a separate Hungarian Ministry
3. Universal suffrage and annual general elections of the members of the Diet
4. Equality of all in the eyes of the law
5. Formation of a National Guard
6. Taxation extended to the nobility and the clergy too
7. Suppression of feudal rights
8. Elected Juries for the criminal courts
9. Establishment of a National Bank
10. Establishment of a National Army
11. Liberation of political prisoners
12. Unification of Hungary with Erdély (Transylvania)

Unfortunately, soon afterwards Ferdinand was forced into abdicating the throne in favor of 18-year-old Franz Joseph, who ignored his predecessor's agreement, and eventually crushed the Hungarian resistance with the help of a huge Russian force sent by Tsar Nicholas at the Emperor's request. The main revolutionary army put down its arms at Világos on August 13, 1849, with only General Klapka at the Fort of Komárom still resisting the Austrians. Great-grandfather Imre Varga was there as second-in-command, and hence he also enjoyed the deal Klapka managed to work out with the besieging forces after 7 weeks of holding the fort. My great-grandmother's brother, Gáspár Noszlopy and his guerrillas kept fighting too; I will have more about him later.

In my summary of the events, I should have said at least a few words about the Ides of March, that is, about the gathering of young poets and their followers on the 15th of March 1848 at the Café Pilvax, which is often recognized (wrongly) as the starting point for the Revolution. Admittedly, the reception of the 'National Song' of Sándor Petőfi, the patriotic speeches of Mór Jókai, Pál Vasvári and others, as well as the circulation of the 12 demands fueled the nationalistic spirit, and hence it is appropriate to mark March 15 as a national holiday in Hungary. But there were other events to be remembered too, like the dethroning of the Habsburgs in Debrecen, the triumphant entry of Kossuth into Vienna, and the retaking of Buda from the Austrians. To learn more about them, as well as about the history of my people, please find your copy of Stephen Sisa's wonderful book shown here, and **please, read it.**

And here are a few more pictures from that era.





Kossuth



Széchenyi



Klapka



Kossuth in Cegléd



in Vienna



Scenes from Pest on March 15, 1848

Pronunciation Guide

For all practical reasons, one can limit oneself to the following letters (leaving out q, w, x and y) since they appear only in foreign words, as well as dz and dzs, which are relatively new and, in my opinion, totally unnecessary additions to the Hungarian alphabet):

a á b c cs d e é f g gy h i í j k l ly m n ny o ó ö ő p r s sz t ty u ú ü ű v z zs

I must start by emphasizing that the **diacritical marks** are essential in the Hungarian language. Leaving them off or using the wrong one changes the meaning of the word drastically. I must assume that most of us Hungarians are too meek to emphasize that fact to non-Hungarians or that they are rude and arrogant, but in this day and age I find it inexcusable to misspell Hungarian words and especially names in such manner. It would be much-much worse than

replacing every **w** by a **v** and every **y** by an **i**

simply because to me **v** and **w** sound the same and the **y** is used by itself in Hungarian names only as an archaic ending in place of the **i**.

I should also emphasize that the double letters in the Hungarian alphabet designate sounds having little to do with the single letters used for their creation.

Thus, **cs sz zs**

should probably have separate symbols to set them apart from the symbols **c s z** like a ~ over them.

Similarly, the **y** in the row of symbols

gy ly ny ty

has nothing to do with the **i** mentioned earlier.

They should also have separate symbols to set them apart from the symbols **g l n t** like a ~ over them.

Moreover, when it comes to the vowels **a e i o** and **u,**

their relationship to **á é í ó ö ő ú ü and ű**

is also relatively small.

It could be said that **í ó ő ú** and **ű**

are the elongated versions of **i o ö u** and **ü,**

but even that is a 'stretch'. Nevertheless, I can live with that.

I must also point out that in family names one must honor usage, tradition and even 'upetiness'.

Thus, the extra **h** in names like Vargha Thulmon and Tóth, where the **h** is silent;

the **ch** in place of **cs** in names like Takách,

the **cz** in place of **c** in Barcza and

the **y** in place of **i** in Döbrentey must be left as is.

And now the

Guide

itself:

a	aw	as in	law	c	c	as in	dance
á	a	as in	father	cs	ch	as in	chug
e	e	as in	set	g	g	as in	go
é	e	as in	grey	gy	dju	as in	adjulation, Gyuri
i	i	as in	mint	j	y	as in	yet
í	i	as in	machine	ly	y	as in	yet (archaic)
o	o	as in	boy	ny	ny	as in	canyon
ó	o	as in	blow	s	sh	as in	shrug
ö	i	as in	shirt	sz	s	as in	skin
ő	i	as in	sir	z	z	as in	zebra
u	u	as in	duke	zs	j	as in	journey, Berzsenyi
ú	oo	as in	cool				
ü	ü	as in	führer	y	y	as in	city
ű	ü	as in	fűhrer				

Letters not listed are pronounced approximately as in English.

To exemplify the extreme importance of using the diacritical marks, let me list below a number of words along with their English translations:

kerek	round		vad	wild		tor	wake
kerék	wheel		vád	accusation		tör	breaks
kérek	please					tőr	dagger
	gaz		weed		vet	sows	
	gáz		gas		vét	err	

Naturally, the **Gombos** and the **Gömbös** families are different too, as well as the **Marton** and **Márton** families.

I should also add that in Hungarian there is **vowel harmony**:

front vowels are	e	ö	ü
back vowels are	a	o	u
the vowel		i	

is a wild card.

In general, words have either all front vowels or all back vowels, with no mixing allowed. However, i can mix with either category.

The rule applies in grammatical endings, but not necessarily in compound words.

By the way, did I tell you that Hungarian is a **fonetik** language? It is!

And here are a couple of quotes from the ‘Poetry of the Magyars’ by Bowring, John Sir (1792-1872), London, 1830

The Magyar language stands afar off and alone. The study of other tongues will be found of exceedingly little use towards its right understanding. It is moulded in a form essentially its own, and its construction and composition may be safely referred to an epoch when most of the living tongues of Europe either had no existence or no influence on the Hungarian region. (p. vi, epoch = long period of time)

The prosody of the Magyar is very remarkable. There is no measure of Latin or Greek rhythmus to which it does not lend itself. (p. xvi, prosody = the rhythmic and intonational aspect of the language)

Which may be contrasted with the following comment:

The Greek language is particularly well suited to this metrical style of poetry but the sound of the verses does not easily transfer to English. As a consequence, translators have historically tended to substitute rhyme, stress rhythms, stanzaic patterning and other devices for the style of the originals, with the primary, sometimes only, connection to the Greek verses being the subject.

And yet another observation: The most striking feature of Hungarian versification is (according to Kodály) „rhythmical duality” – a Hungarian poem, written in any metric scansion can be read out loud with the traditional word-initial stress of natural, spoken Hungarian.

And here is a different **Warning: Be aware of the different handwriting of the Hungarians**

Many of us were taught by a totally different method, called **zsinor-írás** or **string-writing**

It is exemplified on the right. Our individual styles of writing are based on it; i.e., on how we were taught in grade school.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQ
 RSTUVWXYZDEFü

Finally, an important request:

We should stick to the original Hungarian first names of famous Hungarians, like Liszt, whose first name was Ferenc and **not** Franz!

and insist on the **correct pronunciation of both first and last names.**

Moreover, I strongly object to writing a Hungarian name or any Hungarian words without the **proper diacritical marks**; they are essential parts of the language.

It is a sign of **ignorance and disrespect** the way they (reporters, commentators, politicians, etc.) mispronounce Hungarian words and names and make no effort to correct themselves or to apologize for their shortcomings.

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 6

Haynau and the Bach era of terror

Following the crushing of Hungary's 1848-49 War for Independence, the Austrians disregarded the fact that our capitulation was to the Russian troops, whose commander promised complete amnesty to our soldiers. Their retributions included the execution of 13 generals, that of the Prime Minister, as well as many others for involvement in the Revolution. The Martyrs of Arad are shown in the arrangement below; we remember them always on the 6th of October. To their right I have a picture of Haynau, the Austrian General, who was responsible for their execution, along with a picture of Emperor Franz Joseph, who was just as guilty of their demise.



The third person on the right is Bach, the Minister of Franz Joseph, who was most responsible for the era of terror instituted by the Austrians following the revolution. A huge number of Hungarians fled the country, many others were imprisoned, yet others conscripted into the army stripped of their ranks, and of course, many died or were maimed on the battlefields. Some even ended up as prisoners of the Russians, captured by them prior to our surrender. The estates of many were confiscated and given to loyal Austrian subjects, censorship was enforced, and basic rights were constantly violated. Moreover, the efforts of Germanization were stepped up again.

On the other hand, work towards gaining at least partial independence did not cease, and with Austria's military defeats against the Italians and the Prussians the political climate was getting more and more favorable for the Hungarians.

The Compromise of 1867

was engineered by Ferenc Deák and his allies, allowing Hungary to make huge improvements both formally, as well as behind the scenes. While it is true that Hungary flourished wonderfully following that truce, unfortunately, finances, the military, and most importantly, foreign affairs were shared by Austria and Hungary, with the Austrians having the upper hand. Hence it was impossible for Hungary to stay out of World War I when the Austrians got into it. The loss of that war, and the subsequent events of the 1919 communist terror, as well as the ‘Treaty’ of Trianon could all have been avoided if we drove a stronger bargain in 1867. Nevertheless, Deák was revered as the ‘Haza Bölcső’ (The Sage of the Country). Rather than his well-known picture, I show here a photo of him at the Angol Királynő (English Queen) Hotel in Budapest, where he spent the last several decades of his life. That hotel was rented by József Marchal, the brother-in-law of Great-grandfather József Fritsch, and the picture is in the possession of the related Rémi family and was sent to me by Márk Görbe, a genealogical co-worker of mine.



By the way, the terms ‘Austro-Hungary’ or more properly, ‘Austro-Hungarian Empire’ date back to the Compromise, as well as the term ‘K und K’ (Keiser and King), which designated military officers who were trained at the Austro-Hungarian military schools rather than the Ludovika, Hungary’s own military academy.

The years following the Compromise are best characterized by the rising of the nationalistic spirit both among the Hungarians and the various nationalities in parts of the country occupied by them. While prior to the Turkish occupation close to 80% of the population was pure Hungarian, that percentage slipped to 45% afterwards due to necessary repopulation efforts with Germans, and the territorial gains by Romanians, Serbs and Slovaks, as well as the land grants given by the Habsburgs to Austrians, who preferred to import and employ the cheaper workforce of Romanians rather than the local Hungarians. In their euphoria for their long-awaited independence, the Hungarian leadership ignored the hostile attitude of the minorities, which was a huge mistake.

The Millennium

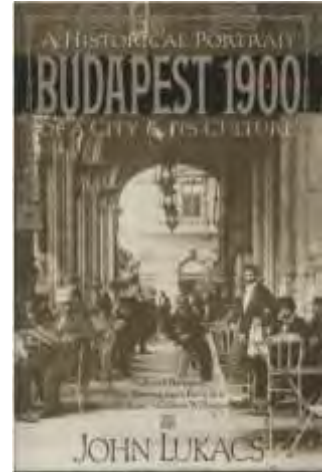
1896 marked the 1000th anniversary of The Conquest. There were incredible preparations for it, including a huge building spree. The first subway on Continental Europe, lots of statues, like those on Heroes Square, as well as the Parliament, which is shown on the right date back to those years. During the decade surrounding 1896 scores of magnificent public buildings, as well as the modernization of the city elevated Budapest to the level of other world capitals. In 1896 alone 400 new schools were opened throughout the country, exemplifying the wide-spread interest in education as well. And it was in 1894 that Hungary’s great mathematics journal, *KöMaL* was born along with the Kürschák Mathematics Competitions, which became the role model for all mathematics competitions 30-40 years later.



More about Hungary's Millennium

While I touched on various happenings in Hungary around the previous turn of the century, I strongly believe that you should read some more about it. In that spirit I recommend to you John Lukács's excellent book, with an addendum of period photographs. It is a good read!

Elsewhere I learned that in 1910 there were 1345 newspapers (of them, 1143 were written in Hungarian) and 537 magazines (of them, 460 were written in Hungarian) published in Hungary¹. I doubt that any other country, with the possible exception of the US had that many newspapers or magazines at any time. Of the newspapers 107 were daily (27 in Budapest alone), but in spite of their more political orientation, they all published literary pieces as well, including some poetry. Thus, everyone had an opportunity to publish their works, as well as translations of pieces written in other languages. Virtually every literary piece of importance was translated into Hungarian.



On the other hand, hardly any of Hungary's literature found its way into other parts of the world, and that is especially true for our poetry, which is especially fantastic. The two poets whose works are probably most difficult to translate are Berzsenyi and Ady, who are two of my favorites; yet barely a dozen of their poems are known by anyone outside of Hungary.

Fortunately, some of our novelists have done better. In particular, Mór Jókai, is widely recognized as the best novelist of Hungary with a total of 350 books to his credit. According to Endre Illés's *Napfoltok* (Sunspots, published in Hungary in 1987), 200 of them appeared in German. Prior to World War I, his German readers purchased one million copies of Jókai's works. His classic *Fekete Gyémántok* (Black diamonds) appeared in 11 different editions, while his next best-seller, *Aranyember* (The man with the golden touch) in 10 editions in German. Twenty-eight different translators of his were known in 1987; one of whom translated 64 of his works. In Warsaw, his works were published by 17 different publishers, whose number in Prague was 10, in Helsinki 8, Saint Petersburg, Paris and Stockholm 6. Jókai was a superb storyteller and everyone loved him for it. They may not have appreciated the historical significance of his works but enjoyed his tales.

In addition to Jókai, I liked Gárdonyi, Móra, Herczeg, vitéz Somogyvári, Wass and Nyíró too.

¹ The Hungary I am referencing here is Greater Hungary (Nagy Magyarország), whose cities included among others the following ones, where, after the old Hungarian name I parenthesized the new name, the country to which they now belong and the population in thousands. (RO = Romania, SE = Serbia, SL = Slovakia, UK = Ukrain and IT = Italy) They were cultural centers with a deep Hungarian history, with some of them rivaling even Budapest. They were taken away at the Dictate of Trianon after World War I, crippling the country. Thereby, many Hungarians refer to their present country as Csonka Magyarország. ('csonka' may be translated as truncated, maimed, incomplete, crippled)

Brasso (Brasov, RO, 550)
 Pozsony (Bratislava, SL, 430)
 Arad (Arad, RO, 420)
 Nagyszeben (Sibiu, RO, 400)
 Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare, RO, 330)
 Temesvár (Timisoara, RO, 320)
 Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, RO, 310)

Újvidék (Novi Sad, SE, 290)
 Kassa (Kosice, SL, 240)
 Nagyvárad (Oradea, RO, 200)
 Marosvásárhely (Targu Mures, RO, 140)
 Fiume (Rijeka, IT, 130)
 Ungvár (Uzhgorod, UK, 112)
 Szabadka (Subotica, SE, 105)

World War I

Since Hungary's military was not independent from Austria's, it was inevitable for us to get into it. We lost it and paid for it dearly. No other country ended up as cruelly dismembered as ours.

Thanks to the 'Treaty' of Trianon in 1920, the country was reduced to barely 28.6% of its former land and it lost 63.6% of its population, 61.4% of its arable land, as well as 88% of its forests, in addition to most of its mines and many of its culturally important cities. Moreover, we were to pay 300 million USD as 'reparations' to Russia, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia for damages caused during World War I. And finally, to add insult to injury, seemingly nobody in Hungary knew the exact time for



the treaty to take place, and hence many of our railroad cars full of merchandize 'happened to be' outside the present borders, and hence were confiscated when the borders were closed.

Many of my ancestors were born outside of present-day Hungary, and many of the records concerning them are no longer available to us. Not only have the Serbs, Romanians, Slovaks and others ethnically cleansed the formerly Hungarian areas, they often falsified the vital records as well to support their claims that those areas were populated by their own people all along. They also 'reconstructed' history to suit their aims as if they were the winners of the war, whereas in reality they joined the banquet thrown by the winners only through the servants' entrance.

In the present treatise I will ignore the Dictate of Trianon and look upon the traditional Kingdom of Hungary as the land of the Hungarians. Thus, in particular, I will refer to its cities by their traditional Hungarian names, mentioning only occasionally in parenthesis their present names.

Throughout history we always had a lot of tolerance for the various ethnic groups within our territory and let them keep their own language and traditions. That is no longer the case outside of present-day Hungary with respect to the Hungarians living there. In the 100 years since the foreign occupation of those lands, the new owners did their best to obliterate everything that was historically Hungarian.

The reign of Admiral Miklós Horthy

Upon receiving the mandate from the Western Powers to establish order in the hugely reduced land of the Hungarians, his first activity was to remove the remnants of the communist rule, which terrified the country during its brief stay in power. He also had to rehabilitate the country's military establishment without violating any of the limitations placed on us by the winners of WWI and restore the pride of those who fought for their homeland during the war.

In particular, he established the designation of ‘vitéz’² (Order of Valor) to reward soldiers for their bravery during the war, which also involved a grant of some land donated by the land-owners living in the same area. Soon he also had to find ways to cope with the hundreds of thousands of Hungarians who had to flee their native lands in view of the fact that the ‘treaty’ of Trianon made them subject to the harsh foreign rule of Romanians, Serbians, Slovaks and others. And then the worldwide depression caught up with Hungary too – thereby further complicating Horthy’s rule of the country. He is shown in the picture on the right.



Nevertheless, during his years as the Regent (governing the country on behalf of the sacred crown of Saint Steven from 1921 until 1944), the number of schools grew from 7418 to 13780, the number of hospitals from 187 to 247, the number of medical doctors doubled, and we added over 1600 miles of first class roads and nearly doubled the mileage covered by railroads, using our own diesel engines, which we sold throughout the world. We also created a nationwide health care system that worked even under communism.

At this point I should also comment on the claim that Horthy’s regime was neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic. Such slander was initiated by the communists, and I find it strange that the supposedly anti-communist western literature agrees with that designation too. For one thing, he was far from trustful of the Germans, and did his best to keep them out of Hungary. In fact, he made several attempts to make separate peace treaties both with the Russians and with the Western Powers; from everything I know, his efforts were not reciprocated. With respect to his anti-Semitism, I find that judgment too harsh also. I will address that issue separately when I write about Hungary’s large Jewish population, its numerous contributions and the unfortunate turn of events during the 20th Century. At this point I wish to mention only one fact: at the infamous Nuremberg Trials, he was not accused, but served as a reluctant, but highly regarded witness.



² A rough translation of it is valiant or brave. Hence, the designation was in recognition of their heroic actions during a war. Those who received this medal of valor could put ‘vitéz’ in front of their names. I should also mention that both my grandmother and Mariska néni contributed plots, called ‘vitéz-telek’ to those who were so honored among the people of Nikla.

Dictionary of Hungarian terms

In place of Mister (Mr.) in front of a name, we put ‘úr’ at the end and thus,

Mr. Taylor becomes Taylor úr,

while his wife is Taylorné, or Taylor Ádámné if his first name is Ádám or, if he is no longer alive, özv. Taylorné, where özv. is an abbreviation of ‘özvegy’ (widow), though that usage seems to be out of vogue nowadays.

For that matter, ‘úr’ is relatively new too, that is, under communism everyone was addressed as ‘elvtárs’ and ‘elvtársnő’, meaning ‘comrade’, as if we professed the same beliefs (nő = woman; the ‘né’ above is a variation thereof). In the era prior to communism, we also addressed the ladies as ‘úrnő’ or ‘úrhölgy’; at times I use the latter, but those terms didn’t come back thus far.

The term ‘úr’ also means ‘gentleman’, a person of gentle behavior.

The terms ‘néni’ and ‘bácsi’ are used after the names of people we know if they are older.

In what follows, I put together a small dictionary of Hungarian words you might want to know:

anya	mother	szülő	parent
apa	father	gyerek	child
fiú	boy	lány	girl
testvér	sibling	születés	birth
húg	younger sister	nővér	older sister
öcs	younger brother	báty	older brother
nagyapa	grandfather	nagyanya	grandmother
dédapa	great-grandfather	dédanya	great-grandmother
ükapa	gr-gr-grandfather	ükanya	gr-gr-grandmother
szépapa	gr-gr-gr-grandfather	szépanya	gr-gr-gr-grandmother
eljegyzés	engagement	házasság	marriage
halál	death	temetés	burial
nő, asszony	woman	férfi	man
meny, menyé	daughter-in-law	vő, veje	son-in-law
anyós	mother-in-law	após	father-in-law
végrendelet	will	nemes	noble
keresztanya	godmother	keresztapa	godfather
keresztelés	baptism	bérmálás	confirmation

Hungary and the Hungarians

Part 7

World War II in Hungary

With Hitler in power in Germany since the early 1930s and his annexation of Austria in 1938, we became fearful. With their occupation of Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1939, France and Romania in 1940, our hope was to avoid the devastation the Germans caused in the neighboring countries, and as a result we managed to postpone the inevitable German occupation till March of 1944. Less than 7 months after that Horthy was deposed by the Germans, and the end of the war was in sight with the advance of the Soviet troops into Hungary.

At this point I should point out that the sentiments in Hungary were hugely divided throughout the war. There were those who hoped that Hitler would help to restore Hungary's historical borders, and hence welcomed him. Others looked upon him more fearfully and were willing to appease him only minimally. Yet others, admittedly a small minority, were decidedly pro-German, and sided even with his anti-Semitic views.

I should also point out that not only Budapest, but cities like Szombathely suffered from the heavy bombing by British and American planes throughout the last parts of the war. We lived there (in Szombathely) during the latter months, since the Germans made a last-ditch effort to hold back the advance of the Russians along the so-called Margit line which extended from the north of Budapest through the middle of Somogy, which had to be evacuated. In the process, they blew up the beautiful bridges of Budapest too, and made the city one of their last strongholds. During the Siege of Budapest, which lasted from the 25th of December 1944 until February 4, 1945, that beautiful capital was nearly destroyed; Poland's Warsaw was the only other capital suffering a comparable fate.

Hungary under communism

Even though the 'official' communist rule of the country did not begin until after the forged elections of 1949, the presence of the Russian occupying forces and their influence towards soviet-style economics brought about several new laws, which prepared the country for the upcoming communist regime. Foremost among them was the land-reform, that is the division of large estates among the peasants in March of 1945, even before the 'official' end of the war. As a consequence, nearly no one could own more than 100 acres of land, which was too small for large-scale production, while the peasants' additional 5 acres (that was the average everyone got) turned out to be even less valuable from an economic viewpoint. Thus, the foreshadow of Soviet-style enforced collectivization was already in the air at that time, but first even the estates of 100 acres had to be confiscated, along with those of 20-30 acres owned by the 'kuláks', the middle class of peasantry, whose main characteristics included diligence, honesty and the love of the land.

The situation was similar in the industrial sector, where first the large factories were confiscated, and then little by little even the smallest ones employing less than a dozen people were taken over by the state. The claim was that they were turned over to the people's ownership, but everyone knew or soon learned the truth about the reality of 'nationalization'. It meant absolute power by the Communist Party after 1949 through its all-powerful 'commissars' in all walks of life and its

ruthless secret police, the KGB-like ÁVH¹, which kept everyone fearful and constantly threatened. Up until 1953 (when Stalin died and hence, there was a reluctant softening of the regime) and then for another decade after the crushing of the 1956 Revolution, they virtually eliminated the upper and middle classes of the era between World Wars I and II via imprisonment on false charges or enforced deportations and inhumane conditions forced upon them. Fortunately, some of them escaped such fate by leaving the country towards the end of World War II or soon afterwards, or after the tragic loss of our 1956 Revolution, while the borders were temporarily open to the West.

Another precursor of the coming communist regime was a law in 1947 that abolished all ranks and titles, including those of the nobility, and it is a telling sign of the continuing power of the former communists that to this day (in 2020) that law could not be repealed in spite of several attempts. While only formally, the repeal of that law would give some recognition to the class of people whose ancestors governed the country fairly capably for more than 1000 years.

The ‘collapse’ of communism

happened in 1989-1990, when the leaders of the Soviet Union and those of the western powers made a pact of sorts, allowing the communist leaders to transfer their political powers to economic ones in return for allowing the West, as well as other countries with available capital to purchase the goods made available to them by the newly rich communists. Part of the deal must have also had some assurances that none of the former communist leaders will be held responsible for their criminal past, and that they will be allowed to reorganize into legitimate-looking parties which might eventually return to power with western help if needed.

Of course, the above scenario is my own reconstruction of the facts and differs significantly from the reported news, according to which communism collapsed on account of its economic faults, and the Berlin Wall was dismantled following the spirited speech of President Reagan and the cooperation of Gorbachev, the enlightened leader of the Soviet Union.

The truth is that while the Russians dismantled many of our factories, they allowed us to rebuild them and eventually the country got back on its feet by the late 1970s after 25 years of communism and the devastations of World War II (just like under Horthy after World War I in a similar length of time). The next 25 years, from 1989 to 2014 almost totally bankrupted Hungary and made it into a ‘Third World Country’, thanks to our western ‘allies’, like the USA and the countries of the European Union.

In summary, I must confess that all of my recent trips to Hungary made me very sad. I still love its terrain, its proud history, its poetry and its people, but I fear for its future. What wars could not devastate and unjust ‘treaties’ could not take away, treacherous ‘business deals’ between the former communists and those who always hungered for the possession of the land and its riches, slowly lead the country into bankruptcy. It is sad enough to see it from a distance, but nearly unbearable to observe it firsthand.

I conclude this section with two maps, the first one showing the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Central Europe, while the second one displays the present-day countries of the same region with emphasis on the central location of the Danube. It shows even the canal which enabled us to take a river-cruise from Amsterdam, starting on the Rhine and continuing on the Danube to Budapest in the Fall of 2019.

¹ Abbreviations for the Hungarian and the Russian secret police



Nobility, ranks, titles and privileges in the Hungary of yesteryears

While in communist Hungary our family suffered greatly on account of the fact that we belonged to the 'upper middle class' prior to World War II, it turned out to be a huge advantage in my research into genealogy that most of my ancestors were indeed of noble birth. Since the concept of 'nobility' is foreign to most everybody in a modern democratic society like the USA, a few words of explanation are in order.

The emergence of the noble class

Initially, when the Hungarians settled into the Carpathian basin in 896, all of them were free, but those who bore arms enjoyed special privileges even then. According to various estimates, there were about 400,000 Hungarians at that time, with about 20,000 of them belonging to the military entourage of the leaders and to the supreme leader of the 7 tribes, who was Árpád at the time of 'The Conquest' (896). Following the coronation of István in 1000, Hungary became a Catholic country, with laws and an administrative system reminiscent of those in Western Europe. Thus, for example, he set up 2 archbishoprics and 8 bishoprics in the country, with huge land grants to each, and divided the country into 40-some regions with a central fort in each, along with several other forts for the future defense of his kingdom.

While the number of Hungarians was relatively small, there was plenty of land within the country. The king claimed about a third of it, from which he could make grants to his deserving subjects. Thus, some of them, as well as those in charge of the forts and those who inherited tribal lands, became large land owners, and the population began to split into three classes: the upper class of large landowners (later called the aristocracy, including the upper ranks of the clergy), the middle class of those who owned relatively small portions of land, and those who worked on the land but had none of their own. Roughly speaking, the nobility came from the first two classes, along with those who were later rewarded by the king or his palatine (of Hungary, when the king was still a child and when the Habsburgs occupied the throne) for their services. Unfortunately, most of the third class of people, except for those who managed to master some trade, became serfs. That was the situation throughout feudal Europe in those days.

The Golden Edict

Those of noble background were expected to bear arms in support of the king in case of war, but they were exempt from taxation. Time and again, the upper class, as well as the clergy tried to press the middle class into service and taxation, but most of them managed to resist. Eventually, in 1222, the situation had to be addressed by King Andrew II himself, who issued in that year the 'Aranybulla' (Golden Edict), reaffirming the status of the middle class, whose members made sure from then on that they could prove their ancestry going back to the time of the Conquest, if necessary. That edict was reaffirmed several times in future years, including 1351, when Hungary's Louis the Great did so. His realm reached from the Baltic to the Black and Adriatic seas. Thus, Hungary's Aranybulla was like the Magna Carta of England 7 years earlier, a positive move in support of the lesser nobility, as well as to ensure the king's military strength. Even during the Napoleonic times, there were 'calls to arms' issued by Hungary's kings. Support, however was limited to defensive wars; i.e., the nobles were not obliged to follow the king in case of wars fought outside of Hungary.

I should also mention that there was a distinction between nobles who also received land grants with their ‘promotions’ and those who did not, but that is a technicality of no importance in the present context. The use of forenames and coats of arms usually date back to the granting of nobility too. I will write separately about both.

With respect to the role of the nobility, it went far beyond military service. From the efficient administration of the country to the overseeing of orphanages, health facilities, schools, charitable organizations --- all of them were in their domain, as well as the judiciary, the cultural and the industrial institutions. The country greatly depended on them. Concerning

ranks within the nobility,

of course there were dukes, princes, counts and barons, but I will mostly write about the lesser nobility, since none of my ancestors belonged to the upper ranks, with the exception of my György Vargha ancestor, whom I will introduce later. His title of ‘lófő’ (given in 1635 by Prince György I Rákóczi of Erdély, i.e., Transylvania) is usually recognized as the equivalent of ‘baron’.

The various ranks can be distinguished by the number of points on the crown in their coats of arms – with 11 denoting a prince, 9 a count, and 7 a baron. In comparison, the king’s crown has 12 points, while the crown in the coats of arms for the lesser nobility has only 5 points. Thus, for example, the crowns in the coats of arm of my Berzsenyi, Svastits, Gyarmathy and Juhász ancestors all have 5 points, while the Vargha’s have 7. At times my father pointed that out, when my mother made one too many references to the wealth of the Berzsenyis prior to World War II. The study of

coats of arms

belongs to the field of ‘heraldry’, which is a special branch of genealogy. Unfortunately, in spite of several attempts, I never got into it. Nevertheless, I am aware of the importance of minor differences, which distinguish different families, as well as similarities, which might point to kinship. Some time ago I made an extensive study of the different coats of arms used by various members of the Berzsenyi family; I will report on it in Part 2B. There are several excellent books on heraldry, both in English and in Hungarian; I recommend the latter in view of their relevance to my ancestry. Some are accessible via the internet too.

All noble families guarded their proofs of nobility for a variety of reasons, which I will address below. But first I want to comment on the certificates of nobility written on

‘sheepskin’

in the English-speaking world. That was the case in Hungary too despite us calling it a bit derisively ‘kutyabőr’ (dog skin). I will comment on such proofs of nobility with respect to some of our ancestral families, and will exhibit some of them too. Returning to the reasons for the importance of keeping such records, consider the following:

- (i) There were periodic compilations of those who claimed to be of noble birth, since the king wanted to be sure that those who could not prove their nobility paid taxes.
- (ii) Often there were controversies concerning holdings, which had to be resolved by the courts. At such times, proofs of ownership, like certificates of grants by the king, were needed.
- (iii) In order to ensure that the ownership of the land stays in the hands of the nobility, a huge effort was made to have all marriages stay within the same class.

Thus, most members of the middle and upper classes were extremely knowledgeable about each other's ancestry, and usually had extensive genealogical charts concerning their own ancestry. Fortunately, some of those charts survived all of the devastations in Hungary, and thus, once I managed to refine my networking, many of them were made available to me too.

Proper addresses,

like the 'Your Honor' to a judge in the USA, or 'Your Highness' to a prince, or even the 'your Holiness' to the pope are part of our social etiquette. During the 100 years or more in pre-communism Hungary sometime they went downright wild with such distinctions. For example, the wife of a military officer was 'Tekintetes-', 'Nagyságos-', 'Méltóságos-' or 'Kegyelmes-' Asszony, depending on his rank. The same adjectives preceded the 'Úr' in addressing governmental officers too. Of course, with communism such addresses, titles and ranks were

all abolished,

along with forenames and the notion of nobility. In fact, some laws were passed to that effect, which were not yet repealed in spite of the claim that there is no longer communism. Nevertheless, some people started to use them again, especially since the notion of 'knighting' was revived with the knighting of some who distinguished themselves during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Sadly, with enough communist power still evident in the country, it is hard to distinguish the former oppressors from the victims nowadays. Those knighted were to have 'vitéz' or its abbreviation 'vit.' preceding their last names, meaning 'brave'. Earlier such recognitions were given for specific acts of bravery in World Wars I and II, and as far as I know, they were not inheritable. Nevertheless, many started using them on account of their father's or grandfather's success. I have also come across the use of 'Báró' (meaning Baron) and 'Gróf' (meaning Count) in front of names lately. Those ranks were inheritable. I have also noticed that some create their own forenames, simply adding their hometown's name in front of their own. Moreover, I have seen evidence of desires to be addressed as 'Nagyságos asszony' by people who could not have earned the address in the old days,

'Enemies of the people'

At this point I should emphasize that while the Communist Party was not formally in power until 1949, Hungary was ruled by the communists ever since the end of WW II. Personal property, like stores, factories and mansions was seized and nationalized, larger apartments were divided into one or two-room living quarters and occupied by strangers, and those of the former ruling class, which included the nobility, were branded as the 'enemies of the people'. Not only were they marginalized with respect to schooling and jobs, but every effort was made via imprisonment and deportations to eliminate their class. Many escaped to 'The West' before the 'Iron Curtain' was put in place, and lots of us left the country in 1956, after our glorious revolution was crushed by the Russians while 'The West' stood by, not even recognizing our legitimate revolutionary government.

Unfortunately, even nowadays it is a widespread belief in Hungary that the nobility took advantage of its privileges without living up to its obligations. That's far from the truth. They governed and defended the country throughout the centuries, ably overseeing its various institutions, including schools, orphanages and hospitals, as well as the governmental facilities. The riff-raff that replaced it during communism nearly ruined the country agriculturally, financially and economically.

Hungary and the Hungarians Part 8

I will start this section with a more complete map of Europe, to point out how small Hungary is nowadays. It certainly shrunk since the days of the kingdom of Nagy Lajos (Louis, the Great, 1342-1382), when it stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea and had ports both on the Mediterranean (Napoli) and on the Adriatic Sea.



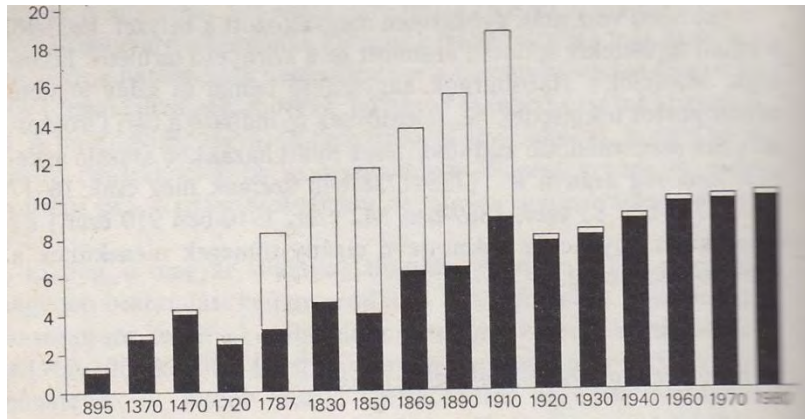
While the map of Europe is displayed, let me mention that according to my source¹, back in the time of King Matthias, towards the end of the 15th Century, the number of Hungarians was equal to that of the Germans and larger than that of the Englishmen or of the Russians. Due greatly to the devastations of the Mongolians and even more of the Turks, it took 350 years for the number of Hungarians to climb back to the same level of about 4 million, while the number of Germans, Englishmen and Russians grew hugely. Since then, Hungary has had a negative population growth, while most of the other countries continued to grow in population, as did the various nationalities within the Carpathian Basin shown in the chart on the next page.

¹ Endre Czeizel, *Az érték bennünk van* (in Hungarian, The value is within us), Gondolat, Budapest, 1984, p. 149

At times it happened purposefully, like the settlement of Germans in areas depopulated during the Turkish occupation, while at other times it was spontaneous, like the fleeing of Jews from Russia and the growing number of Gypsies also finding Hungary more to their liking.

At the time of King Matthias (1470), the number of other nationalities within the Carpathian

Basin was negligible as shown in the chart on the right. But by 1830, the different nationalities outnumbered the Hungarians.



The Hungarians

I left this topic to the end, since it is very difficult to define who we Hungarians are. I could start by referring my readers to an excellent book by my friend, Endre Czeizel (*A magyarság genetikája*², Budapest, 2003), which gives us an accurate characterization, but strictly from a genetic viewpoint. He concludes that we are nearly indistinguishable from the rest of the Europeans. Indeed, due to our migratory encounters with a variety of Iranian, Turkic, and other nationalities, our closeness to the Slovaks, Serbs, Croatians, Romanians and others, the 150 years of Turkish occupation, the often-forced Germanic influence, as well as the settlement of Petcheneg, Cumanian and Swabian communities within our borders greatly influenced our national character. We also welcomed hundreds of thousands of Jews, as well as many Gypsies over the years, and thus, we may have retained some of our Asian characteristics, but could not help becoming a melting pot for many other nationalities. Judging by the success of the USA and that of Canada, having such a rich pool of genes is a partial explanation for our successes as well. Linguistically, as well as ethnically, most of them became good Hungarians and long ago forgot their foreign roots. Thus, it is fair to say that all those who profess to be Hungarians, are indeed Hungarians, and should be recognized and honored as such.

By the way, according to Wikipedia, an **exonym** or **xenonym** is an external name for a geographical place, a group of people, an individual person, or a language or dialect. It is a common name used only outside the place, group, or linguistic community in question. An **endonym** or **autonym** is an internal name for a geographical place, a group of people, or a language or dialect. It is a common name used only inside the place, group, or linguistic community in question; it is their name for themselves, their homeland, or their language. Thus, for example, the English exonym for the land of the Magyar (an endonym) people is Hungary, the German exonym for it is Ungarn, while the Hungarian endonym for it is Magyarország.

Unfortunately, many of the terms used for the people above are their Hungarian exonyms, some of which became accepted into the English language, while for others the English exonyms differ from the Hungarian ones. And of course, different dictionaries give different results. Whenever

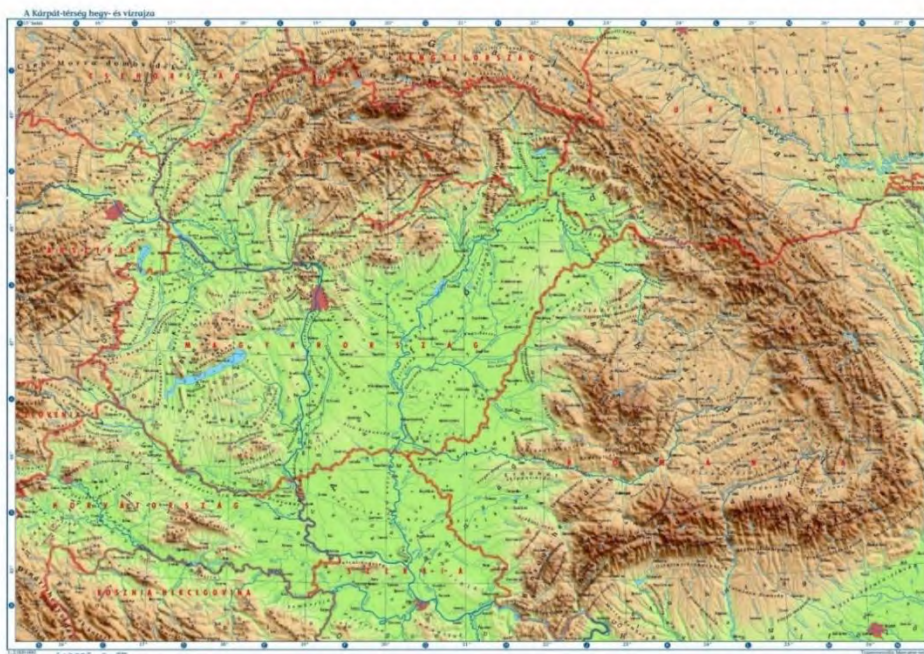
² *The genetics of the Hungarians*

there is fairly good agreement concerning the English exonym, I will parenthesize it following the Hungarian exonym.

As a footnote I should mention that prior to starting serious work on my genealogy, I was convinced that I was a full-blooded Hungarian with all of my ancestors of purely Hungarian origin. Since then I learned that with a probably Polish great-great-grandmother (Pretsinszky), Croatian ancestors in the Svastits family, Austrians in the Fritsch, Moravians in the Hudeček, and Turkic in the Csértán, I am barely half-Hungarian. Hopefully, I inherited some excellent qualities from all of them!

By the way, there are only about 14-15 million Hungarians around the world, with 10 million of them in present-day Hungary, over 3 million in the neighboring countries and 1 million scattered around the world. We survived for over three millennia and over 1100 years within the Carpathian Basin; thus, there is hope for us in the future as well.

I will conclude this section with some more maps. The first one is a topographic map of the Carpathian Basin, to be followed by one of present-day Hungary, showing many of its cities, as well as roads and the remaining provinces within the country. The final map commemorates the tragic Dictate of Trianon, crying out for justice for Hungary both in English and in Hungarian.



In the 'good old days', Hungary's main rivers were the Duna, Tisza, Dráva and the Száva, but now the Száva is no longer ours, the headwaters of the Tisza are in Romanian hands, and parts of the Duna and the Dráva are no longer in Hungary. And of course, we lost our access to the Adriatic Sea, as well as Erdély – as well as our mountains, with all of the minerals in them. Thus, for example, of the Mátra, Tátra and Fáttra, only the Mátra mountain range is in present-day Hungary. They were represented by the three hills shown above in the Hungarian crown. And the Carpathians of Erdély (Transylvania) were also lost with the Dictate of Trianon in 1920.



JUSTICE FOR HUNGARY!
1920. június 4.



63 004 km²
1 084 000 Hungarian

4 026 km²
64 000 Hungarian

93 030 km²
7 600 000 Hungarian

63 497 km²
563 000 Hungarian

102 181 km²
1 704 000 Hungarian

IGAZSÁGOT MAGYARORSZÁGNAK!

Famous Hungarians

The listing of famous Hungarians, who benefited the world in a variety of different ways is beyond the scope of these writings. Nevertheless, below I share with you a few names in different areas ‘off the top of my head’. Most of the names are written in the English manner in spite of my strong belief that we should stick to the original Hungarian first names and insist on the **correct pronunciation of both first and last names**. Moreover, I strongly object to writing their names or any Hungarian words without the **proper diacritical marks**; they are **essential parts of the language**.

Composers and musicians:

Ferenc Liszt, Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály, Imre Kálmán, Leo Weiner, Ferenc Lehár,
Ferenc Erkel, Viktor Jakabi, Károly Goldmark, Frigyes Reiner, Antal Doráti, György Széll,
Miklós Rózsa, János Bihari, Ede Reményi, Jenő Huszka, György Solti, ...

Scientists, other than mathematicians:

Robert Bárány, Albert Szentgyörgyi, György Békésy, György Hevesi, Lénárd Fülöp
Gábor Dénes, György Oláh, János Harsányi, Jenő Wigner, János Polányi, Leó Szilárd,
János Neumann, Ede Teller, Tódor Kármán, Zoltán Bay, Loránd Eötvös, Ottó Bláthy,
Ányos Jedlik, Ignác Semmelweis, ...

Poets and novelists:

Bálint Balassi, Miklós Zrinyi, Dániel Berzsenyi, Mihály vitéz Csokonai, Mihály Vörösmarty,
János Arany, Sándor Petőfi, Mór Jókai, Endre Ady, Attila József, Miklós Radnóti,
Ferenc Molnár, Albert Wass, ...

Explorers:

Sándor Kőrösi Csoma, Aurél Stein, Ervin Baktay, ...

Olympic and world champions:

László Papp, ...

(you all have a book on the Hungarian Olympians, and you have been watching the Olympics too; hence, it is up to you to continue the list, **and** – one of these days – the booklet too!

To further encourage you, elsewhere I also share with you my own tabulation of the Hungarian Olympic champions.

Mathematicians:

Farkas and János Bolyai, George Pólya, John von Neumann, Paul Erdős, Gyula Kőnig, Manó Beke, József Kürschák, Károly Jordán, Frigyes Riesz, Lipót Fejér, Alfréd Haár, Gyula Szőkefalvi-Nagy, Tibor Radó, Alfréd Rényi, ...

At this point I was going to list actors, directors of Hollywood fame, to be followed by inventors, military and political leaders, journalists, and so on, when I came to the decision that the task is too huge, and I should let my readers do their own investigations. Typing into the search field 'famous Hungarians' or into google.hu ' híres magyar emberek', you can produce your own list with explanations.

Thus, for example, with the URL

<http://www.hungariancatholicmission.com/culture/famoushungarians.htm>

you get the following list. If you click there on any of the names, you get a detailed explanation about their contributions.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| • Asbóth Sándor | • Hargitay Mariska | • Pulitzer József |
| • Asboth Oszkár | • Irinyi János | • Puskás Tivadar |
| • Bartók Béla | • Jedlik Ányos | • Rákóczy Jessica |
| • Barnóthy Forró Magda | • Kandó Kálmán | • Reményi Mária Judit |
| • Bánki Donát | • Kármán Tódor | • Anna M. Rosenberg |
| • Bíró László | • Kemény János | • Rubik Ernő |
| • Csonka János | • Kőrösi Csoma Sándor | • Szeles Mónika |
| • Dallos József | • Estée Lauder | • Simonyi Károly |
| • Egerszegi Krisztina | • Liszt Ferenc | • Simmelweis Ignác |
| • Galamb József | • Marton Kati | • Steinschneider Lilly |
| • Mitzi Gaynor | • Mindszenty József | • Szilárd Leo |
| • Gábor Dénes | • Neumann János | • Telkes Mária |
| • Gábor Zsazsa | • Pavlics Ferenc | • Teller Ede |
| • Goldmark Károly | • Pécsi Eszter | • Adrienne Vittadini |
| • Gróf András - Andrew Grove | • Polgár Zsuzsa, Judit, és Zsófia | • Weissmüller János - Johnny Weissmuller |
| • Haraszty Ágoston | • Porkoláb Miklós | • Rachel Weisz |
| | | • Zukor Adolf |

I wish you happy surfing!

All in all, you will find that the contributions of Hungary are HUGE in nearly every area of human endeavor.



Historical overview

Since most of my ancestors were Hungarians, it seems reasonable to give you an overview of the history of that land, Magyarország with some family-related items to make it more relevant.

886-907	Rule of Prince Árpád
896	Conquest of the Carpathian Basin
1000	Coronation of Vajk as István, later Szent István (Saint Steven), King of Hungary
1038	Death of Szent István
1222	Issue of the Golden Bull, Hungary's Magna Carta
1242	Mongol victory over Hungary at Muhi and the destruction of the countryside
1301	Death of the last king of Hungary from the House of Árpád
1301-1540	Kings of different houses (Anjou, Luxemburg, Jagello, Habsburg)
1456	János Hunyadi's victory over the Turks at Nándorfehérvár (now Beograd or Belgrade)
1458-1490	Rule of Mátyás Hunyadi as king of Hungary
1526	Turkish victory over Hungary at the Battle of Mohács
1526-1918	Rule of the House of Habsburg and in part by the Ottoman Empire
1559	Documentation of the nobility of György Berzsényi and his half-brothers
1635	Elevation of György Vargha to nobility with the rank of 'lófő'
1686	Recapturing Buda from the Turks
1703-1711	Ferenc Rákóczi's Kuruc War of Independence against the Habsburgs
1740-1780	Rule of Maria Theresa, who tried to rule evenhandedly, not like most Habsburgs
1776-1836	Dániel Berzsényi, Hungary's greatest classical poet
1791-1860	István Széchenyi, „the greatest Hungarian” leads the peaceful reform movement
1848-1849	Hungary's War of Independence
1867	Ferenc Deák's Compromise with Austria
1867-1900	Huge economic developments in Hungary
1894	Birth of Hungary's famous high school mathematics journal
1895	Start of Hungary's mathematics competitions, 40 years ahead of other countries
1896	Year of the millennium, which was celebrated with wonderful accomplishments
1900-1905	Huge exodus of over a million Hungarians emigrating to the USA
1914-1917	World War I, with Austro-Hungary among the losers
1917	Birth of Soviet Russia in blood and terror
1919	Brief Communist rule and terror in Hungary
1920	Treaty (I call it Dictate) of Trianon crippling Hungary
1920-1945	Rule of Regent Miklós Horthy
1939-1945	World War II, with Hungary on the losing side once again
1945-1949	Reconstruction attempts with emphasis on the partially destroyed capital
1949-1990	Communist rule in Hungary held in power by the Soviet Union
1953	Death of Stalin resulting in the relaxation of terror
1956	Hungarian Revolution ignored by the “free” West, in particular, by the USA
1961	Official change of my name from Vargha to Berzsényi
1965	Marriage of your parents
1969	Receiving my PhD from TCU
1976	My trip to Hungary with Adam; my first return there after 20 years
1978	Our semester in Hungary in the second half of the year
1983	My third visit to Hungary – this time with Daniel
1986	The death of my parents
1990	End of communist rule in Hungary
1999	Our retirement to Colorado
2000	My first genealogical trip to Hungary
2022-2023	Projected years of publication of these volumes

Ancestral families

In Part 1 of my writings, I will limit myself to the families listed below, and will touch upon a couple of others only as the need arises. Please recall that my last name was originally Vargha, and I became a Berzsenyi only in 1961. You might also want to remember that until recently, my change of name was not cleared with the Hungarian authorities, and hence in Hungary I was still Vargha György Sándor. While I am proud of my Vargha origins, I am pleased that of my 9 grandchildren carrying the name of our famous ancestor Dániel Berzsenyi, 3 will hopefully, pass it on to at least one more generation.

In the descendant tree below I started with my father's family name, listing all along the paternal family names first and then the maternal family names.

Vargha-Etényi Svastits-Csertán Fritsch-Mayherr Hudeček-Prachar Berzsenyi-Takách Gyarmathy-Bárány Juhász-Pretsinszky Svastits-Csertán
 Vargha - Svastits Fritsch - Hudeček Berzsenyi - Gyarmathy Juhász - Svastits

Vargha - Fritsch Berzsenyi - Juhász

Vargha - Berzsenyi

Berzsenyi

Perusing this tree, the first thing you might notice is that instead of the usual 8 pairs of great-great-grandparents, I have only 7, and hence only 14 great-great-grandparents. The reason for it is that my parents were second cousins. That is, my mother's maternal grandmother, Emilia Svastits was the sister of my father's paternal grandmother, Ilona Svastits. Such intermarriages were common within the nobility, and thus in the sequel you will see many other instances thereof. In some sense they certainly complicate the life of genealogists; thus, for example, how do you characterize a cousin, who is both a second and third cousin? Is he or she a 1½ - cousin? Genetically, that is the case.

In the sequel I will add first names to each of the last names in the chart above, thereby introducing my ancestors. I will start with the furthest ones, my great-great-grandparents, and then proceed to my great-grandparents, grandparents and parents and finally, to me. I will also introduce everyone's siblings and children thereof, thereby identifying my 3rd, 2nd and 1st cousins, as well as my brother in that order. I will proceed and in fact, zigzag from left to right.

In fact, following the introduction of each of my great-great-grandparents, I will tell you a bit about their children and their families, with special attention to my 3rd cousins, if any. Then, after I am done with the first two pairs of ancestral families, I will turn my attention to my 2nd cousins resulting from them. Then I will repeat the process with the third and fourth pairs of great-great-grandparents, eventually finding my 1st cousins on my father's side. Paralleling the above process, I will also find my 3rd, 2nd and 1st cousins on my mother's side.

The following is a schematic representation of the development I followed *:

01	02	05	06	10	11	14	15	20	21	24	25	29	30	05	06	Ancestral roots
	03		07		12		16		22		26		31		07	Gr-gr-grandparents
		04		08		13		17		23		27		32	08	3 rd cousins
			09			18				28				33		2 nd cousins
				19								34				1 st cousins
								35								Parents and Zolti and I

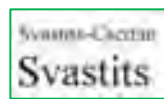
where (the items in blue were introduced earlier)

01	Vargha roots	18	Fritsch – Hudeček 2 nd cousins
02	Etényi roots	19	Vargha – Fritsch 1 st cousins
03	Vargha – Etényi ancestors	20	Berzsenyi roots
04	Vargha , Etényi 3 rd cousins	21	Takách roots
05	Svastits roots	22	Berzsenyi – Takách ancestors
06	Csertán roots	23	Berzsenyi – Takách 3 rd cousins
07	Svastits – Csertán ancestors	24	Gyarmathy roots
08	Svastits – Csertán 3 rd cousins	25	Bárány roots
09	Vargha – Svastits 2 nd cousins	26	Gyarmathy – Bárány ancestors
10	Fritsch roots	27	Gyarmathy – Bárány 3 rd cousins
11	Mayherr roots	28	Berzsenyi – Gyarmathy 2 nd cousins
12	Fritsch – Mayherr ancestors	29	Juhász roots
13	Fritsch – Mayherr 3 rd cousins	30	Pretsinszki roots
14	Hudeček roots	31	Juhász – Pretsinszky ancestors
15	Prachär roots	32	Juhász – Pretsinszky 3 rd cousins
16	Hudeček , Prachär ancestors	33	Juhász – Svastits 2 nd cousins
17	Hudeček , Prachär 3 rd cousins	34	Berzsenyi – Juhász 1 st cousins
		35	My parents, Zolti and I

* Note that the vertical zig-zagging parallels the horizontal indentations in the Table of Contents and note that I will return to the horizontal indentations on page 134. But for the present, the staggering will be done vertically, as outlined below in a picturesque way.

Starting with

and



we proceed to



and then

and finally to



starting with

and



we proceed to



and then work through the Berzsenyi half of my ancestors and their descendants the same way.

In other words,

starting with the paternal side of my family
on the left, I will proceed in the order

- ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

then, with the maternal side of the family
on the right, I will proceed in the same order

- ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦

Vargha	① 3 rd cousins	Berzsenyi	① 3 rd cousins
Etényi	③ 2 nd cousins	Takách	③ 2 nd cousins
Svastits	② 3 rd cousins	Gyarmathy	② 3 rd cousins
Csertán	⑦ 1 st cousins	Bárány	⑦ 1 st cousins
Fritsch	④ 3 rd cousins	Juhász	④ 3 rd cousins
Mayherr	⑥ 2 nd cousins	Pretsinszky	⑥ 2 nd cousins
Hudacek	⑤ 3 rd cousins	Svastits	⑤ 3 rd cousins
Prachar		Csertán	

Starting with the Vargha and ending up, for all practical purposes with my Juhász great-great-grandfather is also appropriate for the reason that the first family reunion I attended and helped to organize was the Vargha reunion of 2005, while the last one was the Juhász reunion of 2017, which I also helped to organize.

As you will see, finding my 1st, 2nd and 3rd cousins is just one of my aims. As I proceed, I also introduce my great-great-grandparents, great-grandparents and grandparents, thereby fulfilling a second aim of my genealogical pursuit. Moreover, I also write about other members of the families that were introduced, including pictures thereof whenever I can – thereby partially fulfilling a third aim: finding those members of my family who made important contributions.

To better fulfill the last two aims, I will have to venture further in the family trees in Parts 2A and 2B of these volumes. In Part 2A, I will also have more about my parents, their siblings, my brother and my 1st cousins too. Concerning my 2nd and 3rd cousins, I will revisit them when I write about your cousins (also in Part 2A).

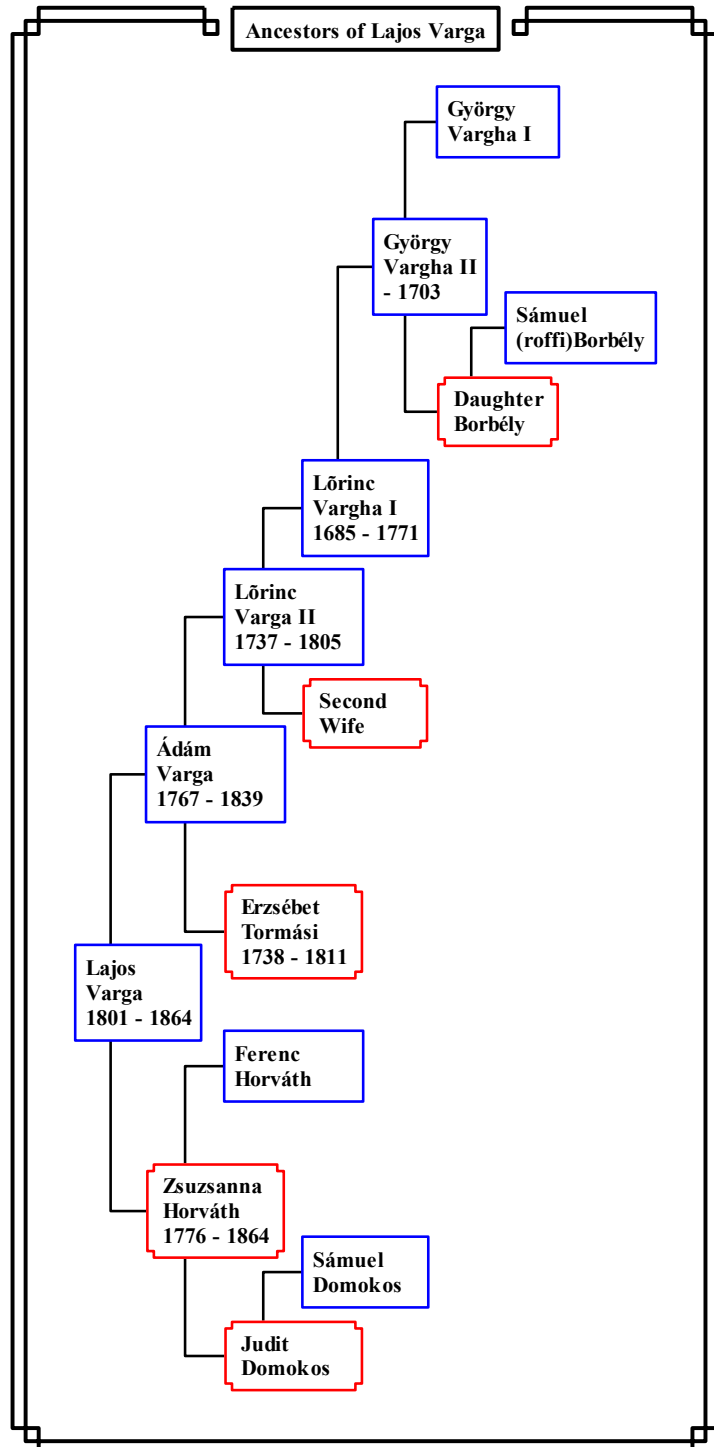
In any case, I hope you will enjoy the journey and don't get lost on the way.

My Vargha Roots

The Vargha family hails from Transylvania, known as Erdély in historical Hungary. There, my earliest known ancestor, György Vargha served as the commander of his own ‘bandérium’ (a small regiment of horse soldiers equipped at his own expense) of the Transylvanian Hungarians (known as “székely”) under the reigning prince, György Rákóczi I, who recognized him as noble man of distinction. In a letter of donation on June 2, 1635, he gave our forefather the rank of “lófő” (the Transylvanian equivalent of baron) in Gyulafehérvár. Hence there are 7, rather than 5 points in the crown of the Vargha family’s first coat of arms. The donation was announced to the public on June 5, 1635 in Marosvásárhely. He was also recognized as ‘Literatus alias Varga de Szent-László’, ‘viceductor principilorum’, indicative of not just literacy, which was not necessarily common among the nobility, but also of penmanship on the level of scribes, thereby recognizing him as an intellectual of his era. That document ended up in the possession of the descendants of János Vargha I, the brother of Lőrinc Vargha I, shown in the family tree on the right.

The only other thing I know about our earliest ancestor is that he was married to a daughter of Sámuel Borbély, whose family later moved to Tiszaroff, and hence was given ‘roffi’ as a forename. Following the ill-fated military campaign of György Rákóczi II into Poland, where György Vargha I disappeared, his son, György Vargha II moved his family first to Tiszaroff, where his mother’s family settled by then, and then to the family’s present hometown, Balatonfüred. He died there in 1703 and is buried there along with many of his descendants.

Of his two sons, János I became a captain in the emperor’s army, while Lőrinc I settled for civilian life and took it upon himself to keep the vital records of the local Reformed Church in 1761.



In 1902, my grandfather, Jenő Vargha (1865-1908), his brother Károly (1869-1912), their first cousin, János Vargha (1857-1924) and the father of their 5th cousin, Gábor bácsi (1859-1948), who was also named Károly (1826-1907) appeared in person at the Ministry of Interior in order to have their double nobility and their associated forenames, szentlászlói and balatonfüredi recognized. The latter were the descendants of János Vargha, the son of György Vargha II, who was seemingly entrusted with the Transylvanian nobility documents, while János' brother, Lőrinc became the keeper of the Hungarian nobility documents to be introduced on the next page. Naturally, I will also introduce in due time the four applicants named above. At this point, I wish to mention only the fact that at the Ministry, János exhibited the Hungarian, while Károly exhibited the Transylvanian nobility documents, along with a family tree and other documents to prove their descentance from György Vargha I.

Subsequently, the Hungarian documents were handed down on our side of the family and they are now in the possession of János Oltványi, a great-great-grandson of János (1857-1924), while the Transylvanian documents disappeared in the other branch of the family. Repeated requests for a picture thereof have been ignored by relatives whom we suspect of having those documents.

Thus, it was a totally unexpected development when I learned from Orsolya Péterfi, a pharmacy major at the University of Marosvásárhely in present-day Romania that at the website

<https://adatbazisokonline.hu/adatbazis/a-131-illesy-fele-csaladtorteneti-adatbazis/adatlap/23650?search=szentl%C3%A1szl%C3%B3&term=eyJxIjoic3plbnRsXHUwM-GUxc3psXHUwMGYZ-iIwiZnEiOnsiZGJfaWQiOnsiZDNkOTQ0NjgwMmE0NDI1OTc1NWQzOGU2ZDE2M2U4MjAiOiIxCj9fSwic29ydCI6InNjb3JlIiwYXEiOiIiLCJhcVR5cGUiOiIifQ==&curr=1>

one finds the location for the documentation of the nobility of the Vargha family of Szentlászló:

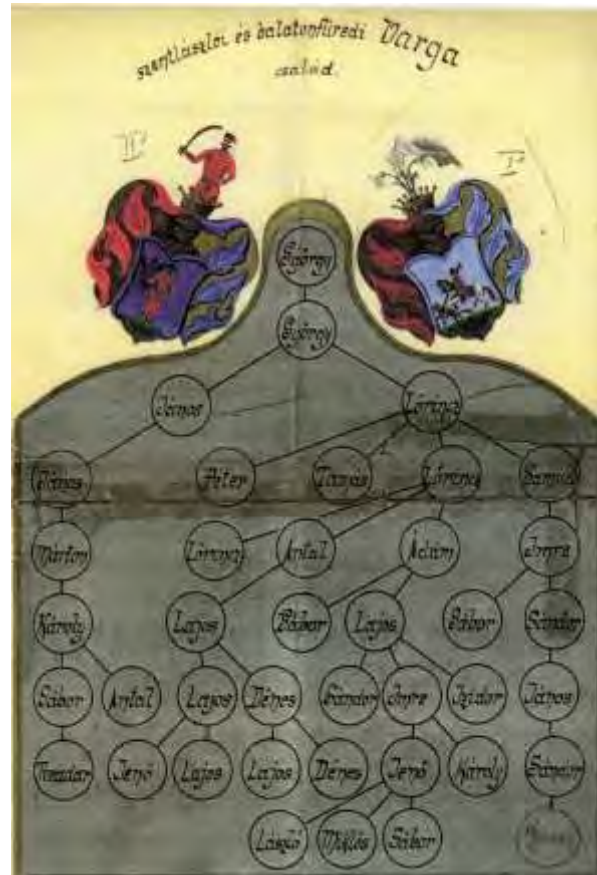
The screenshot shows a search result for 'Literatus-Varga de Szentlászló' in a database. The search criteria are 'V' and 'Sz'. The results show a record for 'Y 1 - A Magyar Országos Levéltár Levéltára - Általános iratok - 1667/1902 OL szám' with the number '1635.06.02'. The record is of type 'I' and was published by 'Rákóczi György 1 | Gyulafehérvár | 1635.06.02'. The record number is '11699'. The content manager is 'MNL OL'. There is a link for 'Hibás adat jelentése, pontosság: saját képek feltöltése'.

1. találat (összesen: 2)		Következő
Vissza a találati listára		Vissza a rekordra a listában
Literatus-Varga de Szentlászló		
Y 1 - A Magyar Országos Levéltár Levéltára - Általános iratok - 1667/1902 OL szám		1635.06.02
Típus	I	
Kiadó	Rákóczi György 1 Gyulafehérvár 1635.06.02	
Sorszám	11699	
Tartalomgazda:	MNL OL	
Hibás adat jelentése, pontosság: saját képek feltöltése		

We were searching for it under V for Vargha, and Sz for Szentlászló, and not under L for Literatus. Now, all I have to do is to wait until Ágota Gombás submits her request for a copy thereof. When she does so, I will replace this page with her findings and an explanation thereof.

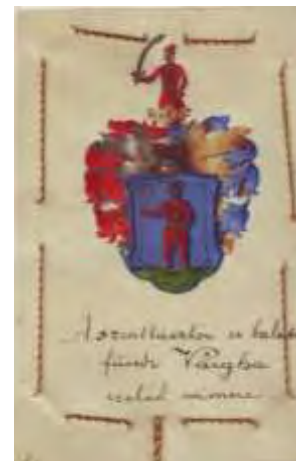
The family's nobility was recognized again in 1713 by Charles III of Austria with a new coat of arms following a petition by the two sons, Lőrincz Vargha I and János Vargha I. That document is in the possession of János Oltványi, a descendant of Lőrinc Vargha I. The grandfather of János Oltványi, yet another János Vargha was a 3rd cousin of mine. That document is shown on the left below, while on the right I show another family tree of ours dating back to 1902-03, when my uncle Gábor (3rd in the bottom row) was already born (in 1902) while Tivadar (bottom left corner) was still alive (he died in 1903).

To the left of Gábor is my father, Miklós, while at the top of the tree one can see the family's coats of arms. However, as the penciled marks claim, they are backwards: the one on the right was given in Erdély, while the one on the left was given later in Hungary. While the tree is fairly incomplete, it shows János, the brother of Lőrinc, as well as János' great-grandson, Károly, who had with him the original Transylvanian documents in 1902, when he and some cousins of his (including my grandfather) petitioned to the Ministry of the Interior for the right to use 'szentlászlói és balatonfüredi' as the family's double forename. I feel very certain that the original Transylvanian document is still in the possession of one of Károly's descendants.



Above on the left I also show the lead original of the double coat of arms of the Vargha family, which was left to me by my father. First Attila, and then I had a seal made from it, but it will take a lot more practice, at least for me to use it properly. I gave the lead original to Adam; it is in his Vargha Shadowbox along with some other Vargha memorabilia, including an official document

that I purchased on Ebay, where I had to outbid someone, who seemingly also wanted it badly. I wonder who was it? It is the hand-painted replica of the coat of arms of the Vargha family shown on the right. Note the 'h' in the name, which was also requested and approved in 1902 by the Ministry of Interior. For other renditions of the Vargha coats of arms the reader should consult the English version of my *Matrikula* article on the Vargha family, included in the Appendix to Part 2A.



Next, I want to tell you about the houses where the Vargha family lived in Balatonfüred. They were purchased in 1811 by Ádám Vargha, the father of my Great-great-grandfather Lajos Vargha from Ádám Horváth of Pálóc (in Hungarian, pálóczi Horváth Ádám), who was a celebrated poet and collector of folk art. He also did surveying and engineering on the side, and in particular, he designed the larger of the two houses shown here – first, via a sketch from an old newspaper, and then via recent photographs.

For a long period of time, it was the most elegant house in Balatonfüred, almost on the shore of Lake Balaton. Only five acres of vineyard belonging to the Vargha family separated it from the lake in those days.

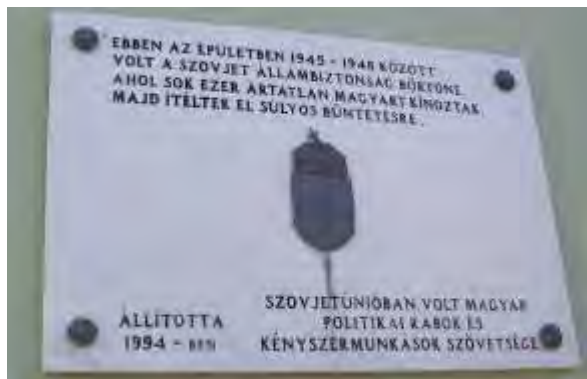


Moreover, it was also used as the Headquarters of the local communist government in 1919, and as a prison from 1945 to 1947 maintained by the Russian occupational forces. Thousands of Hungarians were tortured and killed in that house. Fortunately, by then it was no longer owned by the Varga family. Great-great-grandmother Jozefa Etényi sold it to the Teasdale family after her husband died. The Teasdales moved to Hungary from England along with 62 other families during the construction of the famous Széchenyi Chain Bridge in Budapest (Vilmos Teasdale was in charge of its construction).

Presently, it is the home of the János Ferencsik School of Music, a much better use of the facility. János Ferencsik is recognized as Hungary's premier conductor, who made his home in Balatonfüred after he retired. Hence, he was selected as the first honorary resident (*díszpolgár*) of the city.

A distant but very lovely cousin, Anikó Varga celebrated that event with a nice little book¹ about the life and accomplishments of Ferencsik. Thanks to her, I have a copy of it.

In addition to Ferencsik's name on the house, there are two plaques on it.



The one on the left is honoring the Hungarians who were imprisoned there between 1945 and 1948, while the one on the right declares the house as a historical monument and records the fact that it was owned by our family from 1811 to 1864. Your 4th cousin, Attila Tóth deserves credit for the inclusion of the Varga family on the plaque.

Concerning the second and smaller Vargha house, I have three pictures of it below and on the right, courtesy of Attila Tóth. It was occupied by our family much longer (for 71 years), and even Attila's grandmother was born there. Moreover, time and again it was leased from the family by Károly Eötvös, a close family friend and famous writer, lawyer, and politician who is best known as the defense counsel in a notorious case related to anti-Semitism.



¹ Szenfnerné Varga Anikó, *Ferencsik János Balatonfüred első díszpolgára*, Balatonfüred, 2002

Next, I want to call attention to the fact that the oldest gravestone in the old Lutheran cemetery in Balatonfüred is that of the Vargha family. It is shown on the right, with its inscription below. It says that the first and second Lőrinc Varga were buried here, and that they should rest in peace. The date of September 30, 1804 indicates the placement of the stone, probably by Great-great-great-grandfather Ádám Vargha and his brother, Lőrinc Varga III. It was featured in the first part of an article by a researcher whose husband's name is Varga, but no relation to us. And yet another first, it appeared in the premier issue of Balatonfüred's excellent local historical publication².



ITT
LATHATOD
ELSŐ ÉS MÁSODIK
NS VARGA LŐRINC
EZ ATYÁK HAMVA
IK FELETT TE IS ITTIS
ZTELET TEL MONDI
AD NYUGODJANAK BEKE
SSÉGBEN SEPT 30 1804

I am also happy to report that recently, not only was there some clearing done at the old cemetery, but it was made into a park, with the paths widened, benches placed at various points and some old tombstones and/or broken parts of them were found and identified.

Miraculously, one of those stones was the marker for the gravesite of György Vargha II, shown on the right. Cousin Attila Tóth managed to decipher the writing on the stone at least partially, as shown below. Hence, we know that it is the tombstone of György Vargha, II, erected by his sons in or after 1703. Interestingly, it was not identified in 1922, when Károly Keményffy made a survey of the cemetery, nor was it found by the wife of László Varga, whose article was cited earlier.



IN NOM
GEORGIUS FILIUS GEORG
LYTERATY VARGA
.....
.....
JOANNES (ET)
LAURENTIUS
1703

Once again, I must credit Attila for finding that stone and for moving it to its proper place in the enclosure containing the other Vargha graves. I am also thankful for the care he gives to them.

² Varga Lászlóné, A balatonfüredi református temető sírjelei a 18. század végétől 1920-ig, I. rész, *Füredi Historia*, 2001, 1-2. szám

Concerning the other ancestral families appearing in the family tree on the first page of this section, I know nothing about the Domokos, Horváth and Tormási families, but made an effort to learn about the roffi Borbély family, one of whose descendants, Magyari- Kossa Sámuel (1898-1971) did a fair amount of writing about it. However, seemingly he couldn't go back far enough to get to Sámuel, whose daughter married into the Vargha family. Nor did I learn about their original base in Erdély, which is also of interest to me since we still don't know which of the many places named Szentlászló was the home of the Varghas.

Interestingly, some members of the Magyari-Kossa family turned out to be relatives of mine via the Berzsenyi family too, but I learned that only later. Just as interestingly, recently I became friends with another direct descendant of the roffi Borbély family, György (Gyuri) roffi Borbély, with whom I spent some time in Budapest. He is into genealogy too, and hence there is a hope that our puzzles will be solved someday.

Considering the spelling of Varga with an 'h' archaic, many of my relatives, as well as others addressing them dropped it. It was also frowned upon during the communist era --- yet another reason for its omission. Seemingly, none had any concern for the poor genealogists researching the family!

I must also mention the fact that the name 'varga' referred to an occupation akin to shoemaking until relatively recently. Hence there are many people bearing that name. Another difficulty is that while at times it is noted that a person is of 'noble birth', at other times no mention of it is made. The fact that some members of the family spell it with, while others without the 'h' is fairly bothersome at times. The fact that sometimes even the same person spells his name differently (i.e., with or without the 'h') can be downright mindboggling!

Interestingly, my father had to apply for permission in 1936 to spell his name with an 'h' and also for the right to use the double forename of 'szentlászlói & balatonfüredi'. They were granted by Hungary's Ministry of the Interior, and I was fortunate to locate that document on my only visit to the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest. I had an excellent guide there in the late István (Pista) Bogyay, the foremost researcher of the Bogyay family, many of whose members are related to us. Pista was not a relative, but an extremely helpful and dear friend.

In closing this section, I am featuring on the right a photo of the last will and testament of our forefather, Lőrinc Vargha I, written in 1768. It is in the possession of my brother, but I made an excellent copy of it, which was rendered to more up-to-date Hungarian by Attila Tóth. We found it an interesting read and consider it a true treasure. And bothersome too, since he never mentions his second wife by name. Thus, we can refer to our foremother only as 'Second Wife'.



It was very touching when Lajos bácsi, one of my dearest relatives, not knowing a word of English thought that I found our foremother's name and was very happy for it. Hence, I was sorry to inform him of the truth. By the way, Lajos bácsi (Lajos Varga (1922-2014)) was the honorary sponsor of our first Varg(h)a reunion in 2005 and a wonderful correspondent of mine. He was the son of the Lajos seen as the 4th person in the penultimate row of the funny-looking tree shown on the second page of this section.

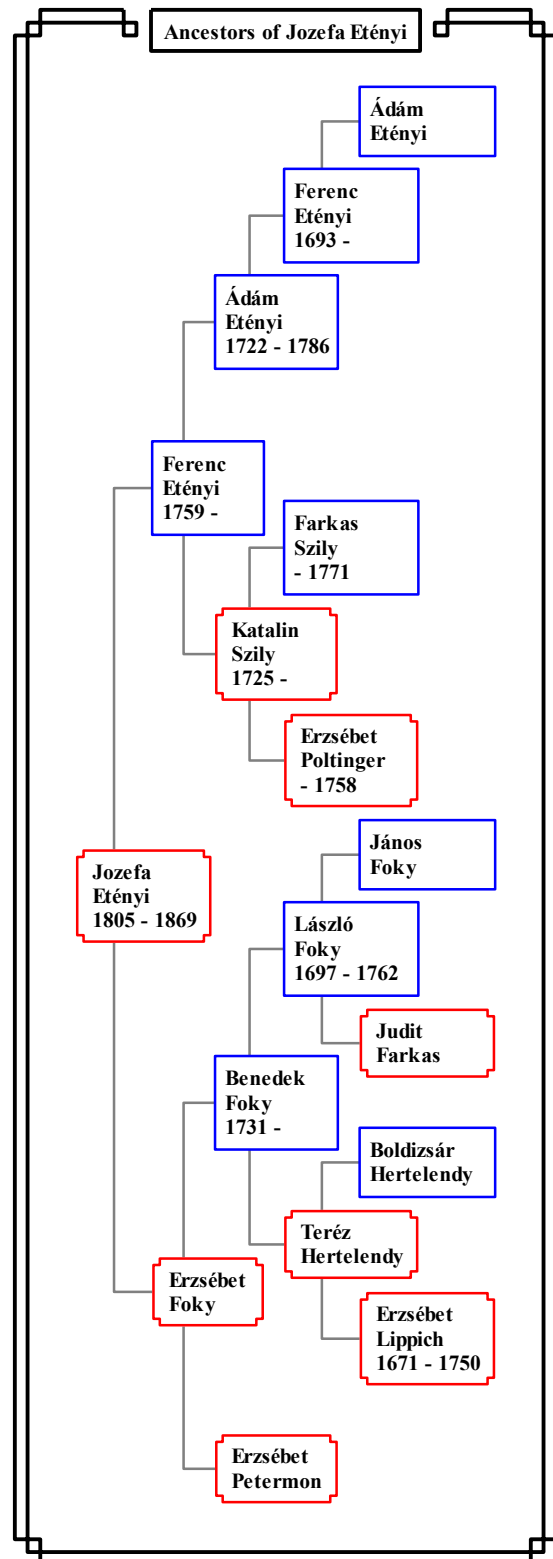
My Etényi Roots

Gáspár Etényi received his nobility with a coat of arms, but no land-grant from Emperor Frederick III in 1638; it is kept at the Archives of Szombathely. I reproduced it below along with the ancestor tree of Jozefa Etényi



With respect to her other ancestors, Katalin Szily was the sister of János Szily, the first (Catholic) bishop of Szombathely, whose clever administration and extensive building projects left a mark not only on the city, but on the entire Province of Vas. In the Foky family I must mention that János Foky was a Lieutenant Governor in the Province of Vas in 1744 and that his grandson Benedek was a captain. The Hertelendy and the (kisbarnaki) Farkas families also provided many excellent individuals over the centuries, including some military leaders of importance.

In Part 2A of these volumes, I will say a bit more about some of the above families, which were all of old nobility and they all provided excellent service to the country and their communities.



My Vargha – Etényi great-great-grandparents and their family

Starting with the present piece, I will introduce one-by-one each of my great-great-grandparents, putting a first name with the last names in the top row in the listing of last names on the previous page, and saying a few words about them. Since I know very little about some of them, I will not be saying much about the others either. There will be time and occasion to do so later. Neither do I have photos of each of them; in fact, I am happy that I have some. I will not say much about their families either; such information will have to wait till the next section. Starting with Vargha, my great-great-grandfather was

Lajos Vargha, who was a District Judge for the Province of Veszprém, though he lived most of his life in Balatonfüred, where his ancestors lived for 4 generations. In addition to upholding the law, he was well-known for his expertise in the growing of different varieties of grapes. He also served as the director of the open-air theater of Balatonfüred, which flourished under his guidance. My only picture of him is shown on the right. Interestingly, he wrote his name without the



‘h’, which is rightly considered as a historic remnant by many, but it is useful for differentiating different families. As far as I know, he didn’t use his forenames, ‘szentlászlói’ and ‘balatonfüredi’ either. He was well-liked and highly respected in the community and was buried in the ‘Old Reformed Church Cemetery’ of Balatonfüred. The Varghas were Lutheran. Thanks to our relative, Attila Tóth and a bit of financing by me, we now have a new marker at his gravesite, which I show above. By contrast,

Jozefa Etényi was of Catholic background, and hence she was buried at the nearby Catholic Cemetery of Balatonfüred. She outlived her husband, sold the properties they accumulated, and lived her remaining years independently of their 3 grown sons and 3 grown daughters. It is the aforementioned Attila Tóth who stands with your Mom and I at her tombstone.

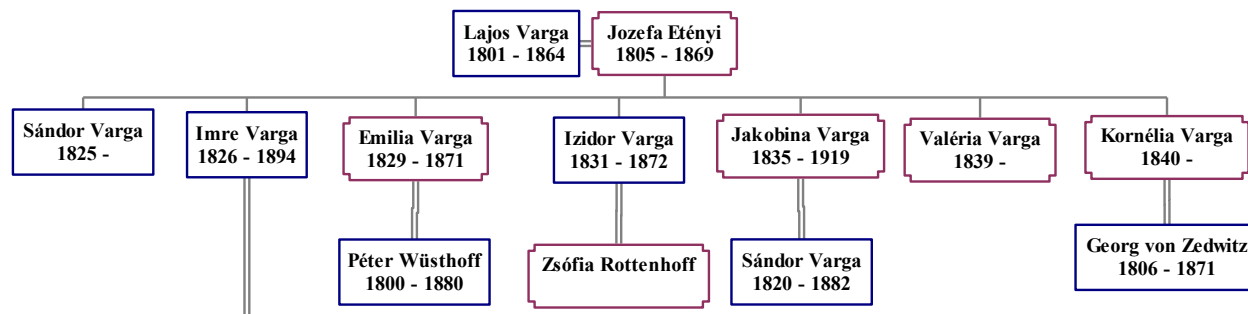
Interestingly, I found that Jozefa also donated useful clothing to the soldiers during the 1848-49 War for independence from Austria, and that she owned some property in Zalaegerszeg and nearby Bánódszentgyörgy¹.



¹ according to the January 1856 Issue of the *Budapesti Hírlap*. See https://adt.arcanum.com/hu/view/BudapestiHir-lap_1856_01/?query=%22Et%C3%A9nyi%20Jozefa%22&pg=83&layout=s

The 12 plots were valued at nearly 5,600 Forints. I wonder, what happened to them?

Below I introduce the children of theirs, show their photographs, and comment on them briefly. Note that I didn't name the wife of Imre; that will have to wait until after I introduce the descendants of Imre's siblings and his wife's siblings too.



Pictured below from left to right are Sándor, Imre, Emilia and Izidor,



to be followed by Jakobina and Kornélia, the children of Lajos Vargha and Jozefa Etényi.

Please note that I keep writing our family name with an 'h' while at times I don't use it in the family trees. It is just a preference, following the way my father wrote his name. By the way, his use of the 'h' was probably challenged by one of his superiors, prompting him to obtain a ruling from the Ministry of the Interior in 1935, affirming his right not only to the 'h' in his last name, but the use of 'szentlászlói és balatonfüredi' as a double forename. I have a copy of that document.



Exhibiting his strange approach to genealogy, Attila dug out the casket holding the remains of our common ancestor, Lajos Varga and exhumed the other bones in the grave too. He made measurements of them, which he shared with me, identified the bones of both Lajos and Imre Varga, and found alongside them the bones of a smaller person. The latter may have been Valeria, who might have died young.

When I visited Attila in 2005, he offered to give me some of the hardware from the casket, and after some hesitation, I decided to accept a corner, which I ended up putting into the shadowbox I made for Adam about his Vargha decendance. I didn't want to be the only grave-robber on our side of the family!

Next I feature Sándor Vargha, the husband of Jakobina, along with Baron Péter Wüsthoff, the husband of Emilia and a picture of Emilia and her husband.



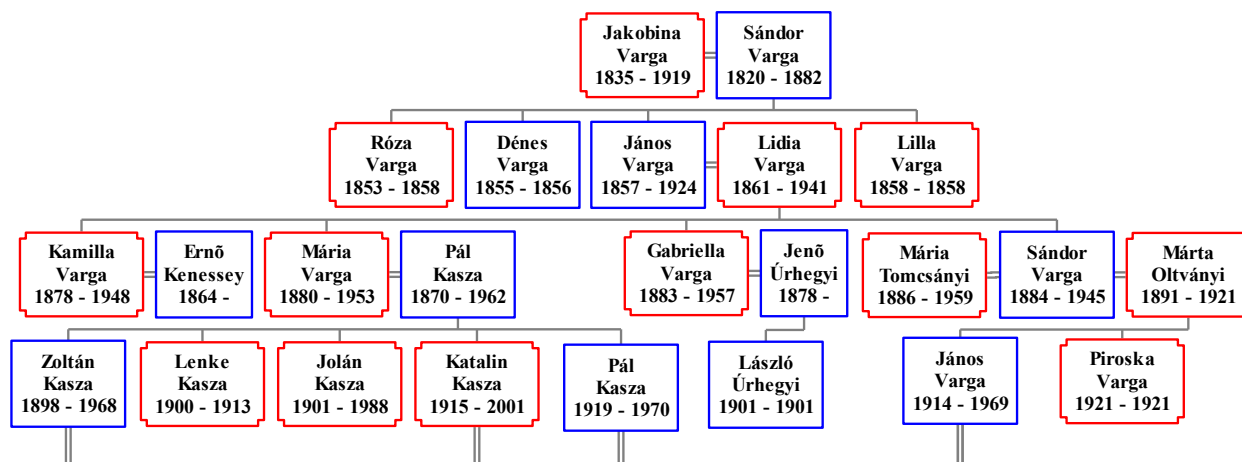
Of the three brothers, for some reason Sándor committed suicide. Like his brothers, he served in the 1848-49 Revolution as an officer (major) and was still in Balatonfüred in 1864 at the time of his father's death. Emilia married Baron Péter Wüsthoff, who became a lieutenant colonel, and had a son named Frigyes. Unfortunately, I don't know what happened to him either, but I found the death notice of his father, which names him as the son, but nobody else is mentioned. Therefore, I assume that there were no further descendants. Izidor married a baroness and served as a captain in the military. Jakobina married a civil engineer, who was a second cousin of her father and had a son named János, who had a large family. Of the remaining two daughters, presumably, Valéria died young, while Kornélia married Count Georg von Zedtwitz, but their marriage didn't last long. They had no children either.

In closing this passage, I want to call special attention to the fact that I left the connection from my Great-grandfather Imre Vargha to his wife 'dangling' in view of the fact that I have yet to introduce my Svastits – Csertán ancestry, and hence the family of my great-grandmother. As soon as I have done so, I will 'tie the knot' and introduce them as a couple, write about their family, and in particular, about my 2nd cousins. Interestingly, some generations later, the Bavarian von Zedtwitz family reappeared twice more in the Vargha family. I will have more to say about it then.

However, first I need to deal with the descendants of the other children of my great-great-grandparents, and hence identify my 3rd cousins resulting from their marriages. That will be the topic for the next section.

Vargha – Etényi descendants the next generation

As mentioned earlier, of the seven children of Lajos Varga and Jozefa Etényi only Imre, Emilia and Jakobina had children. Imre’s family will be discussed later. Emilia’s son, Frigyes disappeared from sight, and we have yet to learn what happened to him. Hence in the present section I will write only about the descendants of Jakobina, who are introduced in the tree below.



Note that I limited the tree to the great-grandchildren of Jakobina, and hence to the first 6 of my 3rd cousins in a long list of 3rd cousins to come:

Zoltán, Lenke, Jolán, Katalin and Pál Kasza; János Varga, in addition to

László Úrhegyi and Piroska Varga, who died in infancy, and hence I don’t count them. The six others are shown above, starting with Zoltán and finishing with János.

Unfortunately, I never met any one of them. Lenke died at age 13, but the others reached adulthood. I know a fair amount about Jolán, Katalin and Pál, since Jolán was an avid researcher of our family, Katalin’s son, Attila Tóth is my closest co-worker on Vargha-matters including our reunions, as well as the maintenance of the Vargha graves in Balatonfüred, while Pál’s son , the third Pál in the family is a close associate too. The picture of János Varga was sent to me by Attila. The photo below on the right shows the three Pál’s along with Jolán, the oldest Pál’s sister.

I also knew Lenke, the daughter of Zoltán, and I know her sons, István and József Takó, Pali, the son of Pál, Attila's sister Piroska, and I knew Judit, the daughter of János, whose son, János Oltványi became the keeper of the 1713 sheepskin of the Vargha family upon Judit's death. Hence, I am familiar with the next generation of descendants, who are your 4th cousins, Adam, Lydia, Eric and Daniel. But in the tree above I chopped off even the spouses of my 3rd cousins, leaving only a hint that they were married and may have had some descendants.

Next, I want to include some more photos of the Vargha – Etényi descendants named above and say a few words about them before returning to my 3rd cousins.

On the right I have a picture of János, the son of Jakobina, courtesy of Attila, his great-grandson. He was the one who went along with my grandfather and the two Károlys in 1902 to petition for the right to use our 'szentlászlói' forename and the coat of arms that came with it.

Next, I show János with his wife, Lidia Varga. Seemingly, she was a descendant of Péter Varga of nearby Balatonszőlős, who was one of the sons of Lőrinc Vargha I by his first wife. Since Lidia's parents died young, she was brought up by the parents of János and later she married him.

The photo on the right shows János and Lidia and their family, with Gabriella and Sándor on the left and Kamilla and Mária on the right of them.

Thanks to Attila, I have 'grown-up' pictures of them too; they are shown on the next page.





Starting with Kamilla on the left, I feature Mária, Gabriella and Sándor Varga in that order above. Below I also show a picture of Gabriella Vargha (1883-1957) with her husband, Jenő Úrhegyi, a wedding photo of the second Pál Kasza (1919-1970) and a picture of Attila's parents



Next, I show a picture of Attila's grandparents, Mária Varga and Pál Kasza (in uniform), and of Gabriella Vargha and Jenő Úrhegyi, to the right of them.

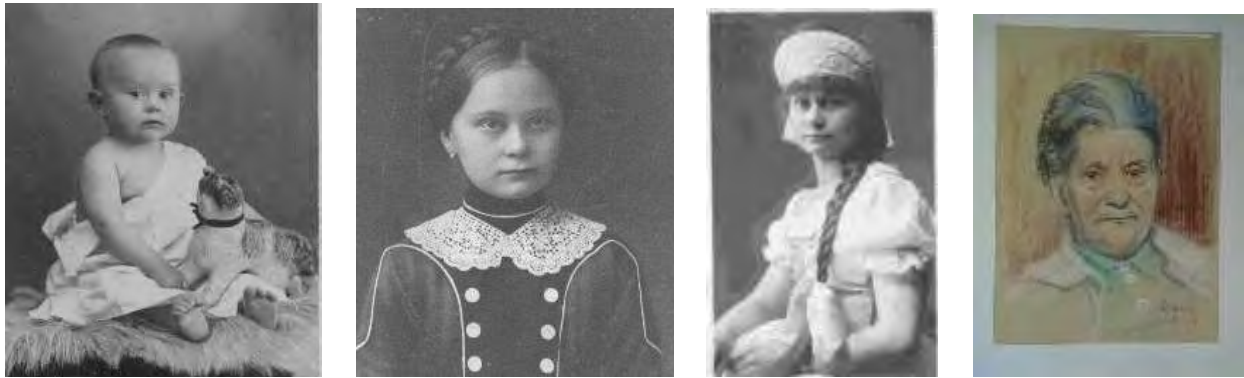
Many of these pictures came from Attila, but some came from his cousin, the youngest Pál (Pali) Kasza, who is also supportive of my efforts.

Thus, the next two pictures were sent to me by Attila and Pali, respectively, showing Attila's mother with her older daughter, Piroska and the three Pál Kasza's yet once more.

I hereby apologize for going back and forth with respect to the three generations of the Varga and Kasza families.



To conclude this section, I will have a picturesque tribute to Jolán Kasza, who initiated Attila into genealogy. Without Attila's diligence, my familiarity with my Vargha - Etényi roots and relatives would be a lot poorer. Hence, I am most thankful to Cousin Jolán.

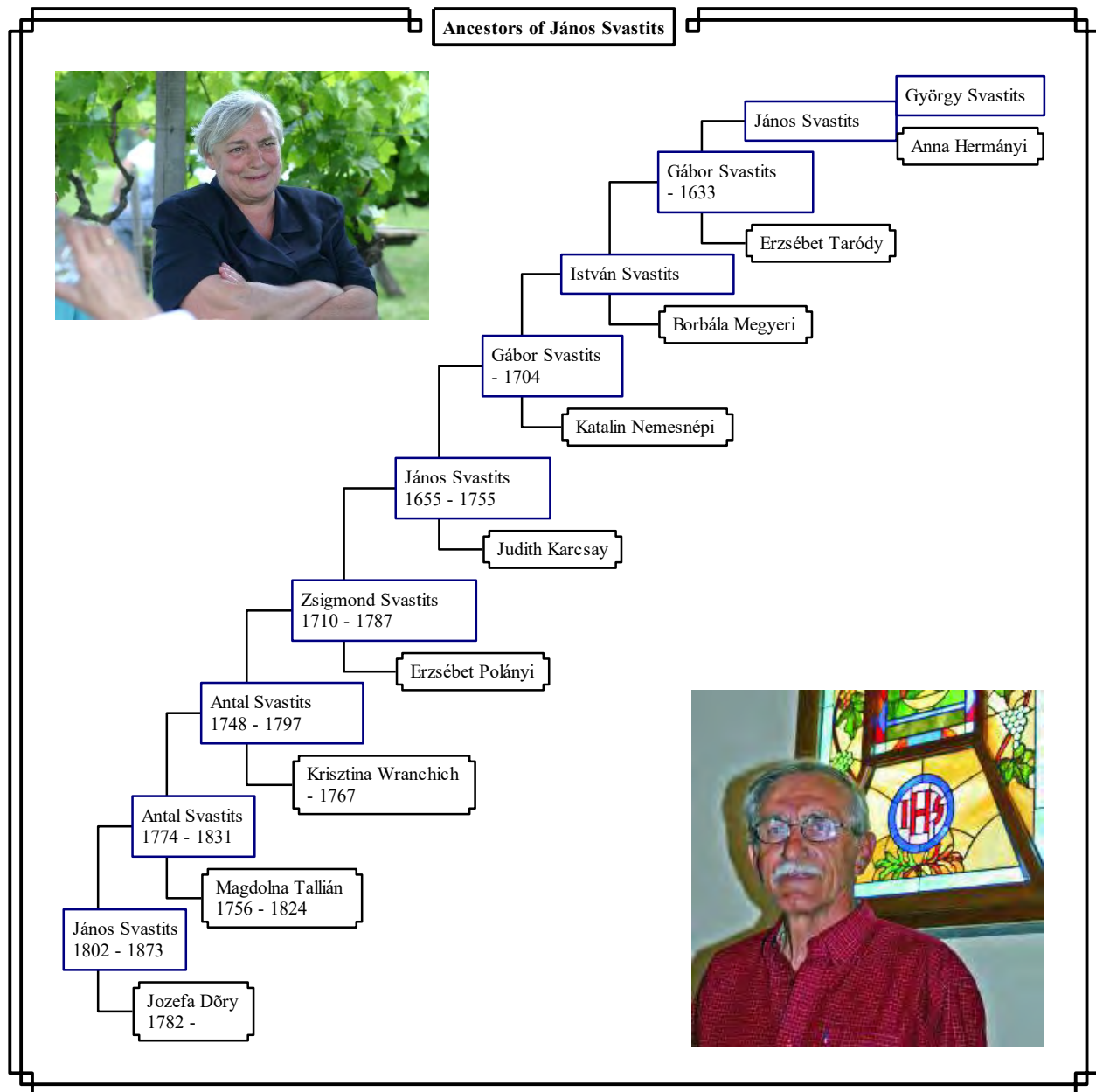


And finally, in the group-picture below, the two children are my cousins, Pál and Katalin Kasza, while sitting at the table on the left is their father, Pál Kasza and grandfather, János Varga. Sitting on the right are Cousins Jolán Kasza and Mária Kasza. Finally, standing on the right is Cousin Zoltán Kasza, while the man standing on the left is yet to be identified.



My Svastits Roots

Below I reproduced the ancestor tree of Great-great-grandfather János Svastits with dates whenever they were known to Mandi, the widow of my 2nd cousin, Antal (Tóni) Svastits and/or to Imre (Jimmy) Svastics, He is a 9th cousin of my grandfather, Jenő Vargha (1865-1908), as well as of my grandmother, Mária Lenke Juhász (1874-1949); that is, Imre's grandchildren are my 11th cousins. Such shifts between generations are not uncommon in genealogy. Jimmy was instrumental in the creation of the Svastits CD-s too; after I shared with him the musical scores of the compositions of my Great-great-grandfather János Svastits, he found a pianist to play and record them. I am honoring Mandi and Jimmy for their contributions by including their photos with the tree.



Interestingly, Imre's branch of the family, as well as some others spell their names with a 'cs' in place of the 'ch' ending, i.e., more phonetically. But even more important is that Imre's branch, starting with Ferenc, another son of the very first János Svastits, uses the forename 'csécsényi', whereas ours is 'bocsári'.

According to Mandi's findings, our forename came from the village of Bocsár, in the Hungarian Province of Torontál, presently in Serbia. Seemingly, our forefather Gábor was implicated in the murder of the governor of the Province of Vas in 1607 and escaped to Erdély (Transylvania) to join the forces of Prince Gábor Báthory. There he may have served in the Fort of Bocsár, since both his father János and grandfather György were captains of forts around 1840 of Körmend and around 1810 of Kőrös, respectively. (Kőrös is presently in Croatia).

Going back even further, according to family legend, our first known Svastits ancestor was **Petar Snačić** (or Svačić, erroneously, but I will use the name in that form since it is closer to its present form), a feudal lord. Supposedly, **he was born** in Kamičak and served as a ban (leader) under King **Demetrius Zvonimir** (1074–1089) of Croatia. **When his successor, Stjepan II** (1089–1091) died without leaving an heir, a struggle for the throne broke out.. The widow of Zvonimir supported her brother, King **László I of Hungary**, but the feudal lords of Croatia elected nobleman Petar Svačić as King in 1095. Upon his election, King Svačić immediately deployed the military to defend Croatia's borders, but King Coloman of Hungary, the successor of King **Ladislaus I**, assembled an enormous force at the eastern foot of Mount Gvozd in 1097, and subdued the Croats. King Petar died in the battle too, but his heroism was commemorated in the renaming of Mount Gvozd to **Petrova Gora** (Peter's Mountain). After his death **Croatia formed a personal union with the Kingdom of Hungary** that lasted until 1918.

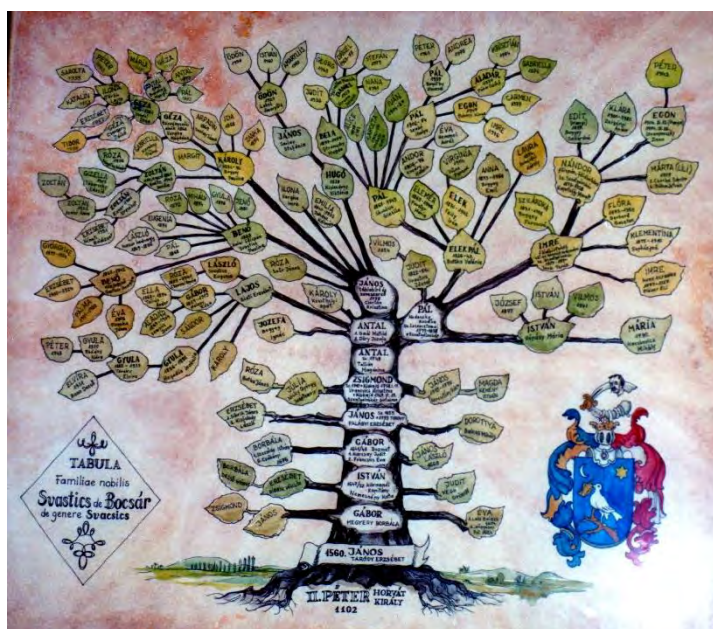
The first illustration below shows the monument honoring Petar on the **Miljevci** plateau above **Višovac** island in the **Krka National Park**, while the second one is a painting entitled *Death of the Last Croatian King*, by **Oton Iveković**.



Interestingly, the memory of Petar Snačić is still around in Croatia, where at a recent medical conference Cousin Egon Svastics was given an impromptu celebration by his colleagues, when they learned his name. Egon just completed his account of the Svastits family history based on his immense knowledge of our family and on the materials made available to him by Mandi, the

widow of Cousin Antal (Tóni) Svastits. It is a thin little volume of 47 pages, but it is packed with information and there are lots of pictures in it too. Egon kindly gave me a beautifully bound copy of it, which I treasure. I read it with interest, and I plan to peruse it again when I find time to write an appendix to it in order to feature more prominently the feminine line of the family. While Egon is open-minded about such matters, he was also traditional in giving more attention to the male descendants. There is also a need for at least a partial family tree to accompany the book in order to place the various descendants who are not only named but identified in the book by reference numbers like 5.2, 6.1, 7.3, and such. While Egon promised to have such a tree available with his book, seemingly, there were technical difficulties in making it a reality.

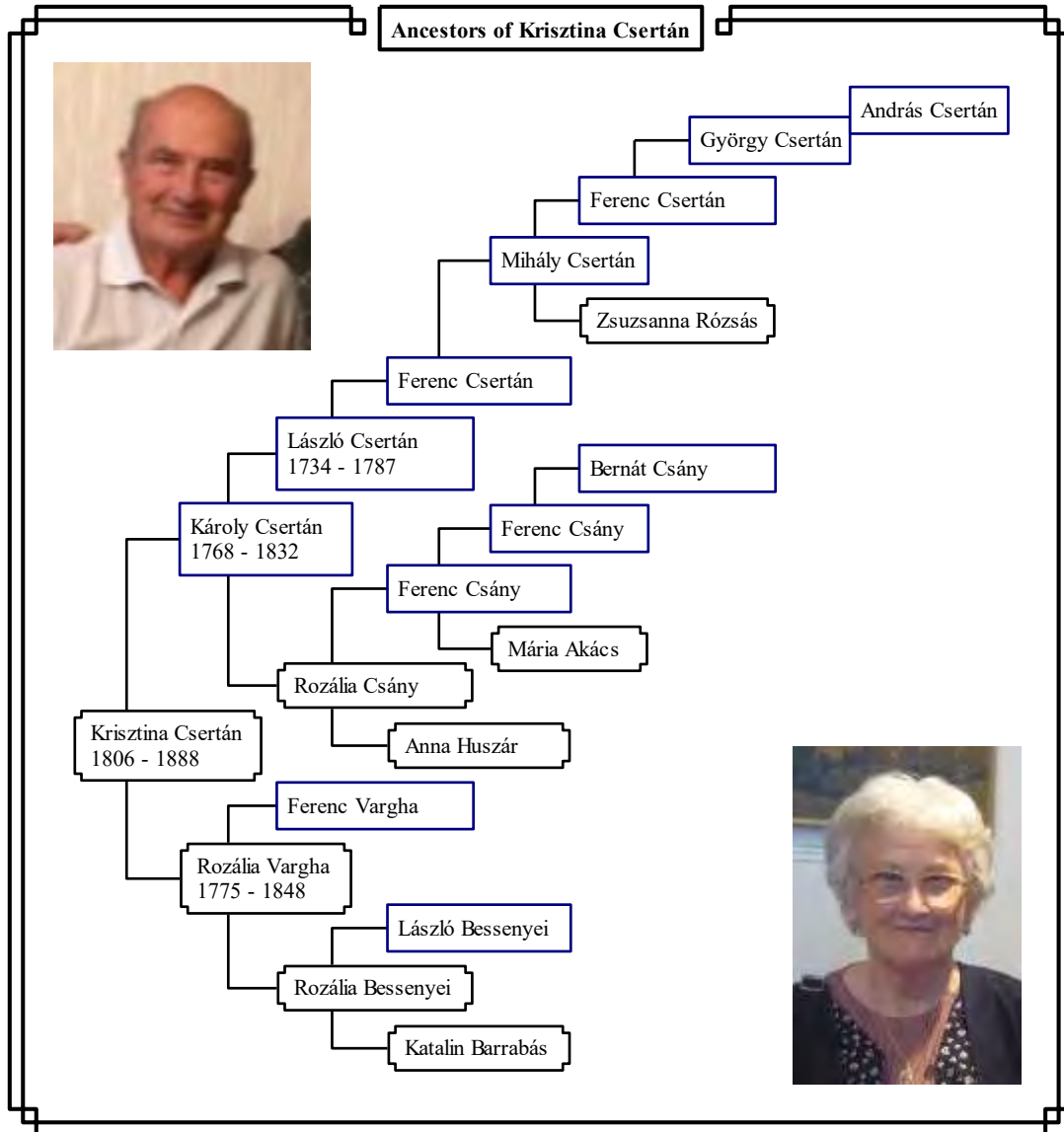
Rather than repeating further information about the Croatian forebears of the Svastits family, I hereby recommend as complementary reading the piece I wrote about “My Svastits – Csertán Ancestors and Relatives” in *Matrikula* (more precisely, the English rendition thereof, which is included in Part 2C). Instead, I will reproduce below a more picturesque family tree that is a photo of the one that used to hang on one of the walls of the Budapest apartment of another Svastits cousin of mine, Iván Petres. There is a small Svastits coat of arms in it; nevertheless, I share with you below, yet another Svastits coat of arms used by some Svastics cousins of ours.



Concerning the other ancestral families listed in the chart above, they are all of old nobility since, in general, most members of the Svastits family married well. In Part 2A, I will include a piece about our jobaházi Döry ancestors, as well as another one about the vizeki Tallián family, which is familiar to me from the Berzsényi family tree too (Dániel Berzsényi’s paternal grandmother was Krisztina Tallián). I also know about the Bosnian background of the Wranchich family, and bits and pieces about the others.

My Csertán Roots

Below I reproduced the ancestral tree of my Great-great-grandmother, Krisztina Csertán, honoring in it my 3rd cousin Ferenc (Feri) Csertán with the inclusion of a photo of his in the upper left corner, as well as Piroska Schandl by having her picture in the lower right corner. Everything I know about my Csertán ancestors I learned from Feri, while Piroska was my genealogical friend, whose spirited correspondence and excellent book on Szentpéterúr were of great help to me throughout my work with the Csertán and Svastits families.



I met them for the first time in the Summer of 2005 in Zalaegerszeg, where in spite of the heavy rain that pounded us throughout the day, Feri drove us all around ‘the old Csertán domains’ near the city. Thereby, I could see where many of our common ancestors lived.

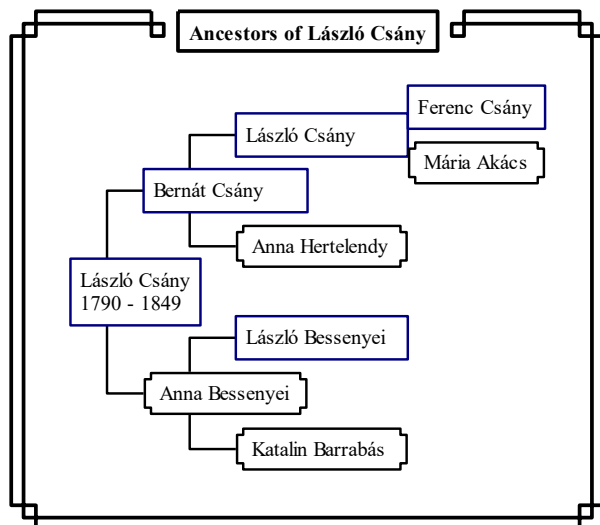
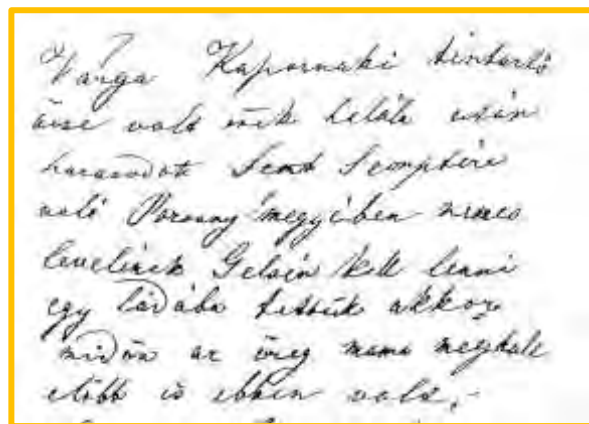
It was also fortuitous that Feri just¹ completed his lengthy, tightly typed account of 13 pages on the Csertán family for his two sons. Thus, he could give me a copy of it, along with several sketches of family trees for the Csány, Bessenyei, Vargha and other families that married into the Csertán family. I am most appreciative of his sharing such treasures with me.

In addition to exploring the historical roots of the Csertán and several related families, Feri's manuscript concentrates on the descendants of our common great-great-great-grandparents, Károly Csertán (1768-1832) and Rozália Vargha (1775-1848). In the resulting family tree, even without the descendants of my Great-great-grandmother Krisztina there are 343 individuals. They include my 4th cousins, including Feri, whom I had to 'promote' to the 3rd cousin status for reasons to be revealed later.

I will also have more about the appearance of a Vargha family in the chart above. At first, I thought that I was dealing with descendants of János Vargha I, the other son of György Vargha II, who served as a captain in the military and settled in Szentgál in the Province of Zala. Later I learned from a letter by Magdolna Sümeghy to Emilia Séllyei (shown on the right) that the family of Ferenc Vargha came from Sintafalva (now Sempte in Slovakia), and their nobility documents were consumed by a fire. Magdolna was one of the grandmothers of Feri, while Emilia was one of his great-grandmothers and the aunt of Magdolna.

When revisiting the Vargha family of Sintafalva, I will also revisit the Csány and Bessenyei families. Nevertheless, at this point, I want to point out that the martyr László Csány is doubly related to us, since both Ferenc Csány and László Bessenyei are among our common ancestors as one can see from the chart on the right. He became a victim of the Austrian terror at the end of our failed revolution of 1848-49 for his 'crime' of serving his country exceptionally well as Minister of Public Works and Transportation during the Revolution.

Needless to say, I am very proud to be related to him.



¹ more precisely, on the Hungarian national holiday of March 15

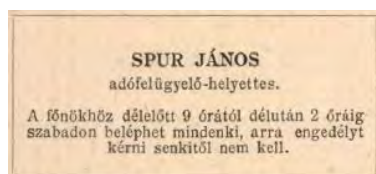
My Svastits – Csertán great-great-grandparents and their family

János Svastits was the eldest son of Antal Svastits and his second wife, Jozefa Dőry, about whose ancestry I wrote a separate piece in this volume. More precisely, he was named János Nep. Svastits after Saint John of Nepomuk; by choosing him, his parents chose his names day as May 16. Saint John of Nepomuk was the patron saint of sailors and owners/operators of water mills and was usually celebrated with a procession involving a decorated barge lit with lots of candles on that day. Names days are celebrated in Hungary; hence it was important to make a choice among the many Saint Johns. His father was a landowner and hence, János became one too, but his passion was music, as I will explain in a separate piece.

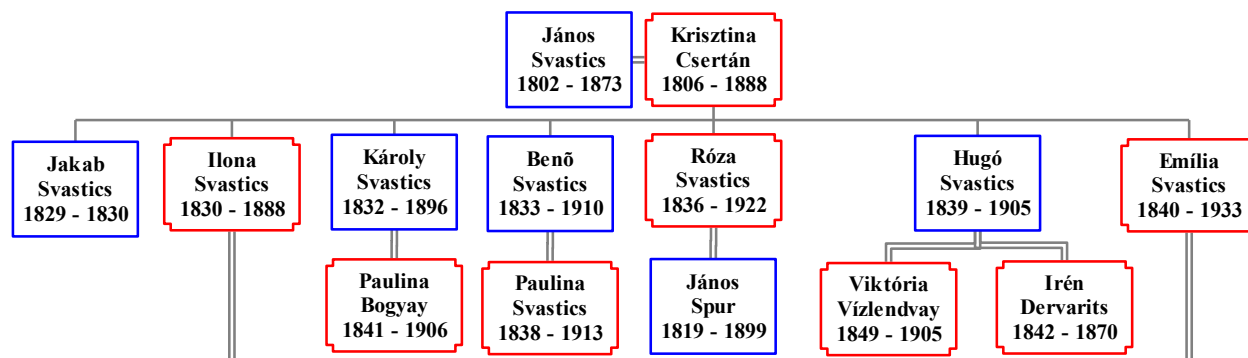


Krisztina Csertán was the daughter of Károly Csertán and Rozália Vargha of the Vargha family of Sintafalva, about whom I will write more in Part 2A. Krisztina was a gutsy lady, who traveled to Vienna by herself to appeal to Emperor Franz Joseph for her brother's freedom after we lost the 1848-49 Revolution against the Austrians.

János and Krisztina were married in 1828 and had nine children. Just like in the case of my Vargha – Etényi great-great-grandparents, of the six that survived, three were girls and three were boys. As we will see, two of the daughters became great-grandmothers of mine: one as my mother's maternal grandmother, and the other as my father's paternal grandmother. (Hence the reduction from 16 to 14 in the number of my great-great-grandparents). The third daughter, Rose married János Spur, a former officer in the 1848-49 Revolution, who became a government employee afterwards. At the beginning of his career, he was involved with taxation; later he was appointed to a supervisory position in the government's fiscal affairs. On the left, I reproduced the sign he had on his door, informing the public that he is available every day between 9 am and 2 pm without appointment or permission by anyone. Needless to say that in view of the heavy bureaucracy elsewhere in governmental offices, he was highly respected and was promoted accordingly.



In what follows, I display a descendant tree showing the six siblings.



Of the three boys, only **Károly** was old enough to join the 1848-49 Revolution against the Habsburgs. He was a 16-years-old student at a military academy when he volunteered and rose in the ranks to become a First Lieutenant. He fought against Jellasics's army along with his future brother-in-law, Imre Vargha, my great-grandfather and similarly ended up serving under Klapka, successfully defending the Fort of Komárom. After the Compromise of 1867, he turned his attention to the family estate in Gelse and to his judicial duties first in the region of Kapornok, and then in Nagykanizsa. He is shown here in 'dizsmagyar' ('decorative Hungarian'), the festive outfit worn by men of high office on special occasions.



Next I show the next oldest son, **Benő** of János and Krisztina, also in dizsmagyar. He served both as Lt. Governor and as Governor of the Province of Zala, devoting his life to public service. In particular, he was effective with his educational reforms in making the region surrounding the Balaton more receptive to tourism and in upgrading the transportation within his jurisdiction.



The third brother, Hugo was also involved with public service, but unfortunately, I have no photos of him.

All three of them are buried in the Svastits Crypt in the Szent Miklós Cemetery of Keszthely, along with their father, János and their uncle, who was an abott in the Dominican Order. Károly's

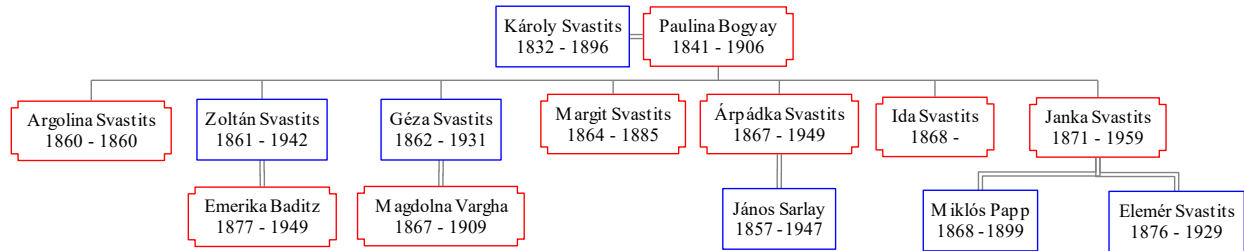


son, Géza, his wife, Magdolna Vargha, and their son, who was also named Géza are also buried there. In view of the heroic participation of Károly in our Revolution, the Svastits Crypt gets a wreath every year on the 15th of March in his honor. On the left I have a photo of the crypt, with me standing there in 2003, when Mom and I paid our respects there. The Svastits crypt is close to my paternal grandmother's, Gomika's grave, which I also visit whenever I am in Keszthely. In what follows, I will introduce separately the branches of Károly, Benő, Róza and the third Hugo in search of my 3rd cousins, letting the connecting ribbons of Ilona and Emilia dangle until later. At present I can share with you only the fact that they were two of my great-grandmothers.

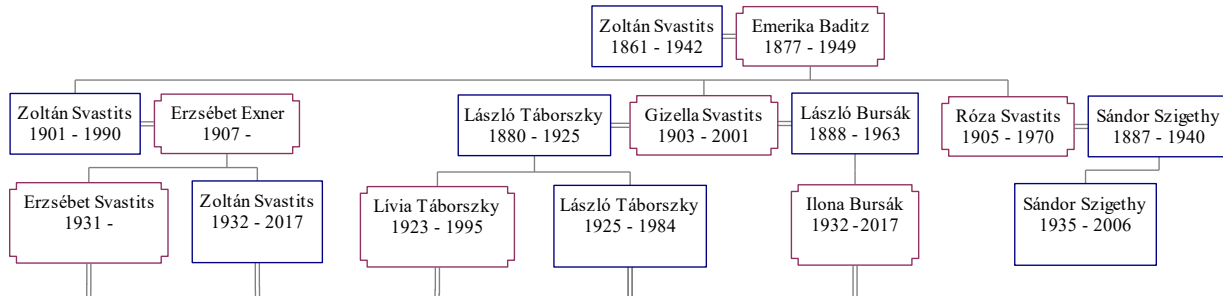
Svastits – Csertán descendants the next generation

As mentioned earlier, in addition to Great-grandmothers Ilona and Emilia, only four of the other seven children of János Svastits and Krisztina Csertán had a family of their own. In this section I will introduce each of them in turn, starting with

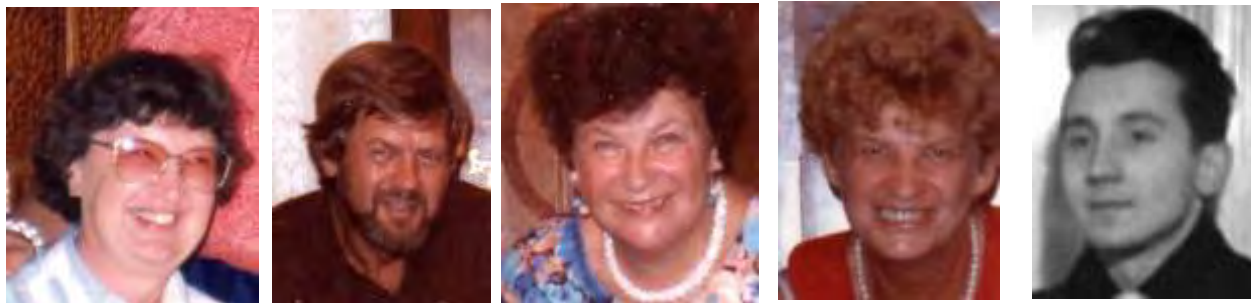
the branch of Károly, which is shown below.



Clearly, it is a large branch, which needs to be cut into smaller branches, but first I must make a couple of comments. Unlike the Vargha family that appeared among my Csertán ancestors, Magdolna Vargha above is from the szent-lászlói és balatonfüredi Vargha family. Hence, I will need to deal with her descendants (and those of Géza Svastits) separately, which I will postpone a bit. Concerning the others, let me start with the branch of Zoltán.

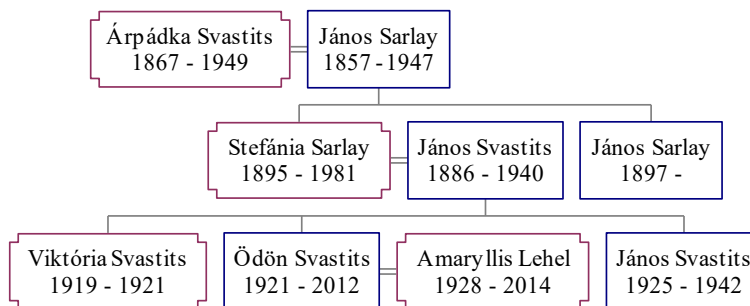


Erzsébet & Zoltán Svastits, Livia Táborszky & László Tábor, Ilona Bursák & Sándor Szigethy.



Shown above from left to right they are Erzsébet and Zoltán Svastiits, Livia Tábornszky and Ilona Bursák in 1984 and Sándor Szigethy. Unfortunately, I have no photos of László Táborny and János Svastits from this branch of the family. All 6 of them, displayed and named above are / were my 3rd cousins. Unfortunately, I didn't get to know Livia, László and Sándor, but I met Erzsébet, Zoltán and Ilona (Baba), and time and again I exchanged letters or call Baba.

Prior to saying more about them, let me move on to the branch of Árpádin shown on the right, and welcome 2 more of my 3rd cousins in **Ödön** and **János Svastits** (and Viktória Svastits too, but she died at age 2 and hence I don't enter her into my list). Unfortunately, János died in WW II, and hence I didn't get to know him, but I am happy to 'report' that I knew and valued my friendship with Ödön, who is shown below in a picture with his five grandkids at Thanksgiving, 2011.

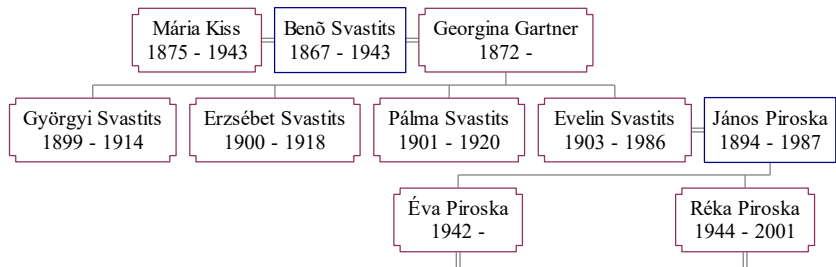


From left to right the grandkids are Alexander (16), Christopher (11) and Katrina (13) Svastits and Stefania (14) and Alexander (12) Rundle.

And finally, when it comes to the branch of Janka, unfortunately, she had only one child, Miklós Papp, born in about 1894, but he died at around age 5. Hence, there are no further descendants of her.

the branch of Benő

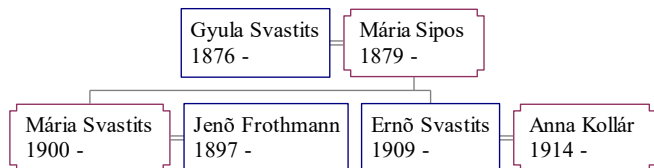
is shown on the right, along with his children and their marriage partners. Below I show the descendants of his son, Benő. Of them, **Éva** and **Réka Piroska** are my third cousins; hence, their names are lettered in red too.



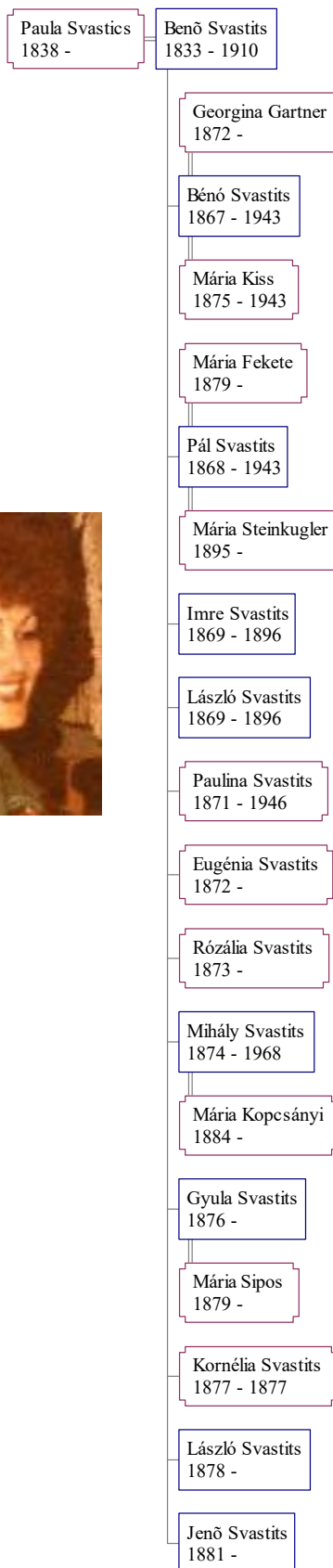
Unfortunately, I never met Réka, but I got to know Éva and her family closely due to several visits with her, including a long walk to her country home in 2005. I show a recent picture of her on the left, along with one of Réka on the right. Éva is a pharmacist and a very accomplished advocate of her father's legacy as an artist. Over the years, she arranged several exhibits of his paintings, and even published a book and a calendar featuring them. Moreover, she is a good and caring friend of mine.



Concerning Pál (1868-1943), I learner about his second marriage only recently, and my search for descendants there is still in progress. Neither do I know whether Mihály (1874-1968) had descendants. However, in the case of Gyula, I recently learned that he had a son and a daughter, but I have yet to determine whether either of them had children. If so, I might have some more Svastits – Csertán cousins. By the way, I also learned that Jenő Frothman changed his name to Farkasházi on 3-10-1934.

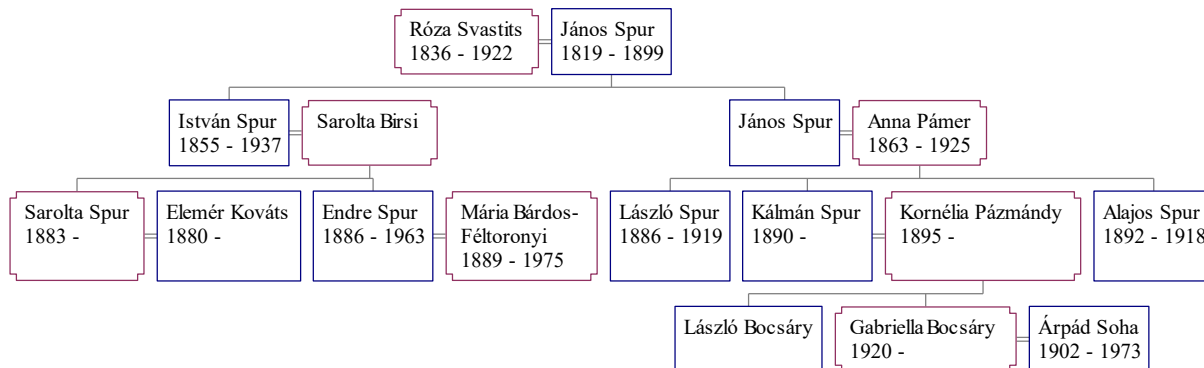


Unfortunately, I have no idea whether any of the other children of Benő (1833-1910) had any children. I am still searching.



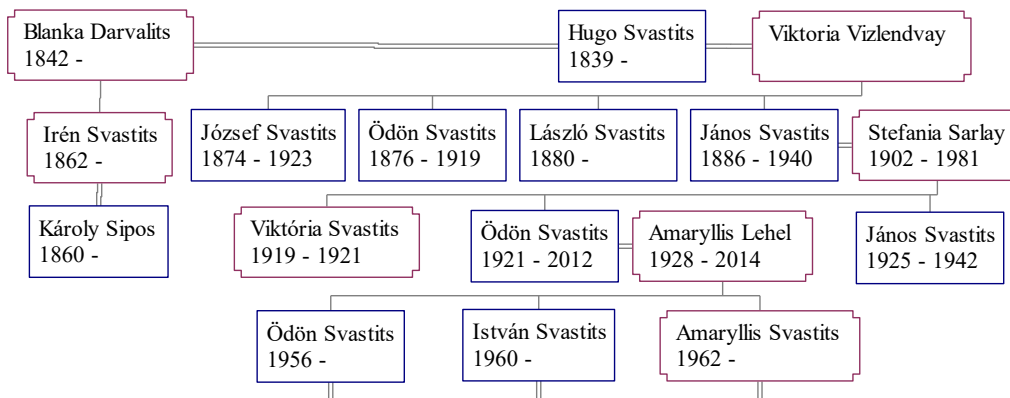
The branch of Róza

calls for yet another family tree. It is shown below, featuring yet 2 more 3rd cousins of mine, **László** and **Gabriella Bocsáry**. Concerning **Endre Spur**, I will write about him in Part 2A.

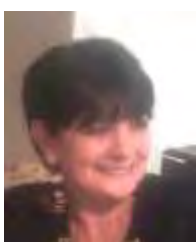


The branch of Hugo

is displayed below, and clearly, it is a partial repetition of the branch of Árpádin, since János married the daughter of his first cousin, Árpádin. Thereby, not only Viktória, Ödön and János (in the 3rd row), but Ödön’s children, **Ödön**, **István** and **Amaryllis Svastits** are my 3rd cousins too



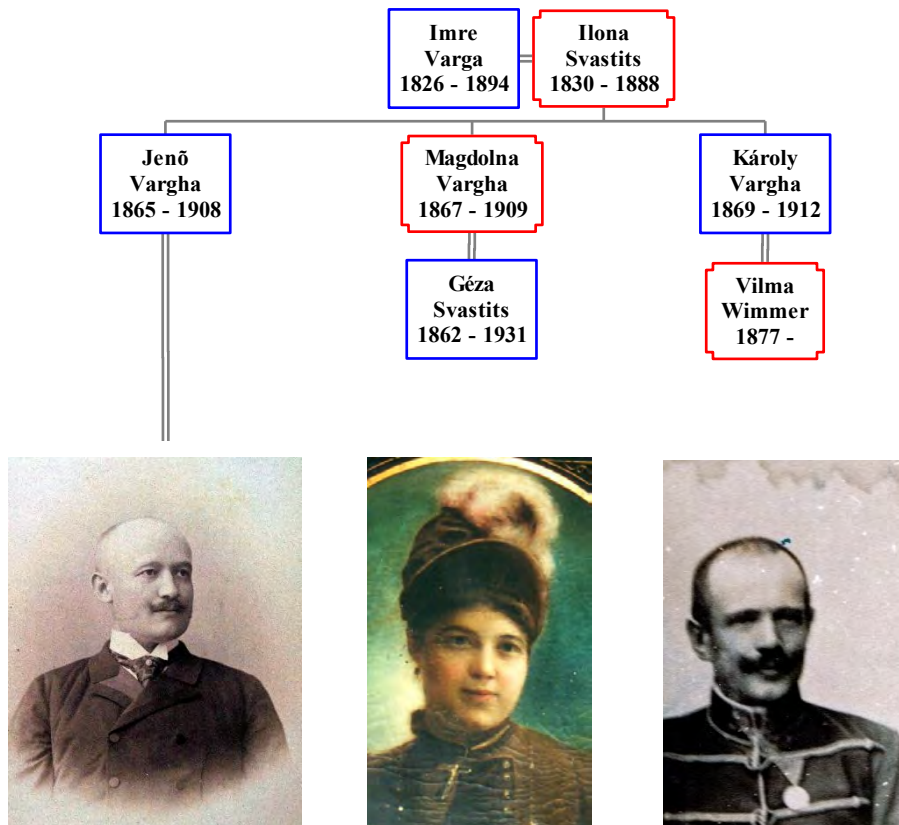
They are shown on the right (with Ödön on the left), and I have a couple of more recent snapshots of Ödön and István (Stephen) taken in Hungary during Ödön’s first visit there in 2016. He is on the right. The ‘mugshot’ of Amaryllis is from 2012.



In summary, in the Svastits – Csertán branch I found a total of 10 more 3rd cousins.

**My Vargha – Svastits great-grandparents
and their descendants
(including my 2nd cousins)**

Having already introduced both my Vargha – Etényi and my Svastits – Csertán 3rd cousins (there were a total of 12 of them, with a ‘surprise thirteenth 3rd cousin’ to be added later), it is time to move on to even closer relatives by ‘tying the knot’ between Great-grandfather Imre Vargha and Great-grandmother Ilona Svastits. In other words, I will hereby connect the ‘loose ends’, and create the descendant tree of my ‘Vargha – Svastits Great-grandparents’ below



with corresponding photographs of my Grandfather Jenő and his two siblings. Note that they all died in the order in which they were born at the age of 42, giving birth to the ‘legend’, possibly concocted by my aunt Mariann (Mici néni), according to which their passing so young was predicted by a Gypsy woman.

This time it is my grandfather, whose connecting ribbon will have to dangle till we identify his wife. It will take a while; hence I beg for your patience until then. In any case, first, I want to tell you about my great-grandparents and my great-aunt and uncle and their families.

Unfortunately, I don't have a picture of my Great-grandmother Ilka; actually, I know nothing about her except for the fact that she was the oldest surviving child of her parents, whose older brother died at age one shortly before Ilona's birth. Ilona died relatively young (at age 58) in Nagykanizsa, but strangely, the cause of her death was recorded as 'old age'. Her tombstone was erected by her husband, and the crypt was used later for other Svastits relatives too, like her brother Károly, who served as a lieutenant in the 1848-49 War for Independence.



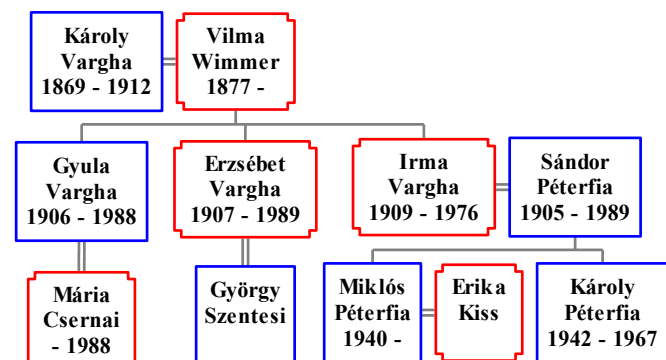
Great-grandfather Imre Varga was trained as a military officer first in Sopron, and then in Graz, Austria and was commissioned as an officer in 1843. He was serving first under Görgei and then under Klapka, distinguishing himself throughout our War for Independence. After the surrender



of the Fort of Komárom, he settled in Nemesapáti, where his 4th cousin, Károly Vargha lived. Interestingly, the Vargha family of Sintafalva also lived there earlier – that's where my great-great-grandparents Károly Csertán and Rozália Vargha got married in 1793 – hence my earlier mistaken assumption of a relationship between them.

Above I displayed two photographs and a painting of Imre Varga, who rejoined the military after the 1867 Compromise and retired as a colonel in 1879. He died in 1894 in Balatonfüred and is buried with his Vargha ancestors there.

Concerning my grandfather's siblings, the descendants of Károly are shown below, where the photo includes only his two older children along with his wife and mother-in-law.

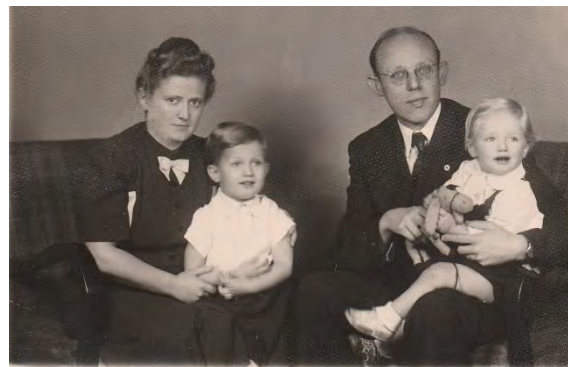


Since he had only two grandsons, clearly, I have only two second cousins, **Miklós** and **Károly Péterfia** from his branch of the family. Unfortunately, I never met Károly, who emigrated to France in 1956 and tragically died there in an automobile accident. But I did make the acquaintance of Miklós already in November, 2000, and visited with him several times since then. They are shown on the right.



It turns out that they are my only 2nd cousins in this branch of the family, since the other five, to be introduced below, are even closer relations.

Before going on to Magdolna Vargha and her descendants, let me include here a few more photographs of relatives in Károly's family, starting with a couple of photos of Miklós' parents, their wedding photo and a later one with the two boys.



Next I have a photo of Gyula Vargha (Gyuszi bácsi), who was an avid photographer and his sisters, Irma and Erzsi, along with one showing him with Cousins Jolán (on the left) and Katalin Kasza in Balatonfüred. I remember meeting him once sometime after the WW II, when I was with my father. Gyula and my father were first cousins.



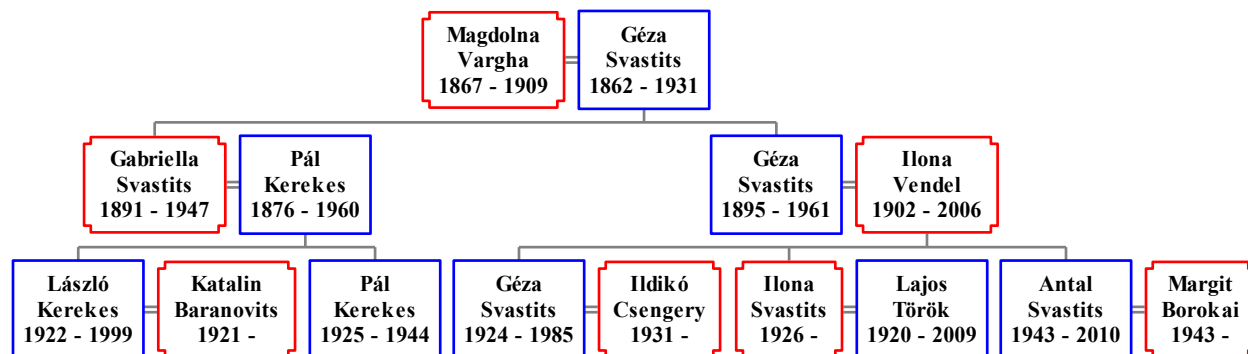
Irma

Erzsi

Gyula



With respect to Magdolna Vargha, my connection to her grandchildren is even stronger, since she married a cousin of hers in Géza Svastits. Below, I list her children and grandchildren, and will return to our relationship later. The latter are of my own generation.



Pictured below are 2nd cousins **László** and **Pál Kerekes**, along with **Géza**, **Iluska** and **Antal** (Tóni) **Svastits**, all of whom will turn out to be cousins of the 1½ -variety, to be explained later. For the present, I just want to say a few words about them.



László, Pál and Géza died long before I got into genealogy, but at least two of them were still around in 1978, when I spent a longer time in Hungary, but I was deeply into mathematical things, was too busy with our own family, and I didn't even know about them. And of course, nobody came to the rescue, suggesting that I should finally get to know my relatives. Both my father and mother were getting old, and such things probably never even occurred to them. It wouldn't have been unreasonable for some of my relatives to take advantage of my being there, to invite me, so we could get to know one another. But communism was still raging, and it was not advisable for the 'enemies of the people' to congregate --- especially with an American, whom the authorities didn't yet forgive that he took part in a revolution against their regime! In any case, although I was interested in genealogy all along, I didn't start working on it until November of 2000, and by then I missed a lot of my relatives.

Pál died during World War II, but László, who was badly wounded, was nursed back to decent health by his future wife (who was a volunteer nurse during the war) and he became a lawyer. I got to know his widow, Katalin, as well as his daughter, Éva and her children, who all spoke highly of him.

Though I will introduce them more properly in **Part 2A**, the following picture of Éva from the 2015 Vargha Reunion is most appropriate now as Éva points to her grandfather and father in the photo to be introduced on the next page.

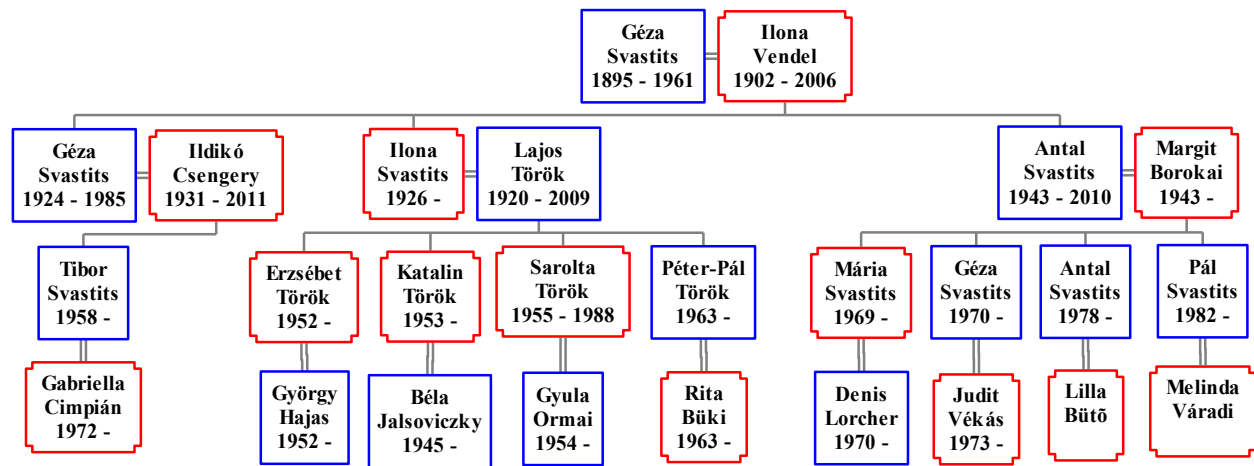
Éva has a bunch of degrees in various history-related fields and speaks good English; Adam, you should remember visiting with her in 2005. I got to know her son, Balázs and daughter, Eszter and was there right about the time when they got married and had some wedding presents for them. Balázs was also sweet to drive Mom and I home when we visited with them, and it was getting fairly late – since Éva and I



I talked too much about politics. She is extremely patriotic. Balázs is an international referee for both soccer and a soccer-like game played on a smaller field. His marriage didn't turn out to be a good one, and it seems that Eszter's failed too, just like her mother's. Above I have a picture of Balázs and Éva with Eszter's daughters, and below I have a picture of Kató, Eszter with her daughters and the daughters with a replica of the Hungarian coat of arms.



As promised, before moving on to Gabriella’s brother, Géza and his descendants, below on the left I have a photo of Gabriella and Pál Kerekes, who was also from an old family, but in the Eastern part of the country. Next they are shown with their two boys, László and Pál, while the third picture shows Gabriella’s brother, Géza, his wife, Ilona, their two older children, Géza and Iluska, and Géza Svastits Sr.



Even though I missed Géza, I was happy to get to know Ilona (Iluska), as well as her late husband, Lajos (Lali) Török, and spend many pleasant hours with them. Moreover, I even attended one of the Svastits reunions when it was held at their place by the Balaton. Finally, I was really fond of (Antal) Tóni, who was my brother’s age. The picture on the right from left to right shows Tóni, Iluska, Margit (Mandi) and Lali at the Török apartment in Budapest in 2000.



I also had an opportunity to accompany Iluska on her visits to her mother, Ilona (Ilus néni) a couple of times, and thus I even had a piece of the cake her children made for her 103rd birthday. That was her last one. Below I have a picture of her family on her 80th birthday, with an identification of all the attendees.



From left to right, the standing adults are: Lali, Mandi, Mária, Tóni, Géza, Tibor, Ildikó, Péter-Pál, Katalin, Sarolta (Sárika), Gyula, Erzsébet (Erzsi), Gyuri; the sitting ones: Iluska, Ilus néni (the celebrant), Erzsébet Vendel (Ilus néni's sister); and the children: Melinda, Réka, Tóni, Géza, Orsolya, Veronika (in Erzsébet's arms), Gergely (in the arms of György (Gyuri) Hajas).

Now, nearly 40 years later, Melinda (Sárika's second child) is a mother of 6, Réka (Sárika's first-born) has 3 children, and so does Tóni (Antal's son), Géza (Antal's son, who is the 4th Géza Svastits of the family) and Orsolya (Sárika's youngest), while Veronika (Erzsi's daughter) has 3. In other words, the descendants of Géza and Ilus néni, with Iluska in the lead are truly numerous! At her recent 94th birthday she had 16 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren, and thus with Toni's 4 children and 12 grandchildren and Géza's one son and two grandchildren, they contributed lots of Vargha – Svastits descendants to the pool. What's more – at least in my eyes – one of Tóni's grandsons, Domonkos is a member of Hungary's Physics team to various competitions and Mandy assures me that several others are also of high ability in Mathematics and Physics. I am very happy for them.

An even earlier photo, taken at Christmas in 1957 shows everyone at a different stage of life. In it from left to right in the back you see Géza (unfortunately, blurred by the light), Antal, Erzsébet Vendel (Ilus néni's sister), Iluska, Lali and Ilus néni; while in the front: Géza, Ildikó, Erzsi, Sárka, Lali's mother, Katalin and Ilus néni's mother.

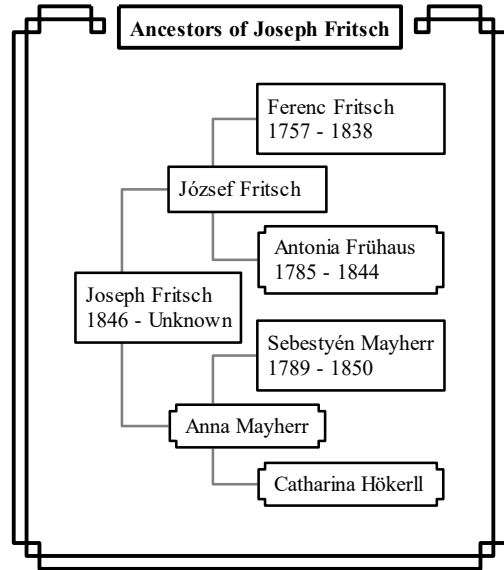


I first met Iluska in 1950-51 at Kató néni's, where I sometime seated Kató néni's and Tóni bácsi's patients upon arrival; Iluska was one of Kató néni's patients. She remembered me, but I didn't remember her. I do remember however, going over to their place in Keszthely with Ili néni, where I met her parents but don't recall seeing any of their children. Of course, Géza and Iluska (Ilka; she likes to go by that nickname too) were already grown and only Tóni was around, but I didn't see him either. Now, Tóni is gone too, as well as Lali, and Iluska too. But I will always remember how sweet she was when I first went to see them in 2000. She was waiting for me with a copy of a letter my father wrote to her father in 1938, apologizing for his tardiness in writing, using the excuse and bragging with the fact that a son was born to him. Me!

It was also Iluska, who put me in touch with Judit Lőrincz-Véger's mother; that connection led to Judit's suggestion and help in organizing the 2011 Berzsényi reunion in Sopron, as well as to lots of information concerning my dukai Takách roots and dukai Takách relatives. And it was Iluska, who brought me together with Piroska Schandl, who turned out to be a wonderful friend and helper in genealogy and Feri Csertán, who opened the doors not only to my Csertán ancestry, but my connection to several related families. I will always miss my wonderful visits with Iluska and Lali.

My Fritsch and Mayherr Roots

This time I combined the ancestors of my Great-grandfather József Fritsch, starting with him, rather than separately with his father and mother. The resulting family tree is shown on the right. Unfortunately, I don't know much more about any of them, except for the fact that all of them lived around Kismarton, which is now the Austrian town of Eisenstadt. I include here the death record for three of them – very little, but more than nothing. The records don't go back further; I was actually happy to have found this much. Thus, I truly appreciate the relative ease of searching for ancestry among the nobility.



1848-02-04

Littera initialis Nominis	Mensis & Dies Mortis	Dies Sepulchrae	Aetas Defuncti	Nomen, Cognomen & Conditio Defuncti (si proles sit, Nomen & Cognomen Parentum eorumque Conditio)	Locus Domicilii	An fuerit gravatus	Sepultura	Animadvertio
J.	2.	3.	29.	Fritsch József Fritsch Ferenc Frühhaus Antonia Mayherr Sebestyén Höckerll Catharina	Kismarton			

1848-02-04

Littera initialis Nominis	Mensis & Dies Mortis	Dies Sepulchrae	Aetas Defuncti	Nomen, Cognomen & Conditio Defuncti (si proles sit, Nomen & Cognomen Parentum eorumque Conditio)	Locus Domicilii	An fuerit provisorius	Sepultura	Animadvertio
J.	29.	31.	29.	József Fritsch	Kismarton			

I also found some marriage and birth records for a couple of them but failed to make copies thereof. Hence, the present collection of supportive documentation is even poorer. I hope to recover those documents sometime in the future and include them here.

Summa Defunctorum 34

1848-02-04

József Fritsch

1848-02-04

Frühhaus Antonia

Mayherr Sebestyén

Höckerll Catharina

J.	17 ^o	19 ^o	87	Franciscus Fritsch personalis parochus Dominalis Catholici	de	parochus	Doan	
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My research on the Fritsch ancestry was hugely hindered by the fact that there were hints and legends about the family which turned out to be false, and they misled my investigations for some time. I was told that Great-grandfather Josef Fritsch was of German origin, who had to leave his country because he killed his opponent in a duel. According to Cousin Miklós Kovács, he moved to Austria only then. Thus, I never even thought of looking for him in Austria, even after I thought that I managed to decipher the name of his birthplace as 'Hoflau' from the ship's manifest that brought him to America.

Being under the impression that he was of German origin, I spent endless hours in search of a place named Hoflau on various historical maps of Germany without any success. I also spent a lot of time perusing volume after volume of the German „Genealogisches Handbuch des Adels”, where I found lots of information about the von Fritsch family, but no mention whatsoever of Josef. Neither was there anything useful for my purposes in the 1902 book entitled „A Gallant Captain of the Civil War” by Frederick Otto baron von Fritsch, which I also read. Nor could I connect our great-grandfather to the World War II German general Freiherr von Fritsch, (whose photo Cousin Miklós sent me as a possible relative), or to the Austrian General Carl Wilhelm Fritsch, who set in judgment of some Hungarian patriots after we lost the 1848-1849 War of Independence against the Austrians. Needless to say, I was relieved by the latter. These searches were partially prompted by hearing the story that our aunt, Mici néni would often fuss at my cousins Miklós and Gyszi when they were disrespectful to our grandmother, Gomika, saying that they should remember that their grandmother is a real baroness.

It was only out of desperation that I thought that maybe I misread the 'n' for a 'u' and typed into the google search the word 'hoflan', however 'un-Germanic' it sounded to my ears. Needless to say, I was most surprised when one of the 'hits' took me to a page of taxation records in the villages of Kis- and Nagy-Höflány and the word 'Hoflan' was penciled in towards the top of the page. I soon learned that they were small communities within the present city of Eisenstadt (formerly named Kismarton, when present-day Burgenland was part of Hungary and was called the 'Órvidék' – region of the guards). I also managed to find a Catholic parish in Kleinhöflein (the German name for Kis-Höflány), and the e-mail address of the priest, Fr. Sebastian there. At that time, I was not aware of the fact that the microfilms of the vital records of Kis- and Nagy-Höflány are available from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and hence I asked Fr. Sebastian to locate for me the birth registration of Great-grandfather József Fritsch and of brothers of his if there were any. Hence, I was very happy when some weeks later I received four slips of paper with my great-grandfather's and 3 of his brothers' dates of baptism thereon. Sometime afterwards I learned about the availability of the microfilms, ordered several of them, and I was able to find the ancestors of my great-grandfather, as well as even more of his siblings.

Needless to say, at this stage I fully believed that none of the stories about the family's German origin or connection to the Baron Fritsch family were true.

On the other hand, something interesting surfaced recently. It came in the form of a message sent to me by my friend Zsolt Zsigray, who located a book, whose cover along with a page about a Fritsch family in Höflány, with their coat of arms are shown on the next page. The latter is enlarged and reproduced on the right.



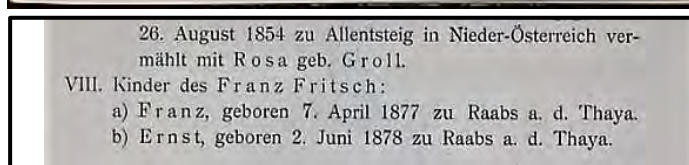
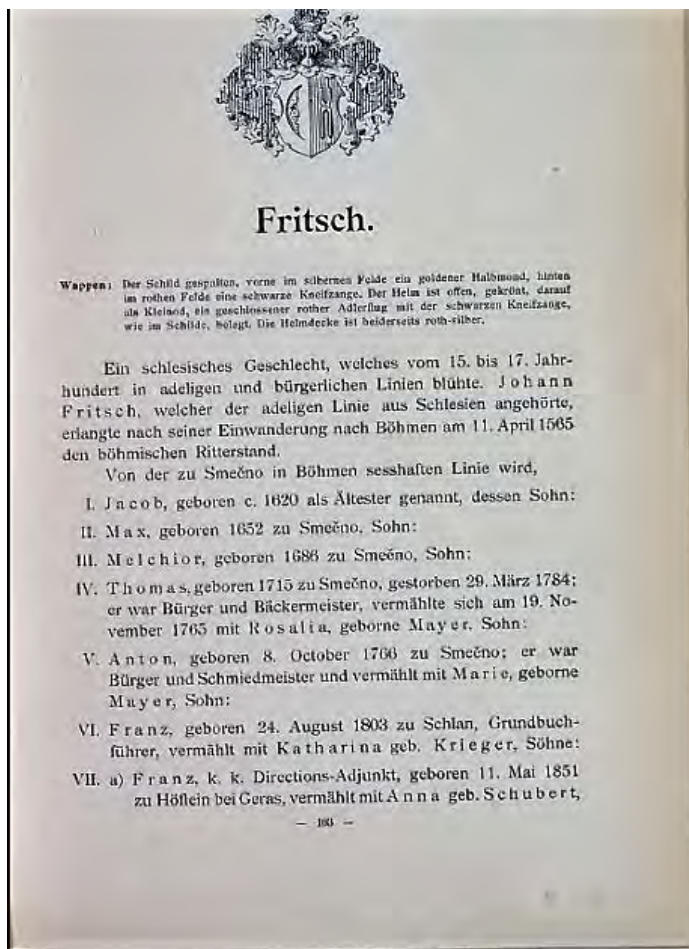


It is a different kind of crest than the ones signifying nobility; seemingly, only outstanding members of their trade received such a recognition. Someday, I will want to learn more about such recognitions.

As it was pointed out by Zsolt, who is a well-recognized expert in genealogy, it is highly unlikely that there were two different Fritsch families there. Franz, who is in the last line on the first page (as VII a), was born in Höflány. Being a contemporary, he may have been a 4th or 5th cousin of Great-grandfather Joseph Fritsch.

With respect to the Mayherr family, I continue to have hopes that a Mayherr relative will surface somewhere, and I can learn from him/her further details concerning their origin. In my initial searches I managed to locate two sisters of Anna Mayherr, Theresia, who died at age 33 on June 12, 1855, and Magdolna, who died on February 7, 1843, at age 4½, as well as a brother of theirs, who was born on March 8, 1831. Later I also came across a soccer player in Hungary by the name Mayherr. Clearly, I need to go back to the microfilms to learn what happened to him in the hope that his descendants can help me with my search.

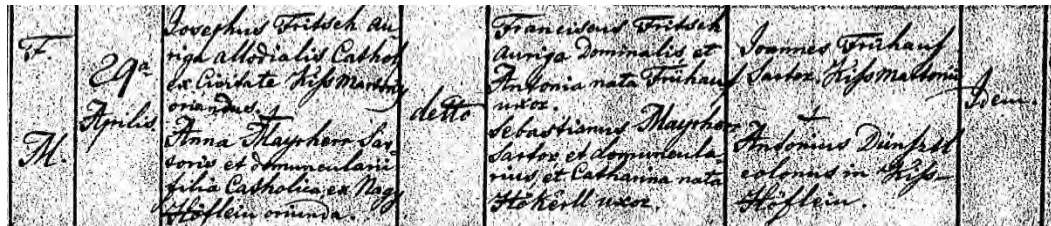
In closing, I must mention that the Höckerl family was very widespread in Nagy-Höflány and hence, I didn't even try to untangle the relationship of its numerous members. That task is awaiting one of the readers of this book.



My Fritsch – Mayherr great-great-grandparents and their family

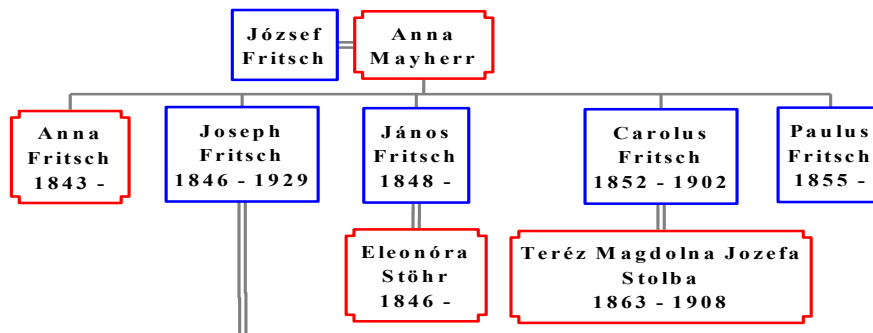
József Fritsch was of simple background; he was a coachman, presumably in the employ of Prince Eszterházy of Kismarton, which later became the Austrian city of Eisenstadt. He married

Anna Mayherr of Nagyhöflány on April 29, 1838, just about 100 years before I was born. Their marriage record is reproduced below.



This is the record that told me about their parents too, and hence my interest extends to the Frühaus and the Hökerll families as well. Subsequently, I learned about their children too; they are tabulated below. They are also shown in a traditional family tree, where once again my Great-grandfather Joseph is ‘unattached’, at least for the time being.

Name	Birthplace	Date of Birth	Place of Death	Date of Death
Anna	Nagyhöflány	09-18-1839	Nagyhöflány	12-02-1840
Carolina	Nagyhöflány	08-20-1841	Nagyhöflány	10-04-1843
Anna	Nagyhöflány	02-09-1843	?	?
Rudolf	Kishöflány	03-09-1845	Kishöflány	03-18-1846
József	Kishöflány	04-16-1846	Budapest	1921?
János	Kishöflány	02-21-1848	?	?
Michael (Mihály)	Kishöflány	07-01-1850	Kishöflány	04-24-1861
Carolus (Károly)	Kishöflány	04-09-1852	Szeged	1902
Paulus (Pál)	Kishöflány	01-10-1855	?	?



Four of their children did not reach adulthood; I didn't include them in the tree above. Unfortunately, I didn't manage to learn anything further about the second Anna and Paulus, the youngest child in spite my search for them both in Hungary and in America. Thus, we might yet find some relatives via their descendants, if any. With respect to János and Károly/Carolus, I was much more successful, as you will see presently. However, I will present them in reverse order on account of the fact that I got to know the descendants of Károly long before the descendants of János.

The key to prove that Károly was indeed a brother of my Great-grandfather József was the baptismal registration of one of the children of Károly, for otherwise, why would my Gomika (Fritsch grandmother, Anna) and my grandfather (Jenő Varga) be the godparents of Béla László Jenő? I also learned from the slip below that the child was not even 3 months old when he died, and that his parents were married (Esk. for esküvő, i.e., wedding) in Vienna (Bécs) at a parish church on April 30, 1883.

			Fritsch Károly vendéglős, r.k. Klein-Höflein, Sopron m. Stolba Teréz Magdolna, Szécsen, r.k.	Róssa u. 99.	Varga Jenő gyógyszerész, r.k. és neje Fritsch Anna r.k. Sársébetkörút 39.	szelliger Vilmos Ráplán	V. h. l. Bécs. fog- dalmi presbiteria- r. 1883. apr. 30. Medgyes Ókriánus mellett
238.	15.	23.	Béla László Jenő	fiúfi	—	törvényes	
239.	13.	23.	Ottília Zsófia	—	nő	törvényes	Selientka S.
			† 1892. máj. 11. helyben				

The latter information was seemingly recorded in Hungarian too, as shown below in the registration of his marriage. His occupation was listed as the owner of a restaurant.

Fritsch Károly vendéglős R. K. Kis-Höflein Sopron m. Stolba Teréz Magdolna R. K.	Várkert Rakpart R.	Wrabelt. Sziget vendéglős R. K. és neje: Koeck Anna A. V. Eszmond u. 44.	Varga József Ráplán.	V. h. l. Mangel 126 Sz. Medgyes pü. Büschel.
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Eventually, I managed to find their other children too, as well as their great-grandchildren, who are my 3rd cousins. From them I received pictures and further information about the descendants of Károly, about whom I will write in the next section.

Below I show a photo of Károly and Károly's wife, Teréz Stolba, along with the tombstone marking their graves in Szeged. Moreover, I display below the Hungarian death notice of Teréz Stolba, which lists my great-grandmother, the widow of Joseph Fritsch among the mourners.



Fritsch Károly, Anna, Magda, Mariska, Hilda és Sarolta mint gyermekei úgy a maguk, mint a rokonság nevében mély fájdalommal jelentik a jó anya, testvér és sógornő

özv. FRITSCH KÁROLYNÉ
szül. STOLBA TERÉZ

folyó hó 6-án d. u. 5 óraker életének 45-dik évében hosszas szenvedés után bekövetkezelt gyászos elhunytát.

Kedves halottunk földi maradványait folyó hó 8-án délután 4 óraker kísérjük az Alföldi-utca 23. szám alatti lakásból nyugóhelyére, a belvárosi római katolikus temetőbe

Az engesztelő szentmise-áldozatot a belvárosi templomban e hó 9-én délelőtt 10 óraker mutatjuk be a Mindenhatóknak.

Áldott legyen az emléke!

Szeged, 1908. április 7-én.

Stolba Henrik
bátyja
Stolba Károly
szobrász
Fritsch József
sógora.

Stolba Henrikné,
Fritsch Józsefné,
özv. Fritsch Jánosné
sógornő.

Kézírt-nyomatkezelési intézet. Eadrényi Imre, Szeged



With respect to János Fritsch, I display below his marriage registration, which identified him as the son of József Fritsch and Anna Mayherr – hence, I knew that he was ‘our János’.

<i>Fritsch János</i>	<i>Pis. Hoffmann Sándor</i>				
<i>fiadós</i>	<i>megyék lakos</i>	<i>nr.</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>/</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>Fritsch József Mayherr Anna</i>	<i>Stolba utca</i>				
<i>hitveseje</i>	<i>68/</i>				
<i>Stolba Eleonóra</i>	<i>Pest. Nyv. m.</i>				
<i>Stolba József Károly anyja</i>	<i>Orizsara</i>	<i>nr.</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>/</i>	<i>"</i>
<i>hitveseje anyja</i>	<i>4/2</i>				

Fritsch – Mayherr descendants the next generation

The children of Károly

As mentioned in the previous section, I will start with the descendants of Károly, who are shown below in a table, where I give even the number of the microfilm as the source of my information.

Name of child	Birth / Baptism	Diocese, Dates	Film Number
Károly Frigyes Ferenc	1884.03.15	Tabán, 1884-1889	453168
Anna Teréz Magdolna	1885.03.04	Terézváros, 1885-1888	611438
Magdolna Mária Henrika	1887.04.23	Ferencváros, 1882-1888	611962
Ferenc	1888.09.25	Józsefváros, 1888	612920
Béla László Jenő	1892.02.23	Terézváros, 1891-1892	611440
Hilda Anna Terézia	1893.03.01	Erzsébetváros, 1893-1895	611389

Note that the six of them were registered in 5 different dioses; hence, I suspected all along that they may have had more children born elsewhere. Nevertheless, I was stuck. Fortunately, I thought of the possibility of one of Károly's descendants changing his or her name, and I was familiar with the excellent database put together by my fellow members of MACSE (Magyar Családkutató Egyesület, Hungarian Family History Association) with a section on official name changes, listing the original along with the assumed name, the date on which the change became effective, along with personal data like hometown, birthplace, year of birth, age, religion and/or occupation.

The Fritsch – Forrai Breakthrough

Entering the name 'Fritsch', I was pleasantly surprised to come up with a dozen or so people, who changed their names to and from Fritsch, with one among them matching the data I had for one of Károly's sons, also named Károly. He took the name Forrai, and I 'followed the scent', looking up the list of Károly Forrai's, whose death was registered in the MACSE database. Luck was with me, and not only did I find him, I also found his last home address, Vaskapu utca 25 in Szeged.

Next, I put the name 'Forrai' into the online Hungarian 'Tudakozó', which is like the 'White pages' in the USA and lucked out again, finding another Forrai living at that address. My subsequent call confirmed that he was indeed the grandson of Károly Fritsch, who changed his name to Forrai, and hence a 3rd cousin of mine. Through this grandson, Gábor Forrai, I managed to find all of my 3rd cousins on his branch of the family.

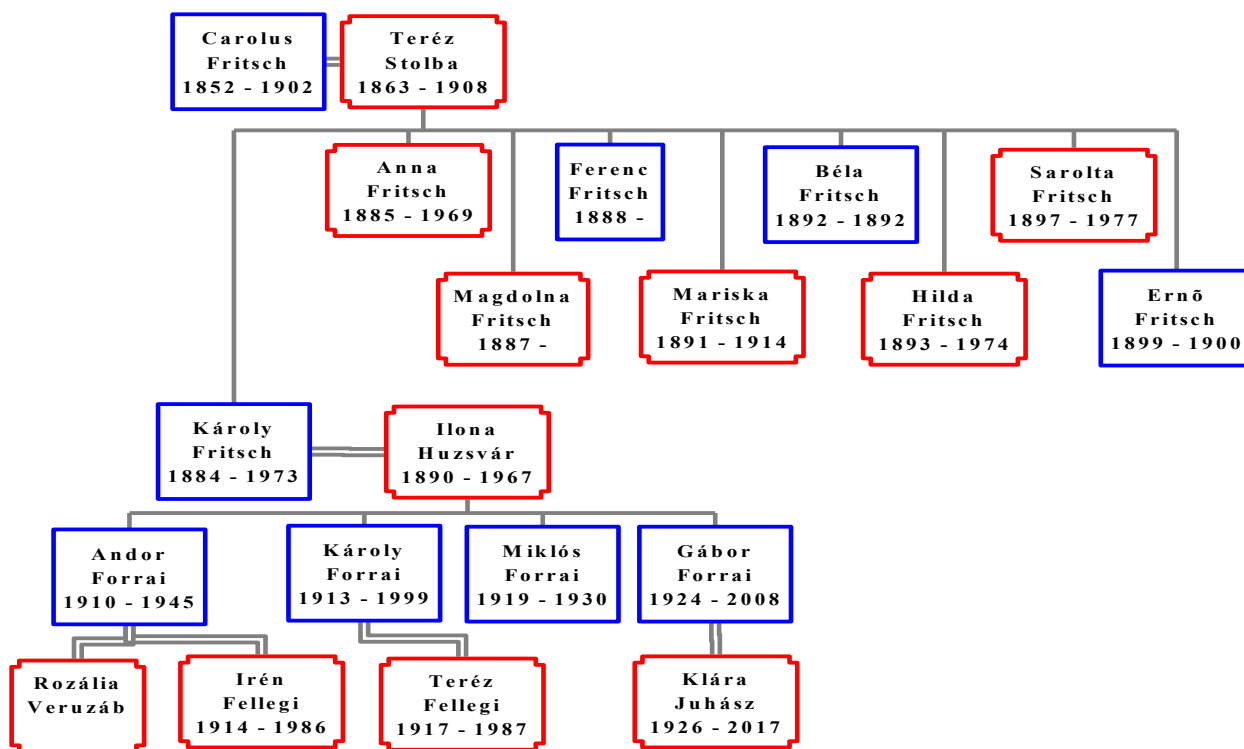
My Fritsch – Forrai Cousins

Interestingly, my timing was perfect in searching for a Forrai descendant in Szedged, since barely a year after I found Gábor, he had to sell the house in Vas-
kapu utca and move elsewhere. Thus, I may not have succeeded in tracking him down if I had to search for him later. While the name is not common, like Varga, it turns out that there are many other Forrais living in Szedged who are not related to us. On the right, I show a



photo of the old house with Károly Forrai/Fritsch in front of it, taken in August 1938, about the time I was born!

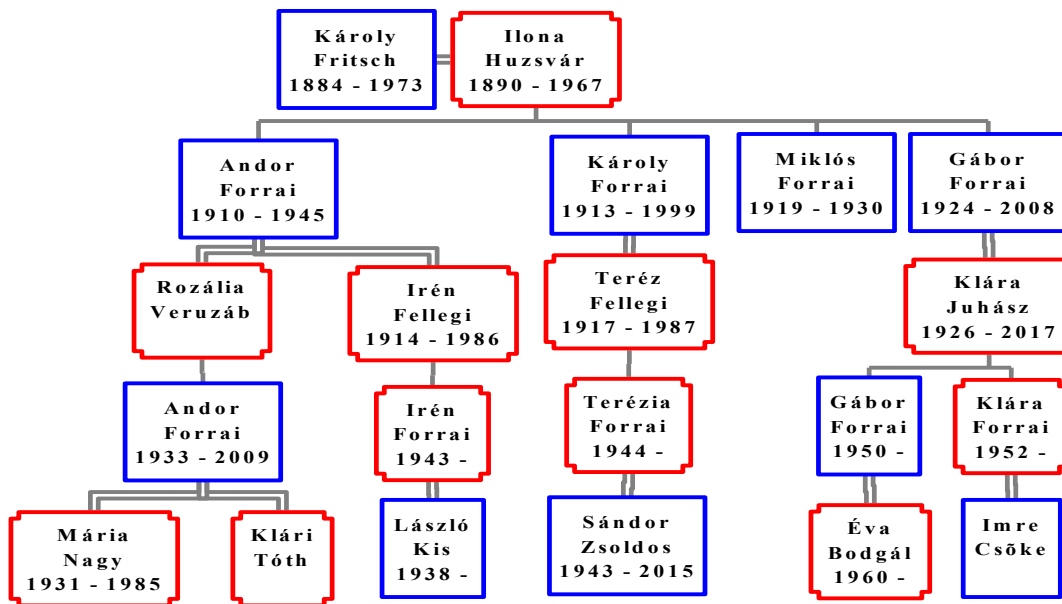
With Gábor’s help and via some further inquiries, I managed to put together the tree below, showing nine, rather than six children of Károly Fritsch and Teréz Stolba.



Of the nine children only five reached adulthood and of them even Marika died at age 23 and only Károly had a family. And even he lost one of his boys at age 11 to the River Tisza due to drowning. The four boys, Andor, Károly, Miklós and Gábor were of my father’s generation; they were his 2nd cousins. Their children, listed in the next family tree are my 3rd cousins.

More properly introduced, they are **Andor, Irén, Terézia, Gábor** and **Klára Forrai**.

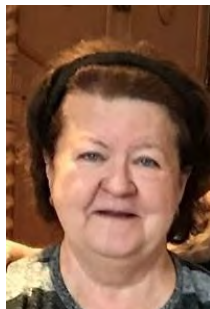
I have been in correspondence with some of them, as well as with children thereof, and I am most appreciative of the information and the photos received from them.



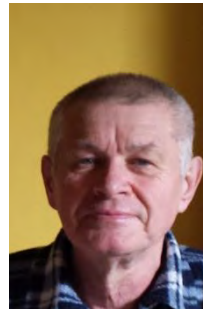
I show a ‘mugshot’ of four of my 3rd cousins, leaving room here for Andor if I get a photo of him. One may note that he was born out of wedlock, which is of no consequence.



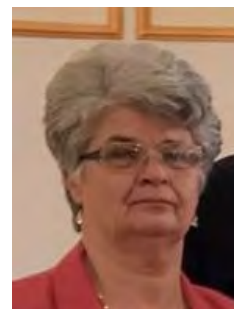
Irén (Irike)



Teréz (Terike)



Gábor



Klári

Returning to Andor, he is a Fritsch-descendant regardless of the identity of his mother and hence, just as much of a 3rd cousin as the others. Unfortunately, he was not well during his last few years, and I missed him by a decade. But I didn’t miss his older daughter, Gabriella (Gabi), who became one of my favorite relatives.

In particular, it was Gabi, who sent me the picture of the tombstone of Karoly Fritsch and Teréz Stolba; note that two of their children are listed on it too. The tombstones shown on the right are of the seven others.



Gabi also shared with me the description of the exact location of the graves in the cemetery in Szeged; her attention to such details is greatly appreciated.

Next, I will show some old pictures shared with me by Cousins Gábor and Terike, starting with one of Károly and his three sisters, Anna (Nina), Hilda and Sarolta (Lotti).



Above on the left, Hilda sits with two of her nephews, Károly and Andor, while below on the left we have Anna, in the middle Anna is sitting and Hilda stands by her, and on the right Károly and his wife, Ilona Huzsvár are standing.



Now that at least some of the other members of the family are introduced, I will show yet more old photos, starting with a picture of Gábor Forrai with his aunt and godmother Lotti and continuing with a photo a Károly Forrai with his parents, Károly and Ilona at the top of the next page.



The picture on the right of Károly, Gábor and Andor with their parents was seemingly taken soon after the death of their brother, Miklós, who drowned in the River Tisza. Of the four boys, Andor died in World War II, and his son was born out of wedlock. The younger Andor also died, but I got to know his widow, as well as his older daughter, Gabi via Skype. She sent me pictures of the family. Some of the other photos came from 3rd Cousin Terézia, yet others were sent to me by 3rd Cousin Gábor or his son (named Gábor too), while the death notice of Teréz Stolba was sent to me by 3rd Cousin Klára.



More wedding photos follow, starting from left to right with that of Gábor and Klára; Andor and Irén; and Károly and Teréz of my father's generation. They are followed by the wedding photo of Károly and Ilona of my grandmother's generation.



And then, when it comes to my generation, I also have the wedding photos of Irén (who goes by ‘Irike’) and Teréz (who goes by Terike) on the right, as well as a picture of them when they were little girls. Since they are 1st cousins on their mothers’ side too, they were truly close to one another.



In fact, as the photo on the right shows, they are still close in spite of the fact that Terike lives in Tatabánya while Irike lives in Héviz.



In 2019, taking advantage of the wonderful friendship of my Berzsenyi-cousin, Magdi Szabari and her husband, Gerardo Ramirez, we visited Terike, and then went on to see some more cousins of mine in Szeged.

Meeting them in person

The picture on the right shows Terike with Kay and I, while the picture below features Gábor, Kay, me, Klári and Dániel Csőke, Klári’s middle son. The photo next to it shows Magdi in front, while Gabriella (Gabi), Benjamin Tallósy (Gabi’s second husband), and Péter Makra (Gabi’s son from her first marriage) are on the other side of the table, with Gábor looking toward them. In the fourth picture, standing from left to right are Klári, Dániel, Krisztina, Benjamin, Gabi, Péter, Kay, Gábor and me. Gabi is Andor’s older daughter, who became a very sweet friend over the last couple of years; I will have more about her in Part 2 of these volumes. Earlier I spoke with Ferenc Csőke, Klári’s oldest son, who is a fireman and was on duty. He got married a couple of years ago, Péter Makra and the younger Gábor Forrai are newly-weds, while Daniel Csőke got married in July 2021.





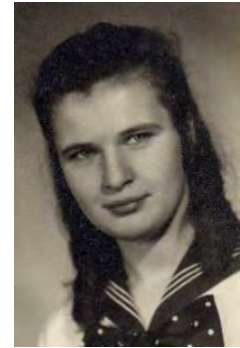
After we returned from Hungary, I received several more photos from Klári and her middle son, Daniel, which I will display below, along with some other photos which I still have not shown. For starters, I show below a relatively recent photo of Gábor and his wife, Éva. Next is a picture of their son, Gábor, who is a policeman, who was on duty, but called me to excuse himself.





In a much older photo on the left, he is shown with several friends of his sister, Klári, who is the girl on the right. A close-up picture of hers is also shown on the below.

I enjoyed getting to know her, since originally, I didn't expect her to show up at all. I learned a lot about her 'bugs', as she refers to the bees they keep and found her company very much to my liking.



Unfortunately, there are some deep scars in her from her dealings with various members of her family, including her mother and brother and at first, she refused to have anything to do with me either.

This time, however, she even acknowledged the presence of her brother, Gábor, with whom she is not on 'speaking terms'.

Next, I show an older photo of Klári with her husband, Imre and the three boys at Christmas time about 25 years ago, when her youngest one, Péter was just a baby.

During our mini-reunion, I was also happy to learn that of their great-aunts, Anna (Nina) was a seamstress, Hilda was a nun, while Sarolta (Lotti) was deaf and dumb. Lotti and Nina lived in Budapest on Török utca and were joined by Hilda when the communists disbursed all of the religious orders in Hungary. All of my 3rd cousins knew and had fond memories of their grandfather and his three surviving sisters.



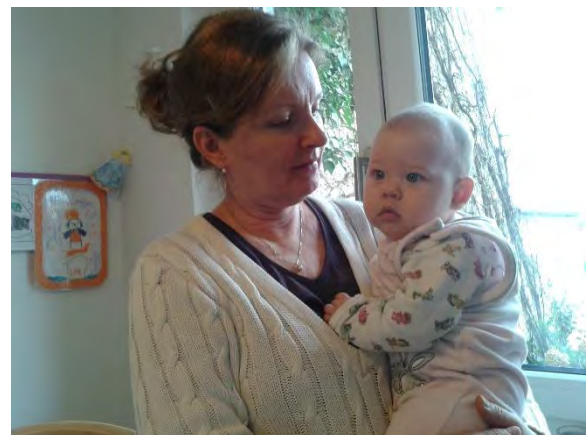
In Part 2, when I tell you about your 4th cousins, I will have a lot more about the Csőke boys, as well as about the younger Gábor Forrai and the children of Terike and Irike, but I will jump ahead a bit by telling you about Gabi, one of the daughters of Andor, who came with her son, Péter and her second husband to our gathering in Szeged, since Gabi and I have been corresponding and Skype-ing for some years already. She is one of my favorite relatives.



In the first picture above from left to right we have Feri, Éva, Gabi and Peti (Péter); in the photo above on the right Gabi is shown with Klára, her father's widow (whose last name I don't yet know); and then on the right Gabi is shown with Benjamin. Below it, I show Gabi with her first grandchild, Bálint Beke, who was born on March 14, 2016. By the way, Gabi is a 4th cousin to my children, and hence her children are 5th cousins to my grandchildren. Unfortunately, Gabi's sister is not interested in 'digging into' their father's past, and hence I have yet to establish contact with her.



I am most happy that my relationship with Klári improved a lot, and I hope it will remain good. Our meeting in Szeged helped a lot, and I think that her sons influenced her positively too. While I didn't have much contact with her youngest and no contact whatsoever with her husband, I am getting along well with her other two sons.



The children of János

As in the case of Károly, I will start with a tabulation of the children I found after learning that János was married to Eleonóra Stöhr, with their marriage taking place in Józsefváros on February 6, 1871. Without that piece of information, it would have been more than twice as slow to proceed, and I would not have had an idea for the proper time interval either. Moreover, since their marriage took place in Józsefváros (one of the districts of Budapest), it seemed reasonable to start my search there.

Name of child	Birth / Baptism	Diocese, Dates	Film Number
Mária Katalin	1872.11.19	Józsefváros, 1871-1872	612909
Mária Katalin	1874.04.11	Józsefváros, 1872-1875	612910
Emil József	1876.01.06	Józsefváros, 1875-1876	612911
József János	1876.12.17	Józsefváros, 1875-1876	612911
István	1878.08.16	Terézváros, 1878-1879	611435
Ferenc Károly	1879.11.06	Terézváros, 1878-1879	611435
Gizella Erzsébet	1883.05.05	Terézváros, 1882-1884	611437

Indeed, their first four children were born in Józsefváros. The others ‘popped up’ as I was frantically searching for the children of Károly. Again, I show the numbers of the microfilms of vital records I borrowed from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City; in those days, one could order them to be delivered to the Family Research Center of one’s choice and read them at one’s convenience. From one of the microfilms, I also learned that János’ wife, Eleonóra Stöhr was born (or baptized?) on January 3, 1846 in Józsefváros and that her parents were indeed József Stöhr and Zsuzsanna Zsigray.

The descendants of János

The rest of the information on János and his family came from Hungarian death notices, like the one of Emil, shown on the left, from which I learned that Emil had a daughter named Klára in 1949. Since Klára was listed on her mother’s death notice in 1906 too, she had to be at least 43 by then, and still without a family. Hence, it seemed safe to assume that she had no descendants.



Faidalomtól megtört szívvel tudatjuk, hogy a legöbbsz edesapa, testvér és rokon

Fritsch Emil

az Előwest-Príteg Telefon és Elektromos Ipar műszaki tisztviselője

folvó hó 23-án, szolgálatának példás teljesítése közben váratlanul visszaadta nemes lelkét Teremtőjének.
Temetése folvó hó 31-én délután 3:30 órakor lesz a **Farkasréti temető halottasházából**.
Az engesztelő szentmisealdozatot lelke üdvéért folvó hó 31-én reggel 9 órakor a budai
Ferencrónék plebániatemplomában (II. Mártírok-utja) mulattatjuk be a Mindenhatónak.
Budapest, 1949. december hó 28-án.

Az Úr adta, az Úr elvette, áldott legyen az Ő szent neve!

Fritsch Klára leánya	Fritsch Ferenc Fritsch Gizella testvérei	Dr. Zsigray Ferenc és neje Fritsch Gabriella Fritsch Laciika Podhradszky Imrene Podhradszky Imre Podhradszky Györgyi unokahígyi és unokacsészt
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Gyászolja még kiterjedt rokonsága.

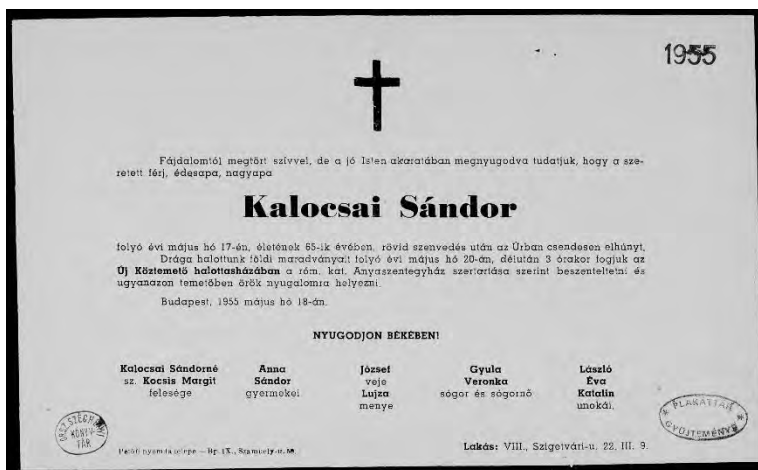
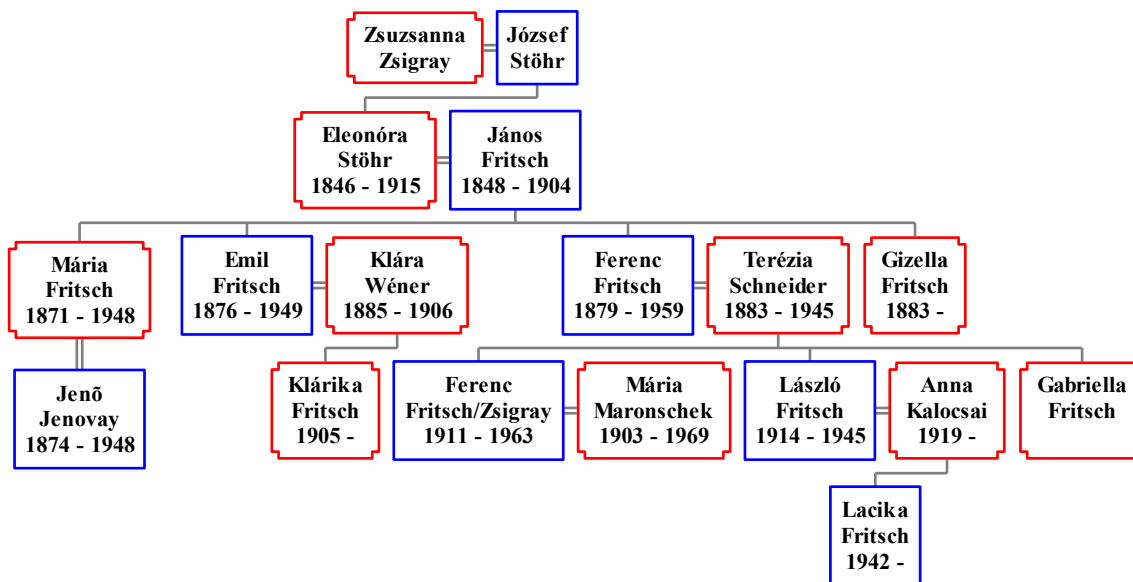
Lakás: II. Török-u. 2. H. 2.

Fővárosi Temetkezési Községi Vállalat közp. i. IV. Vezet. Pálya-u. 26. — Bagta S. (Buschman F. utóda) IV. Molnár-u. 37.

On the other hand, I strongly suspected that Lacika Fritsch named in the death notice of Emil was probably the son of László Fritsch and Anna Kalocsai, who got married on November 9, 1940. Since László died in the war in 1945, I estimated that his son, also named László (Lacika is a diminutive for it) was born in 1942. Being a great-grandson of a brother of my great-grandfather, I concluded that **László Fritsch** is definitely a 3rd cousin of mine -- seemingly, the only one in the branch of János.

Neither Ferenc nor Gabriella had any descendants. Ferenc was a medical doctor, who changed his name to his great-grandmother's name, and when he died in 1963 only his widow and by then middle-aged sister were named as mourners.

The status quo prior to the 125th anniversary of my father' birth



In the tree above, I did not include those children of János, who didn't seem to reach adulthood. Nor did I include the second husband of Anna Kalocsai, since he is included only as 'József', without a last name on the death notice of Anna's father, shown on the left. I strongly suspected that the unnamed József adopted Lacika and Lacika took his name.

I was stuck there. I recognized that the key to the puzzle was the registration of the death of Anna Kalocsai, and hence learning her second husband's last name. I kept looking for it, but to no avail. I also contacted every László Fritsch in Hungary but got nowhere. I looked for him in America too, assuming that maybe he also left the country in 1956. And then, on my father's birthday, the

18th of December 2020,

I looked yet once more, at least for the 20th time at the data base of MACSE, and there it was, the death registration of Anna Kalocsai as the wife of József Tornyai.


a haláleset helye: Budapest III.	családi és utóneve Tornyai József ne. Kalocsai Anna	születési helye: Budapest VIII.	házastársának családi és utóneve: Tornyai József	1970. év november. hó 7. nap	1930. év november. hó 10. nap	Dr. Péter Patai anyakönyvtartó st.
a haláleset ideje:	név: családi állapota: foglalkozása:	születési idő: 1930. május. hó 17. nap.	házasságkötésének helye: Budapest III.	384		
	lakóhelye: Budapest III. Urszaly utca 9.	szünetek családi és utóneve: Kalocsai László Kocsis Margit	házasságkötésének ideje: 1949			

It was posted by MACSE only on the 31st of October 2020, and hence I couldn't have found it earlier.

Afterwards I also located the death notice of József Tornyai, and hence I knew that indeed, László Fritsch became László Tornyai, and he was listed as the son of József Tornyai in the 1983 document.

Moreover, I was happy to see that Cousin László had a son and a daughter, listed as the grandchildren of József.

Naturally, my next action was to search for a telephone number for László Tornyai and I found a Tornyai Lászlóné, the wife of a László Tornyai.



Fájdalomtól megtört szívvel tudatjuk az összes rokonok, barátok és ismerősök nevében is, hogy

Tornyai József

1983. augusztus 18-án életének 74. évében elhunyt.


Felejtethetlen halottunk földi maradványait 1983. szeptember 6-án 11 órakor, az Obudai temető halottasházából, a református vallás szertartása szerint helyeztetjük örök nyugalomra.

DRÁGA EMLÉKE SZIVÜNKBEN ÉL.

Tornyai László fia Tornyai Lászlóné menye	Tornyai Emese unokája Tornyai László József unokája
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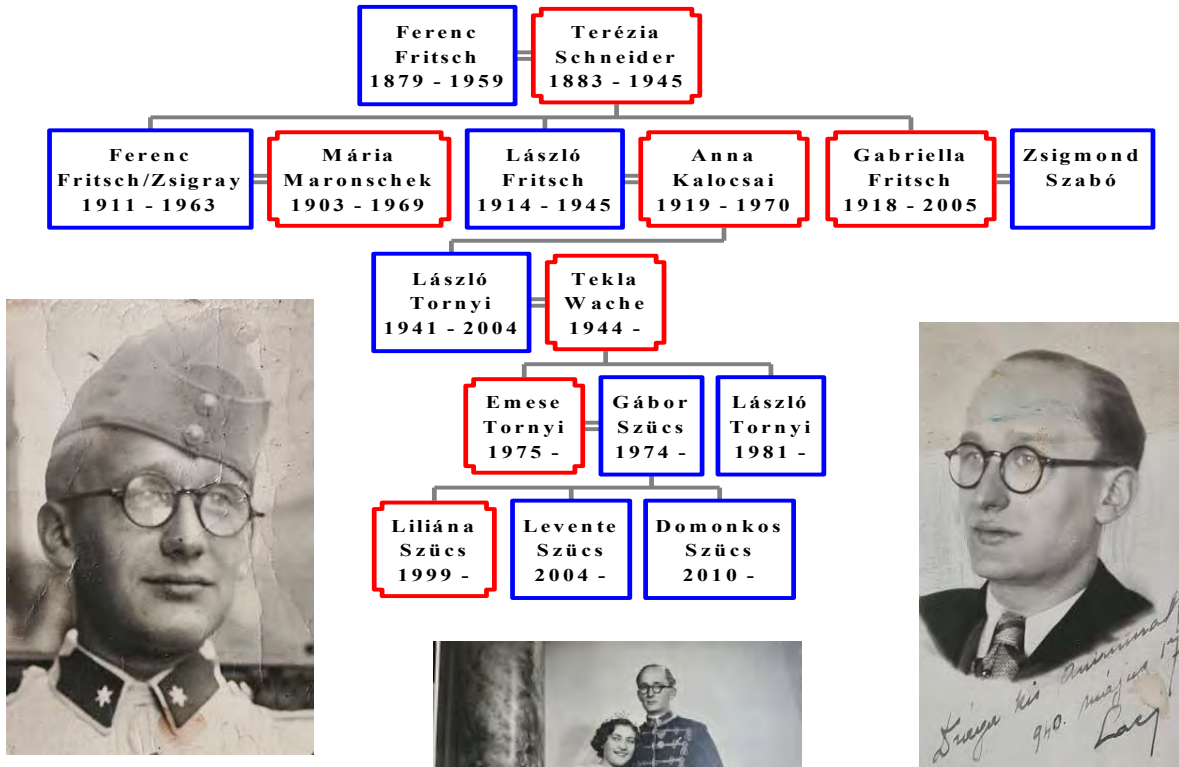
Távíratcím: Tornyai László, 1035 Bp. Szentendrei út 17.

nyv 13



I called her number and it turned out that she was indeed the widow of my cousin. In Tekla I found a wonderful lady with fond memories of her husband who passed away in his 63rd year on October 14, 2004. Their son, the younger László Tornyai was at home too, and hence I had a wonderful chat with him too, got their snail-mail and e-mail addresses too. We have talked several times since then on the phone and exchanged documents and pictures too. While I will always be sorry that I missed getting to know my 3rd cousin in him, I am very pleased that I found such wonderful relatives in his family. Naturally, it would be great to get to know them in person too, but that can wait. The most important thing is that I found them and that I found them very much to my liking.

The documents sent by Tekla nicely complement the ones I have, and hence I can show below a more complete descendant tree of Ferenc Fritsch and Terézia Schneider. Please note that Lacika became László Tornyai on June 6, 1950, when his adoption was registered.



And now it is time for some wedding photo of László Fritsch and two photos of László, who died in

pictures, starting with a photo of László and Anna Kalocsai joined by World War II.



The next ones show my cousin, László Tornyi and years later with his son and Aunt Gabriella.





Next, I have two pictures of
and one of

And then come 'mugshots'



Tekla with her son, László,
Emese and her family.

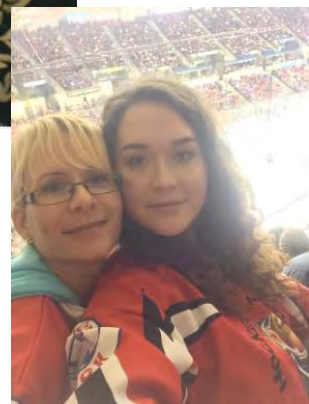
of Levente, Domonkos and Lili
with their mother

and a picture of the whole family



In the picture above, from left to right sitting we have Tekla, Baby Liliana, Géza Máté (the stepfather of Tekla), László Tornyí and Gabriella Fritsch, while Gábor Szüics and László Tornyí Jr. are standing in the back.

It is really nice to have them all in the family!



Postscript

The saga of the Fritsch family would not be complete without telling you about some of my misadventures concerning Ferenc Zsigray / Fritsch. Somehow, I didn't pay attention to the fact that the mother-in-law of János Fritsch was a Zsigray, and hence had no idea who was Ferenc Zsigray when he appeared on the death notice of Emil Fritsch displayed earlier in this section. The line 'Dr Zsigray Ferenc és neje', which translates to 'Dr. Ferenc Zsigray and his wife' was followed by the name Gabriella Fritsch in the next line, and while they were said to be 'nieces and nephews' in the last line, I jumped to the conclusion that Dr. Ferenc Zsigray was a stranger marrying Gabriella, who was a niece of Emil.

Thus, I set out to find Ferenc Zsigray. I started with the on-line white pages of the Hungarian telephone book; more precisely, with the site www.tudakozo.t-com.hu, where I typed in the name 'Zsigray', and was rewarded by 15 hits, that is, 15 people named Zsigray. I wrote to several of them a polite letter of inquiry and was eventually rewarded by two responses. One of them was the widow of a Zsigray, who very kindly sent me lots of materials concerning the old noble Zsigray family, while the other one was Zsolt, who turned out to be a wonderful correspondent. He called my attention to an article by András Nyerges concerning a physician named Ferenc Fritsch, who later became Ferenc Zsigray. Unfortunately, the article was not too complimentary, but I could live with that.

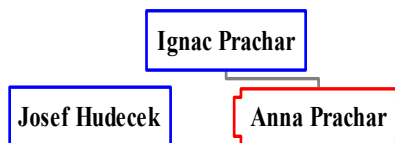
It was more confusing to accept him as a nephew of Emil, who married a niece of Emil, and hence a first cousin. It was then that I discovered that he was listed the same way a year earlier on the death notice of Mária, Emil's sister, but that in the following lines a wife's maiden name is given in the proper style with the abbreviation 'sz.' for 'született', i.e., born. That nuance difference told me that Gabriella was not his wife, which made me feel a bit better about him in spite of the negative opinion of Nyerges. Much later I also learned that he was the son of Emil's brother, Ferenc, and I learned a bit about his medical education too by obtaining various records from Semmelweis University in Budapest. And even later I was surprised to find that the maiden name of the mother of his paternal grandmother was 'Zsigray' --- hence his choice of that name. It taught me to be mindful of every piece of information.

I must also mention that Zsolt Zsigray also helped me in a totally unrelated matter, when he called my attention to an original Vargha document on the auction block at Darabanth Auction House. At his recommendation, I put in a bid on it and managed to outbid whomever else also wanted it for some reason. Eventually, Attila Tóth, my cousin picked it up, brought it to me in Shorewood, and I put it into Adam's shadowbox. It is an official recognition of the nobility of the Vargha family issued to Jenő Vargha, my grandfather in 1902 by the Ministry of Interior. Attached to it there is also an original painting of the family's second coat of arms issued in 1713. Clearly, that piece of family heirloom would have ended up somewhere else without Zsolt's help, but more importantly, I may not have found that important article by Nyerges, was it not for the fact that Zsolt found it of interest as an item in his Zsigray research.

Finally, please recall that it was also Zsolt Zsigray, who called my attention to the other Fritsch family in Nagyöflány, the one which had a coat of arms in appreciation of the family's craft. That was also a wonderful find that I would have missed without Zsolt's help. The lesson: It is nice to have some friends in genealogy too!

My Hudeček and Prachar Roots

On the right I reproduced the ancestor tree of my Great-grandmother Franziska Hudeček, whom I will introduce in the next section. While I know that Josef Hudeček and Anna Prachar were my great-great-grandparents, unfortunately, I can't go back any further and I know nothing about them.



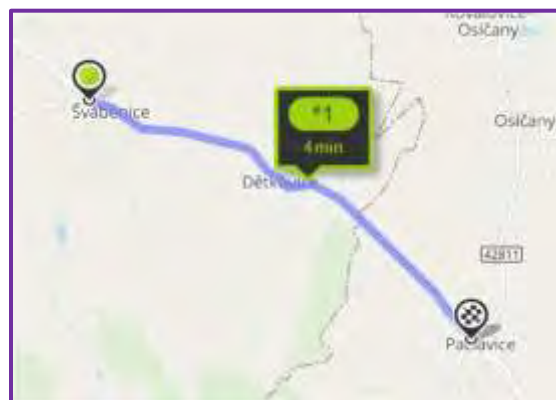
And even my present knowledge is due to the help of Ladislav Blazek, a fine young Czech lad recommended to me by Brother-in-law Ed Kocurek. Ladislav did the ‘digging’ at my request and learned that

József Hudeček was a tavern operator in Svabence in the Czech Republic. His last name was later Hungarianized in various ways.

Anna Prachar was the daughter of Ignac Prachär (seemingly, an alternate way to spell his name), who was the owner of a pub in Paclavice. I know nothing more about her, except for the fact that she was still around in 1894 in order to become the godmother of one of her great-granddaughters, Aunt Marianna (Mici néni, my father’s sister).

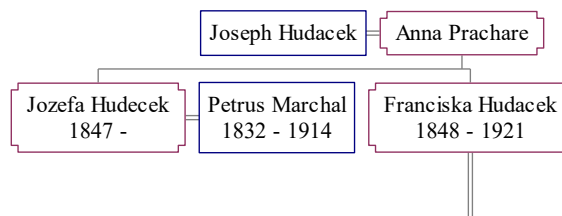


The places mentioned above were in Moravia, whose capital was Brno, but now they are in the Czech Republic, whose capital is Prague. At my suggestion, Ladislav, who lives in Prague searched for them near Brno. The reason for that will be revealed in the next section; for the present, I just want to call attention to the distance of Prague to Brno (130 miles) and from Brno to Svabence (30 miles), and the closeness of Svabence and Paclavice (2.6 miles), which are depicted in the maps displayed.

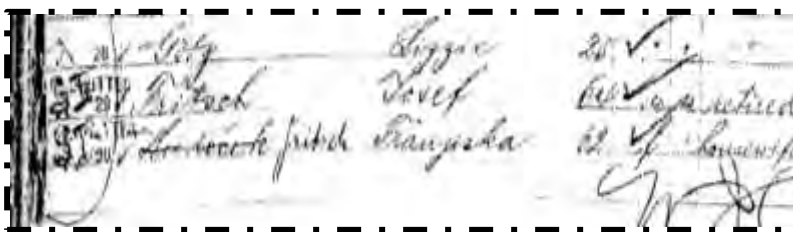


My Hudeček – Prachar great-great-grandparents and their family

As the chart below shows, my great-great-grandparents, **József Hudeček** and **Anna Prachar** had two daughters, my Great-grandmother Franziska and a slightly older daughter, Jozefa. Jozefa married Petrus Josephus Marchal of German descent, who was born in France, and was a chef in Napoleon's court before moving to Russia to be a chef at the Czar's court. After that, he was in the employ of Prince Albrecht, prior to moving to Budapest at the invitation of Count Esterházy in 1863. When Franz Joseph was finally crowned the king of Hungary after the Compromise of 1867, it was also József Marchal, who put together the feast to celebrate the event. Later he was in charge of the kitchen of the National Casino, and then the owner of the Angol Királynő (British Queen) Hotel, where he trained some of the most successful chefs of the era. In particular, the creator of the Dobos torte was one of his students. The use of sour cream was also introduced by him in making the famous Hungarian stew (pörkölt) more palatable, and it was him who cut back on the strong seasoning of traditional Hungarian meals.



Going back to the chart above, please note that the double line that will connect my great-grandmother to her husband is still dangling, and will do so a bit longer, but let me peek ahead for a moment and call attention to her momentary lapse years later, when she first entered her maiden name, Hudeček on a ship's manifest, crossed it out neatly and then entered her married name (Fritsch) there, as can be seen on the right. Though I learned from my father that her family name was Hudeček, that was the first time I saw it written. And it was on the ship's manifest that she also gave her birthplace as Patschlawitz, which I knew to be near Brno, again from a comment made by my father years ago. That's how I could suggest to Ladislav to search for Patschlawitz near Brno.



Fortunately, Ladislav recognized that the name of the place had to be Patzeslawitz, the old German name for Paclavice, and when he couldn't find the birth of Franziska there, he looked for it in nearby Svabenice, where her parents lived. And indeed, that's where her birth was registered; i.e., Anna Prachar went back home to her parents' place to give birth to her daughter. Not knowing anything more about her father, next I will tell you about her sister and her family.

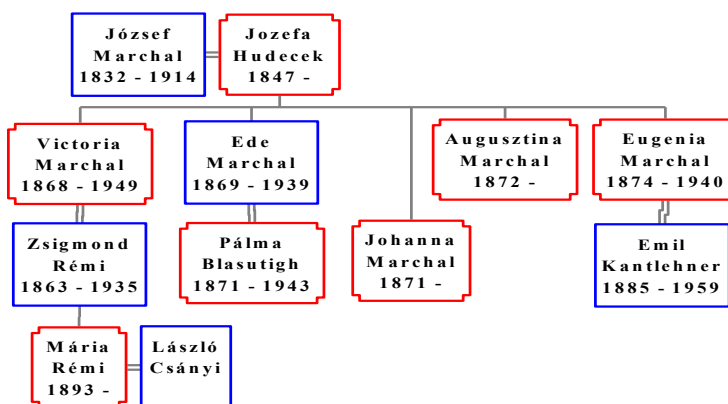
Kudos to my brother-in-law, Ed Kocurek for introducing me to Ladislav Blazek, a young and very clever genealogist from Prague, who did some valuable research for me, to Mom who found the manifest of that ship and to you, Adam for getting me an official copy of the ship's manifest, which I treasure and to my great-grandmother for writing her maiden name on the ship's manifest. I will have more to say about that manifest, but for now the attention should be on the family of Jozefa in the hope that I have some 3rd cousins among her descendants.

Hudeček – Prachar descendants the next generation

Petrus Josephus (or simply, József) Marchal and Jozefa Hudeček got married on April 23, 1867 in the Central City Parish of Budapest. The vital data included the names of her parents as Josef Hudeček and Anna Prachar of Paclavice, and her age as 19. Since her sister, Franziska was born on January 28, 1848, it seems that Jozefa was slightly older than Franziska.

Next, I searched for the children of József Marchal and Jozefa Hudeček. Tabulated below are my findings, followed by a family tree in the traditional format. I managed to learn a fair amount about each of them, and I will share with you my findings either here or in an anecdote (or two). But in spite of my pride in their accomplishments, I must confess disappointment too since none of the five children of Jozefa and József had any grandchildren, and hence I have no 3rd cousins from this branch of my family. In fact, seemingly two of their daughters didn't even marry, two others had no children, while the lone grandchild also went through life without a child of her own.

Name	Date of birth	of baptism	Marriage	Spouse	Death
Victoria Josepha	1868.02.23	1868.03.15	1887.11.22	Zsigmond Rémi	1949.11.25
Ede József	1869.03.26	1869.04.13		Pálma Blasutigh	1939.08.11
Johanna Anna	1871.03.16	1871.04.08			
Augusztina	1872.08.01	1872.08.13			
Eugenia Josefa	1874.06.23	1874.06.30		Emil Kantlehner	1940.03.13



Starting with the lone son I learned that like his father, Ede went by the name József too, and followed in his footsteps with respect to his profession also. After his tour of the United States, he directed the Hotel Tisza in Szeged, and then owned various other hotels and restaurants throughout the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. He was a highly regarded expert in hotel management, but lost all of his holdings with the loss of World War I, and Hungary's loss of two thirds of its former territory. Thus, he had to settle for positions of management afterwards. They included the Hotel Royal in Budapest, and then the restaurants of Hotel Gellért and of Gundel in Városliget (City-park), partially on account of being the brother-in-law of Károly Gundel. One can still go to many restaurants in Budapest and ask for liver to be prepared a'la Marchal. It was the 1943 death announcement of his widow, the sister of Gundel's wife, that gave me the correct spelling of the

Blasutigh and Kantlehner names, but it was disappointing not to see a bunch of Marchal descendants among the grieving family members. More specifically, I learned that József Marchal Jr. had no children, and hence my hopes for Marchal descendants shifted to his sisters.

It was at this point that I came across the baptismal record of Mária Lujza Eugénia Johanna Jozefine Anna Susanna Rémi, born to Victoria Marchal and Zsigmond Rémi in Budapest on July 7, 1893, and my attention became focused on her. I looked up a bunch of death notices of members of the Rémi family and put together a reasonable family tree thereof, ranging from Róbert Rémi, the owner of a hotel empire (and father of Zsigmond, who married Victoria Marchal) to more recent descendants named Cholnoky, Egerváry, Menyhért and others. Next, I searched for some people with such last names in Hungary's online white pages, and located some candidates for my inquiries. My first attempt (of a Menyhért) failed, but when I called Dr. Márta Egerváry, I struck gold. Not only was she a bona fide Rémi descendent, but she directed my attention to another Rémi descendent, Márkó Görbe, who already put a lot of work into their family history. Moreover, it turned out that I was very familiar with Márta from Hungary's efforts in swimming at the Olympics, where she represented us most successfully several times. Thus, we had a nice conversation and hence my call to her paid off incredibly well. Márkó (Márk) and I finally met last year at the Gellért; we are shown together in the picture on the right.



My subsequent exchanges of e-mail messages with Márkó Görbe were even more incredible. In particular, I got from him several pictures of the Marchal family, including the wedding photo of Victoria, shown on the right. I learned that they married on the 22nd of November, 1887, and the event was recognized as the joining of two of the biggest dynasties of the hotel business. In particular, they took over the rental of the National Hotel, which was the largest and most prominent hotel in the country, with 168 well-equipped, elegantly furnished rooms, a huge dining hall and a café, which rivaled the other famous coffee houses of the city.

Zsigmond was a many-sided character, who won the country's first bicycle competition in 1886, and was also recognized as an expert in the horticulture of vineyards, owning and publishing a magazine on the topic in the 1890s. Nevertheless, he could not keep the marriage together, and it ended in divorce in 1895. From then on, Mária Lujza Rémi was brought up by her mother alone, and the relationship with the Rémi family deteriorated.

Fortunately, my own relationship with the Rémi descendants fared better, and hence, I also received from Márkó Görbe a photo of the Marchal family shown below. It was salvaged from a newspaper article by Márkó's great-grandmother, who identified the young lady sitting on the right as her aunt Victoria. The other two young women might be Johanna and Augusztina, but I can't distinguish them. It seems the third sister, Eugenia, might have moved to France, since in the "Comments" column of the bap-



mal registration “France” is written. It is followed by the statement that “She married Emil Kantlehner in Vác’s Upper-City Parrish”. Unfortunately, I can’t access the books of that parish in Vác online or otherwise. In any case, the Kantlehner family is listed among the mourning families in the 1943 death announcement of her widowed sister-in-law, and Mária Lujza Rémi is listed as Mrs. László Csányi among the mourners in the 1959 death notice of Emil Kantlehner, which I also found. By then, someone else is listed as the widow of Emil Kantlehner; thus, he must have re-married after the death of Eugenia. The fact that Mária Lujza Rémi was married to László Csányi was communicated to me by Márkó Görbe, who also learned that she was excluded from her grandfather’s 1907 will. According to Márkó, Mária Lujza Rémi had no children. And, according to Emil Kantlehner’s death notice, neither did he by his first wife, Eugenia Marchal. Thus, I strongly believe, that we don’t have any Marchal cousins.

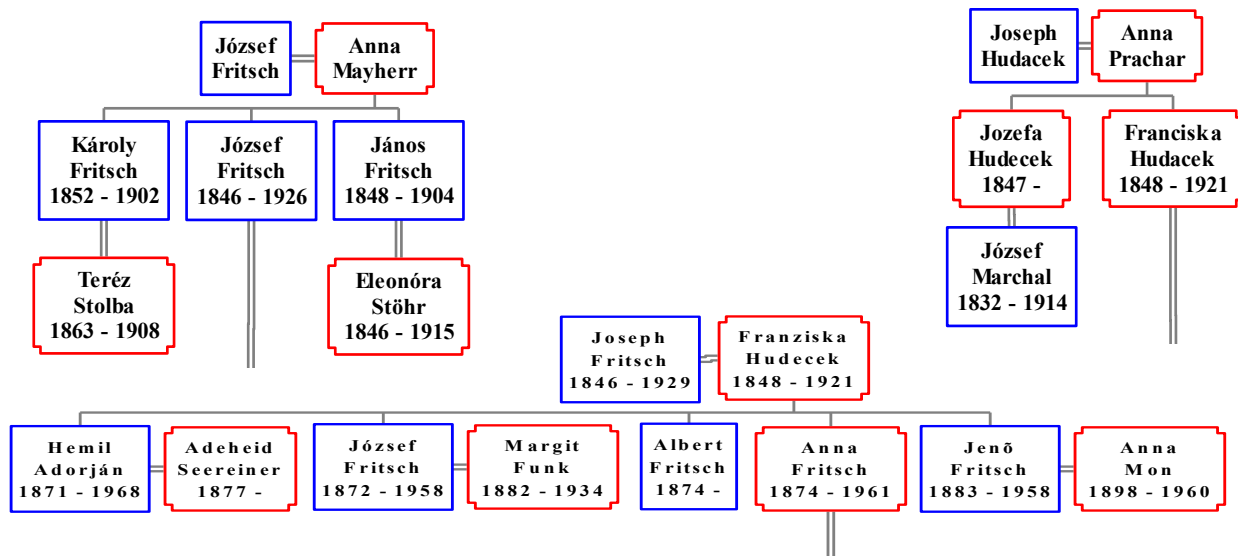


Among the pictures sent by Márkó, there is one of József Marchal Senior, shown on the right, as well as one of Jozefa shown next to him. I am only sorry about their lack of great-grandchildren! And hence, with the lack of Hudeček – Prachär 3rd cousins, I will return to Great-grandmother Franziska Hudeček, ‘marry her off’, and search for second cousins among her descendants. Thus, at least wistfully, I will entitle my next piece of writing accordingly.



My Fritsch – Hudeček great-grandparents and their descendants (including my 2nd cousins)

Having already introduced both Great-grandfather József Fritsch and Great-grandmother Franciska Hudeček, it is time to bring them together as they were brought together in real life too. Presumably, this was in Vienna, since there were stories about Great-grandfather driving a hackney there, and I assume that the Hudeček family ended up in the Austrian capital too, if they were upwardly mobile.



In the family trees above I reintroduced both of them and I show their families too. (Note that I included only those two brothers of my great-grandfather who had families of their own.) Next, I will want to say a few words about their descendants prior to saying anything about the two of them.

Emil (christened Hemil József) changed his name officially from Hemil to Emil and from Fritsch to Adorján on the 28th of December 1892. He married Adelheid Anna Seereiner in Budapest on 2-29-1896. She was born in Kassa (now Kosice) on 03-24-1877 to Nándor Seereiner and Júlia Török. At his wedding, Emil bácsi gave his occupation as a businessman; his best man was József Marchal, a first cousin on his mother's side.

Emil bácsi was known as Peppi in the family. He lived in Kispest, at Kisfaludy utca 15, and when his wife died, Mici néni and Gábor bácsi moved in with him; that's how the apartment on Hungária körút became my brother's. It seems, Emil bácsi's wife had a nephew, whose name may have been Emil Rendreis (according to Cousin Márta), who kept bothering Márta about the stuff left in the apartment in Kispest, after Mici néni died, and finally Márta let him do whatever he wanted with it. It is sad, since Mici néni collected whatever she could about her Fritsch-Hudeček grandparents, and now all of that is gone. And all of Emil bácsi's possessions are gone too.

Unfortunately, I never met Emil bácsi. But I did meet Jóska bácsi (József), when he once came to see his sister, my grandmother, Anna, whom we called Gomika (short for the German grossmutter). I was 12 at the time, and he ‘entertained’ me by listing all the states of the United States (there were only 48 of them then).

It was only recently that I learned that Gomika had a twin brother too, named Albertus Alexander; about him I know nothing further. He may have died in infancy, but it is also possible that he was the Albert Fritsch, who was listed as living at Hold utca 29 in Budapest’s District V according to an online directory from the Year 1900. The name Albert is fairly uncommon in Hungary.

Gomika’s youngest brother, Jenő bácsi, emigrated to the USA in 1905. I met him first in St. Louis, when he came to see my father and me shortly after our settling there, and then in Los Angeles, when I visited him and his wife in August 1957. He died a year later, and she followed him two years afterwards. I found the marriage records for Jóska and Emil bácsi, and recently of Jenő bácsi as well; he married Anna Rosta on October 6, 1937. Her family name was Mon, but seemingly, she used the last name of her second husband. I located that information on the Mon-Griffin family tree on Ancestry, wrote to the site manager on 7-15-2021, but have not heard from her thus far.

Unfortunately, none of the four brothers of Gomika had any children, and hence, I have no 2nd cousins in this branch of the family. Therefore, after saying a few more words about my great-grandparents and Jenő bácsi, I will proceed to the family of Gomika and her ‘chosen one’ and introduce their other grandchildren as my first cousins on my father’s side of the family.

As mentioned above, Jenő bácsi came to America in 1905. He came on the ship *Carpathia*, sailing from the Port of Fiume (now called Rijeka, but was in Hungary then) on the 18th of October 1905, arriving to New York on the 13th of November of that year. Seemingly, soon after arriving, he settled in Schenectady, NY and was working at Machine Works, the original company of Thomas Edison that later became General Electric. He was a tool maker there. Later I managed to locate references to two of his early inventions in the „Index of Patents issued from the United States Patent Office” (Trimming Board, No. 1,172,127, Feb. 15, 1916, Gaz. vol. 223, p. 911 and Drill-Stand, No. 1,357,041, Oct. 26, 1920, Gaz. vol. 279, p.648 --- issued to Eugene Fritsch and Eugene C. Fritsch, respectively). He also told me about several rides in an amusement park in Los Angeles which were his inventions. Unfortunately, the Depression ruined him, and he died broken in spirit and poor, but back in 1910 he was doing well enough to have his parents join him in Schenectady, NY. In search for my great-grandfather’s grave (which was a futile effort), we visited there some years ago. In the first picture on the right, I stand at the site of Edison’s original company, while the second one shows the duplex behind me at 422 Francis Avenue, where Jenő bácsi lived with his parents.



Returning to my great-grandparents, I finally have a photo of the two of them via Kathleen, the daughter-in-law of my cousin, Kató, who photographed it at Márty's. I knew about the picture and asked Márk (Márty's grandson) several times, to send me a copy of it but got no response from him. It is shown below.

Below it I also feature a picture of my great-grandfather with the inscription (in Hungarian) "Papa is sending his greetings from America to the Hungarian home-land, Mohawk Valley, Schenectady, NY, June 1912". It was for a long time the only evidence that my great-grandparents were indeed here. It was among my father's memorabilia, and I had a copy of it made for me in 1988, when Zolti and I divided our parents' few possessions.

Much later we found my great-grandparents and Jenő bácsi in the 1920 USA Federal Census. That's where we learned that Jenő bácsi came out in 1905, while they came in 1910. Then we (that is, Mom and I) found the manifest for the ship, the *S.S. Blücher* that brought out my great-grandparents. It left Hamburg, Germany, on the 1st of November 1910, arriving to the Port of New York on the 12th of November. My great-grandparents gave their ages as 64 and 62, respectively. They had blue eyes and gray hair, were of fair complexion, and were of height 5'8" and 5'3", respectively. They claimed to have paid for their own fares and were in good health, except for the loss of Papa's left arm,

It was also on the basis of the data carefully collected on the ship's manifest that we could search for their birth records. And that's where I saw my great-grandmother's maiden name written for the first time, except for the old note I kept from one of my talks with my father. It was also there that I first saw the name of 'brother-in-law Joseph Marchal' as their closest relative in Hungary, though it took me some more serious work to figure out who he was and how he was related to our family. I 'reported' on that elsewhere in this volume.

Upon reflection I find it of interest that both Josepha and Franziska had five children; in one case four girls and a boy, while in the other, four boys and a girl. Moreover, in both cases only one of the five children had a family. But while in the Marchal family there were no further progenies, and hence no 3rd cousins of mine, fortunately, the Fritsch family did better. Not a lot better, since I have no 2nd cousins either, but I have four 1st cousins through them. They will be introduced in the next pieces of my writings.



Presently, I want to call attention to some of the enigmas surrounding my great-grandparents. One of them concerns a trip made by Papa in 1888 to New York, for which we (that is, Mom) found the ship's manifest. However, it revealed no further information of any use. Was he here to visit a sibling of his; that is, did his sister, Anne or brother Paul emigrate to America and he came to see them? We don't know.

Based on some misinformation, I used to think that it was my great-grandfather who died in America, and I searched for Papa Fritsch's gravesite in Schenectady for some years --- first via telephone and the internet, and then in person too. Thus, I didn't expect any miracles when I perused the website of "Historic Vale Cemetery" in Schenectady much later and decided to look at the alphabetical listing of those buried there. Surprisingly, I found a "Frich" named Fannie, who died on the 12th of February 1921, at the age of 73. I called, found that her last known address was the one I had for Jenő bácsi, and hence I discovered that it is my great-grandmother who died here and not Papa Fritsch. Thereby I learned that it was him who went back to Hungary with Gomika when she came for him in 1921.

The pictures below show the gravestone of Great-grandmother Franziska Hudeček; I had it refurbished about 2012 and hence it is in good condition. And finally, in 2014 Mom and Lydia and I managed to pay our respects to her in Schenectady, NY at her gravesite.

Recently I also found the newspaper report (*Az Est*, 1926.12.03, p.16) shown on the right about a serious accident of his in Soroksár, being hit by a streetcar there. I must assume that he did not recover from that accident. His oldest granddaughter, Margit néni was a kindergarten teacher in Soroksár and he lived with her and his daughter, Gomika (my paternal grandmother) at Soroksári út 75.



I hereby express my appreciation to István Németh, who also made a huge effort to learn about my great-grandfather's fate after the accident and to search for his gravesite in the hospital and cemetery records of Budapest, but to no avail.

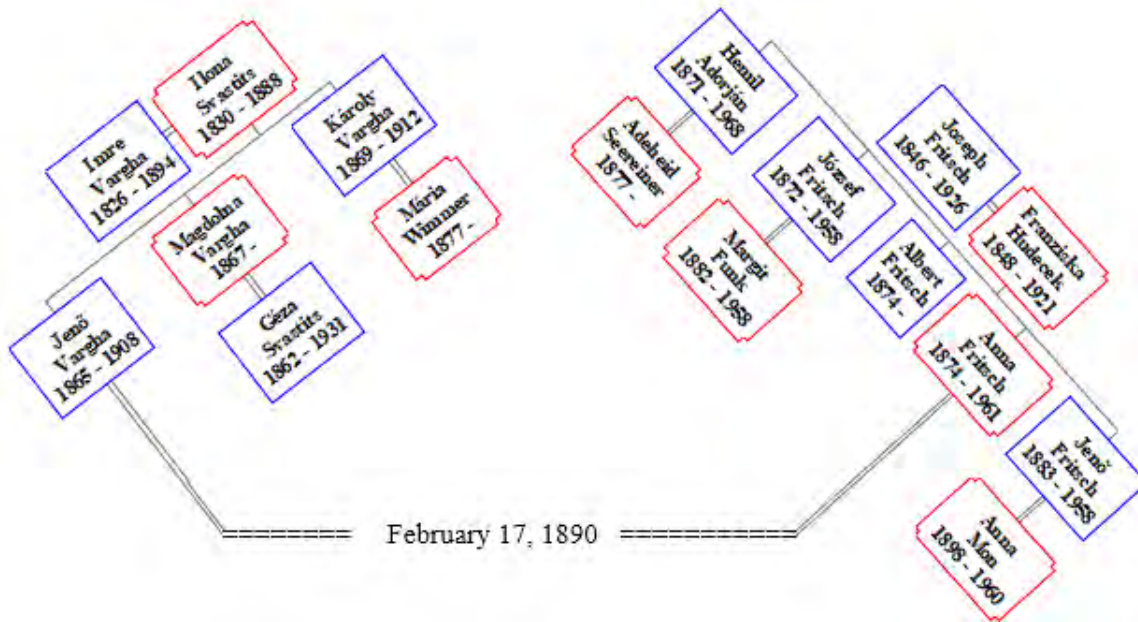
Nevertheless, eventually someone put his death up on the MACSE site on 8-31-2021, and I finally know that he survived the accident and died 'of old age' (aggság in Hungarian), as shown below.



1928	1929	Fritsch József	születés	helye	születés	helye	aggság
aug 28	aug 27	Budapest VII	éve	Hudeček	Fritsch	—	
	aug 28	Blasendörösi út		Franziska	József		
					női		
					chayherr		
					szünet		

My paternal grandparents and Vargha – Fritsch 1st cousins

Please recall that in the section on my ‘Vargha – Svastits second cousins’ I left the ‘connecting line’ from Grandfather Jenő Vargha ‘dangling’, and that I did so similarly in the case of Grandmother Anna Fritsch too in the previous section. It is time to connect them, and I do so below.



I have no idea of when and how they met, but strongly suspect that my grandmother’s cousin, Victoria Marchal and her husband, Zsigmond Remi were the ones introducing them. In any case, Victoria and Zsigmond were their witnesses. I must also assume that my grandmother got married without the approval of her parents, since she gave a fictitious name in place of her mother’s name on the marriage registration, which was corrected later in a Note added by the priest. My grandfather was



24, while my grandmother was barely 16 at that time.

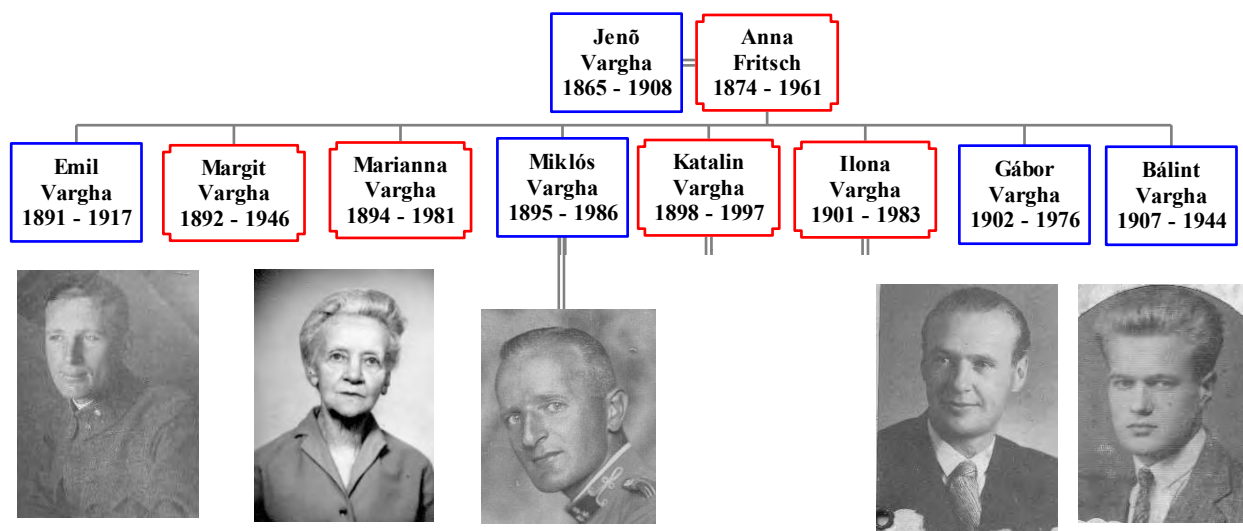
I show on the left the only photo I have of my grandfather, along with some pictures of my grandmother. The first one was from her ID card, while the others were cut out from larger photos. One from my parents’ wedding photo in 1935; one from 1956, playing with her first great-grandson, while the third one is from 1959.



At the time of their wedding, my grandfather was a certified pharmacist. Later he went to work for MÁV, the Hungarian railroad company first as a cashier, and then as an official of the company. Unfortunately, he died at the age of 42, and Gomika (our nickname for her --- short for grossmutter, the German term for grandmother) was left a widow with 8 children, the youngest still a baby. I have no idea how she managed to bring them all up on her small pension.

Neither do I understand how her parents could leave her when they moved to America 2 years later at the invitation of their son, Jenő bácsi? Could it be that they would have been more burden than help? In the long run she still ended up looking after her father in his old age, since she brought him back to Hungary when she learned of her mother's death. Your Mom found that her ship, the *Imperator* left Cherbourg, France on the 21st of February and arrived at New York on the 6th of March. I don't know when she went back to Hungary; presumably, only after the funeral, which was on the 8th of May. We have yet to locate the ship on which she returned, but I was told by Cousin Miklós that her voyage back home was not without adventures either, since the screw of the ship broke, and they were going around in circles for 9 days before it was repaired.

Below I show the eight children of my grandparents; they were my paternal aunts and uncles, about whom I will also have a separate piece in **Part 2A**. Hence, after showing a picture of 7 of them – five of them below and two on the next page – this time I will write about them only briefly.

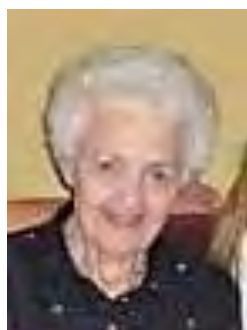
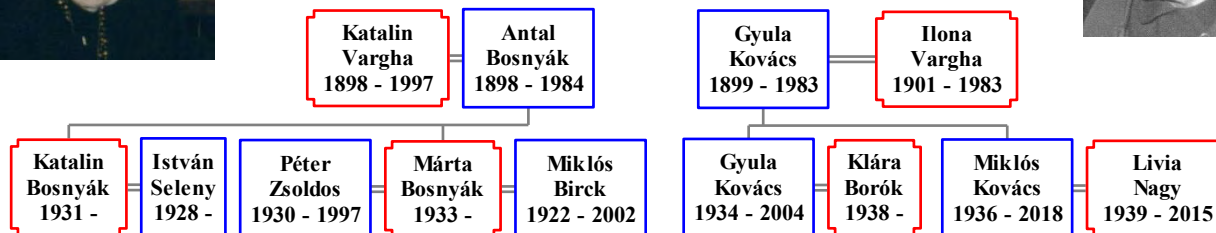


The oldest, Emil (whose second name was László, and hence remembered as Laci bácsi) was a decorated pilot in World War I, who died a tragic death when his plane crashed. Margit néni was a kindergarten teacher, whom I met only once, but have no picture of her. Mariann, who was called Mici néni was one of my favorites; we enjoyed spending some time with her in 1978, when we were all there. My father was the 4th in line, followed by Katalin (Kató néni) and Ilona (Ili néni), whose pictures will be shown later. They were the only three who got married and had families. Next was Gábor (Gabi bácsi), my favorite uncle, while the youngest one was Bálint, whom I never met. Gabi bácsi had a doctorate in geology, but he worked in his field only briefly, while Bálint bácsi seemed to have been a perpetual university student with lots of promise, but no accomplishments. He died towards the end of World War II. The pictures of Gábor and Bálint are from their college record books.

Below I show Kató néni and Ili néni along with their husbands and their children, who are my paternal first cousins. You will have to wait a bit longer for the introduction of my mother and hence the uniting of my father with her.



Kató néni was a dentist, and so was her husband, Tóni bácsi, while Ili néni was a kindergarten teacher and Gyula bácsi worked for the postal services of Hungary.



At this point, since they are already displayed, let me introduce my 1st cousins on my father's side. They are **Katalin** and **Márta Bosnyák** (Kató and Márti) and **Gyula** (Gyuszi) and **Miklós Kovács**, featured above in that order, as well as Antal Bosnyák, Kató néni's son and Edit Kovács, Ili néni's daughter, both of whom died in infancy, and left behind only vague memories. Hence, I don't count them either and didn't include them in the above family trees.

I will write about all four of them later in a separate piece entitled "My first cousins" in Part 2. Hence, we will bid them farewell for the time being and return to my paternal grandparents. Cousin Miklós told me about the year he and his brother lived with Gomika and Margit néni, Gomika's oldest daughter. Seemingly, Gomika had some very nice water-color paintings of her own and tried to teach him how to draw and paint. He was about 5 years old and she was holding his hand. I wonder what happened to those paintings. At another time, Gomika showed Miklós some letters written by the great writer Goethe; it seems someone in the family was corresponding with him.

My visit with Gomika was close to 10 years later, during the summer of 1950. By then, she was less energetic, and I spent much of my time perusing some old magazines and going off to a public pool not too far from her place. She had a very small house in Érdliget, at Hegyhát utca 1092, and I stayed with her until school started in Budapest. I also remember helping Kató néni and her family carrying large baskets of peaches to the railroad station and taking them to Budapest, which was close by train. They made excellent jam from it, or at least I assume that it must have been

good. I remember my father trying to treat me to some of it, but Tóni bácsi showed up in time and put the jar back into the cupboard. During that school year we lived at their place at Veres Pálné utca 28, with Cousin Márta sharing her room with me while my father slept somewhere else. Kató néni and Tóni bácsi owned a larger orchard with a bigger house beyond Gomika's small bungalow in Érdliget, with many peach and maybe other trees as well.

I also visited with Gomika several times on Hungária körút in Budapest, when she moved in with her unmarried children (Mici néni and Gabi bácsi; Margit néni died earlier) for the rest of the year. It was on one of those occasions that I met Jóska bácsi, her older brother. I know that I should have asked lots of questions from both of them, but I was only 12 years old then, the same age as my father when he lost his father. Thus, I fully understand that he had only a few memories of his father too. I recall only one story of his concerning some rock candy my grandfather placed among the pebbles along the walkway leading to their huge house. It seems he was returning from a trip and surprised his children with them; prior to that, they had never seen such candy.

Exercising my rights as the family's firstborn, I brought two letters of Gomika written to my mother, with greetings to Zolti and me. Both were written in the early 1950s with kind thoughts for everyone. They clearly show how gentle a soul she was even in her old age.

In closing, I show a picture of Gomika's grave in Keszthely. Both Gábor bácsi and Ili néni are buried with her, as well as Ili néni's husband, Gyula bácsi, their son, Cousin Gyula (Gyuszi) Kovács, as well as one of Gyuszi's son-in-laws, Klárka's husband. During my visit there in 2015, I managed to pay for some masonry work at the gravesite, as well as for leasing the plot for an additional 25 years. That was the least I could do.

Concerning my grandfather's grave, I recently had some hopes of finding it. Unfortunately, it turned out that the portion of the Solymár cemetery where he was buried was 'renewed'; i.e., I can get only some vague description of its location.

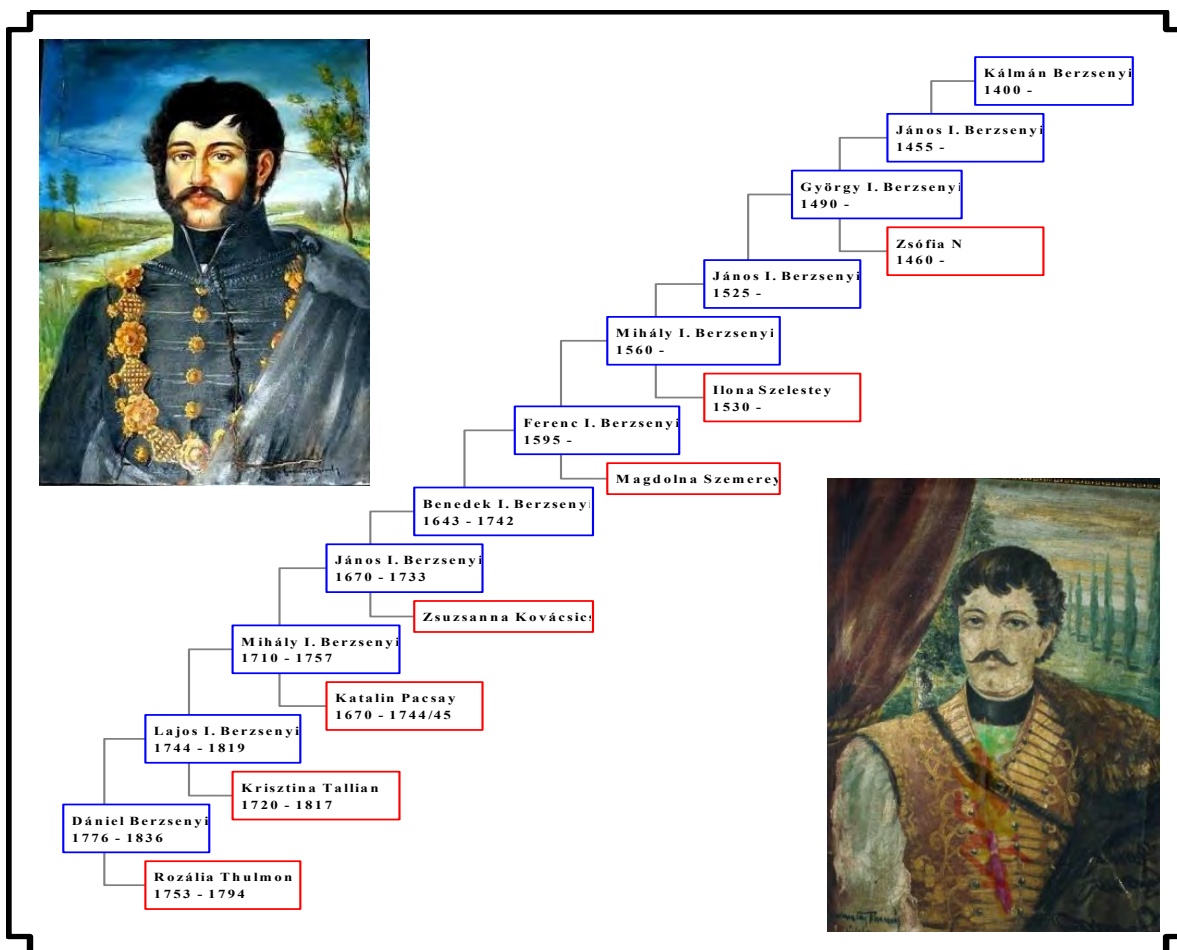


Unfortunately, I have no idea when my aunts, Margit néni and Mici néni died and where they are buried. Margit néni must have died in the late 1940s; I remember her only vaguely, when my father took me to visit her and Gomika. Mici néni was still around in 1978, when we spent a half-a-year in Hungary; we even took her with us to Keszthely, when my cousin Gyuszi invited us for a big feast, since his brother Miklós was there too with his entire family from Canada. Later Mici developed some memory loss and Cousin Márta ended up taking care of her. She must have died in the early 1980s since she was no longer around when Daniel and I visited in Hungary in 1983.

In the case of Laci bácsi, he was buried with military honors, seemingly in the new cemetery of Rákospalota. I have yet to locate his grave there, and don't know where Kató néni was buried either. When it comes to Bálint bácsi, he was killed in World War II in the house-to-house fighting against the Russian invaders in the village of Tivadar, in the Carpathians. Seemingly, he is in a mass grave. Your cousin, Klári Kovács was there in search of his grave, but couldn't find it. That little corner of former Hungary was given to Ukraine after World War II.

My Berzsenyi Roots

For starters, I feature below a fairly bare tree with Dániel Berzsenyi in the upper left corner and his son, Farkas, my great-grandfather in the lower right one. Dániel's picture hangs at the entrance of the Berzsenyi Museum in Nikla, while Farkas' portrait is in the possession of the Köllő family. Both were painted by Tihamér Gyarmathy, one of my 3rd cousins, to be introduced later.



While the family's nobility is definitely older, it was not until 1559 that it was officially re-affirmed via a decree by Prince Miksa in the name of his father, Emperor Ferdinand I of the House of the Habsburgs, naming György Berzsenyi, as the son of János and grandson of Kálmán, as well as two half-brothers of his from the second marriage of his mother.

The document makes reference to two other Berzsenyis too, Pál Beörseny of Kis-Berseny and Máté Beörseny of Nagy-Berseny, who were present when the decree was announced in the villages of Egyházás-Berseny and Enderszeghi Csáfford. The family's forename (egyházásberzsenyi) was taken from the first village, while the second village was the home base of György's stepfather, named Orbános, and was inherited by György's half-brothers, Balázs and Mátyás, about whom I know nothing further.

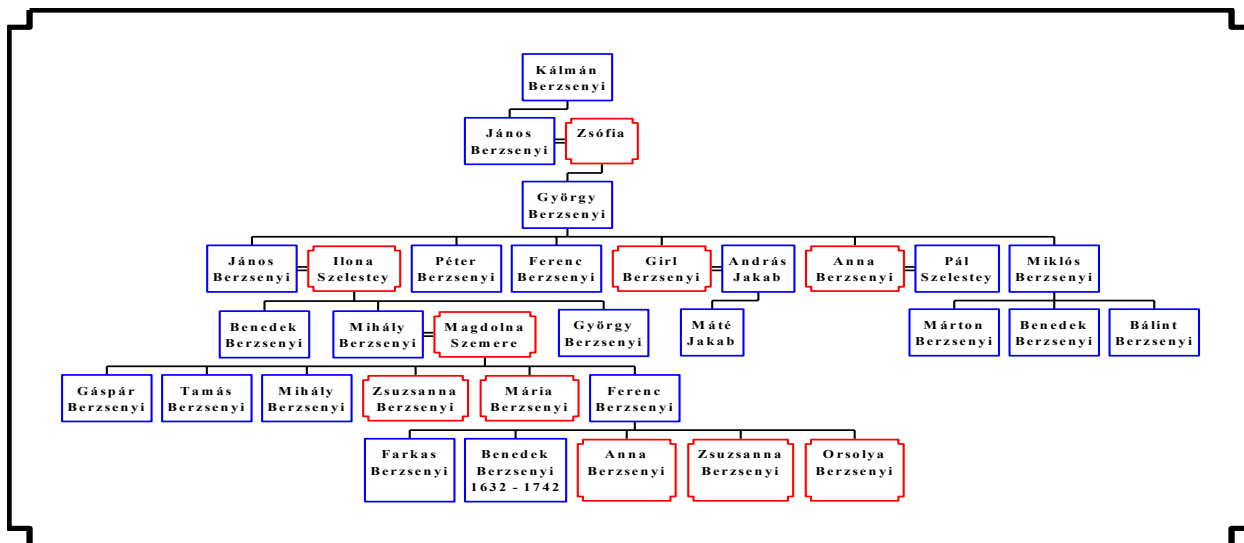
The situation with respect to the Berzsényi coat-of-arms is a bit more complicated in that the 1559 document didn't specify one. Nevertheless, various members of the family used a variety of coats of arms, some of them reminiscent of the one given to the Bersényi family of Nagyida, whose relationship to ours is yet to be determined, while others used crests that were totally different. A brief description of them appears among my writings in **Part 2B**.



After careful consideration of them, we concluded that the best candidate for it is the one shown on the right, which was included in an official document by Franz Joseph on August 2, 1914.

The situation was somewhat similar with respect to the proper forename of the family too. Eventually, it became uniformized only at the 1941 reunion of the family as 'egyházas-berzsényi'.

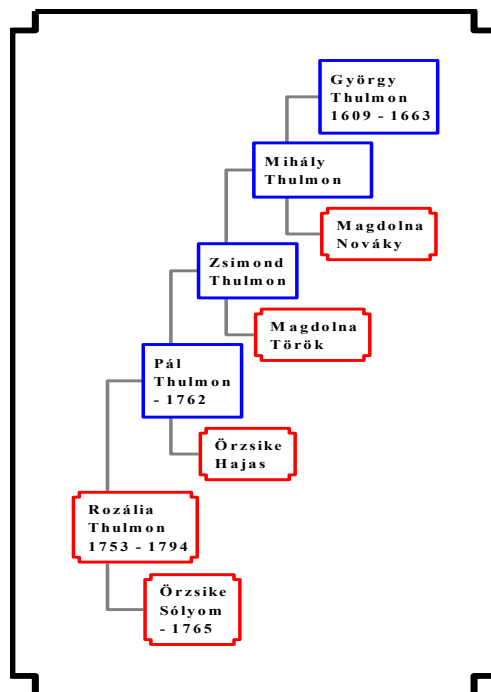
Next, I display the descendant tree of Kálmán Berzsényi, which is partially based on the information gathered from a second donation to the family in 1561 by the Palatine of Hungary, Tamás Nádasdy. I also relied on the research of István Hetyéssy and other Berzsényi scholars in the construction of the tree.



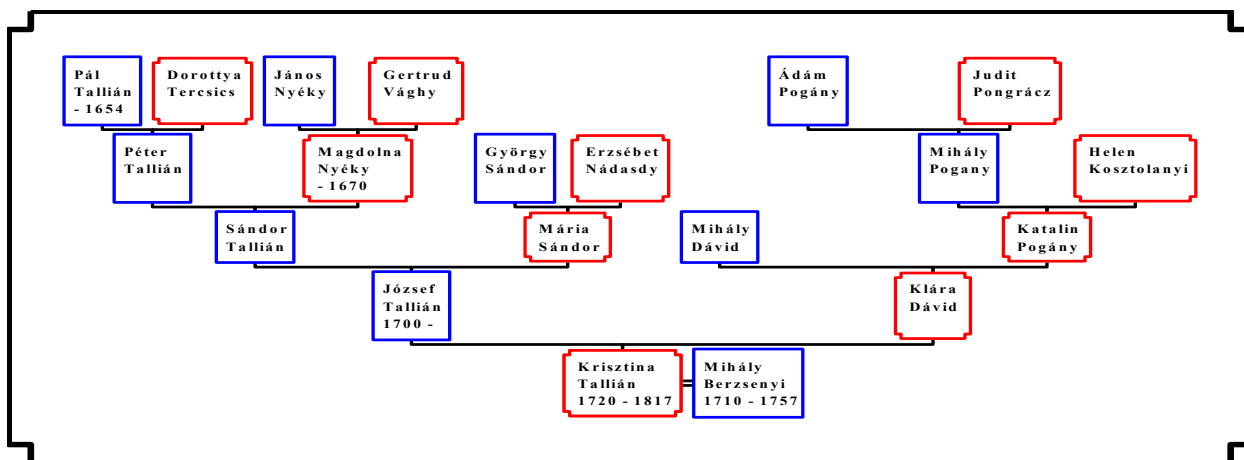
In the tree, I want to point out that Mihály Berzsényi, the grandson of György, served as a tutor of László Nádasdy, the brother of Tamás. In appreciation of her son's tutoring their mother, Margi Cheron, also gave to Mihály 'in inscription' land in the Province of Veszprém worth 200 Forints.

In the above descendant tree, I also want to call attention to Benedek Berzsényi, whose lifespan of 110 years always fascinated me. Unfortunately, we can't verify the year of his birth or death, there is evidence that he lived well into his nineties. In what follows, we will consider him as the ancestor of the egyházasberzsényi Berzsényi family in view of the fact that all presently known members of the family are his descendants. The various branches of the family originating from him will be discussed in **Part 2B** of these **Tales**.

Unfortunately, the mother's name is often missing from the early registration of births, and many of the family trees also failed to include the women of the families. Therefore, it is very difficult to research the feminine sides of one's ancestry. Nevertheless, in some cases I succeeded, like in the case of Dániel's mother, whose ancestry is shone on the right. Her paternal grandmother, Magdolna Török was supposedly so rich that her washbasin was made of silver according to a letter written by Dániel Berzsényi. Since the Thulmons make yet other appearances among my ancestry, I have a separate piece about my Thulmon relatives in **Part 2A** of these **Tales**.



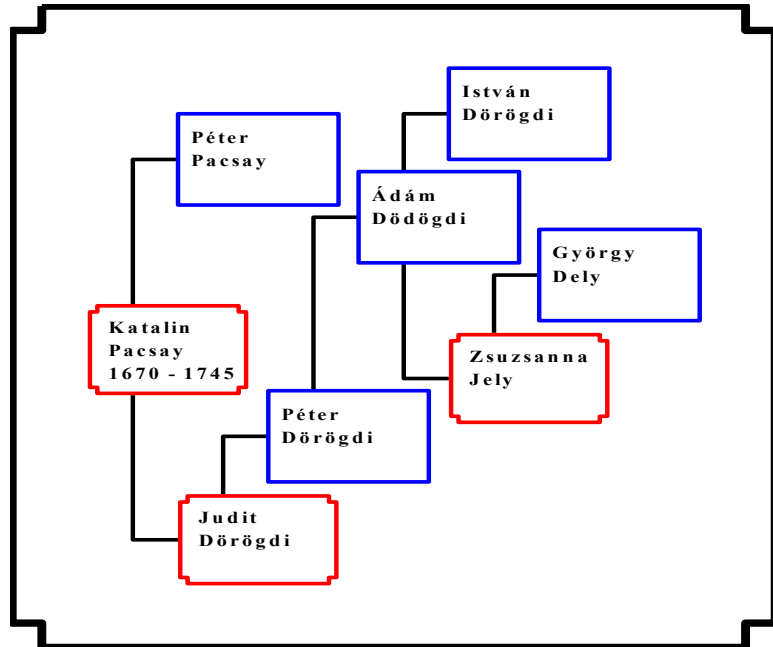
The same goes for the Tallián family. I show below the ancestry of Dániel Berzsényi's paternal grandmother, but it is also true that I have Tallián ancestry on the Svastits side of my family too. Hence, and for other reasons as well, I wrote a separate piece about my Tallián relatives in **Part 2A** of these **Tattered Tales** also.



Among the Tallián ancestors, I will call attention to Erzsébet Nádasdy, as well as the csebi Pogány ancestors, via whom Dániel Berzsényi was right to claim that he was related to Wesselényi. The Pogány family could trace its nobility back to 1238 and connected the Berzsényis to a number of important noble families. Moreover, they were fabulously rich, to which Dániel Berzsényi once called attention in a letter to Kazinczy, his literary patron / friend / secret rival.

The Török ancestry via the Thulmons connected him to the wife of Kazinczy also, which he pointed out in one of his letters to Kazinczy, his friend and literary mentor. Wesselényi was a friend of Széchenyi, both of whom were among his many admirers. Berzsenyi thought of them very highly too.

Returning to the first family tree, I should add that of the other families named below, I am in contact with a descendant of the Szelestey family, and I learned a fair amount about the Pacsai family from the notes of István Hetyéssy. Both of them are old noble families. On the right I show the ancestors of Katalin Pacsai.



In my correspondence with Attila Szelestey-Polgár (his mother was a Szelestey) I learned that there were two different Szelestey families, from the ‘upper’ and the ‘lower’ Szeleste, and that the Berzsenyi family married into both. In particular, he thinks that János Szelestey, the brother of Ilona married Anna Berzsenyi, a sister of János. These were from Lower (Alsó) Szeleste. On the other hand, the wife of Bernát Szelestey from the other branch married Eufrozina Berzsenyi (whose name was written as ‘Dersiny’), one of Attila’s foremothers.

Interestingly, later the name ‘Szelestey’ became ‘Guary’, and we have that name reappear in our family tree. It is also of interest that Orsolya Sibrik, one of the grandchildren of Bernát and Eufrozina became a foremother of Ilona Zrinyi, one of the greatest women in Hungarian history and that there were several intermarriages between the Sibrik and our ancestral Svastits families.

At this point I also want to point out that not only was Dániel’s father a lawyer, but his grandfather Mihály and his great-grandfather, János were also practicing law in nearby Bük, which was frequented by Dániel in his youth. Consequently, the Berzsenyi family was well-known there and he was welcome at the houses of many of the noble families that lived there. Bük was larger than Egyházashetye and partially attracted by István Nagy, one of the supreme judges of Hungary, several retired officers, as well as other notable public figures moved there. Moreover, Dániel’s grandfather and his brothers used to own a mansion there too, which they sold to the Hetyéssy family in 1752.

These facts were related by the genealogist-turned veterinary István Hetyéssy in an article about Dániel Berzsenyi in Hungary’s *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* (“Proceedings on the History of Literature”) in 1969 on pp.604-613, where he went on to emphasize that in those days poetry was very much appreciated by the people of Bük, who expected that at the funerals of its noteworthy citizens the pastor should sing original verses of a poem written for the occasion with appropriate praises of the deceased and proper descriptions of the mourning relatives. Hetyéssy felt that young Dániel Berzsenyi was probably influenced towards versification by the attitude of the villagers.

Next, I want to show a couple of the old homes where my Berzsenyi ancestors lived. The picture on the right shows the birthplace of Dániel Berzsenyi in Hetye, which is a museum / heritage house now. The two photos below, show the same house in its present ‘incarnation’, with Collin and I standing in front of it in one picture and Kay doing so in the other one.

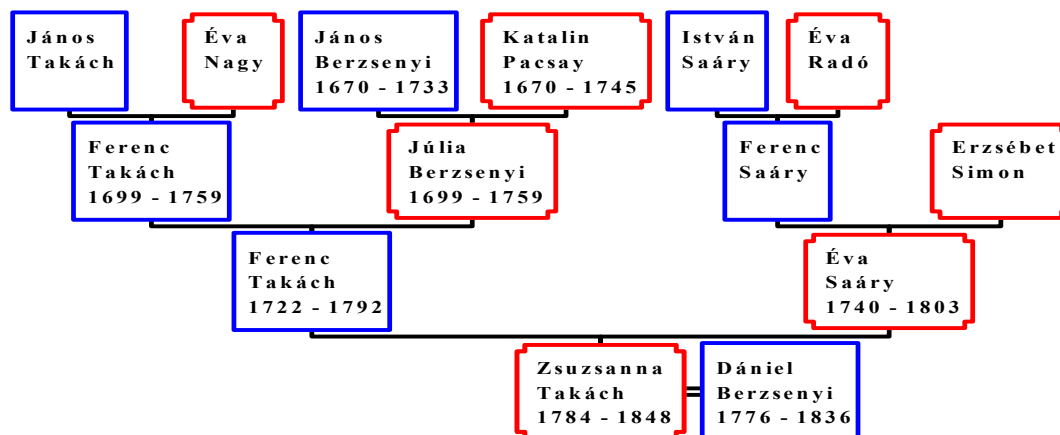


In closing, I also show the Berzsenyi house in Nikla, which was built around 1812 under the direction of Dániel Berzsenyi. It is also a museum / heritage house now, but back in the days of my childhood we used to live there. Therefore, I will definitely have more images of the house and its surrounding in my other writings.



My Takách Roots

The dukai Takách family married into the Berzsényi family a couple of generations prior to the arrival of Dániel Berzsényi onto the scene, and in fact in Zsuzsanna Takách he married one of his 2nd cousins since Julia Berzsényi was a sister of Dániel's grandfather. It is often emphasized that Zsuzsanna was 14 years old when he married her (which is false), but not mentioned that she was the youngest of the 14 children of her parents.



Both the vámosi Saáry and the dukai Takách family were of old nobility, as well as the families with which they intermarried. Zsuzsanna's ancestry tree is shown above. The Saáry family received its sheepskin in 1635 from Emperor Ferdinand II, while the Takách family got theirs in 1638.

I should also emphasize that the dukai Takách family was much wealthier than the Berzsényi, which was spelled out in a letter of Dániel Berzsényi, claiming that his wife's sisters all lived in castles, while his Susa was satisfied with a much simpler lifestyle. By moving to Nikla, they indeed chose more limiting circumstances and much simpler pleasures in life. And unfortunately, his attempts to move back to the Province of Vas were not successful. Just when he saved enough funds to pay off the mortgage on his holdings, the currency was devalued.



The picture above shows the back of the dukai Takách mansion in Duka, the Province of Vas. Interestingly, Dániel Berzsényi might have modeled his house in Nikla after it in order to please his wife.

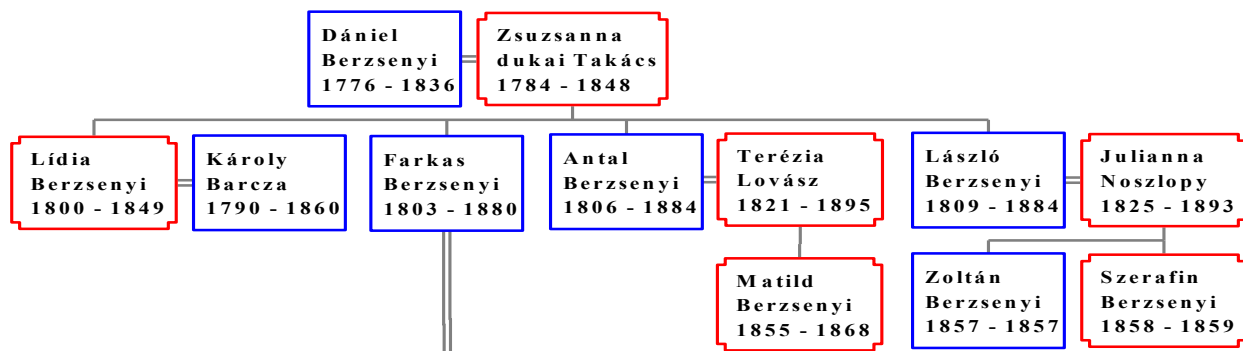
My Berzsenyi – Takách great-great-grandparents and their family

Dániel Berzsenyi was one of the greatest poets of Hungary, whose presence I felt throughout my life. In addition to loving his poetry, I greatly admire his patriotism and strong positions on moral issues as well. I show on the right a portrait of his, which was painted by Tihamér Gyarmathy, a third cousin of mine, which hangs at the entrance of the Berzsenyi Museum in Nikla, with Collin standing in front of it. By the way, he usually spelled his name as Ber'senyi, almost the same way as the Bersenyis of Nagyida spell it. They use the forename 'nagyidai', while we generally use the forename 'egyházas-berzsenyi', but I strongly believe that along with a third noble Berzsenyi family, they are branches of the same family.



I will have more about Dániel Berzsenyi and his poetry in the next Part of these Tales.

Zsuzsanna Takách was a second cousin of Dániel and barely 15 when she married him. She happens to share your mother's birthday of February 26 – only 160 years apart. Tough she did not share her husband's literary interests, she has done a wonderful job in bringing up her children, who are introduced in the family tree below, leaving the connection of Great-grandfather Farkas open for the time being.



Like your mother, Zsuzsanna had three sons and a daughter too, and we know from personal experience that the upbringing of four children is a huge task! Unfortunately, only the children of Farkas reached adulthood. László's children died in infancy, while Antal's daughter died in a cholera outbreak at age 12.

Zsuzsanna's daily life is described to some extent by István Hársházi in his *Niklai Hagományok* (in English, *Nikla's Heritage*, published in Kaposvár in 1978), where he comments on her

generosity, on the fact that she would call for a midwife whenever one of the women in the village would need it, and how she would feed some of the playmates of their children along with her own.

According to Noszlopy's book¹, Lidia wrote lots of poems; it is highly unlikely that her mother was not aware of that. She also translated some poems from German and French; when and where did she learn those languages? There are no records of her being away at school in Sopron (like Judit dukai Takách) or Székesfehérvár (like Mariska néni in the next generation) or elsewhere.

Farkas attended the Lyceum in Sopron, where he joined the Magyar Társaság (Hungarian Association), a literary circle started by János Kis, the Lutheran pastor (later bishop), who was instrumental in recognizing Dániel Berzsenyi as a poet. Years later, when the history of that circle was published (see Kovács Sándor, *A soproni ev. Lyceum Magyar Társaság története. 1790–1890*. Sopron, 1890), it was reported that only three of its members, János Kis, József Székács² and Farkas Berzsenyi authored significant poetry between 1790 and 1840. In case of Farkas, his poem was entitled 'Esthajnal', whose literary translation, is 'eveningdawn'. It appeared in an 1837 booklet entitled *Virágfüzér* (in English, flowerbouquet). Some time ago I also learned that the Marcali Museum has a booklet of poems hand-written by Farkas Berzsenyi and Lajos Véssey (also a member of that circle) and authored in 1822 with several poems by Dániel Berzsenyi in it. I have not yet seen that booklet, but I came across a poem written to Farkas by a fellow law student in Győr³. As it turns out, his sister, Lidia wrote a poem to him also; it is included in Noszlopy's book. According to Noszlopy, Lidia's translation of a play by Kotzebue was in the family's possession in Nikla; unfortunately, it didn't survive the devastations of WW II.

Concerning László, I learned that he was a member of the literary circle too in 1824-1825 while a student in Sopron, and two of his poems are include in Noszlopy's book. One was written to Ede Reményi, the violinist-composer, who was present at the unveiling of the obelisk in the cemetery in Nikla in 1860, while the other appears on the tombstone of Júlia Bárány, the paternal grandmother of Tivadar Noszlopy.

Noszlopy also tells us that Lidia, Farkas and László destroyed all of their poetic works after their father's death, not wanting to rival their father with their better pieces or publish inferior poems. Antal was seemingly not part of their 'conspiracy'; concerning his poetic vein it was Hársházi, who told us that Antal was known to speak to the people of Nikla in sentences that rhymed.

Lidia married Károly Barcza of Halimba in the Province of Zala. She died in 1849 and was buried there. My mother made inquiries about her grave and learned that the Barcza crypt there was in poor condition. A young officer named Barcza visited my mother sometime during WW II and presented her with a booklet of reminiscences put together by Lidia. Unfortunately, that was lost also during the war.

Farkas spent a year at the high school in Kaposvár as well. Afterwards, he received his law degree in Győr in 1825. He served the Province of Somogy first as a juror (1826-1828), and then as a district and provincial judge while he was also on the judiciary of the Lutheran Church in Outer Somogy. During the 1848-1849 War for Independence, he was named first lieutenant governor of

¹ Tivadar Noszlopy, *Berzsenyi Dániel és családja* (Dániel Berzsenyi and his family), Kaposvár, 1910

² He became a Lutheran pastor famous for his oratory. In 1860, when the obelisk in Nikla was unveiled, he was the main speaker, who recited Berzsenyi's 'Fohászkodás' in place of a prayer during his speech.

³ Here I am proud to announce that I was similarly honored by Teréz Koncz neè Csizmadia, a published poetess and a former classmate from Csurgó.

Somogy. In that capacity, he worked closely with Gáspár Noszlopy (an uncle of Tivadar), who was named regional commissioner in charge of recruitment by Lajos Kossuth, the leader of Hungary. After we lost the revolutionary war against the Austrians, who were aided by a huge Russian army, Farkas had to flee. At first, he and his friend, Jónás Lájpczig, who was also a landowner in Nikla sought refuge in the marshland near Nikla, then they hid in a wine cellar in Kővágóörs, north of the lake according to the autobiography,

ms.sik.si/fileadmin/user_upload/CzipottRudolf_%C3%B6n%C3%A9letrajza_1886.pdf

of Rudolf Czipott, a Lutheran pastor, who looked after them. In return, they were instrumental in securing a position for Czipott in Vése.

When Farkas learned that his family is being questioned by the Austrian authorities about his whereabouts, he gave himself up and suffered imprisonment in Pest in the so-called Új Épület (in English, new building). His property was confiscated and even after he was set free and he got back his estate, he was watched closely by the authorities. He thought about emigrating to America like so many of his compatriots did, but his brothers talked him out of it.

Farkas' brothers, Antal and László also attended the Lyceum in Sopron, where their father joined them in November of 1819 for two years according to Noszlopy. Naturally, time and again he went back to Nikla, where he left the management of his estate to his relative, Sándor Korenika. Of the boys, Antal joined the military after graduation, where he spent 3 years before returning to Nikla to assist his father in managing their estate, while László went on to obtain a degree in law. He clerked during the meeting of the Hungarian Parliament in Pozsony (now Bratislava in Slovakia) and was a certified notary afterwards. During the Revolutionary War he was a 'supplies officer'. According to Noszlopy, he was most like his father.

Antal was also instrumental in helping Gáspár Noszlopy gather a large enough group of volunteers in Nikla and Pusztakovácsi among the peasantry to subdue near Marcali a regiment of Jellasics, the Croatian general, who was leading a huge army against the Hungarians. Thereafter Gáspár Noszlopy conducted guerilla warfare against the Austrians; I will report on that in a separate piece. Following the Austrian victory, Antal escaped to the Adriatic Sea to serve on ships until he saw that it was safe to return to Nikla and resume managing his estate. Farkas was the first to get married (in 1846), to be followed by Antal (in 1853) and László (in 1856). Farkas died first (in 1880), to be followed by Antal (September 26, 1884) and László (December 14, 1884). Antal and László were very close. According to Noszlopy (and here again I refer to his book), while earlier László rarely went out to the cemetery, after Antal's death, he was a daily visitor there. Much of the information about the life of Dániel Berzsenyi was related by his youngest son, László to Noszlopy and others.

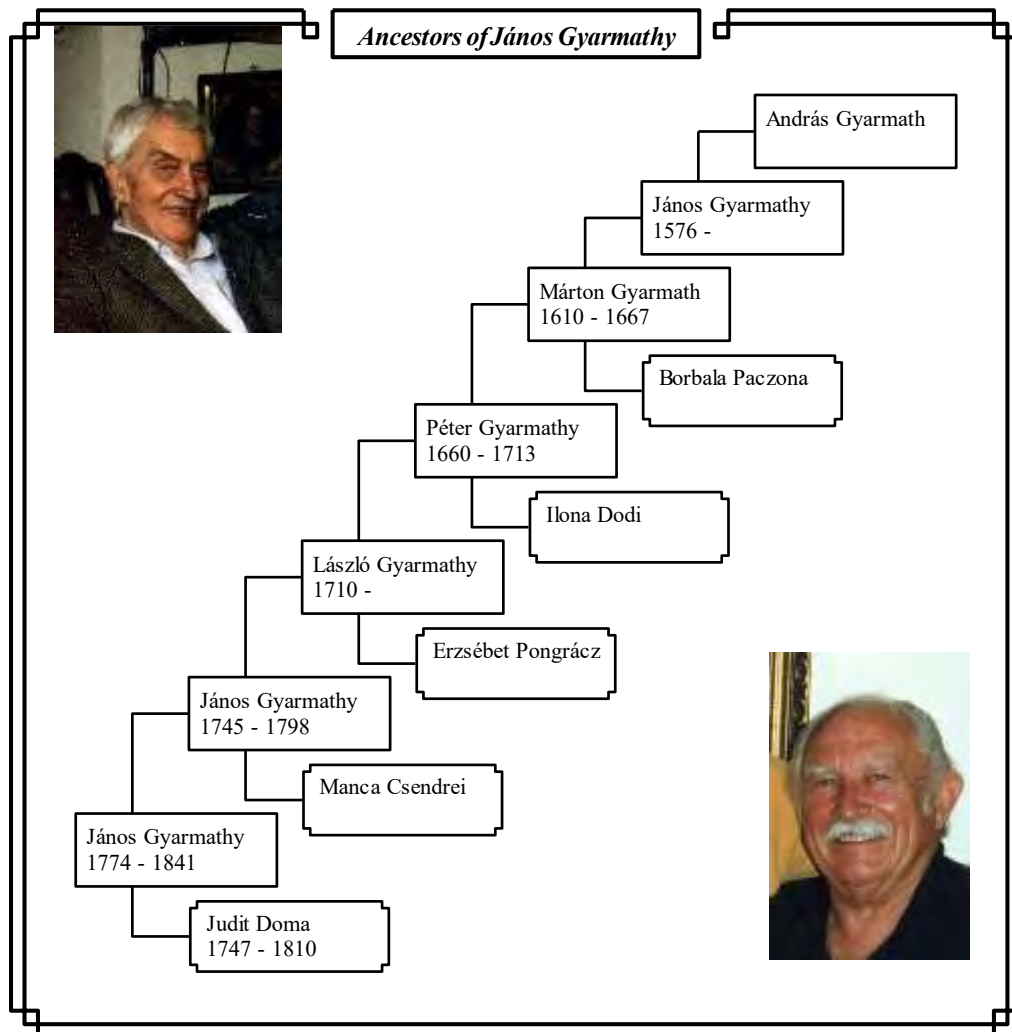
It was also László, who handled the correspondence with Gábor Döbrentei, when the latter prepared the first edition of the collected writings of their father. Later, he also worked with Toldy, when he was in the publishing their father's works. Seemingly, in both cases he was most conscientiously making certain that their father's wishes are followed.

László continued in his father's footsteps in cultivating his orchard too. Some new varieties of apple and pear trees were introduced by him there, but the row of hazelnut bushes and cornel-berry trees were planted by his father.

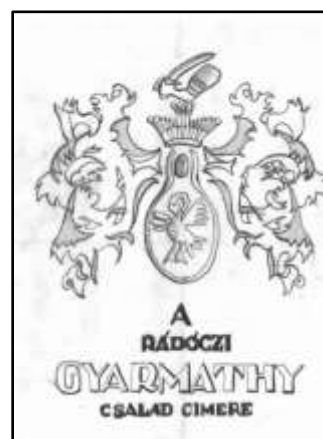
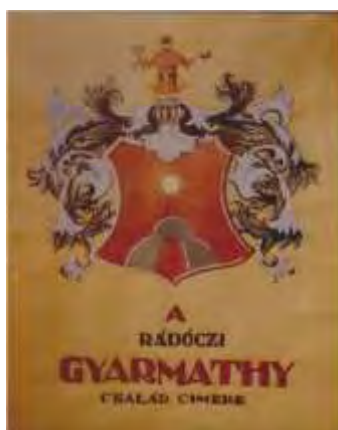
My Gyarmathy Roots

Originally, the Gyarmathy family lived in the ‘Felvidék’ (Upper regions, present-day Slovakia), where they owned and operated mines. That’s where they received their nobility. Later part of the family moved to Transylvania (Erdély), while another part settled in the Province of Vas. Their nobility was affirmed there --- hence the forename of ‘rádóczi’ or ‘pusztarádóczi’ in reference to the villages acquired by the family around 1580.

The family tree below starts with András Gyarmathy, who moved to Szentgotthárd in 1540. It is based on the one shared with me by my 3rd cousin, Attila Gyarmathy; it was prepared by his niece, Ágnes. I also learned a lot about the family from 4th Cousin Ferenc Gyarmathy, with whom I visited several times in Budapest. Seemingly, Ferenc’s father was also deeply into genealogy. I hereby honor Attila and Feri with their snapshots in the family tree below --- Feri in the upper left, while Attila is in the lower right corners. Unfortunately, neither Attila, nor Feri are with us any longer. I learned about Feri’s death from his daughter, Kati, who was kind enough to introduce us (that is, Imre Gyimesi and myself) to a cousin of hers, Maya (Erzsébet) Weltler, who has also been of great help to us in researching the family.



I display below three representations of the Gyarmathy coat of arms. The first one was copied from a book about the artist, Gábor Rádóczy Gyarmathy¹, who often goes by the name Rádóczy. The second one was sent to me by Maya, while the third one was drawn by one of the sons of Kati. The first two clearly show an opening to a shaft, as well as a miner --- in reference to the mines owned by the family. (By the way, Gábor (Gábris) is the son of Attila's brother, Tihamér. Though I didn't get to know Tihamér, I visited Gábris in 2003, and he later sent me a copy of the book mentioned above.)



Unfortunately, I can't trace back the family beyond András Gyarmathy, and there are some uncertainties even when it comes to his descendants. For example, I can't identify György Gyarmathy, who was a schoolteacher in Nemeskér and a friend of Great-great-grandfather Dániel Berzsenyi. According to Hetyéssy², that friendship led to the marriage of Dániel's son, Farkas to Mária Gyarmathy, my great-grandmother. Neither can I identify János Gyarmathy, who purchased some properties³ in the Province of Sopron from Magdolna Berzsenyi and her husband Mihály Csiba in 1759. Moreover, I cannot place yet another János Gyarmathy, who was a lawyer in Kiscell and was supposedly the originator of a Gyarmathy Foundation⁴ there. According to István Porkoláb⁴, the Gyarmathy Plaza in Celldömölk is named after him.

Nevertheless, I have close to 500 direct descendants of András Gyarmathy in our family tree⁵, thanks to the work done mostly by Feri Gyarmathy and his father, who was a Lutheran pastor in Tab, in the Province of Somogy. Feri, or more properly, Dr. Ferenc Gyarmathy was a highly recognized Doctor of Medicine, about whom I will have more to say later.

Similarly, I will have more to say about my great-grandparents, Farkas Berzsenyi and Mária Gyarmathy, as well as about the artistry of Tihamér Gyarmathy and his descendants, since not only his son, Gábris, but his daughter, Ágnes and Ágnes' son, Máté Giricz followed (loosely) in his footsteps.

¹ Koltayné Zolder Klára, *Emlékek, szimbólumok, mítoszok*, Budapest, 2001

² Hetyéssy István, *Adalékok és dokumentumok Berzsenyi Dániel életrajzához, Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, 1969, pp.604-613

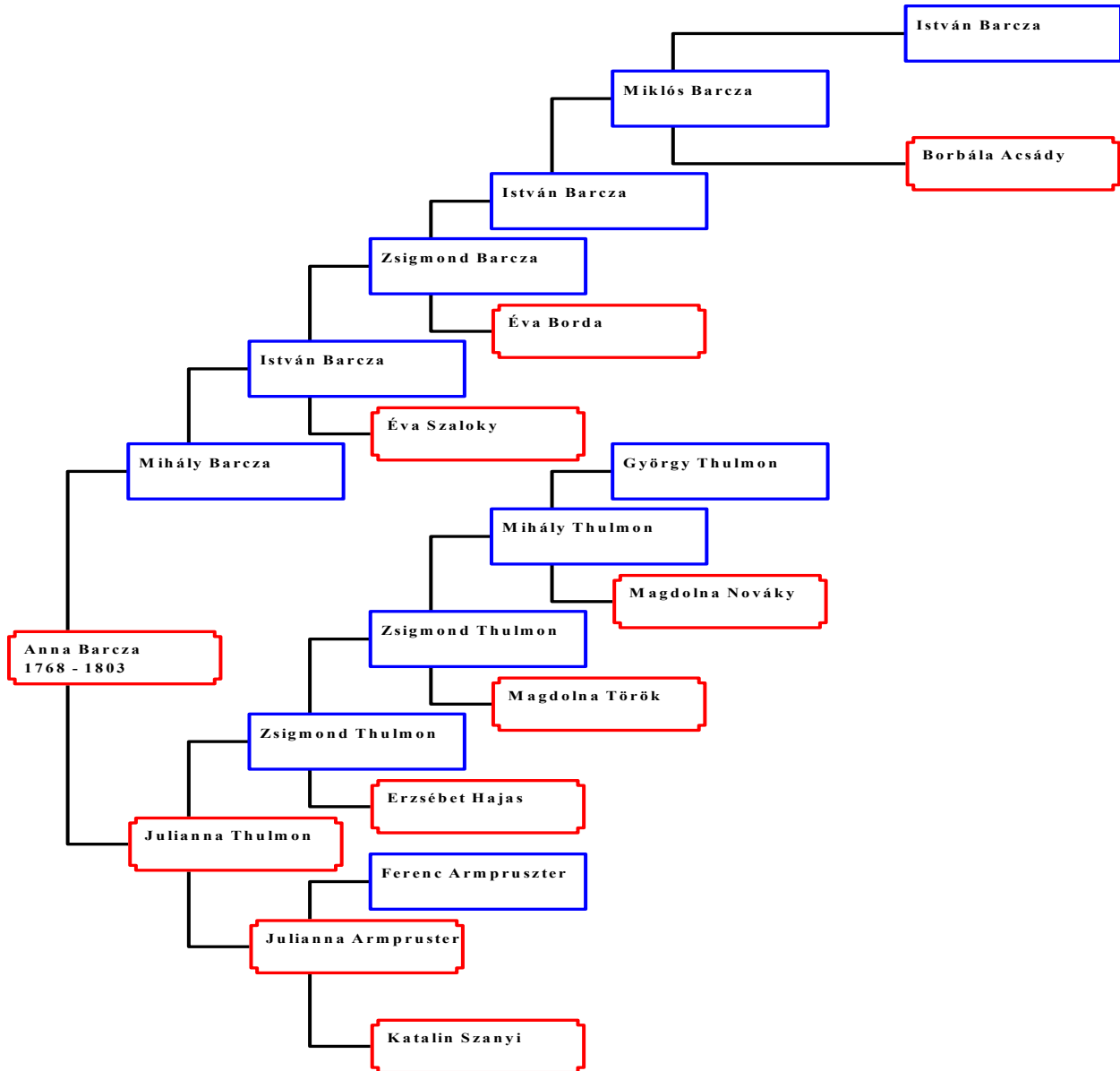
³ Thanks to Feri Gyarmathy, I have a copy of the agreement

⁴ Porkoláb István, *Celldömölk története*, Celldömölk, 1927, p.47

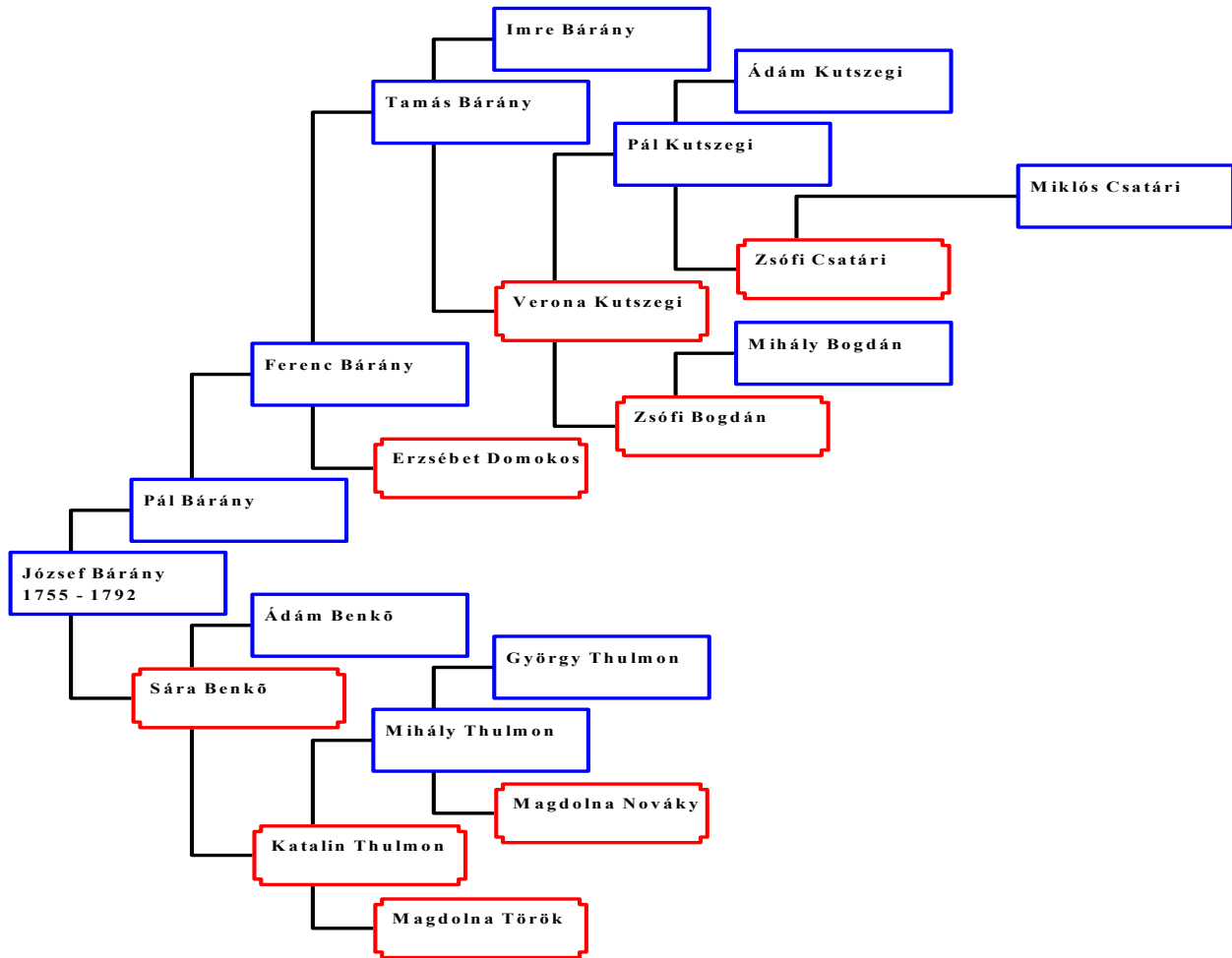
⁵ There are 728 persons in the family tree, where there are 234 recorded marriages. Assuming that none of them were inter-marriages in the family and nobody married the same person twice, the difference of these numbers gives the total number of descendants. Since there were a number of inter-marriages, clearly 500 is a low estimate.

My Bárány Roots

Rather than featuring the ancestry of Great-great-grandmother Mária Bárány, I will show first the ancestors of her mother, Anna Barcza, to be followed by the ancestors of her father, József Bárány, calling attention to their common Thulmon forebears.



It should be noted that not only were they related to one another as third cousins, but Dániel Berzsenyi was a cousin to both of them too (2nd to Anna Barcza and 3rd to József Bárány), and thus by marrying their granddaughter, Dániel’s son Farkas married a not-so-distant cousin. However, I am jumping too far ahead, since first I must concentrate on Mária and the Bárány family,



From the above ancestral tree, it is also clear that I can go back at most 4 more ‘greats’ via the Bárány family tree. Unfortunately, no more since Imre Bárány was just a serf and we don’t even know the names of his parents. They were in the employ of the Fekecs family, when a large part of Hungary was ruled by the Ottoman Empire and many members of the nobility, as well as much of the peasantry fled either to Erdély (Transylvania) or to the Northwestern part of the country ruled by the Hapsburgs. Due to the uncertainties of the times, it was also possible to make one’s fortune via fortitude and cleverness, which must have characterized Imre Bárány and his father too.

Imre Bárány might have had some help from his wife’s family, since Verona Kutszegi must have been from a relatively better-off family, for otherwise it would have been near-impossible to identify the names of her parents, three of her grandparents and one of her great-grandparents shown above. Relying on family connections was even more necessary back then than it is now.

Fortunately for the Bárány family, the plot of land they occupied was suitable not only for the typical grains, but also for the cultivation of grapes, which were much more profitable. While in the case of grains, one could expect to harvest no more than 4 or 5 times the amount that was sowed, the vineyards required only care and expertise in order to provide a much higher yield for the work invested. Moreover, not just the men, but the women could work in the vineyards too, and hence a family could handle a larger part of the plot if they grew grapes there. Seemingly, Imre Bárány took advantage of such opportunities and managed to accumulate 150 Forints, which was a huge sum in those days. With it, he purchased three plots of land in the village of Rendes (Province of Zala) from his landlord, Gergely Fekecs, who must have valued the money more than the land with all its risks. The purchase of land by Imre Bárány was recorded in 1601 and paved the way towards the family's rise. Later the family took its forename from there as 'rendesi', sometime written as 'rhendesi'.

On account of his bravery against the Turks or for other services, Imre Bárány also applied for nobility and received it from Emperor Rudolf of the House of Hapsburg on the 30th of August 1594. The family's coat of arms is shown below.

At this point I should mention that much of my information comes from Károly Kertész, the husband of Délibáb Bárány, who is a 6th cousin of mine and the late Szabolcs Horváth, who was a 5th cousin of mine. I visited both of them in 2011, and got to know even one of Szabolcs's daughters, who reminded me of the early settlers of the USA with her pioneering spirit. Szabolcs and I used to talk on the phone too, but he got upset with me when I didn't take sides in his controversy with Károly Kertész concerning the coat of arms of the Bárány family. Unfortunately, he died before we could have reconciled. Nevertheless, I want to honor both of them via the photos below.

I learned a lot from the materials shared with me by Szabolcs and Károly; based on them I could even write an entire book with lots of pictures about the rendesi Bárány family. Károly did so, naturally, in Hungarian; I have a copy of it on the disk he gave me. And there are hundreds of documents related to the Bárány family on the disks sent to me by Szabolcs.



Returning to my Great-great-grandmother Mária Bárány, unfortunately, I must share with you some very sad 'news': her father, József Bárány was murdered --- seemingly, under the most suspicious circumstances. The story was told in the February 13, 1913 issue of the *Budapesti Hírlap* by a great-grandson of his, Dr. Gyula Mányoky. The article is mostly about Boldizsár Bárány, the brother of Mária. In Part 2A, I will have separate piece entitled **More about Boldizsár Bárány**, hence I will not say more about him at this at this time.

It seems Great-great-great-grandfather, József Bárány was asked to come out of his house to receive a letter, and when he stepped out, two shepherds in the employ of István Berzsenyi beat him to death. Some days later they caught the men and put them in jail; however, they were poisoned on the day their trial was to start. Hence, no charges could be brought against them, and the suspicion lingered for a long time that it was István Berzsenyi who was behind the murder. Not only were the shepherds in his employ, but 8 years earlier he was an unsuccessful suitor of Anna Barcza, who chose József Bárány instead.

Now that her husband was 'out of the way', barely a year went by before István Berzsenyi married Great-great-great-grandmother Anna Barcza. There was still talk of foul play, but it calmed down, seeing the care István Berzsenyi gave to the upbringing of Mária and her baby brother, Boldizsár. In any case, my Great-great-grandmother Mária Bárány and her brother grew up in a Berzsenyi household in Nikla (called Mikla then).

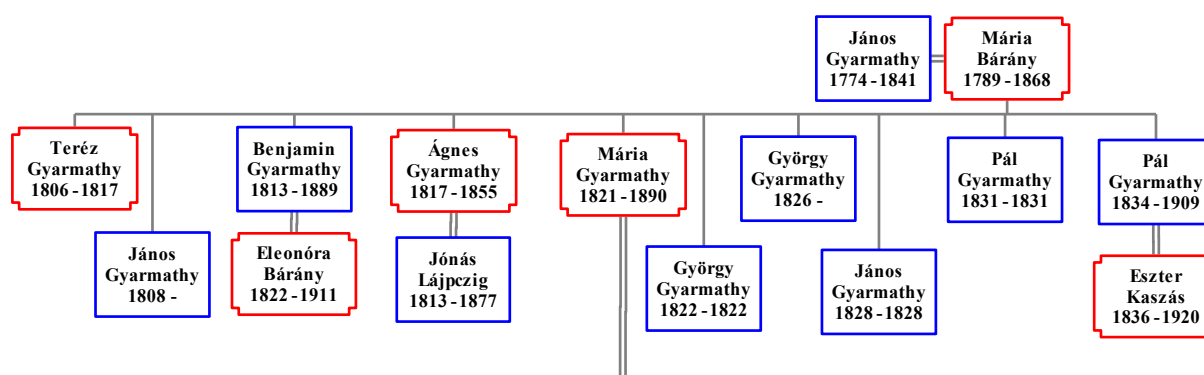
Concerning Anna Barcza, following her two children with József Bárány, she had 6 more with István Berzsenyi of my mother's egyházasberzsenyi Berzsenyi family, which I have yet to introduce. Therefore, this is just a preview of the Berzsenyi clan, as well as of Nikla where my great-great-grandfather Dániel Berzsenyi moved during the first decade of the 19th Century. István Berzsenyi already lived there, and in fact, married my great-great-great-grandmother in 1793 on January 11. Moreover, even Anna Barcza was dead by the time Dániel arrived.

Even though there were several intermarriages between the Barcza and the Berzsenyi families, Anna Barcza was my only Barcza ancestor. That justifies my writing separately about my Barcza ancestry in Part 2 of my book. I will also tell you more about the Thulmons, though with them too I will wait till Part 2 of these volumes. As you will see, they were instrumental in having both branches of the Berzsenyis move to the Province of Somogy.

At this point, I should also reflect on the fact that I am (1/16)th Bárány, just like I am (1/16)th Fritsch, Mayherr, Hudeček, Prachar, Berzsenyi, Takách, Gyarmathy, Juhász and Pretszinsky. Therefore, they all deserve the same amount of attention. Only the Svastits and the Csértán families deserve more attention from me, since I am (1/8)th Svastits and (1/8)th Csértán. My only excuse for not reporting on all of these ancestral families equitably is that some are closer, while others are further in history, and the further they are the more fog seems to cover them. Thus, it is easier to write about my Vargha and Berzsenyi roots than about my Fritsch and Juhász ancestry. They are in turn closer to me than the Svastits, Hudeček and Gyarmathy forebears, and so on. And thereby it is natural to leave the Barcza, the Thulmon, and yet a few more ancestral families until Part 2 of these volumes.

Gyarmathy – Bárány great-great-grandparents and their family

I have no idea how my Gyarmathy - Bárány great-great-grandparents met, but both **Mária Bárány** and **János Gyarmathy** were from old noble families in the Province of Somogy, and I am sure they knew of one another long before the young couple met. By then, the Gyarmathys were mostly in public offices and the clergy, rather than landowners. On the other hand, Mária Bárány must have had a nice trousseau due to her Thulmon grandmother's riches, possibly including some land. Since most of their children were born in Sörnye, I assume that they were landowners there.



Unfortunately, the marriage of Ágnes Gyarmathy and Jónás Lajpczig was not blessed with children. They lived in Nikla and Ágnes was known to be a highly cultured woman who looked after her cousin, Szidónia, the daughter of Boldizsár Bárány from his first marriage, after the death of her mother. Since Boldizsár married the maid of his deceased wife, 'The Family' had to intervene and rescue the motherless child when she became older and needed proper guidance.

I will introduce the families of Benjamin and Pál, and hence my Gyarmathy – Bárány 3rd cousins in the next section before tying the knot between Great-grandmother Mária Gyarmathy and Great-grandfather Farkas Berzsényi in a follow-up section. Nevertheless, it might not be inappropriate to mention here that the first love of Farkas Berzsényi was Szidónia Bárány. However, as her son described it years later¹, Szidónia met a dashing young lawyer, László Mányoky at a ball in Kaposvár and married him. Thus, my great-grandfather ended up marrying the younger sister of Ágnes Gyarmathy, who was probably just as cultured and sophisticated as Ágnes herself.

It is most unfortunate that I never asked anything about her from her youngest daughter, Mariska néni many years ago, when I used to hang on every word of hers as she was telling me stories about her grandfather - who died long before she was born. Instead, I should have questioned her about her parents, my great-grandparents.

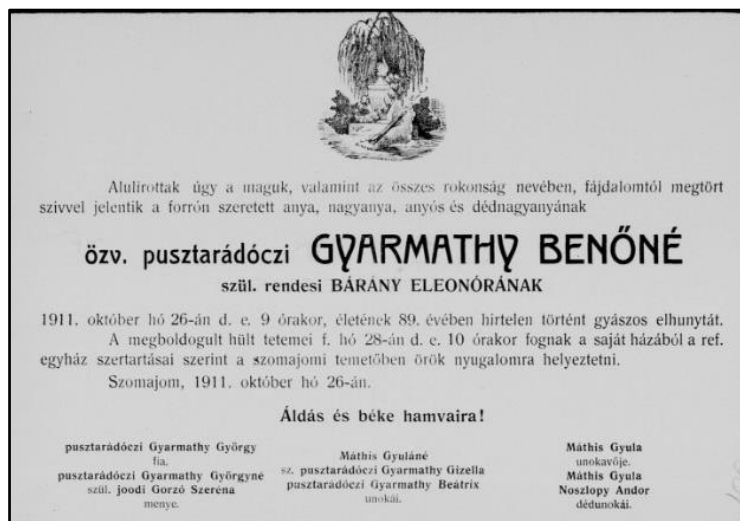
¹ Article cited earlier by Dr. Gyula Mányoky in the February 13 1913 issue of the *Budapesti Hírlap*

Gyarmathy - Bárány descendants the next generation

Starting with the

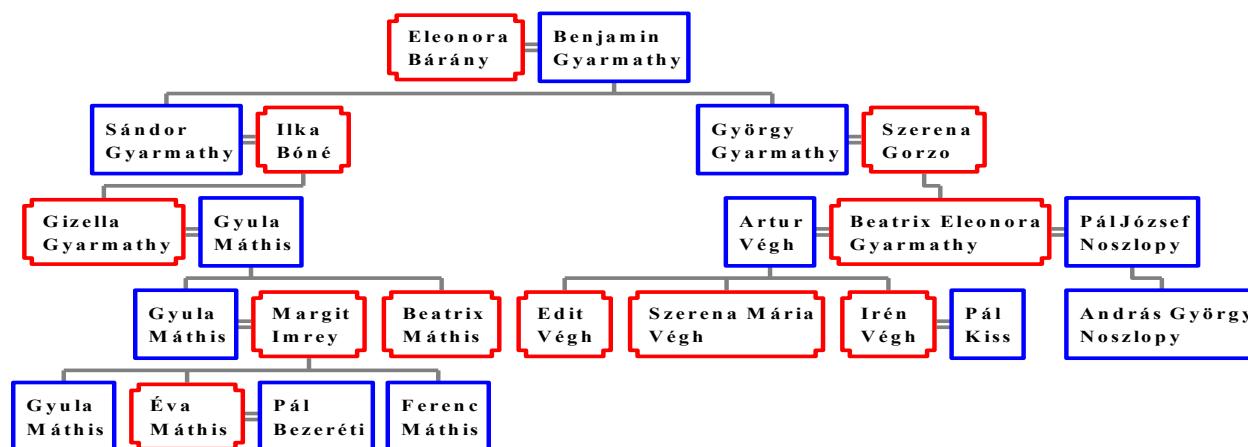
Branch of Benjamin / Benő Gyarmathy, his descendants to three generations are partially given by the Hungarian death announcement of his widow, shown below.

Based on the death notice, I first thought that György was the only son of Eleonóra and that Gizella and Beatrix were the daughters of György. Moreover, I thought the second Gyula Máthis listed in the death notice was the son of grand-daughter Gizella and her husband, Gyula. However, I couldn't figure out how Andor Noszlopy became a great-grandson too. For that I had to dig deeper and learn that I was only partially right, as shown in the family tree below. Since Eleonóra Bárány lived such a long time, she outlived her older son, Sándor, and her younger son's daughter did not yet marry for the second time to give her three more grandchildren in Edit, Szerena and Irén Végh, of whom I met Szerena, but only once. Thereby, from the branch of Benjamin Gyarmathy I have five 3rd cousins:



Sándor, and her younger son's daughter did not yet marry for the second time to give her three more grandchildren in Edit, Szerena and Irén Végh, of whom I met Szerena, but only once. Thereby, from the branch of Benjamin Gyarmathy I have five 3rd cousins:

Sándor Máthis, Edit, Szeréna and Irén Végh, and András (Andor) Noszlopy.



Szeréna lived almost next door to my brother's place in Kaposvár, and hence I should have met her a lot earlier, except for the fact that nobody guided me toward her. And for that matter, it was not until after my return from Hungary in 2000 that I finally figured out our relationship. Luckily,

in time to share my discoveries with her prior to her death. Nevertheless, I managed to impress her sufficiently so that she left the few family photos in her possession to me. I scanned them but left the originals at Zolti's. Some I display here, starting with the one I took of her when I met her in November of 2000, when she was 81. On the wall behind her is a portrait of her from years earlier.

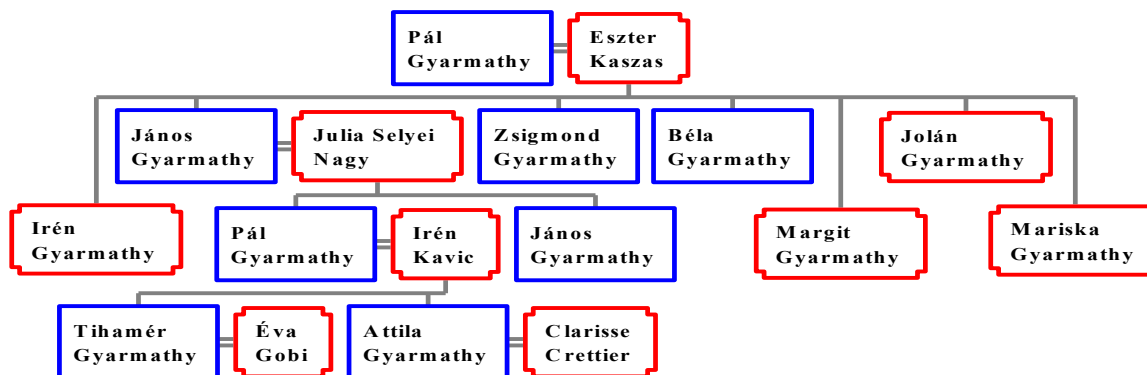


The second photo on the right shows the three sisters, along with their mother, Beatrix Gyarmathy, and with Irén's husband on their wedding day. Unfortunately, none of the three sisters had any children, and neither did Andor /András Noszlopy, but the son of Gizella Gyarmathy had a son and a daughter, and I am in touch with descendants thereof. In fact, Miklós Bezeréti, one of the great-great-grandsons of Gizella was born in 1979 and is an avid sailor. He was representing Hungary in January at the 2016 World Championship held in Florida along with Skipper Tibor Tenke with their yacht, the *Barbarella IV*. In **Part 2B** of my **Tattered Tales** I will have more about Miklós Bezeréti and our other Máthis-Berzsenyi relatives.



Branch of Pál Gyarmathy,

whose descendants are shown below:



Clearly, this tree yields two more 3rd cousins, whom I already mentioned earlier, **Tihamér** and **Attila Gyarmathy**.

And now it is time to show some photos of Tihamér and Attila. On the left, I have two pictures of Tihamér ‘borrowed’ from the internet, while the photo on the right was taken in 2000, when you, Adam, and I met Attila and his wife, Clarisse for the first time in Colorado Springs. Thereafter Mom and I got together with Clarisse and Attila fairly regularly; we greatly enjoyed their company and their wise attitude towards the world. Being a bit older than us, we learned a lot from them.



On the right I also show a photo of Attila with one of his great-grandsons. Since their daughter, Kati lives virtually next door to them, they often had some family ‘drop in’ to visit with them.

Concerning the branch of Pál, I should also mention that Margit néni spent many years with my Great-aunt Mariska néni (Mária Berzsenyi, the younger sister of my maternal grandfather) as her companion, and the two of them traveled a lot. Irén néni lived in Nikla too as the ‘post-mistress’, but then she got involved with someone named József Révész and came out to America with him. I think she died here or in Canada, and afterwards he went back to the village with a big car and brought back some of her personal possessions for the family. He was of simpler background, and the family didn’t approve of her joining him and possibly marrying him. The Berzsenyis could be very haughty, even when it came to poorer relatives.



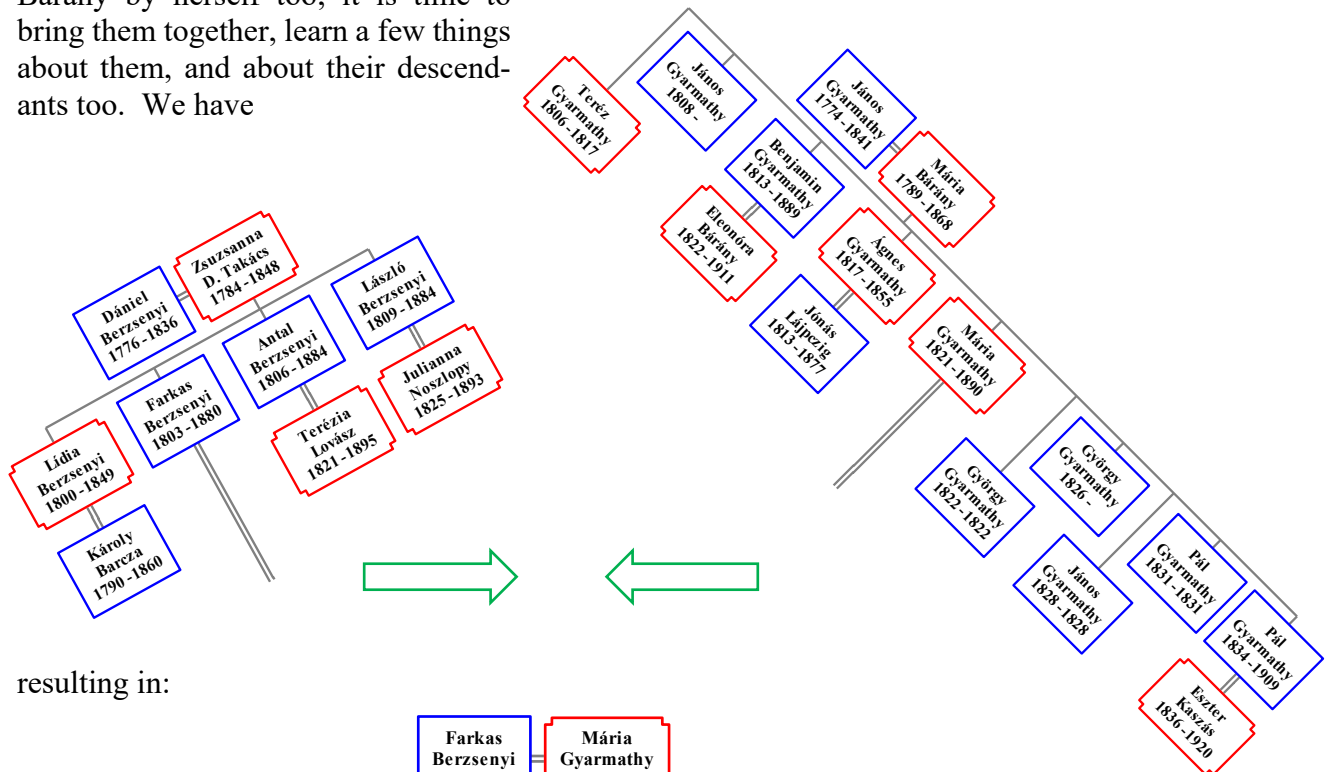
Finally, I must say at least a few words here about Attila’s uncle, János, who was most helpful to Attila and his family, but, other than being our sponsor when we came to America (which was a huge thing, but cost him nothing), he did nothing for us. He was a Catholic priest with a checkered background, who was a frequent visitor in Nikla in the ‘good old days’ and showed his appreciation towards the family with some ‘care packages’ after the war. He was also an outstanding orator and a homosexual. I will have more about him in a separate piece.

Concerning the

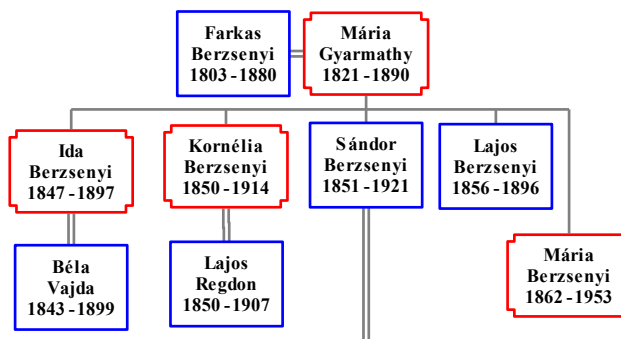
Branch of Ágnes, unfortunately, I have no cousins from there. By marrying Jónás Lajpczig, she too ended up in Nikla, and lived there throughout her life. Their house became the home for the clerk of the village.

My Berzsenyi – Gyarmathy great-grandparents and their descendants (including my 2nd cousins)

Earlier I left Great-grandfather Farkas Berzsenyi ‘stranded’ and more recently I left Great-grandmother Mária Bárány by herself too; it is time to bring them together, learn a few things about them, and about their descendants too. We have



resulting in:



Interestingly, the house of Farkas was envisioned by his father already in 1812, as he wrote about it to Kazinczy in a letter that spring right after moving into his own house. He described the 86-acre lot where he was planning to build it, and hence it is easy to identify it as the house bought and renovated by my brother, Zoltán, where my grandfather brought up his family, and before him Farkas did so too. If communism would not have interfered, our mother would have inherited that house – hence, it is most fitting that my brother owns it now.

In the picture below, I show that house now along with a picture of my brother, next to the plaque put on the house since the photo was taken – identifying it as the family home of Farkas and then of Sándor Berzsenyi.



In a separate piece, I will have more about

The house that my brother rescued,

but for the present, I need to tell you about the family of my Great-grandfather Farkas Berzsenyi. As you will see, unfortunately, both Ida and Kornélia married late, and hence had no children, while Lajos was sickly and died relatively young, and neither him, nor Mária (Mariska néni) ever married. Thus, in spite of the promising title, I have no 2nd cousins in the Berzsenyi – Gyarmathy Branch.

Nevertheless, to reflect upon the latter happenings in the Berzsenyi family prior to the marriage of Grandfather Sándor Berzsenyi (on December 29, 1898), I have listed below some relevant dates in chronological order with brief descriptions of the events taking place on those dates:

- 06-03-1880 Farkas died.
- 09-26-1884 Antal died.
- 12-14-1884 László, the youngest son of Dániel Berzsenyi died, leaving his widow, Julianna Noszlopy alone in the Berzsenyi house that is the Museum now. Shortly afterwards she invited Jolán Hochreiter, the 21-years old granddaughter of her sister, to join her in her home.



- 02-15-1888 Jolán married Vince Lájpczig, another landowner in Nikla. He was also a lawyer, who later opened a joint office in Marcali with my grandfather, Sándor Berzsenyi.
- 03-16-1890 Great-grandmother Mária Gyarmathy, the widow of Farkas Berzsenyi died, leaving her four adult children, Ida, Kornélia, Lajos and Mária alone in the house of Farkas (that is Zolti's house now); Sándor, her older son was away working as a lawyer.
- 04-07-1893 Julianna Noszlopy, the widow of László Berzsenyi died, but before her death she had a lot of the documents from the attic of her house moved over to the attic of the Lájpczig house according to a letter by the late Béla Adamecz, the grandson of Vince Lájpczig and Jolán Hochreiter. She also gave a large box of documents to the children of Farkas, according to Tivadar Noszlopy, her nephew.
My grandfather did not yet return to Nikla; he was still lawyering somewhere.
- 11-15-1893 Ida married Béla Vajda, but her marriage didn't last long, and she returned home.
- 09-17-1894 Kornélia married Lajos Regdon and moved to Budapest. She kept her house there even after her husband died in 1907 and she moved back to Nikla and lived with her sister, Mária, where she died in 1914 at age 64. She was buried next to her husband, Lajos Regdon, next to the Berzsenyi Crypt. The house on Bajza utca was kept in the family until 1943 or '44.
- 02-07-1895 Terézia Lovász, the widow of Antal died, leaving their house mostly vacant until it was sold to Hungary's Postal Services.
- 08-09-1896 Lajos died of a lung disease at age 40 in Nikla. By then, my grandfather was settled in Nikla again, since he had to take over the management of the estate from his brother. He opened a law firm in Marcali in partnership with Vince Lájpczig.
- 01-05-1897 Ida died at age 49 in Nikla.
- 1897-'98 Sometime during this period, Mária, my grandfather's younger sister moved into the house that was built by her grandfather and is the Museum now in order to let her brother bring his bride home on the 29th of December 1898 to his paternal house, to which I will sometime refer to as Sándor's house. Similarly, I will refer to the present museum as Mariska néni's house; that's how I remember the house and that's how I addressed her.

Please note the quick succession of the happenings in the family in barely 16½ years – 8 deaths, 3 marriages and 1 divorce, surely, a lot! As a consequence, everyone was doing his or her best to cope with the developments and not much attention was paid to the heritage of Dániel Berzsenyi either.

First, it was my grandfather, who represented the family at the various celebrations of his grandfather, Dániel Berzsenyi, and then Mariska néni, the poet's youngest grandchild, who carried on the torch. She is the only person of her generation, whom I knew personally -- hence I will have a separate piece,

More about Mariska néni,

in which I will tell you a lot more about her, as well as about the stories she told me about her grandfather. In the picture on the right, I show her with her brother, Lajos, I think.



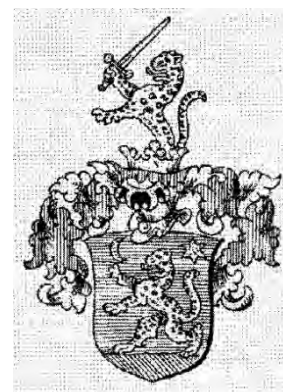
My Juhász Roots

Departing from my previous procedures, rather than introducing the ancestors of Great-great-grandfather János Juhász, let me start by introducing my mother's first cousin, Márta Juhász (to me, Márta néni), whose memoir to her grandchildren is the only document known to me that addresses the issue. In that memoir, Márta néni claims that the name of János' father was Antal, who was a wealthy landowner, presumably near Esztergom, since János claimed that he was born there. Unfortunately, I must take this with a bit of doubt since Márta néni also said that the first name of János' wife was Karolina, whereas I found that her name was Franciska. Márta néni also claimed that Karolina's father was a Polish military officer who had to flee his homeland; that didn't turn out to be true either. Márta néni went on to tell us that Antal Juhász shared his home with the family of the Polish officer, whose daughter later married his son, János. Unfortunately, this last scenario turned out to be unlikely too, as I will point out later.

Nevertheless, I must believe that the family legend about the origin of the 'Juhász' name was truly 'handed down' by our Juhász ancestors rather than 'borrowed' from the book *Magyar nemes családok* by Béla Kempelen¹, where he tells the story of Benedek Hajas, who was the captain of a fort and became the prisoner of the pasha of Érsekújvár, who used him as a shepherd. Since 'shepherd' is 'juhász' in Hungarian, he took that name. Supposedly, the family of Benedek Hajas received its nobility from King Rudolf of the House of Habsburg, but it was lost when he was captured by the Turks. Therefore, upon his release, King Ferdinand II reinstated his nobility, giving him a coat of arms, as well as the village of Nemespann, sometime abbreviated as Pann. Thereafter, the family often used the forename 'pannfalvi', which was also written, erroneously as 'pánfalvi' and even 'bánfalvi'. Some members of the Juhász family also used 'hajas' as a forename, while others 'kislapási' after a nearby village in the Province of Nyitra (now in Slovakia), which was probably an earlier possession of the family. And naturally, judging from the death notices, some also used combinations like 'hajas & pannfalvi', 'hajas & kislapási' and 'pannfalvi & kislapási' too.

Though it doesn't really fit the description given in Latin on the left, they also use the coat of arms shown below on the right. Hopefully, someone will paint it properly for me one of these days.

„Scutum videlicet militare erectum coelestini coloris, viridi campo in fundo stratum, in quo naturalis integer albus nigris maculis leopardus, ore hianti, lingua exerta, cauda sursum elevata, anterioribus pedibus dis(tentis) . . . ramum olivae gestare inque dextrum scuti latus conversus per medium scuti assurgere visitur. Scuto incumbentem galeam militarem apertam, regio, diademate, naturalem album monocerum umbilicotenus emergen(tem . . .) ramum similiter olivae tenentem proferente ornatam. A summitate sive cono galeae laciniis seu lémniscis dextris aureis et rubris, sinistris vero argenteis et coelestinis in scuti oram fluitantibus illudque decenter exornantibus.“



¹ Grill Károly Könyvkiadóvállalata, Budapest, 1913, p.289

The above Latin description of the coat of arms is from the 8th volume of *MNM Címjegyzéke és Cimeres Levelek* by Antal Áldásy². A rough translation of that description is as follows: “Upright shield with green background in which a leopard stands with its tongue out and tail downward. There is an olive branch stretching from the right to the center. There is an open helmet at the top with rich décor, and on top of the shield a rhinoceros holding an olive branch too. The colors of the ribbons are gold and red on the right and silver and light blue on the left.”

I also consulted the excellent works of Iván Nagy³ about the various Juhász families, but thus far unsuccessfully. Nevertheless, eventually I located the Hajas family, also discussed by Iván Nagy in *Fejérmegyei nemes családok*⁴ by Miklós Schneider. From that I learned that a branch of the Juhász family moved from the Province of Nyitra to the Province of Esztergom. Since János Juhász was born in the Province of Esztergom, I am hopeful to locate his ancestors there.

At this point, I must introduce my 3rd cousin, Hédi, who is the main researcher of our common Juhász family. I am in constant contact with her since November of 2000, when we visited her. I show a picture of Adam and I from that visit, along with her spread of research materials.



The third photo of Hédi was taken later at her new place (which used to be her mother's) in Veszprém, where she is close to the Provincial Archives, which she visits often. I am hopeful that one of these days, she will manage to locate the ancestors of János Juhász and I can rewrite this section and include a huge family tree of our Juhász forebears. I keep encouraging Hédi by sharing with her every new piece of information I come across.



² Published by József Áldásy, Budapest, 1942, p. 526

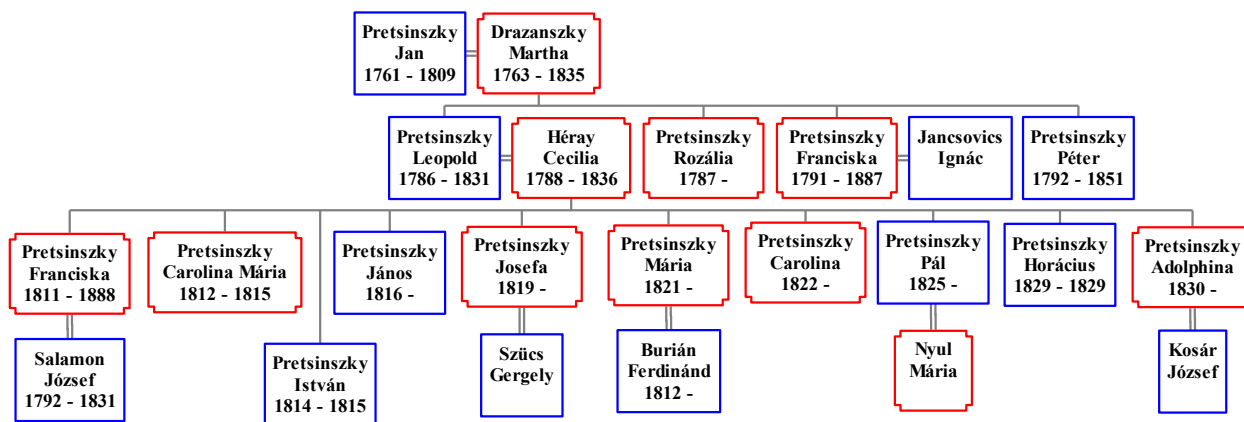
³ *Magyarország családai*, published by Ráth Mór, Pest, 1859, Volume 5, pp. 368-370

⁴ Published by Jenő Csitáry, Székesfehérvár, 1935, p. 100

My Pretsinszky Roots

One of the important findings of Hédi was that the godfather of several of the children of János Juhász and Franciska Pretsinszky was Péter Pretsinszky and we became curious as to how he was related to the family. Our puzzle was solved by a dear genealogical friend of mine, Piroska Schandl, who managed to find a book¹ revealing that Péter Pretsinszky was a Catholic priest who was born in Garamszentbenedek on June 29, 1792, and served in Kiskomárom, in the Province of Zala from 1822 till his death (March 7, 1851). Unfortunately, the book didn't say anything about his parents, and therefore, at Piroska's suggestion I contacted the archives in Slovakia for his birth registration, as well as for whatever other information they had about the Pretsinszky family.

Their answer (provided by the Statni Archav v Banskej Bystrici for \$66.52) was prompt but did not include anything about Péter Pretsinszky. Instead, they found the registration of the death of the parents and grandparents of Great-great-grandmother Franciska Pretsinszky, of her marriage to Joseph Salamon and of the birth of a sister of hers, Adolphina. Later I learned more about their family, and hence I was able to put together the family tree shown below.



At this point I must also acknowledge the contributions of Sylvia Czobor, who was also researching the Pretsinszky family and after seeing our website (www.berzsenyi.net) and my story about Franciska, she wrote to me and in several subsequent messages shared with me the information she gathered. In return, I sent her the Hungarian versions of my own writings about the Juhász and Pretsinszky families and we stayed in touch for the next year or so. Recently, I renewed correspondence with her in order to thank her again for her findings and for sharing them with me.

Needless to say, I am indebted to Márta néni too in spite of her seemingly erroneous information about Franciska's father. She gave me a head-start not just in my Juhász – Pretsinszky research, but in my Svastits research too. As a tribute, I show her picture on the right. I wish I had a better picture of her, but my correspondence with her son, Frici was less than adequate, and it is not much better with Frici's daughter either.



¹ Pfeiffer János, *A Veszprémi Egyházmegye Történeti Névtára (1630-1950)*, München, 1987, p.857

Returning to my Pretsinszky ancestors, I learned that Jan, and then his son, Leopold Pretsinszky served as the managers of the holdings of the Abbey of Garamszentbenedek in the Province of Bars (now, Hronsky Benadik in Slovakia), which was founded by King Géza I in 1075. On the right I show a 19th Century lithograph of the abbey, which must have played an important role in the region. Managing its holdings in several provinces of the country had to be of similar importance. Thus, he wouldn't have had time to be a military officer in the Polish army.



Such managerial positions usually went to men of noble background and proper training in the field of agriculture, who did not inherit land of their own (often inherited by the oldest male in the family) but were willing to work for others. They were like modern-day CEOs even in the sense of troubleshooting wherever the need arose. That explains why the children of some were born in different places. In the case of Leopold Pretsinszky, while Adolphina was born in Garamszentbenedek, Mária was born in Párkány (now, Sturovo, Slovakia) in the Province of Esztergom and Franciska was born in Somogyszob in the Province of Somogy².

Interestingly, Sylvia Czobor's ancestor, József Burián was just a couple of years younger than Leopold Pretsinszky and had a similar position to his in Kiskomárom, which he gave up when his wife died. His successor was József Salamon, the husband of Franciska Pretsinszky. By then, Franciska's uncle was a priest there, so he welcomed them. Their first son died and their second son, Vince was born there, but soon József Salamon died within a couple of years. And then János Juhász appears on the scene, as if he was summoned, from the same area of present-day Central Slovakia. Did they know each other from back there? Did the families know one another? Probably so. After they got married, not only did János Juhász bring up Vince Salamon as his own son, but married off Franciska's sister, Mária to Ferdinánd Burián, the son of József Burián. Perhaps even some other siblings of Franciska lived with them too, since not only Vince, but Pál Pretsinsky volunteered for service in Hungary's revolutionary army in 1848 from the small village of Kápolna, near Kiskomárom, where János Juhász leased some land. The marriage of János Juhász, as well as the birth of his children were registered in Kiskomárom, but he lived Kápolna and in fact, that's where he was buried. Kiskomárom is now part of Zalakomár, but Kápolna is no longer even marked on the maps. Hence, I wouldn't know where to look for his grave.

In the 1848-49 War for Freedom, Vince Salamon served with distinction as a first lieutenant and later he got his degree in Agricultural Studies in Keszthely at the same Georgikon, where your Uncle Zolti got his. Pál Pretsinszky became an engineer, who made a good name for himself.

In the next section I will write a bit more about Vince Salamon, about my search for his descendants, as well as about my eventual success. Therefore, our next Juhász Reunion will rightly become a Salamon – Pretsinszky – Juhász Reunion with the possible inclusion of some of Vince Salamon's descendants.

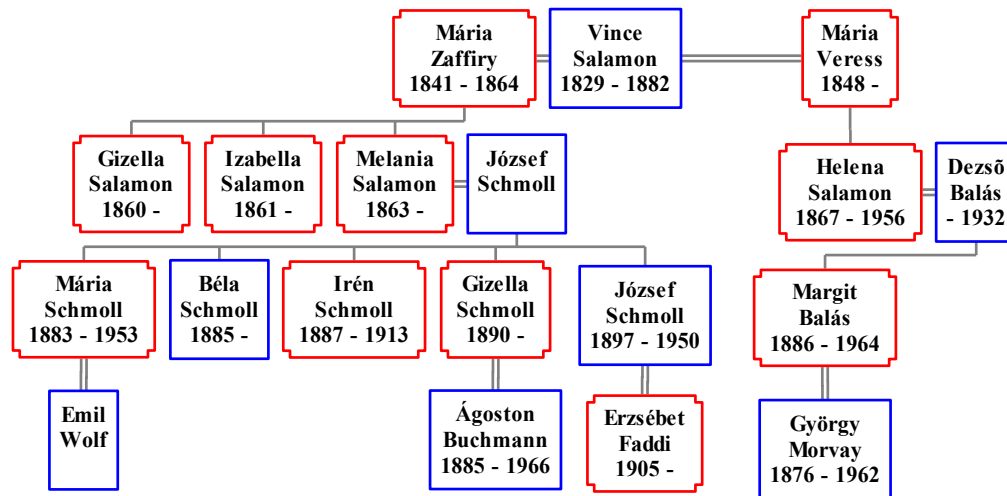
² Interestingly, we just visited in Párkány in October 2019 in order to see a possible Vargha relative of mine, while Somogyszob is a familiar place to me not only because my close friend, Pista Molnár's father was the stationmaster there, but also because that's where I had to change trains between Marcali and Csurgó when I went to high school there.

My Salamon – Pretsinszky Cousins

Vince Salamon followed in his father’s and his maternal ancestors’ footsteps in becoming the manager of the clerical holdings of Bozók (now, Bzovik in Slovakia) in the Province of Hont, similarly located in present-day Central Slovakia. Its monastery was built in 1135, and back then it was the largest in the area. Later it was converted to a fort, but its living quarters were still occupied around the turn of the previous century. Nowadays, as it is seen on the right, it is mostly in ruins.

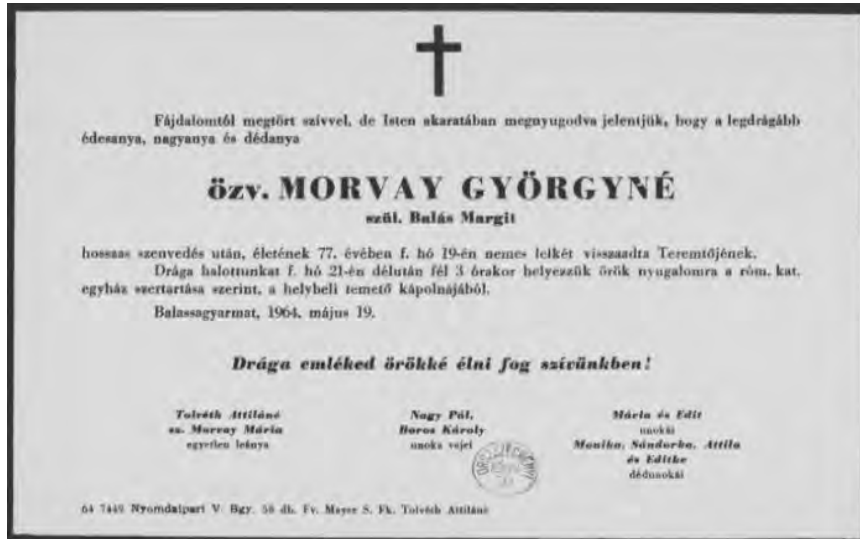


As it is clear from the family tree below, alapi Vince Salamon had six grandchildren from his two marriages. I found them all, and then I was stuck for a long time, not finding any further descendants of his in spite of the fact that I found marriages for four of them.

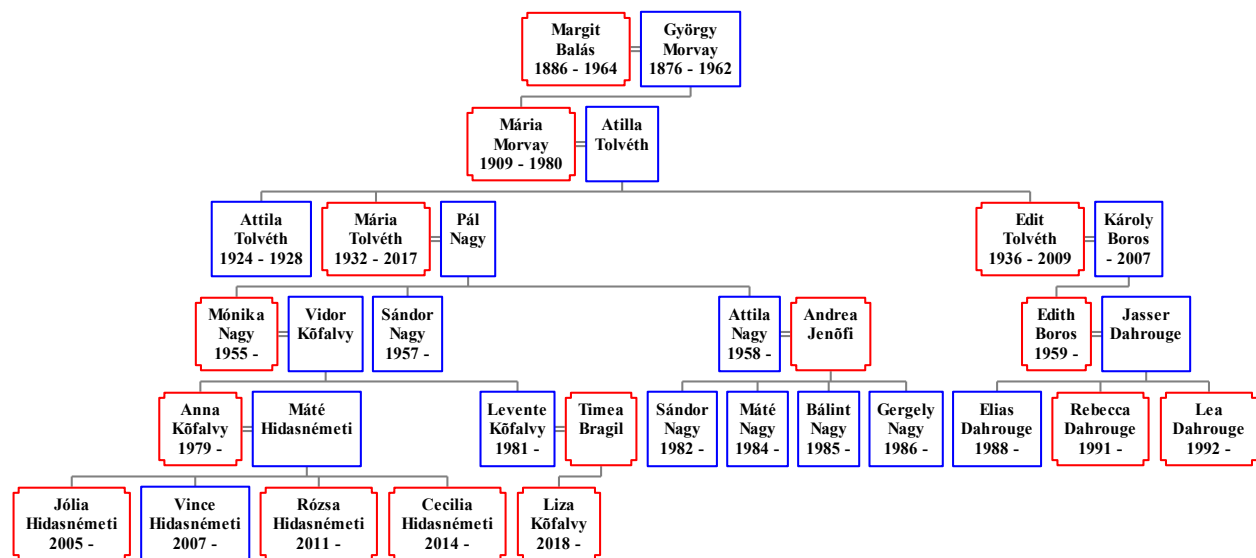


My breakthrough came when I found the 1964 death notice of Margit Balás, shown below, which told me that she had a daughter named Mária, who was married to Attila Tolvéth and that they had two daughters, Mária and Edit, who were married to Pál Nagy and Károly Boros, resulting in four grandchildren Móni(ka), Sándor(ka), Attila and Edit(ke).

First, I thought that I should look for the sons-in-laws but found no sign of either of them in Balassagyarmat. More precisely, the on-line service (<https://www.telekom.hu/lakossagi/tudakozo>) via which I usually find telephone numbers, didn’t produce anyone named Pál Nagy or Károly Boros in Balassagyarmat even though both names are fairly common in Hungary.



Then I made an effort to locate the grave of Margit and had someone check the rosters at the local cemeteries for the Balás and Morvay graves, maybe even crypts, but I failed there too. My hope was that if I learn who looks after the graves, maybe I could locate a relative. I also made inquiries to two different members of the sipeki Balás family whom I knew to be involved in genealogy but got no answers. And then, I posted an inquiry in the box (in the Radix Index) for the ‘Tolvéth’ family and waited with patience -- which paid off at least doubly. The answer came from Attila Nagy, another Tolvéth-relative through whom I first located Edit(ke) and then Móni(ka), putting the endings for the diminutive terms in parentheses since they both grew up since 1964. In fact, Edit is married to a merchant in Lebanon and has two grown daughters and a son, while Mónica is a grandmother with 5 grandchildren. Attila and Sándor turned out to be Mónica’s brothers; with them I have yet to get better acquainted. Neither is Mónica very communicative in spite of her initial enthusiasm. Thereby I know much more about Edith, who moved to Lebanon in 1981 in order to marry Jasser Dahrouge.



I will have more about them, but first I want to honor Attila Nagy for putting me in touch with Edith by including his photo on the right. Interestingly, his name is the same as one of Mónika's brothers. I was happy to learn that Attila and I are distantly related via several families, and that he has done a lot of research on many of them. By sharing with me his findings, he managed to extend much of my knowledge with respect to my own ancestry. Seemingly, he became much more familiar with the various genealogical information available on the internet about some families than I, and hence he directed my attention to some websites too. Finally, and very importantly, I learned that his son was one of the winners of the mathematical competitions in Hungary and hence a member of Hungary's team to the International Mathematical Olympiad. That means a lot in my book!



Returning to Edith and her family, I will start with a picture of her grandmother, Margit (she preferred it to Mária) Morvay when she was 16. She was my 3½-th cousin, the only one I found thus far. Then I show Edith's mother, when she was 17-18 years old and finally, Edith from her Facebook page.



Next, I show a picture of Edith's family, with Jasser on the left, to be followed by Elias, Edith, Lea, Rebecca and Joey, Rebecca's fiancée. They plan to get married in Hungary. Elias lives and teaches at Corvinus University there, in pursuit of his doctorate. Both Kay and I were very happy that he could join us at the Gellért on the 13th of October 2019; it was nice to meet him. Below I have a picture of the two of us.



I am also hopeful that Elias will do some genealogical search when he has more time for such pursuits.



Above I also show a picture of the Dahrouge kids when they were young, along with a picture of the old mansion of the family.

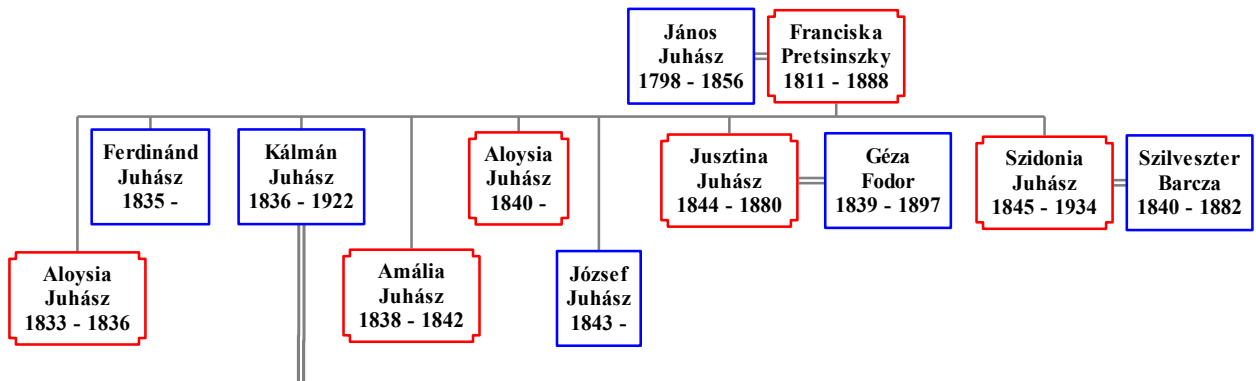
The picture on the right was taken following the engagement of Atilla (he preferred to write his name that way) and Margit in 1927; she sits on the far left and he stands behind her. The fourth from the left is her mother, Margit Balás.



Atilla Tolvéth was a mechanical engineer with a degree in agriculture as well, who managed to make the combined estates of the Morvay and Tolvéth families in Magyarnándor a model for others to follow – very much the same way as my father did in Nikla after World War II. Starting each day at 4 in the morning, overseeing every aspect of the operation, paying attention to everything and knowing what needs to be done and when – that was their style.

My Juhász – Pretsinszky great-great-grandparents and their family

Earlier I alluded to the fact that **János Juhász**, who was seemingly born in Esztergom and used the forename of ‘pannfalvi’, showed up in Kiskomárom just in time to marry **Franciska Pretsinszky**, the widow of József Salamon. Their wedding was in Kiskomárom on July 29, 1832. Franciska was only 20 at that time, but already the mother of two boys – the older one died in 1829, before her second marriage, while the younger one was brought up by his stepfather, János Juhász. Unfortunately, I know nothing further about my Juhász – Pretsinszky great-great-grandparents, except for the fact that at one time his nobility was characterized as ‘questionable’, which was the case when a person didn’t submit convincing evidence, like the original documents to the examining board. I strongly suspect that for some reason he cut his ties with his family back in Esztergom and didn’t want to go or even write back for documentation. Nevertheless, he is marked ‘nemes’, meaning ‘noble’ on the birth registration of all of his 8 children. They are displayed below. Note that I left the ribbon dangling with respect to Kálmán for the time being.



In fact, Kálmán Juhász, my great-grandfather married twice, and hence, as in the case of his mother, I will discuss his first marriage before moving on, since it changed the situation of his entire family. By marrying Gizella Bogyay, the daughter of nagymádi and várbogyai Péter Bogyay, he became a landowner in Pusztakovácsi, and he moved there with his entire family. His mother went along too, since by then she was widowed again, as well as his remaining sisters, Jusztína and Szidónia and he married off both of them.

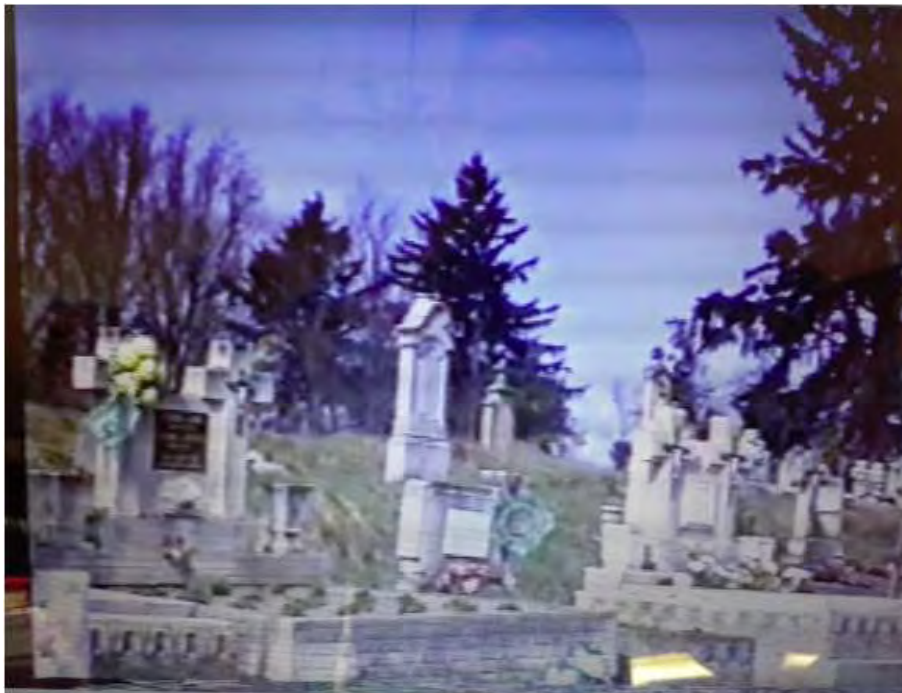
My mother still remembered Szidi néni (Szidonia), but I don’t recall her saying anything about her. And of course, there are no pictures in my possession about any of the above introduced members of the family. Maybe some will turn up with some of their descendants, but I doubt it.

I should also mention that Szilveszter Barcza was born out of wedlock to Antal Barcza, who later adopted him. Antal, and hence Szilveszter was a member of the same nagyalásnyi Barcza family as the son-in-law of Great-great-grandfather Dániel Berzsényi, as well as Great-great-grandmother Anna Barcza (1767-1803), who married István Berzsényi (1765-1841) after his shepherds killed her first husband, Great-great-grandfather József Bárány (1755-1792). Anna was reputed to be a great beauty.

Unfortunately, Gizella Bogyay died when she was only 23, leaving behind a daughter, Vilma, who was barely a year and a half old at that time. For a long time, I didn't know what happened to Vilma; it was only recently that I learned from the death announcement of her father that she was still alive in 1922, married to Miklós Bezerédy. She had no children and remained close to the family. My mother remembered her kindly too, and even mentioned the excellent treats she used to prepare whenever they visited her in Pusztakovácsi.

Prior to closing this passage, I want to emphasize once more that Great-great-grandfather János Juhász brought up Vince Salamon as his own son, as evidenced by the death notice of Vince on the right, where the surviving Juhász children are listed as siblings.

Finally, to close this section I display below the grave of Great-great-grandmother Franciska Pretsinszky in the cemetery of Pusztakovácsi. It was sent to me by Hédi's grandson, Bence Szabó at my request. Unfortunately, I couldn't find it when I was visiting there and hence don't have a close-up photo of it.



Juhász – Pretsinszky descendants the next generation

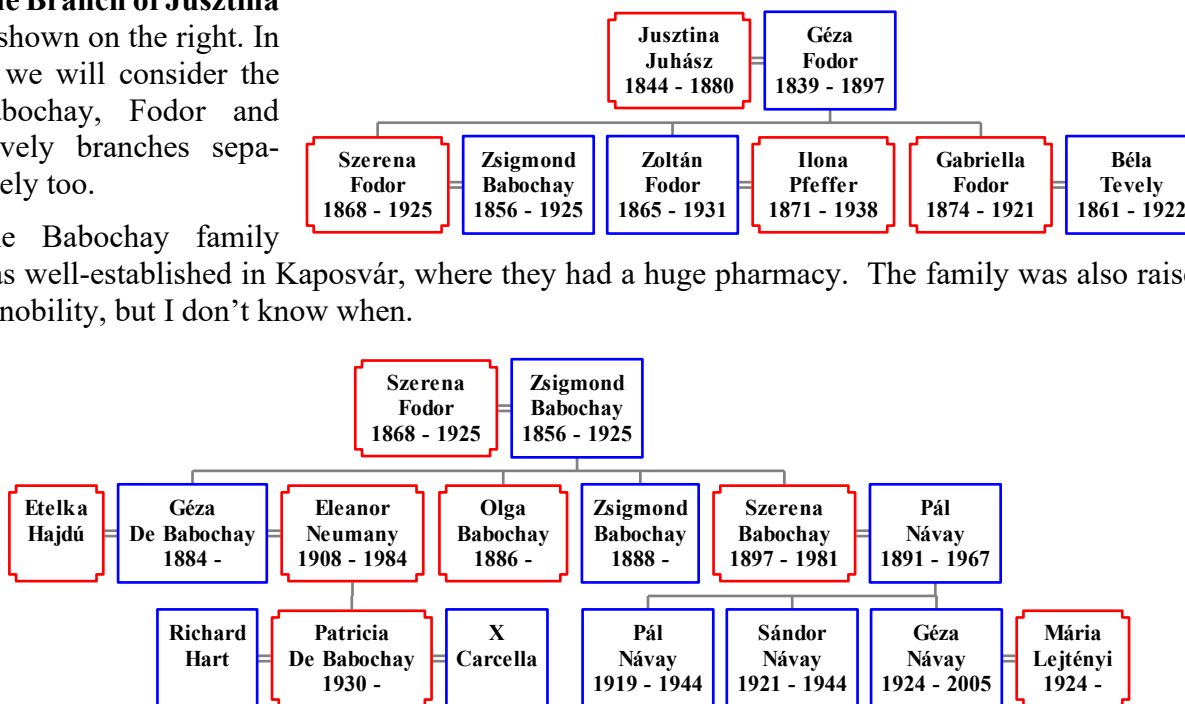
As in the case of the Fritsch–Mayherr and the Gyarmathy–Bárány branches, here I also have two ‘sub-branches’, each of them leading to 3rd cousins of mine. Accordingly, we will consider the descendants of Jusstina and Szidónia separately, leaving the case of Kálmán until later.

The Branch of Jusstina

is shown on the right. In it, we will consider the Babochay, Fodor and Tevely branches separately too.

The Babochay family

was well-established in Kaposvár, where they had a huge pharmacy. The family was also raised to nobility, but I don’t know when.



Here I want to recognize four 3rd cousins of mine,

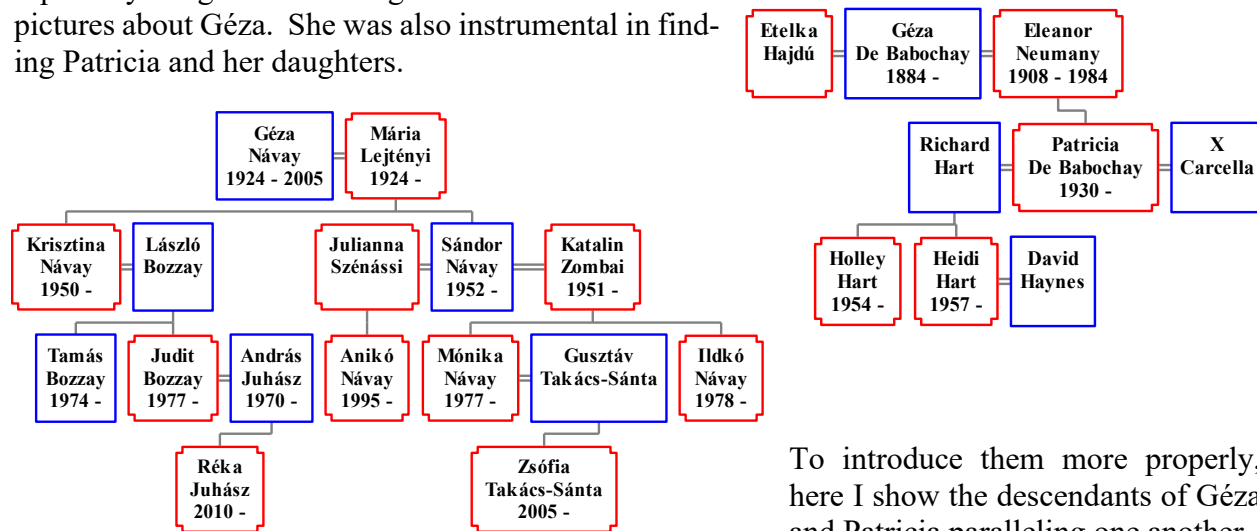
Patricia de Babochay and **Pál, Sándor** and **Géza Návay**, of whom only Patricia is still living.

Patricia’s father came to America in 1929, divorced his first wife (who seemingly went back to Hungary), remarried into a Hungarian emigrant family, and faded into oblivion. Eventually, we managed to locate his daughter and granddaughters, of whom Holly even came to our Juhász reunion in 2007. I missed meeting Géza Návay by just a few years, but his brothers, Pál and Sándor by many, since both of them died in World War II. Since their family is of old nobility, there is even a book about it¹; the pictures of Pál and Sándor Návay were taken from that book.



¹ János Gilicze, *A földéaki Návay család története* (in English, The history of the Návay family of Földeák. It was published as Item 5 in the ‘Régi Magyar Családok’ series in Debrecen in 2006)

My familiarity with the Babochay branch comes from correspondence and several wonderful meetings with Géza Návay's daughter, Krisztina, and his granddaughter, Judit Bozzay. Judit was especially diligent in sending me documentation and pictures about Géza. She was also instrumental in finding Patricia and her daughters.



To introduce them more properly, here I show the descendants of Géza and Patricia paralleling one another.

I copied the photo shown on the right from the same Návay book. It shows Géza Návay with his daughter, son and daughter-in-law in Földeák. His daughter, Krisztina is one of my favorite relatives, but I have yet to meet many other members of his family

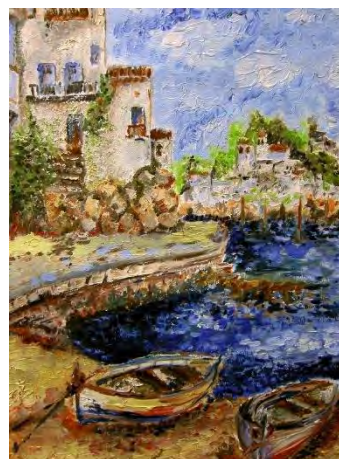


However, I do have a photo of the Babochay family from 1925, with Szeréna Fodor and Zsigmond Babochay sitting in front of their three children, Géza, Szeréna and Zsigmond, as well as one of Szeréna Babochay from 1946.

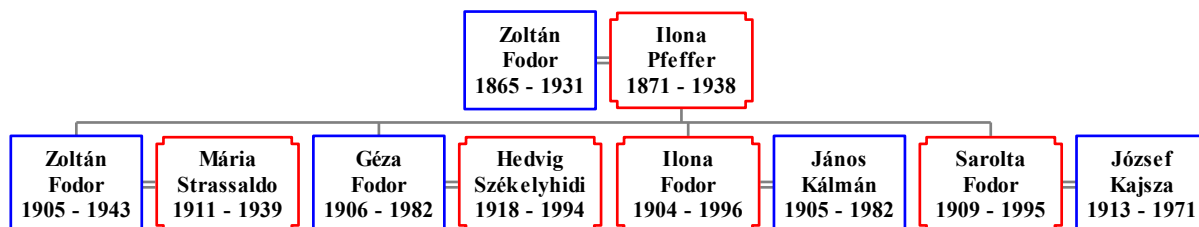


The photos were sent to me by Judit, who also told me about the convoluted affairs of the Babochay brothers with the Hajdu family, with Géza marrying and then divorcing one of the daughters, Etelka, while Zsigmond had an affair with Etelka's married sister, which led to a fatal duel with the brother of the sisters and the subsequent suicide of Zsigmond. Géza's departure for America was also somewhat scandalous since he was fleeing from his creditors. Consequently, Serena never talked about her brothers.

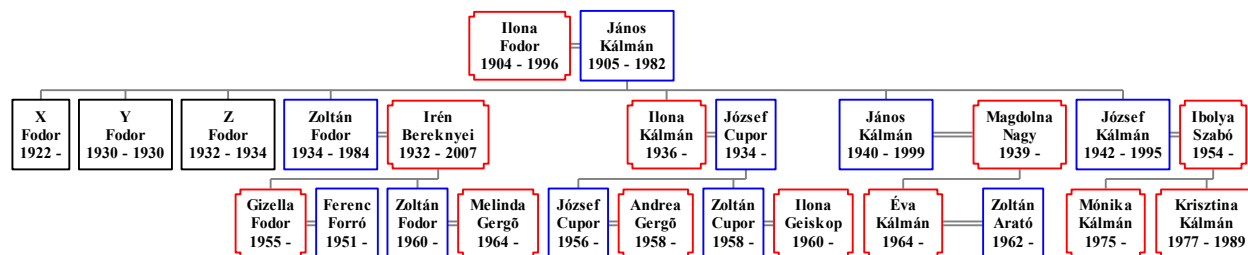
By the way, in addition to being a well-paid executive with perfect command of the English language, Judit is a talented artist too. Below I show some of her favorite pieces.



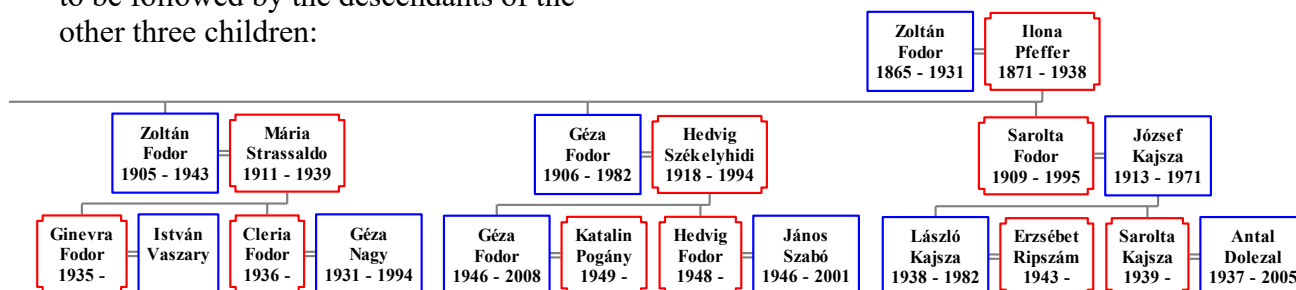
The derecskei Fodor family is of old nobility too and has been studied most diligently by my 3rd cousin, Hédi. Adam, you have already met her. Here I will finally introduce her more properly. But first, I need to display below her parents' generation.



Here too I will separate the descendants of Zoltán Fodor and Ilona Pfeffer into two parts, those of their first-born Ilona,



to be followed by the descendants of the other three children:



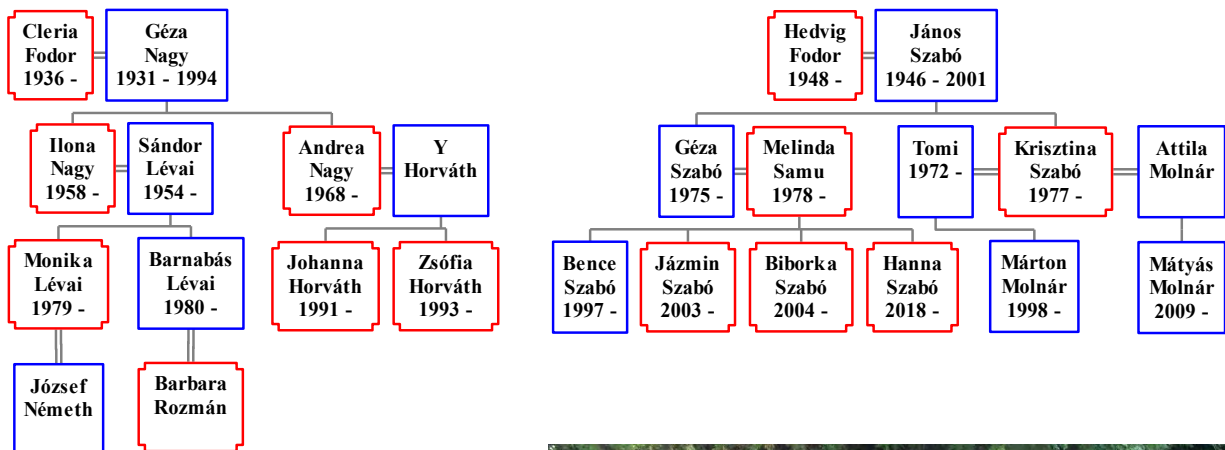
Not counting the first three children of Ilona, who were not even named, I have a total of ten 3rd cousins from Zoltán’s sub-branch of the family:

Zoltán Fodor; Ilona, János and József Kálmán; Ginerva (Gini), Cléria (Cléli), Géza and Hedwig (Hédi) Fodor; and László and Sarolta Kajsza.

The pictures below show Gini, Hédi and Cléli in that order; they are among my favorite relatives.



I am particularly close to Hédi, as well as to Gini (Ginerva) and Cléli (Cléria) since their parents were my godparents. And I really enjoy their company whenever I visit in Hungary, as shown in the photo below. But first, let me squeeze in a couple of family trees to introduce their families.



In the picture on the right, next to me is a Pfeffer-cousin of theirs, Zoltán Cserveni, with whom I corresponded but never met before, while Zoli is between Gini and Cléli and Cléli's daughter Andi and Andi's daughter Zsófi are standing in front.



It was through Zoltán Cserveni that I learned about the Fodor sisters, Ilona and Sarolta; earlier I didn't know that Zoltán and Géza had any sisters.

By the way, the first time I met Gini and Cléli was in 1978, when my mother arranged for them to visit us in Balatonfenyves. The two pictures below were taken at that time.

From left to right, in the first picture below we have: my mother, Cléli, my father with you, Dani, Gini and me; while in the second one in the back: Cléli, me, Gini, Pista (Gini's husband), your mom, Robi (Gini's son) and Géza (Cléli's husband), in front: Andi, my mother, Lydia and Daniel.



The picture on the right is Gini's wedding photo. In spite of the fact that István died many years ago, Gini still visits his relatives in Croatia and enjoys their company. Cléli's husband, Géza also died a long time ago, as well as Robi (Robert), the son of Gini, who died in an industrial accident at age 18. After burying four daughters who died in infancy, poor Gini had to bury her son.

Interestingly, after retirement, both Gini and Cléli, who don't see eye-to-eye otherwise, got involved with politics, and after that Gini started to paint. Clearly, such an artistic interest must be in the genes of her branch of the family. Next, I show some of Gini's works – just a few, to give you a glimpse at them.



Neither will the picture on the right do proper justice to Cléli's granddaughters, Hanna and Zsófi, of whom she is very proud. I must admit being a bit too partial about Hanna and Zsófi (the blond one at times), who were terrific volleyball players and I am sure that Hanna became a superb dentist, while Zsófi is a wonderful kindergarten teacher.

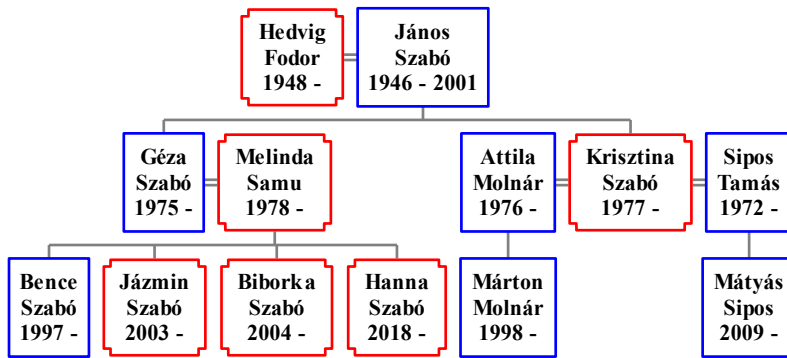


Their mother, Andi, managed to put herself through school to become a teacher while bringing up her daughters alone. Some more pictures follow; they were taken in 2017.



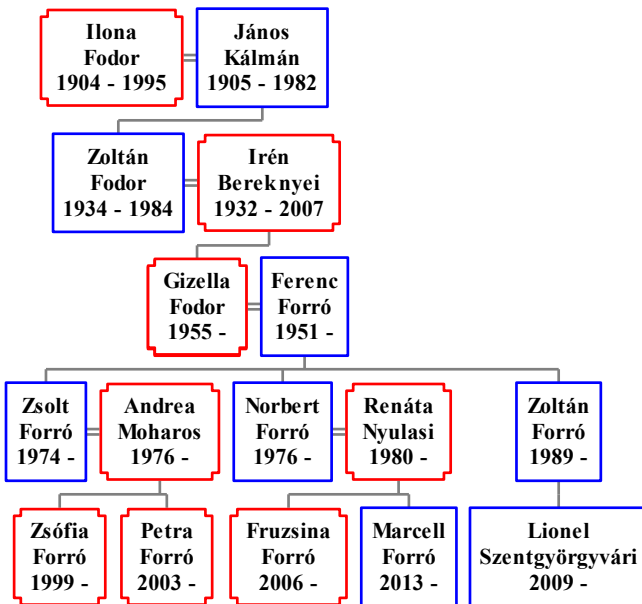
The first picture shows Cléli with her daughters, Ilona (Süni on her right) and Andrea (Andi); the second one shows her with her grandchildren, Zsófia, Mónika, (Clélia), Johanna and Barnabás.

In addition to Gini and Cléli, I am in close contact with Hédi (Hedwig) too, partially on account of our common interest in genealogy. Her family tree is shown below, while the picture on the right shows all of the members of her family at the christening of grandson Mátyás.



In the picture, going from left to right, in the back you see Géza (with Biborka in front of him), Krisztina, Tamás and Hédi, while in front Melinda (the godmother, holding Mátyás), Márton (with Jázmin in front of him) and Bence.

However, I never met Hédi's brother, Géza or any member of his family or any of the other 3rd cousins of mine or descendants thereof. The only exception was Norbert Forró, with whom I corresponded for several years via e-mail, but I didn't even meet him until the summer of 2015, when Daniel and I visited them in Szigetvár



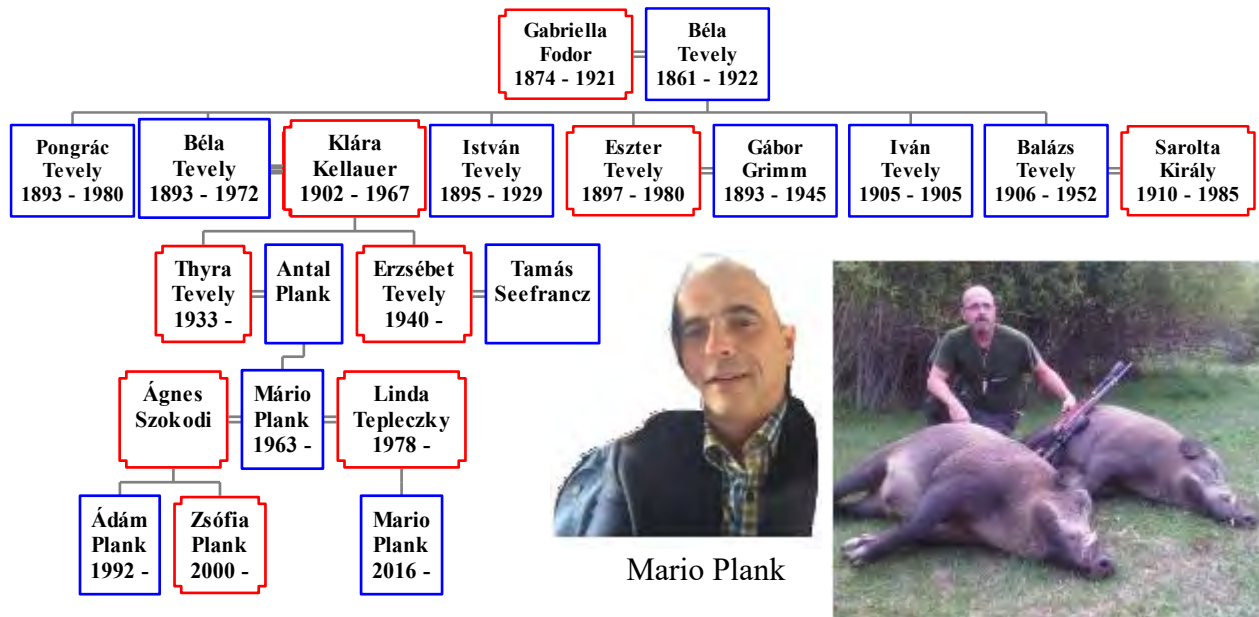
In the picture above from left to right you see Daniel, Gizella me and Norbert, while on the left I show their ancestry within the Juhász – Pretsinszky family.

Next, below I show a picture of the Ferenc Forró, Gizella Fodor and their son, Norbert, who were wonderful hosts at our Juhász reunion in 2017.



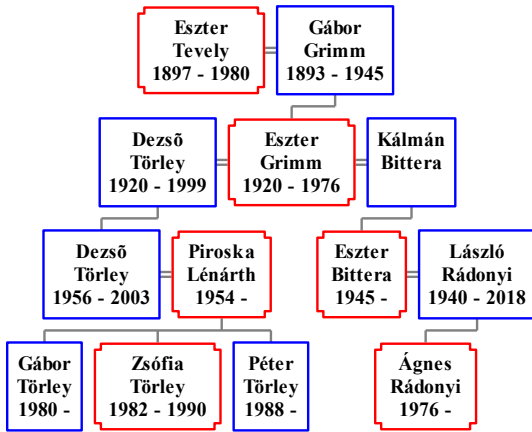
Next to them is a photo taken by your Mom as I was saying my farewells to Norbert’s family. At the reunion, I finally met many of the descendants of Ilona and Sarolta Fodor. Some of them will be introduced in the English rendition of my ‘report’ on that reunion. I wrote its Hungarian version right after the event.

Moving on to the third sub-branch of the ‘Branch of Jusztina’, featuring the descendants of Gabriella Fodor and Béla Tevely, I should point out that the adásteveli Tevely family is also one of the oldest noble families of Hungary.



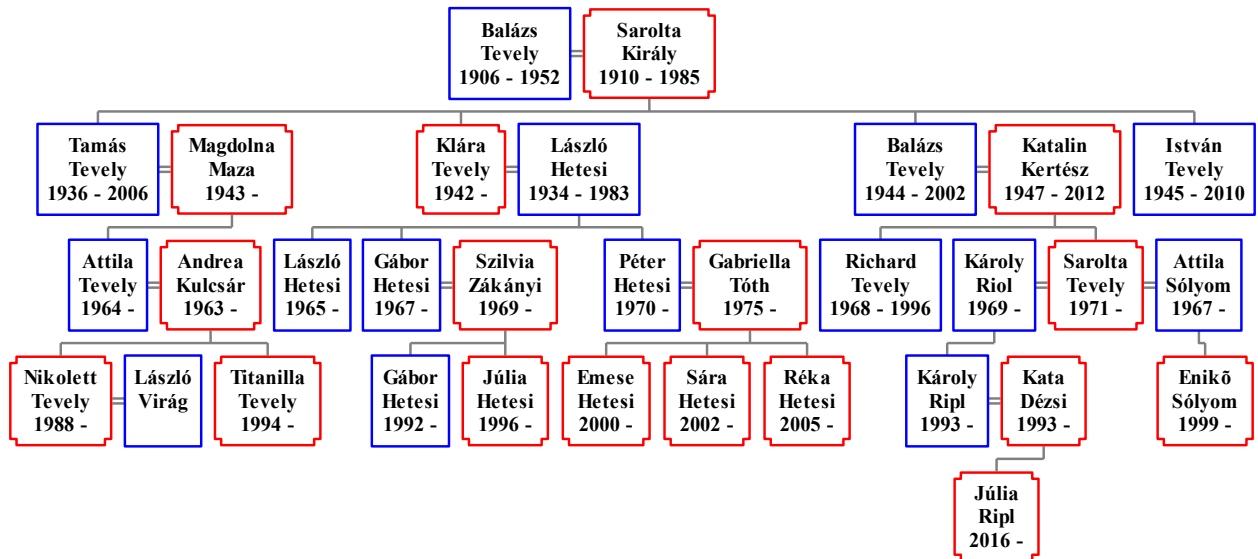
Above, I started my introduction of our Tevely relatives with Mario Plank, who is the CEO of an American company (NCH Hungary Kft.) and enjoys hunting, as well as showing off on his Facebook page with his younger son, Mario, who is truly adorable. We enjoyed getting to know him and his mother at the Juhász reunion in 2017 – partially on account of their perfect command of English.

Next, I feature below the descendants of Eszter Tevely along with the third Eszter and her daughter Ágnes. Eszter was a chemist, who switched to Environmental Engineering midway in her career, while her daughter has a degree in Mathematics and is an actuary at an insurance company. Eszter’s husband was a Professor of Mechanical Engineering.



Eszter Bittera and daughter, Ágnes

Next comes the most populous subbranch of our Tevely – Juhász tree, that of Balázs Tevely.



I was fortunate to meet Tamás Tevely a year before he died and to receive from him a Tevely family tree, which was an excellent guide in my subsequent searches. On the left, I show a picture of him and his wife and Cléli sitting at their home. Cléli knew them and was kind enough to take us there.

In the next picture, I am sitting next Andrea, his daughter-in-law, while Attila is sitting opposite me. I am admiring a beautiful book that Andrea authored about Dührer, while Attila brought me some works of Béla Király, who played a key role in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Király was a relative of theirs via the grandmother of Tamás. The other picture shows me with the newlyweds, Nikolett Tevely and her husband, dropping in for a moment at the Gellért on their way to a ‘photoshoot’.



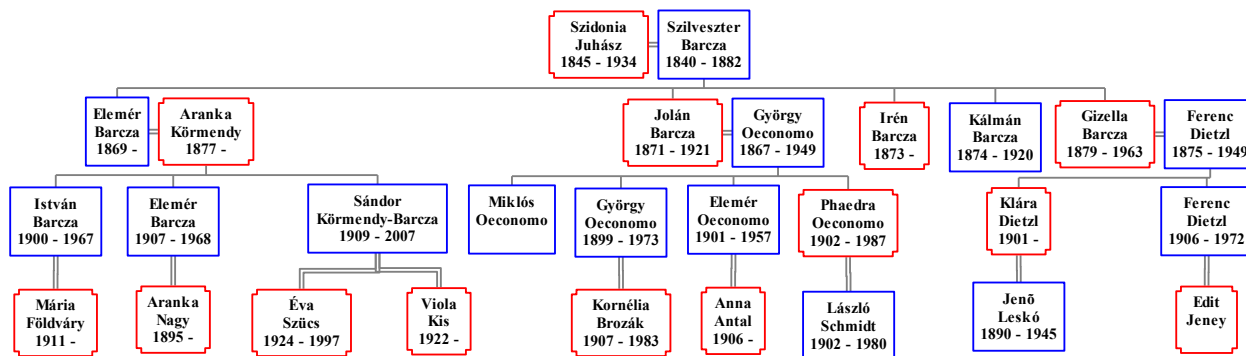
I also enjoyed getting to know Klári Tevely, who helped me with missing data concerning the family and sent me some pictures of tombstones marking the graves of members of her family. She communicates via her son, László, which makes correspondence a bit more difficult, but it is also true that I have been a poor letter writer lately. Klári’s husband was a Mathematics / Physics teacher, who died years ago. I would have enjoyed knowing him.

Summarizing the Tevely sub-branch’s contribution to my ‘cousin – count’, I have (or in too many cases, had) seven more 3rd cousins, namely

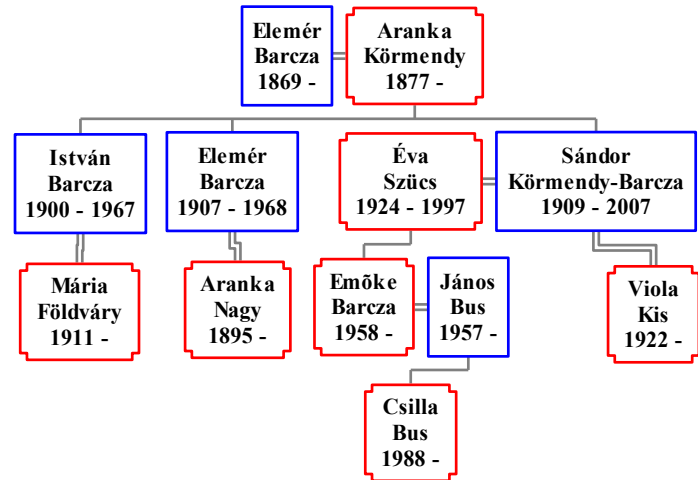
Erzsébet, Thyra, Tamás, Klára, Balázs and István Tevely and Eszter Grimm.

Unfortunately, of the seven, I met only Tamás in 2000, and he passed away soon afterwards. But I am in contact with Erzsébet, Thyra and Klára, as well as with the daughter of Eszter.

And now we come to **The Branch of Szidónia**, which I will introduce with yet another family tree in three sub-branches: Elemér’s, Jolán’s and Gizella’s sub-branches.



Looking at Elemér's sub-branch in more detail, we find **Emőke Barcza**, as the only 3rd cousin of mine. I met her in 2005. In fact, I also corresponded and visited with Emőke's father, Sándor, who still remembered my Great-grandfather Kálmán Juhász, as well as my mother playing the piano when she visited her uncle's family and her grandmother in Pusztakovácsi. Below I show a picture of Sándor, and one of Emőke and her daughter Csilla on Emőke's 50th birthday.



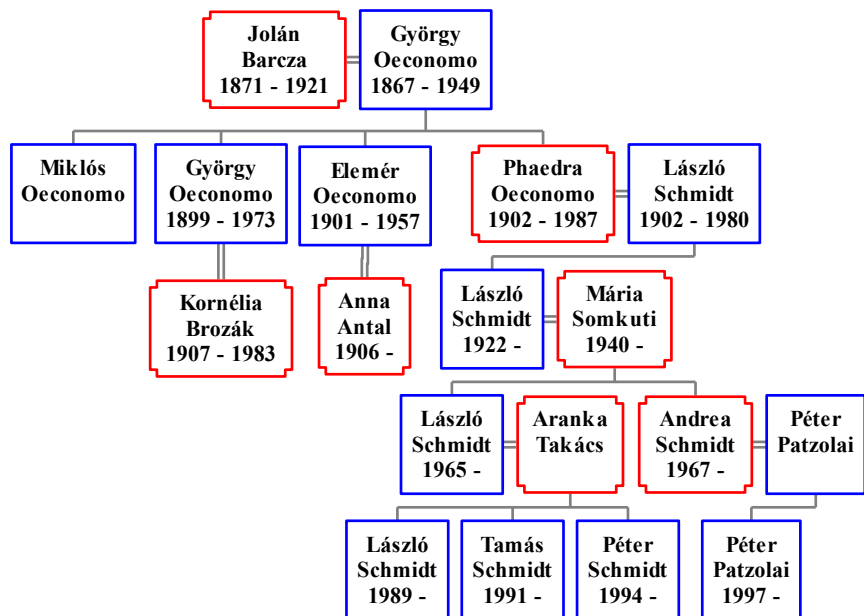
Sándor Barcza had many talents and corresponding degrees too, including one in Law. He was lamenting not getting his drivers' license renewed and hence not being able to go to his favorite sites at Lake Balaton to paint.





I greatly admired his paintings, some of which are shown above – thanks to Emőke’s efforts. Sándor and I managed some correspondence too via his granddaughter’s pen and I managed to visit him once in 2005.

Next, we come to Jolán’s sub-branch as shown on the right, from which it is clear that **László Schmidt** is the only additional 3rd cousin of mine. We (your mother and I) visited him in 2003. He is a pharmacist in Balatonlelle, with a son and a daughter. My mother used to correspond with his mother, Phaedra, whom I might have met in 1978 too. Adam and I visited briefly at the old family mansion with the younger László in Balatonboglár; seemingly, he and his wife have taken over the pharmacy since then. Their daughter Andrea is a medical doctor in Fonyód.



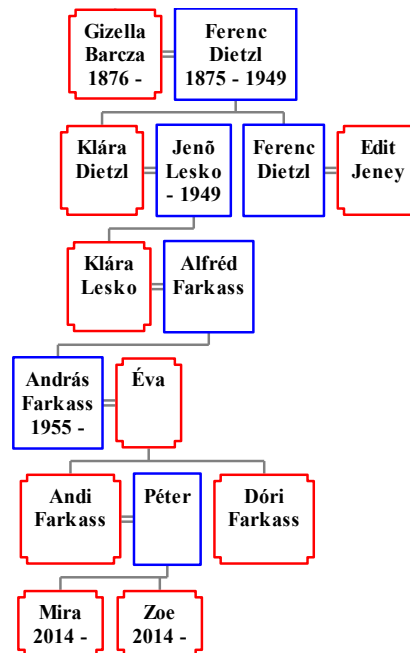
Mom took a picture of him and his wife, Marika with me in 2003; it is on the right. Below I have a more recent photo of them along with a picture of their daughter from her Facebook page.



I tried to communicate with both of their children but failed in the long run. On the other hand, 96 years old Cousin Laci responded very sweetly and wished us a happy reunion in 2017.

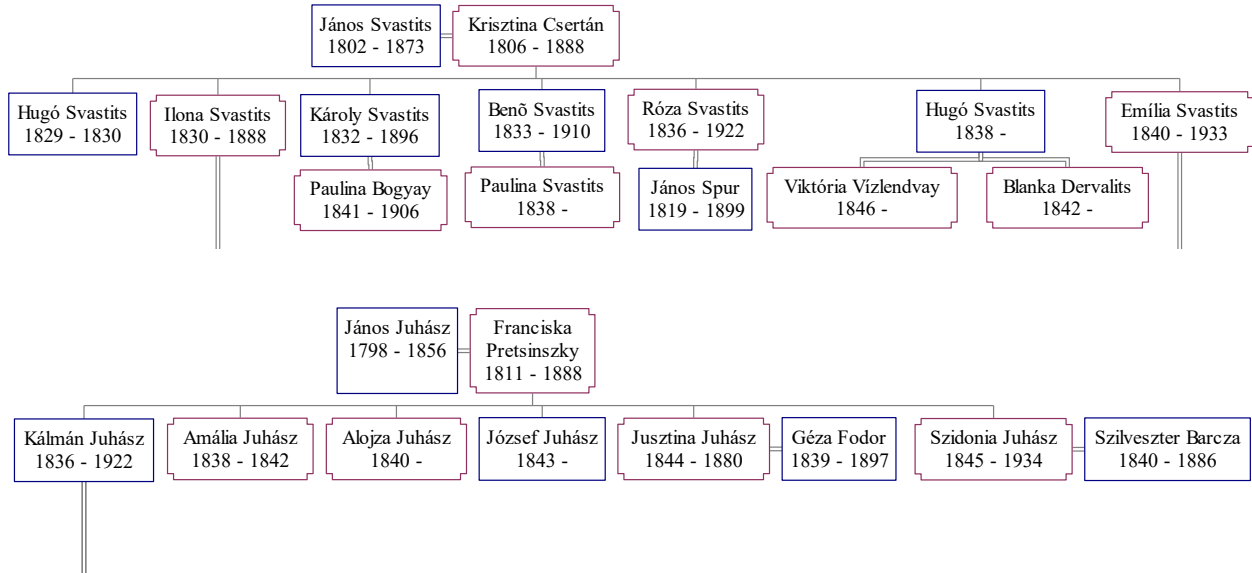
Adam, you met their son in November 2000; his 3 boys were still small at that time. It was raining and his big German shepherd was not very friendly. Afterwards I corresponded with him for some time, but I never managed to establish contact with his sister.

Concerning Gizella’s sub-branch, I fared even more poorly. I knew for some time that I have yet one more 3rd cousin, **Klára Leskó** in that sub-branch, and I knew even of her son, András, but only by a near-miracle did I manage to become acquainted with a second cousin of András and hence learn how to reach him. Hence, we exchanged several messages over the internet with me sharing all sorts of Juhász information with him, but he kept putting me off. Thus, the only things I learned about my 3rd cousin come from Judit Pompéry, whose grandmother was Jenő Leskó’s sister. In particular, I learned that Klára Leskó was known as ‘Móki’ in the family and had hopes of becoming an actress. When that dream didn’t materialize, she learned several languages and gained good employment in spite of the communist system in Hungary. She and her husband got divorced twice and married three times; it must have been a lot of fun to grow up in that family! The information I gathered, as well as the picture of Éva with her two daughters are to be credited to Éva’s Facebook page and not to András, whose responses were always polite, but negative. So be it!



My Juhász – Svastits great-grandparents and their descendants (including my 2nd cousins)

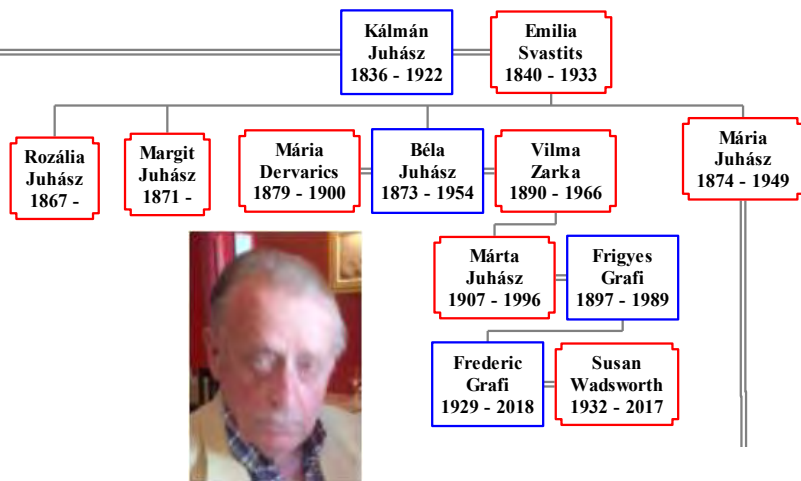
Please recall that I still have a couple of more great-grandparents of mine waiting to be ‘hitched’. More specifically, Great-grandfather Kálmán Juhász is still ‘on the loose’, and similarly Great-grandmother Emília Svastits was left alone many pages ago. To refresh your memory, here they are:



Please recall that Ilona Svastits found her match already in Imre Vargha; hence, it is only Emilia who is left. Her marriage to Kálmán Juhász took place in Keszthely on May 29, 1866, just about 150 years ago. They became the parents of two daughters who must have died young, as well as Béla bácsi and Mária Juhász, my Nagymama (grandmother), for whom I still left open the door as to whom she will marry (in spite the fact that I already called her chosen one ‘Grandfather’). Rather than Mária, she went by her second name, Lenke – just like your mother, who prefers Kay to Lillas.

In the family tree I am also introducing Márta néni, the lone descendant of Béla bácsi, her husband, as well as their son, Frici, who was my only 2nd cousin in the Juhász – Svastits Branch of the family in spite of the plural case I used in the parenthesized part of the title.

More formally, I had a 2nd cousin in **Frigyes Grafi, Jr.** The picture shown on the right is his last one.



In the family tree above, I want to call attention to the open connection to Great-grandfather Kálmán Juhász. It shows that he was married before marrying Great-grandmother Emilia Svastits.

Please recall that his first wife was Gizella Bogyay of Pusztakovácsi, who died at age 23, when their daughter, Vilma was barely a year old. Vilma was brought up by her Bogyay grandparents - -- hence, our relationship with the Bogyay family of Pusztakovácsi was always strong.

And now it is time to say a few words about my great-grandparents, Márta néni, as well as her son, Fred, whom I always called Frici. However, for starters let me show a picture from 1911, when teachers at one of the high schools of the Norbertine Order visited in Nikla.



In it I clearly recognize my Berzsényi grandfather holding a pipe, Béla bácsi behind him on the right and I strongly believe that next to Béla bácsi with his hat on is Great-grandfather Kálmán Juhász. Sitting in front of them is my Juhász grandmother (recall that I have yet to marry her off to my Berzsényi grandfather) and going from her to the left you see Mariska néni, to be followed by her nieces, whom I am yet to introduce. (Nevertheless, I will let you in on the secret: going from right to left, the girls are Babi néni, Piri néni and my mother – sitting partially in the lap of possibly, Vilma néni, with her husband sitting next to her.) The others are probably the visiting teachers, but the standing lady may be Mariska néni's companion. It could also be that the priest standing next to my great-grandfather is (Gyarmathy) Jancsi bácsi, who might have been instrumental in bringing the visitors to Nikla.

Via his first marriage, Great-grandfather Kálmán Juhász was a landowner of about 800 acres, which were later divided between Béla bácsi and Nagymama.

In the next picture, taken in Nikla in 1923, Great-grandmother Emilia Svastits is the second person on the right sitting in front. To her right is her daughter, Lenke (my Nagymama), while her son, Béla bácsi is sitting between Mariska néni (next to Great-grandmother) and either Vilma néni or Margit Gyarmathy, Mariska néni's first cousin and companion (just 'intelligent' guessing again).



Standing in the back are my mother, István Lájpczig (Pisti bácsi, whom I will introduce in Part 2A of these volumes), Piri néni and Babi néni between two visiting officers.

My knowledge of Great-grandmother Emilia Svastits comes mostly from the memoirs of Márta néni, her granddaughter, who idolized her. Quoting from the memoirs of Márta néni, “She was an excellent pianist, and spoke both German and French fluently. Her big wish was to visit Rome and to see the pope, so she learned Latin in preparation. When she was 16 years old, her parents fulfilled her wish and the pope received her. They conversed in Latin.” I learned about her charity concerts from original sources; there were several complimentary news-stories reporting on them. By subscribing to the Hungarian ‘Arcanum’ site, I managed to locate them.

Unfortunately, I know very little about Great-grandfather Kálmán Juhász, but a second cousin of my mother, Sándor Barcza, whom I introduced earlier, still knew him, and remembered him fondly. He told me that my great-grandfather liked to go to Kaposvár, where he spent much of his youth drinking and singing Hungarian songs with his friends to the accompaniment of gypsy musicians. Such merrymaking is called “mulatás” in Hungarian, a wonderful pastime when you are young and free of cares. His second wife, my great-grandmother Emilia Svastits must have been more understanding, since her father, János Svastits was famous not only for his wonderful compositions, but also for merrymaking (while his estate lasted). Such extravaganza was costly even then.

Concerning Béla bácsi, I remember him vaguely from my childhood, of going to his place by a back-road sometimes by carriage and at times via sleigh, and I remember meeting there with Frici, as well as with Imre Maár, a distant Barcza-relative of mine and an excellent correspondent of mine over the years. His family was a landowner in Pusztakovácsi too and Frici and him were boarders at the parents of Egon Svastits in Kaposvár while they were students there. Béla bácsi used to come over to Nikla too in order to give advice to Nagymama in the running of the estate or just to visit. Below, I show a picture of him and his family.

As a young man, Béla bácsi was a student of law in Budapest but decided to enlist in the military when he turned 21. Hence, he became an officer in the cavalry ('huszár' in Hungarian). He fought in World War I, was decorated six times, but his injuries forced him into retirement in 1924 as a lieutenant colonel. Thereafter he was managing his estate of 400 acres in Pusztakovácsi. His first wife died young, and his second wife was only 16 when they got married. She left him for his best friend when Márta néni was still a small child. Thereafter Márta néni lived in Zalaegerszeg with her mother and stepfather, spending only parts of her summers in Pusztakovácsi. She was just a couple of years younger than my mother and they were good friends in spite of their different upbringings. Márta néni was brought up partially in Zalaegerszeg by her mother, while my mother lived in Nikla, far from any city.



Márta néni met her husband, Frici bácsi, who was also in the cavalry, at one of the hunts in nearby Nikla, and after marrying him they enjoyed a rich social life wherever he was stationed. Much of her autobiography is about that. However, at the end of World War II, they got separated when her husband stayed in Germany while she went back to Hungary with their son.

After Frici graduated from high school, he joined his father in Austria. I still remember when he came to say goodbye to us in Nikla prior to his escape; he was of the same age as I was when I left in 1956 some 8 years later. Márta néni stayed in Hungary and much of the rest of her book is about those years. She took care of her parents, as well as her stepfather during their old age during the worst years of communism by teaching German secretly and earning some money that way.

She joined her husband and son in Canada only after her parents' death. I visited them there a couple of times, once with Mom and you, Eric and Daniel, and have a few pictures here to remind you of that visit. But first, I show the picture she sent me of the three of them earlier: Frici bácsi, Márta néni and Frici.





The first picture shows the Eric and Daniel with Vanessa and Eric Grafi and their mother behind them, while the second one features Márta néni, Frici bácsi, Kay, the kids and me.

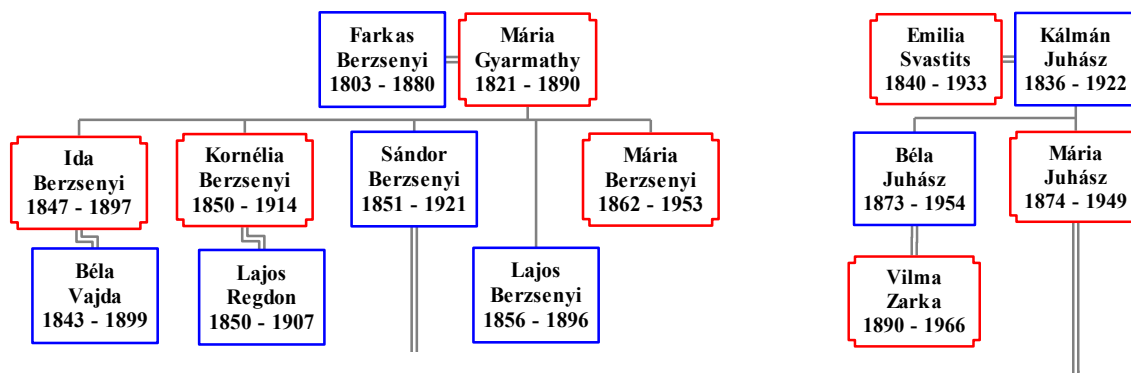


The third picture was taken when I visited them alone, while the fourth one was taken on the 90th birthday of Frici bácsi, and was published in the November 1987 issue of *Krónika*, an excellent Hungarian publication in Toronto which was edited at that time by László (Laci) Endes, a friend of the family. I visited with them too when I was in Canada, but by now not only Márta néni and Frici bácsi, but Frici and his wife, Susan, as well as Laci Endes are all gone.

I try to stay in touch with Vanessa and even have some photos from her, but she lives a busy life with two growing kids with not much time left for correspondence. In any case, young people in this day and age are not like my mother was, who kept up with all of her relatives, or Márta néni, who also responded to each of my letters with wonderful letters of her own – in her very distinct handwriting.

My Maternal grandparents and Berzsenyi – Juhász 1st cousins

The next marriage I must ‘perform’ is that of Grandfather Sándor Berzsenyi and Grandmother Mária Lenke Juhász. Recalling that Sándor was a son of Farkas Berzsenyi while Lenke was a daughter of Kálmán Juhász, the ‘loose ends’ we are to connect are shown here:



Married
in
Pusztakovácsi
December 29, 1898



First, I want to write a bit about my grandparents, starting with another picture of them on the right, taken some time after they got married. It clearly bears out the judgement of my late cousin, Attila Gyarmathy that she was one of the most beautiful women of the Province of Somogy. Supposedly, my grandfather was visiting in Pusztakovácsi and upon seeing her while she was still in the crib announced that he will wait for her. He did. In spite of losing both of their sons as infants, they must have had a happy marriage.

Though I never knew my grandfather, I will refer to him as ‘Nagypapa’ since I called my grandmother ‘Nagymama’ too. He was a lawyer, who came back to Nikla to manage the family estate only when his brother, Lajos became ill (with tuberculosis), but he kept up with his practice by maintaining a joint office with his distant cousin, Ignác Lajpczig in Marcali. They also partnered in the opening of a library room for the people of Nikla.



Next, I show a picture of my Berzsenyi grandfather with some of his relatives. It was taken in 1912 on the occasion of the installation of Jenő Berzsenyi as the overseeing presbyter of the Lutheran Church on the western side of the Danube (called Dunántúl, meaning “beyond the Danube” since the term was created by someone on the other side).



Sitting from left to right are Jenő Berzsenyi (1865-1953, who was a lawyer in Siklós), Gyula Berzsenyi (1836-1913, who lived in Keszthely), and Jenő Berzsenyi (1845-1931, who was a famous medical doctor in Kemenessömlén). Standing to the right of Grandfather are Dezső Berzsenyi (1846-1934, who was a lawyer in Celldömölk and the great-grandfather of Éva and Jutka Berzsenyi-Janosits), Ádám Berzsenyi (1895-1969, who was a lawyer), and György Berzsenyi (1888-1971, who was Ádám’s brother and the father of the olympic silver medalist foil-fencer Barnabás Berzsenyi). They were all very devoted Lutherans, supporting and leading the church wherever they lived. Many of them will be introduced more properly in Part 2B of these volumes.

There is an excellent article about the contributions of the family entitled „Az Egyházasberzsenyi Berzsenyiek” by Sándor Payr, one of the most outstanding theologian bishops, which appeared in the 1931 edition of the „Luther Naptár” (Luther Calendar) on pp. 130-136. It is in the section entitled “From the treasure house of the Lutheran spirit”, where only three or four other families were so honored. Interestingly, Payr himself became a member of our family, since he and his brother, Gustav married the Turcsányi sisters Sarolta and Erzsébet, respectively, who were the granddaughters of Eszter Berzsenyi (1814-1881).

Earlier my grandfather was named the superintendent of the diocese of Somogy a year before he got married. According to the nice article sited above, my grandfather regularly attended the religious meetings of the Lutheran church in far-away Sopron (where he studied, like his father and grandfather, Dániel) and Győr (where he got his law degree) from far-away Nikla. He also drove all around Somogy in his carriage (with his foursome of excellent horses) when Bishop Ferenc Gyurácz visited his congregation in 1899. By that time, he bought out the Fischer family, and in

particular, their homestead, which included a nice Lutheran chapel. It was recently restored and can be seen on the right side of the road as one drives into Nikla from Marcali.

At this point I wish to feature another group picture of Berzsenyis, presumably taken some time during World War I, judging from the uniforms of several men around the table. Unfortunately, I don't know where it was taken, and apart from my grandfather (second from the left, I can't identify anyone for sure. They seem to be playing cards. Is that my grandmother sitting in the back? Are they playing in the small office opening onto the larger dining room? I can't tell.



After the war, during the brief 'Red Terror' of communism there were some disturbances in Nikla too; in particular, someone shot through the side door of the house of my grandparents. In reaction to that, Nagypapa had strong metal bars installed on the doors to the outside. That safety measure came in handy after World War II also, and I remember how we always put the bars up at night and took them down each morning in Mariska néni's house, where he also had them installed.

In the initial publication of his book¹, István Hársházi, the chronicler of Nikla also told the story of how my grandfather stood up for the people of the village during the 'White Terror' following the 'Red Terror'. When he learned that several of the communist leaders of the village were taken to Marcali for 'questioning', he immediately went there to ensure their release.

Unfortunately, he died long before I was born, and I never asked anyone about him enough to 'know' him. But I do remember my grandmother well and have fond memories of her loving care for Zolti and me. Her name for me was 'Pócsi' and for Zolti it was 'Mócsi'; I would love to transfer those endearing nicknames to Phoebe and Meredith, whose names have the corresponding initial letters. Unfortunately, we live too far from them to ensure the 'sticking' of those names.

¹ István Hársházi, *Niklai Hagyományok*, Kaposvár, 1978

However, I better get back to the times when both my grandparents were young and ambitious to have a family of their own. I show below their children and grandchildren, leaving my mother without a husband for the time being.



Babi and Piri Néni – as you remember them



Snapshots of Laci, Gaston and Lenke (Hugi) are shown on the left.

Unfortunately, Laci and Gaston are no longer with us.

Indeed, **László Köllő**, **Gaston Ungár** and **Lenke Ungár** are my three 1st cousins in the Berzsenyi – Juhász Branch of the family. Laci and Gaston have passed away in recent years, but Hugi and I still talk on the phone and correspond.

I will tell you more about Babi and Piri néni in a separate piece entitled “My maternal aunts and uncles” and about my cousins too in one entitled “My first cousins”. I also have a special tribute about Hugi.

Returning to my grandparents, you need to keep in mind that my grandfather was much older than my grandmother. In addition, probably on account of his weight, he had heart problems in his later years. My mother remembered the need for being quiet, which must have been depressing. In fact, I suspect that the upbringing of their daughters was mostly left to her mother even while her father was alive.

Upon his death from a heart attack, my grandmother had to manage the large estate too, which she could not do without overseers. Unfortunately, they were more loyal to their own causes than to the family’s, and hence the estate suffered economically during the difficult times of the twenties and thirties. She also inherited the responsibility of looking after her sister-in-law’s holdings, which was an additional burden.

Concerning the schooling of my mother and her sisters, they had English, German and French governesses, who also gave them piano lessons, and in the case of Babi and Piri néni, my grandmother enrolled them in the ‘Angol Kisasszonyok’² in Budapest for a couple of years.

Upon my grandfather’s death, Nagymama also had to make certain that their daughters find good husbands. They had to be taken to various balls in Budapest, Kaposvár and elsewhere to be introduced to ‘Society’. Hunts and other events had to be organized in Nikla, and ‘the right people’ to be invited to them -- and Nagymama also needed to ensure that ‘fortune hunters’ were kept away, since the large Berzsenyi holding was tempting. She succeeded admirably, with all three daughters marrying military officers, which was typical and highly desirable in those days.

Moreover, she had to live up to the family’s expectations of paying proper respect to our famous ancestor, Dániel Berzsenyi. The scene below depicts the celebrations of 1926, when a plaque was unveiled on the poet’s house by Archduke Albrecht, commemorating the 150th anniversary of Berzsenyi’s birth. There were close to 1500 people at the ceremonies, and 160 of the guests were treated to a sit-down lunch.



In the picture above, Nagymama stands with the archduke in front of a Hungarian flag that was embroidered by her for the occasion, while in the one below, she sits between the archduke and my mother. By the way, while she did not teach me embroidery, she taught me how to mend socks, and had me thread her needle time and again.

² Mary Ward Sisters; since 2004: Congregatio Jesu -- one of the most important female teaching orders of the Catholic Church. The “Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary” was founded in 1609 and operated a school in Hungary too.



Her three daughters were very different from one another. While my mother and Piri néni enjoyed horseback riding, Babi néni was much more at home with her plants and flowers. Consequently, Nagymama had proper horses and arranged for riding lessons for the two younger ones, while she had a hothouse built for Babi néni's pleasure. However, although she was an excellent cook and was very much at home in the kitchen, she didn't pass that on to her daughters. She must have assumed that they will always have appropriate employees to take care of the household. It must not have occurred to her that one day they will have to do everything for themselves.

One of my favorite picture is shown on the right, taken probably in the summer of 1939 with Hugi, Gaszton and me. Nagymama was a very loving grandmother, who enjoyed having us around. Before and during World War II, my mother, Zolti, and I usually spent the summers in Nikla along with Piri néni, Gaston and Lenke (Hugi). Due to their military involvements, Károly bácsi and my father could join us only occasionally.



During the last year of the war, I think Károly bácsi stayed in Nikla too, at least, most of the time. In the picture on the right, Nagymama is in the center, Károly bácsi and Piri néni are on the left, while mother and my father's brother, Gábor bácsi are on the right, with Hugi, myself and Gaston in front --- in the summer of 1941, I think. I also have a couple of other photos from around the same time, with Nagymama in them, but none more recent.



Unfortunately, the Köllő family was living in Marcali (and later in nearby Gomba), since Bandi bácsi was assigned to the militia there. Therefore, none of them are in any of the photos from that era.

The next photo on the right was taken a year or so later, when Zolti was still a baby. This seems to be the only photo I have of my father in uniform. Sitting on the right is the village's priest, József Baráth, who gave me my first communion on May 15, 1947; I still have a keepsake commemorating that event.



When the WWII front was approaching Nikla, we finally moved to our apartment in Szombathely, along with Nagymama, who didn't want to leave the country, and hence we stayed in Hungary too.

Unfortunately, Zolti got very sick, and hence my mother couldn't leave him even after traveling became once again normalized. Therefore, it was decided that I should accompany Nagymama on her return trip to Nikla, in the hope of arranging for my mother's and Zolti's return, since we were already evicted from our apartment in Szombathely and had nowhere else to go. I was 6 years old, and probably no help at all. Neither do I remember much of what we did, where we went, etc. We stayed at the house of one of the family's most trusted servants, the coachman Sándor Hosszú, who was not too happy to put us up, but was still unsure what would happen now that the war was over, and the Berzsenyi family was returning to their village.

We found that the old house where my Nagymama used to live was not habitable. The furniture was mostly gone, the windows were broken, and even the doors were taken. But the other residence, where the Berzsenyi Museum is now housed, was in better shape and my grandmother was able to gather enough pieces to furnish a room for us in that house. Therefore, by the time my brother was well enough to travel, we had a place for the family. At that time, there were still some occupying Russian forces in the village, and some of the soldiers shared the house with us -- keeping their horses in the last room of the house. They were simple and well-meaning country boys, who managed a separate life from the village's population, and most of us kids were often fascinated by their singing and accordion playing.

Later, after my father returned from the American P.O.W. camp in Germany, we managed to move back to her old home by the road, and Nagymama had a few relatively peaceful years. My father

did wonders with the 300 acres left to the family, and there was hope for the future again. It all ended on the 5th of April 1949, when we were told to leave our home immediately. We were not entirely surprised, since the pressure had been building up for some months already towards giving up the land and there were more and more additional taxes levied on us of the size we could not possibly pay. Nevertheless, that was the last straw for my grandmother, who came down with a mysterious illness later diagnosed as a liver ailment. It's first sign was that one morning, while still in bed, she called my father's attention to some cobwebs, thinking that a mouse was caught in them. Clearly, she was hallucinating, so we called the doctor the next day. He was known as „Dódi” and was a decent guy. Dódi suggested hospitalization, and hence, as soon as we made the move (again, to Mariska néni's house), my father took Nagymama to Budapest for possible treatment. She died there on the 16th of May 1949.

Unfortunately, my memories of Nagymama are very vague, but I still remember sitting in her lap lots of times as a little boy. I also remember that one of her hands (maybe the right) was nearly immobilized by an infection caused by cutting it while opening a metal can. It happened when my mother was still a young lady, and the whole family took a vacation on the Adriatic Sea, in the resort town of Abbázia. It seems she had to be rushed to Budapest, where her hand was operated on by the very best surgeon of Hungary, Dr. Verebély, but even he couldn't restore Nagymama's hand entirely. Nevertheless, she continued to function as if everything was well. She was an outstanding hostess, whose house was frequented by friends and relatives throughout the years.

Next, I have yet another picture of my Nagymama, taken from her passport application from 1931, when she and my mother asked to go to Czechoslovakia in order to visit relatives there. Of course, I have no idea whom they went to visit -- maybe some Pretszinsky or Juhász relatives? There is no one I can ask.

She was loved and adored by her three daughters, their husbands, and by all five of her grandchildren. Her funeral was the first I ever attended, and hence it remains even more vividly in my memory.

Before closing this section, I will feature one more photo from my mother's girlhood, showing Great-grandmother Emilia Svastits, Mariska néni and Béla bácsi sitting in front, while Margit Gyarmathy, my mother, Lájpczig Pisti bácsi, Babi néni, Piri néni and one of the visiting Krausz brothers are standing in the back – from left to right. The picture was taken in 1928, not long before Piri néni got married.



Her husband, Baron Károly Ungár (Károly bácsi) was one of the most decorated heroes of World War I. In fact, with the Order of Maria Theresia that was awarded to him, he was elevated to be a baron, with forenames reflecting the locations where his bravery was demonstrated. My memories of him date back to the wartime years of 1941-1945 and they are rather mixed. The same goes for Piri néni.

Babi néni was the last to get married, she and Bandi bácsi were married in 1938. He was a major in the csendőr (countryside peacekeeping force) division of the Hungarian military, and I thought very highly of him. I liked Babi néni too, and I felt sorry for her too. On the whole, they were not prepared to cope with the difficult life in which they found themselves under communism, and they struggled a lot.

I wrote about my aunts and uncles separately and will conclude that writing in Part 2A of the present edition too – hence I will part from them for the time being. I also wrote a separate piece about my cousins; hence I will part from them too. Nevertheless, I will include here a few photos of us at my brother's place; he always made sure that the five of us cousins spend at least a few hours together whenever I went home. The first one shows Laci, Zolti's wife Judit, me, Hugi and Laci's wife, Márta (from left to right).



The next one shows Zolti, Zoli, Adam, Gizike (Gaston's wife) and Gaston. In the last one, Gaston, me and Laci are posing, again from left to right. The first two were taken at Zolti's place in Budapest, while the last one was taken in Nikla, in the wonderfully restored old manor house where my mother and her sisters and earlier, where my Berzsenyi grandfather and his siblings grew up. Gaston, Hugi, Zolti and I spent there the summers of our first few years there too.,



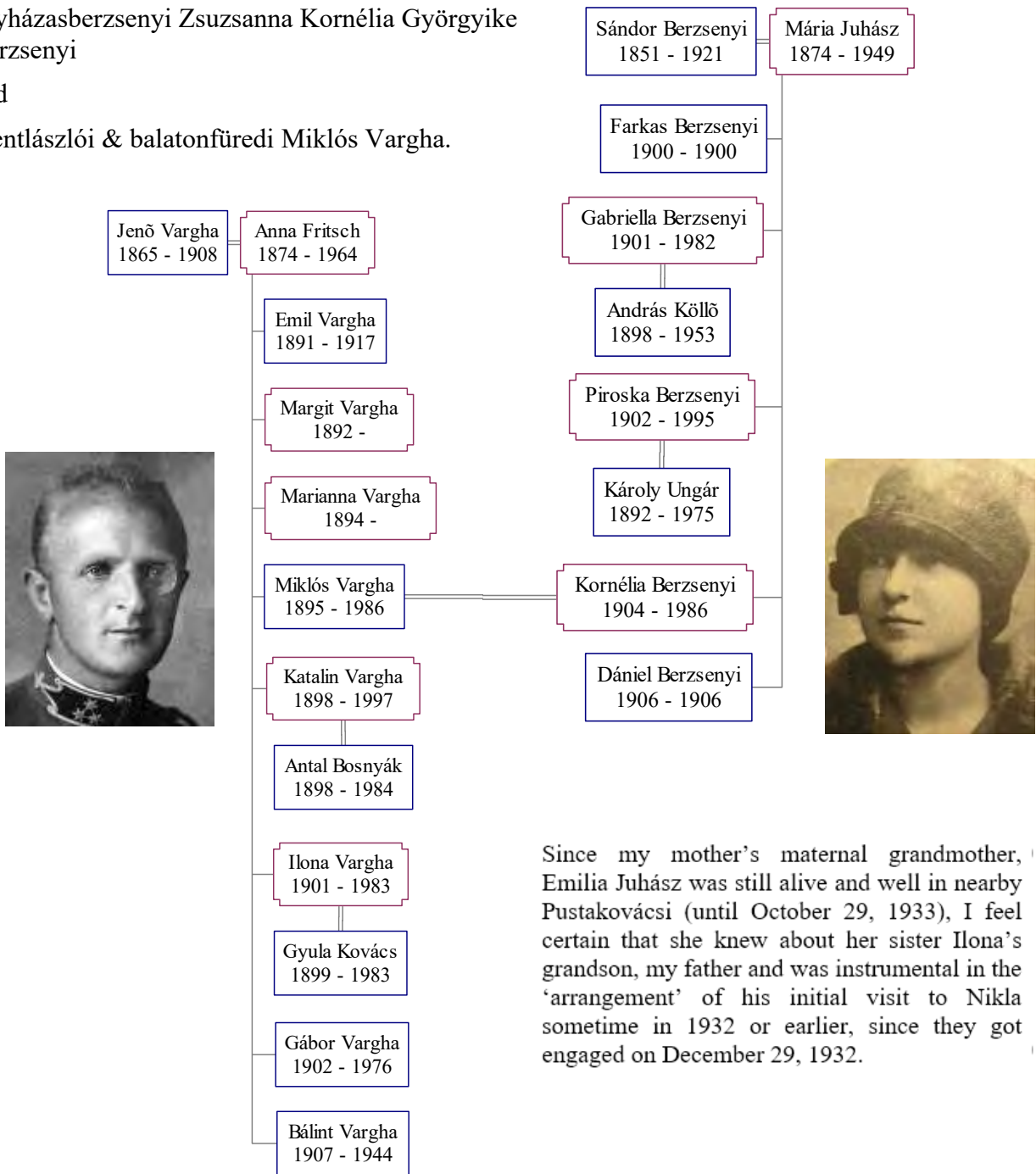
My Parents

The time has come to legitimize ourselves, and to repeat the marriage vows my parents must have said on the 26th of October, 1935 in Hungarian in Nikla, in the Province of Somogy. Hence I hereby join, as in matrimony, my parents,

egyházasberzsényi Zsuzsanna Kornélia Györgyike Berzsényi

and

szentlászlói & balatonfüredi Miklós Vargha.



Since my mother's maternal grandmother, Emilia Juhász was still alive and well in nearby Pustakovácsi (until October 29, 1933), I feel certain that she knew about her sister Ilona's grandson, my father and was instrumental in the 'arrangement' of his initial visit to Nikla sometime in 1932 or earlier, since they got engaged on December 29, 1932.

Below I show the announcement of their engagement, followed by the announcement of their wedding, as well as the official registrations thereof prior to showing their wedding photo.

*Egyházasmegyei írásban
Berzsenyi Györggy
szülés helye: Balatonfűredi
L. Vargha Miklós
- a házasságkötés helyén
gyógyult
Vilka, 1935. október 16.*

EDYHÁZAS-NAGYBERZSENYI BERZSENYI KORNELIA, GYÖRGYI
ÉS
SZENTLÁZSLÓI ÉS BALATONFÜREDI L. VARGHA MIKLÓS
M. KIR. SZÜZSÉGSZÁMBRA
ÖRÖMMEL TUDATJÁK, HOGY F. HÓ 17-ÉN D. E. K. 11 ÓRAKOR TARTJÁK
ESKÜVŐJÜKET A NIKLAI RÓM. KATH. TEMPLOMBAN,

NIKLA, 1934. ÉVI OKTÓBER HÓ.

Szent, Balaton

Somogy vármegye város.

Házassági anyakönyvi kivonat.

Év- hón- nappal	A házasságkötés helye (sz. helye, pl. templom)	A vőlegény		A menyasszony		A házasságkötés formája (szülői és utóneve)	Házasságkötés helye (szülői és utóneve)
		(születési és anyanyelvi neve, születési helye)	születési helye és utóneve	születési és anyanyelvi neve, születési helye	születési helye és utóneve		
Niklai 1935 október 16	Niklai 1935 október 16	Szentlázslói és Balatonfűredi L. Vargha Miklós - a házasságkötés helyén - köt. 1905. márc. 18. Lajos utca lak. Budapest T. 1031. sz. u. 45	Niklai Szentlázslói és Balatonfűredi Vargha Károly - Földes utca Borsfű	Egyházas-megyeri Somogyi Berzsenyi Kornelia - a házasságkötés helyén - köt. 1904. márc. 11. Nikla lak. Nikla	Niklai Györggy - a házasságkötés helyén - köt. 1900. márc. 11. Nikla lak. Nikla	Kassai és Balatonfűredi Vargha János - a házasságkötés helyén - köt. 1900. márc. 11. Nikla lak. Nikla	Dr. Berta Lajos anyakönyvszerző helyettes - a házasságkötés helyén - köt. 1900. márc. 11. Nikla lak. Nikla

Helyi bejegyzés - Kivonat

Bizonyítom, hogy ez a kivonat a
anyakönyvi bejegyzés házassági anyakönyvi címmel megegyezik.

Niklai, 1935. nov. 15.

Niklai
Dr. Berta Lajos

(Állomány: 24)

Parents					Children				
No.	Name	Birth	Death	Marriage	No.	Name	Birth	Death	Marriage
1	John	1845	1915	1870	1	John	1870	1940	1900
2	Mary	1845	1915	1870	2	Mary	1870	1940	1900
3	John	1845	1915	1870	3	John	1870	1940	1900
4	Mary	1845	1915	1870	4	Mary	1870	1940	1900
5	John	1845	1915	1870	5	John	1870	1940	1900
6	Mary	1845	1915	1870	6	Mary	1870	1940	1900
7	John	1845	1915	1870	7	John	1870	1940	1900
8	Mary	1845	1915	1870	8	Mary	1870	1940	1900
9	John	1845	1915	1870	9	John	1870	1940	1900
10	Mary	1845	1915	1870	10	Mary	1870	1940	1900



While I don't have any hope to identify everyone in the wedding party, I certainly hope that I will have a name with most of the faces visible there --- in **Part 2: More about Them**, giving myself a bit of time until then. For the present, let us be satisfied with the following identifications:



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 = My mother, Kornélia Berzsenyi | 2 = My father, Miklós Vargha |
| 3 = My grandmother, Lenke Juhász | 4 = My grandmother, Anna Fritsch |
| 5 = My aunt, Piri néni | 6 = My uncle, Károly bácsi |
| 7 = My aunt, Babi nlni | 8 = My great-aunt, Mariska néni |
| 9 = My father's guardian, Gábor bácsi | 10 = My uncle, Gabi bácsi |
| 11 = Béla's grandmother, Jolán Lájpczig, | 13 = Hédi's father, Géza Fodor |
| 14 = Baroness Finta | 15 = Hédi's grandmother, Ilona Pfeffer |
| 17 = István Lájpczig | 20 = Márta Juhász |
| 21 = Frici Grafi | 23 = Baron Finta |
| 26 = Béla Juhász | 27 = Gini's father, Zoltán Fodor |
| 28 = Gini's mother, Mária Straasaldo | |

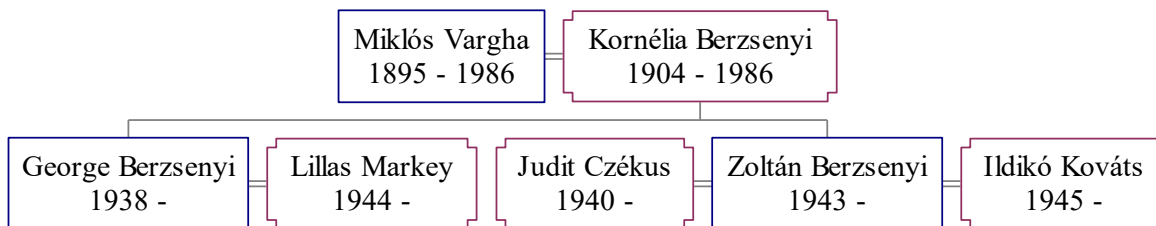


As far as I know, my parents lived first in Budapest, then in Székesfehérvár (in 1937), and finally in Szombathely (in 1939) after their marriage. I was born in Budapest while they were already in Székesfehérvár, but Zolti waited until after they moved to Szombathely to be born there. Their marriage seemed to be solid throughout their 51 years together, but it was more the caring than the loving variety. My father was kind and generous, loving and giving, and he lived in the present. My mother was strong willed and reserved, caring and measured, and much of the time lived in the past. Both were very hard on themselves, and both could cope with hardships and injustices. But while my father could get over such unpleasant turns of events, my mother was less flexible. Both were very proud, but they manifested it differently.

Fortunately, they had a few years of peacetime after their marriage. While they had a nice apartment in Szombathely, Mother preferred to be in Nikla and help her mother handle the management of the estate. Hence Zolti and I spent much of our childhood there.

My Brother and I

And here we are, my brother and myself, the offspring of our parents' marriage. Just the two of us with our better halves. As in the case of my cousins, I will not go to the next generation; for that you will have to wait till **Parts 2A and 3**, which are 'in preparation', as I used to say about mathematical articles I planned to write, but didn't yet do so.



As mentioned earlier, though I changed my name to Berzsényi in 1961, in Hungary I am still Vargha (György Sándor, to be precise). I don't recall the year my brother became Berzsényi, but I know it was later.

Below I feature our birth registrations --- first mine, since I am the older, and then Zolti's with some comments to follow afterwards.

Kiszórolag katonai ügyben díj- és bélyegmentes.

Születési anyakönyvi kivonat.

Az állampolgársági szám: 3001 28 102

Pályaszám	A bejegyzés ideje (év, hó, nap)	A születés ideje (év, hó, nap)	A gyermek utónéve, neme, vallása	A szülők		A születés helye, ha a születés nem az anyai lakóhely területén	A korábbi előző testvérek megjegyzései. Aláírások.
				apai és anyai név, állampolgárság, lakóhelye	varos, község		
	1938	1938	György Sándor	Vargha Miklós Kornélia Berzsényi	Budapest I. ker. 12. sz. utca	Budapest I. ker. 12. sz. utca	

Utólagos bejegyzések. — Kiegészítések.

Bizonyítom, hogy ez a kivonat a Budapesti I. ker. áll. anyakönyvtárhoz megegyezően a születési anyakönyvvel megegyező.

Kelt: Budapest, 1967. május 1.

[Signature]
anyakönyvtáros

18. sz. előírás az A. U. 115-§-ának
10. cikkének és 12. cikkének

My first name was probably György, because our first known Vargha ancestors were named György too, and the middle name of Sándor was chosen because my maternal grandfather was Sándor too. In Zolti's case, his first name might

Adószám: 2462490096

Születési anyakönyvi kivonat.

Pálya szám	A gyermek születési ideje (év, hó, nap)	A születés helye (év, hó, nap)	A gyermek előneve, néme, vallása	A szülők		A gyermek anyja és a születés előtti anyja házassági állapota	Alkalmazott általános megjegyzések, aláírások.
				anyai és apai, név (születési) lakóhely	életkor		
	1943	Zoltán	Károly	népnyelv. tanár, Zoltán Fodor Vargha Miklós m. kir. k. tábornok	27	Zombalkély 1900.01.01	Ennek a gyermeknek a születését megelőzően a szülői házban nem volt más gyermek. A szülők házassági állapota: házasságban. A gyermek anyja és a születés előtti anyja házassági állapota: házasságban. A gyermek anyja és a születés előtti anyja házassági állapota: házasságban.
	27	28	Sándor	Berzsenyi Ágostonné Kovács Györgyné Zombalkély Dr. Vass József	31	Zombalkély	

Általános megjegyzések — Különítések.

Bizonytalan, hogy ez a kivonat a Zombalkély anyakönyvi terület területi anyakönyvével megegyezik. Kelt Zombalkély, 1943. május 15.

1943. május 15.

10. sz. melléklet a 10. sz. T.É. 1943. május 15. napján.

have been chosen to honor Zoltán Fodor, my god-father, or Dr. Zoltán Berzsenyi, the organizer of the 1941 Berzsenyi reunion, or because my mother's little brother, who died as an infant was named Dániel Zoltán. His middle name of Károly was probably in honor of Károly bácsi, who may have been the one to introduce my father to my mother.

Let me also call attention to the fact that my father's full name with the double forename is spelled out, as well as his title of 'lófő' in the 'Comments' column. And now for a couple of pictures for posterity follow:



At this point the present journey is over. Naturally, I will have a lot more to say about my parents and my brother, and even more about myself, but for the time being, I am DONE.

QED, as in mathematics. And as there, some 'Corollaries' will follow in **Parts 2A and 3**.

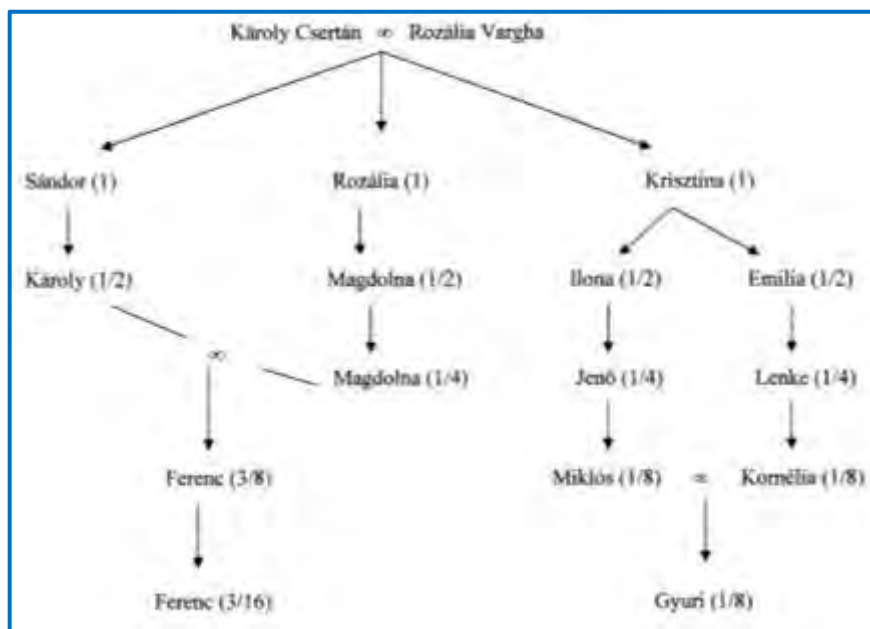
Please, bear with me!

The Csertán – Vargha Branch revisited

At this point I want to fulfill a promise made earlier, and prove that Ferenc Csertán, whom I thanked earlier for his incredible help with my Csertán ancestry is a 3rd cousin of mine in spite of appearances to the contrary. To do so, please recall that Sándor, Rozália and Krisztina Csertán were the children of Károly Csertán and Rozália Vargha.

Since Károly Csertán and Rozália Vargha were Feri's and my earliest common ancestors, the chart below starts with them and three of their children, who were our great-grandparents (listed without their spouses). The parenthesized numbers following the first names indicate the amount of CV-blood (short for Csertán – Vargha inheritance) they carry with them. Its amount is halved with each generation due to the 'significant others', and hence it trickles down to 3/16 in case of Feri and 1/8 in case of me. Thus, since $3/16 > 1/8$, the common amount of CV-blood we have is 1/8 unit. That is exactly the amount of common blood between ordinary 3rd cousins too, and hence, in spite of the fact that Feri and I don't originate from the same great-great-grandparents, for all practical purposes we are 3rd cousins.

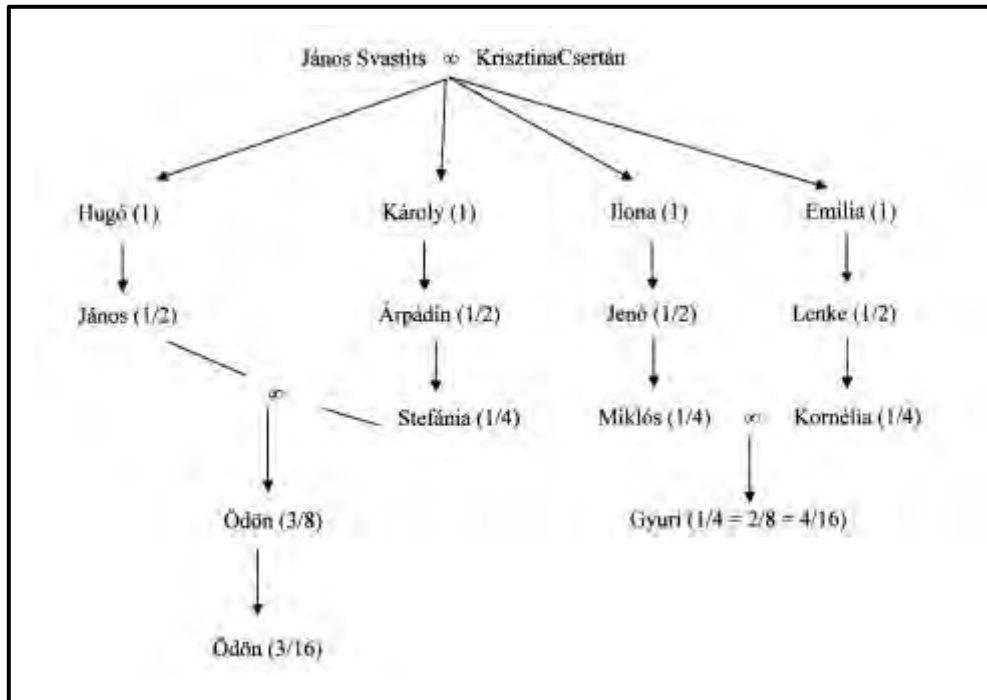
(Note that Feri's paternal grandfather married the daughter of his Csertán – Vargha 1st cousins, while my parents were Svastits – Csertán 2nd cousins. The latter was a not-so-well-kept-secret until the completion of the previous page, and hence I couldn't feature this page earlier. And thus it became a Corollary.)



All in all, I hereby welcome **Ferenc Csertán** as my 57th (i.e. fifty-seventh) 3rd cousin – a wonderful addition to the list. A Summary of all my cousins will be another one of the corollaries.

Cousin Count

As yet another consequence of my double inheritance of Svastits – Csertán blood and yet another inter-marriage within the family, it turns out that Ödi bácsi and his brother were 2nd cousins of mine, while his children have to be elevated to the rank of 2½th cousins, a new concept in family relations. To see this, consider the chart below, where I left off last names for brevity.



Since $2/8 < 3/8$, Ödi bácsi (the first Ödön) and I are sharing $2/8$ units of SC-blood (SC standing for Svastits – Csertán), which is the same as $1/4$ units, the same as second cousins share. That proves my first claim. As for the second claim, since $3/16 < 4/16$, Ödi (the son of Ödi bácsi) and his siblings share $3/16$ units of SC-blood with me, and hence 2½th cousins of mine (since $3/16$ is half-way between $1/8 = 2/16$ and $1/4 = 4/16$, and 2nd cousins share $1/4$ while 3rd cousins share $1/8$ units of 'family blood')

In my *Matrikula* article on 'My Svastits – Csertán Ancestors and Relatives' (whose rendition in English is included in **Part 2C**), I similarly proved that Iluska Svastits and her brothers are 1½th cousins of mine, since we are related not just via the Svastits – Csertán Branch, but also via the Vargha – Etényi Branch. We are also contemporaries; i.e., of the same generation in at least one of the branches, That I consider a necessary condition, an unwritten rule for 'cousinship'.

Thereby, the following 7 relatives are my 1st cousins:

Gyula & Miklós Kovács, Katalin and Márta Bosnyák, László Köllő and Gaston & Lenke Ungár

The following 3 relatives are my 1½th cousins:

Géza, Ilona & Antal Svastits

The following 7 relatives are my 2nd cousins:

Miklós & Károly Péterfia, László & Pál Kerekes, Ödön Sr. & János Svastits and Frgyes Grafi

The following 3 relatives are 2½th cousins of mine:

Ödön Jr., István & Amaryllis Svastits

The following 54 relatives are 3rd cousins of mine:

Zoltán, Lenke, Jolán, Katalin & Pál Kasza, János Varga;

Erzsébet & Zoltán Svastits, Livia Tábornszky, László Táborny, Ilona Bursák, Sándor Szigeti,

Éva & Réka Piroška, László & Gabriella Bocsáry;

Irén, Andor, Terézia, Gábor & Klára Forrai, László Tornyi;

Sándor Máthis, Edit, Szeréna & Irén Végh, András Noszlopy, Tihamér & Attila Gyarmathy;

Patricia de Babochay, Pál, Sándor & Géza Návay,

Zoltán Fodor, Ilona, József & János Kálmán, Ginerva, Cléria, Géza & Hedwig Fodor;

László & Sarolta Kajsza, Erzsébet, Tyra, Tamás, Klára, Balázs & István Tevely,

Eszter Grimm, Emőke Barcza, László Schmidt, Klára Lesko & Ferenc Csértán.

And finally, **Margit Morvay** was a 3½ - cousin of mine.

All in all, I have 75 cousins; none of them are of the 'removed' variety.

(Note: I have yet to learn about the possible descendants of Gyula Svastits, and I am suspicious of some of his siblings too! Thus, the count may still be on.)

Concerning 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and even more distant cousins, it should be noted that not only do I know a lot of them on different sides of the family, but many of them were most helpful in my research. Moreover, it is always in the back of my mind that 'the further their relationship, the more likable they are'— a Xelpho-like comment made by your mother. At times I wonder whether there is indeed some truth to it. Nevertheless, I will not write about them systematically in the main body of this account; instead, some will surface in **Parts 2A, 2B and 2C**.



The convergence of lives

The present tabulation is a horizontal, rather than a vertical display of my ancestors, as compared to the Ancestral Families at the beginning of this part of the book. Here I put first names to each of my ancestors and color-coded the entries as a further aid.

Starting with the 14 ancestors 4 generations ago (i.e., parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and great-great-grandparents), counting my brother and myself, we ended up with 76 of us in my generation. It is a growth by a factor of almost 5½; i.e., 5 generations later there are circa 5½ times as many of us around.

Looking at it yet another way, it turns out that in each generation our number increased by a factor of about 1.525; i.e., 14 begot 21 begot 32 begot 49 begot 75 of us, which will beget 115 in your generation. Hence, you better start looking for those 4th or closer cousins of yours now!

Joseph Frisch

Joseph Fritsch

Anna Mayherr

Anna Fritsch

József Hudeček

Franciska Hudeček

Anna Prachar

Miklós Vargha

Lajos Varga

Imre Vargha

Jozefa Etényi

Jenő Vargha

János Svastits

Ilna Svastits

George Vargha / Berzsenyi

Krisztina Csertán

Emilia Svastits

János Juhász

Lenke Juhász

Franciska Pretsinsky

Kálmán Juhász

Dániel Berzsenyi

Kornélia Berzsenyi

Zsuzsanna dukai Takách

Farkas Berzsenyi

János Gyarmathy

Sándor Berzsenyi

Mária Bárány

Mária Gyarmathy

Family Fruitfulness

In the present section we will consider only the number of great-great-grandchildren of each of the 7 sets of great-great-grandparents, temporarily extending that number to 8 in order to cover the case of 3rd cousin Ferenc Csertán, but leaving his a somewhat special case as it will be seen in the Venn-like diagram to be featured below.

The present piece is preparatory to the upcoming summary on ‘Family Reunions’ advocating the belief that an ideal family reunion includes the great-great-grandchildren and families thereof of a pair of ancestors, like the seven pairs of my great-great-grandparents introduced in Part 1 of this writing. If the number of those great-great-grandchildren is too small, the gathering will be small too; in such cases one may wish to include further relatives in order to reach a ‘critical mass’ of 45-50 participants. With that many participants it is still possible to meet everyone and to form closer ties with several of them. When the number gets smaller, it becomes a gathering of like-minded relatives (and the exclusion of others) or a gathering of close family members (like the meetings of our four kids, rather than of 3rd cousins and their families). On the other hand, if the number of those great-great-grandchildren is too large, or if for some other reasons the gathering becomes too large, it is near-impossible to meet everyone and, except for the few who are deeper into genealogy, learn how the people are related to one another.

As a first step, I will assign the letters **A** to **H** to the 8 sets of third cousins to be specified below, listing the members of each set, but paying attention mostly to the number of elements of each. These numbers will be parenthesized right after the letters, and we will ‘equate’ each set with the number of its elements; the names of the individuals are there mainly to be able to check the accuracy of the counts. Thus,

A (19) = Vargha - Etényi descendants = {Zoltán, Lenke, Jolán, Katalin, Pál Kasza; János Varga; Miklós, Károly Péterfia; László, Pál Kerekes; Géza, Iluska, Antal Svastits; Kató, Márti Bosnyák; Gyula, Miklós Kovács; George, Zoltán Berzsényi}

B (32) = Svastits - Csertán descendants = {Erzsébet, Zoltán Svastits; Livia Tábornszky; László Táborn; Ilona Bursák; Sándor Szigety; Ödön, János Svastits; Éva, Réka Piroska; László, Gabriella Bocsáry; Ödön, István, Amaryllis Svastits; Miklós, Károly Péterfia; László, Pál Kerekes; Géza, Iluska, Antal Svastits; Kató, Márti Bosnyák; Frici Gafi; Gyula, Miklós Kovács; Gaston, Lenke Ungár, László Köllő, George, Zoltán Berzsényi}

C (12) = Fritsch - Mayherr descendants = {László Tornyai; Irén, Andor, Teréz, Gábor, Klára Forrai; Kató, Márti Bosnyák; Gyula, Miklós Kovács; George, Zoltán Berzsényi}

D (6) = Hudecek – Prachar descendants = {Kató, Márti Bosnyák; Gyula, Miklós Kovács; George, Zoltán Berzsényi}

E (5) = Berzsényi – Takách descendants = {Gaston, Lenke Ungár, László Köllő; George, Zoltán Berzsényi}

F (12) = Gyarmathy – Bárány descendants = {Sándor Máthis; Edit, Szeréna, Irén Végh; András Noszlopy; Tihamér, Attila Gyarmathy; Gaston, Lenke Ungár; László Köllő; George, Zoltán Berzsenyi}

G (31) = Juhász – Pretsinszky descendants = {Patricia de Babochay; Pál, Sándor, Géza Návay; Zoltán Fodor; Ilona, János, József Kálmán; Gini, Kléli, Géza, Hédi Fodor; László, Sarolta Kajsza; Erzsébet, Tyra, Tamás, Klára, Balázs, István Tevely; Eszter Grimm; Emőke Barcza; László Schmidt; Klára Leskó; Frici Gafi; Gaston, Lenke Ungár; László Köllő; George, Zoltán Berzsenyi}

H (8) = Csertán – Vargha descendants = {Ferenc Csertán, Ödön, János, Géza, Ilona and Antal Svastits, George and Zoltán Berzsenyi}

Returning to the notion of fruitfulness in the title of this piece, next I want to reflect on the size of the sets A to G, preparatory to the discussion of family reunions, the topic of the next section.

It is instructive to recognize that sets B and G are large enough (with 32 and 31 members, resp.) to have a decent size family reunion of the corresponding descendants and their families, as it was demonstrated by the success of the recent Juhász family reunion (which should have been called Salamon – Pretsinszky – Juhász reunion).

In the case of the Svastits reunion, it was reasonable to extend the invitations more broadly in view of the fact that the initiation came from Egon Svastics and Imre Svastics, representing two different branches (bocsári and csécsényi, respectively) of the family. Since the two branches separated eons ago, it was natural to include members of both branches.

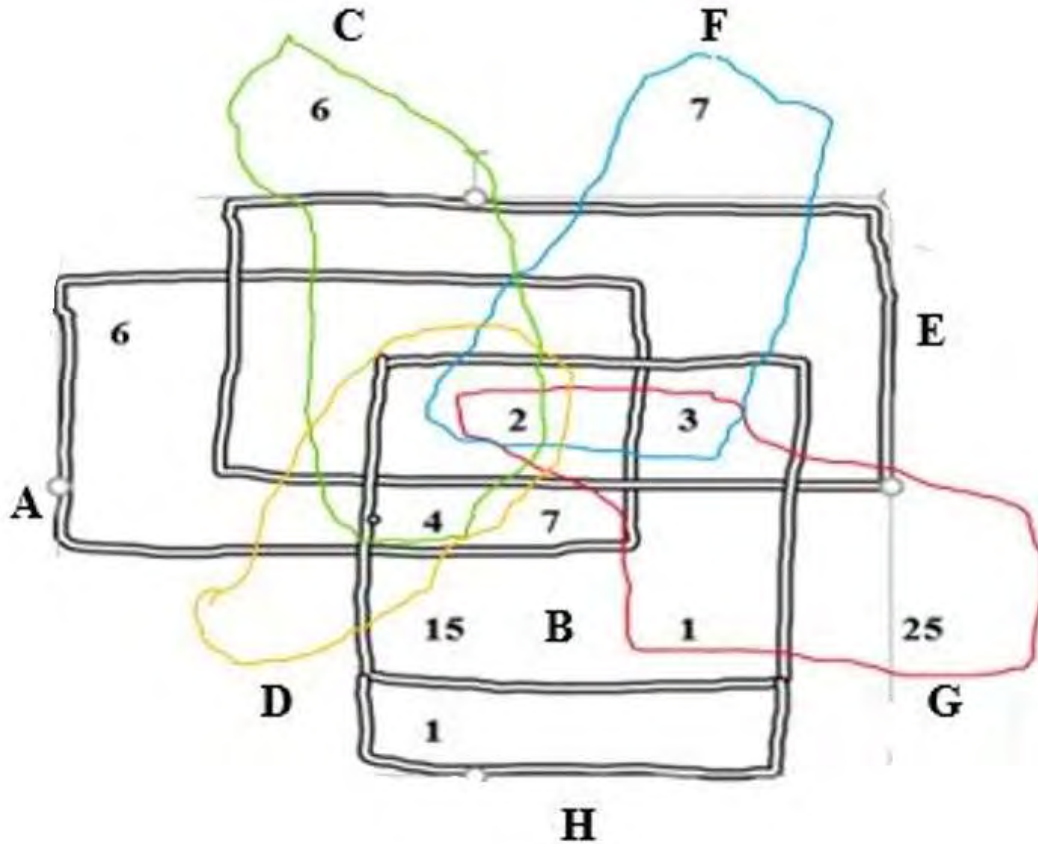
The relatively smaller size, 19 of A might also justify the involvement of further Vargha invitees to the Vargha family reunions. In fact, we ended up inviting all the known descendants of the great-great-grandfather of Lajos Vargha (György II Vargha), rather than only his descendants.

And when it comes to the other sets (C, D, E and F), clearly, they are too small for limiting family reunions to their descendants. In the case of E, we went out to include my 4th, 5th and 6th cousins since even with the inclusion of those 4th and 5th cousins of mine, whom we could ‘track down’, the size of the Berzsenyi reunions would have been too small. On the other hand, it is also true that we know of nearly 10,000 descendants (including spouses) of Benedek I Berzsenyi, the great-great-grandfather of Dániel Berzsenyi, my great-great-grandfather – hence I am a bit bewildered! Were the other branches the only fruitful ones?

In the cases of C and D ‘we are stuck’, i.e., we don’t yet know about further relatives!

And finally, in the case of F, we could organize a family reunion if someone would reach out further, that is, if one would invite the descendants of the parents of János Gyarmathy, i.e., of János Gyarmathy and Judit Doma, or maybe go back yet one more generation, and invite the descendants of László Gyarmathy and Manca Csendrei. But of course, first one must find addresses, phone numbers, etc.

The Venn-like diagram below illustrates the overlaps of the different trees in my family forest, where my brother and I and our first, second and third cousins are included.¹
 By the way, one can easily check that only my brother and I belong to all 7 sets (A to G), that



$$A \cap B \cap C \cap D = 6 \quad \text{and} \quad B \cap E \cap F \cap G = 5$$

and $A \cap B = 13$ and $B \cap G = 6,$

where I used the mathematical symbol \cap for the intersection of sets, i.e., the number of elements (i.e., people) they share. The first two of these equalities state that there are

6 of us in a paternal and 5 of us in a maternal first cousin relationship,

while the next two equalities reinstate the fact that there are

13 of us in a 2nd cousin relationship via our Vargha – Etényi and Svastits – Csertán ancestors

and

6 of us in a 2nd cousin relationship via our Svastits – Csertán and Juhász – Pretsinszky ancestors.

¹ Hopefully, its only flaw is in the treatment of **B** and **H** which I propose to 'fix' by eliminating **H**, putting Feri Csertán into **B** and increasing the number of members of **B** to **33**. Presently, **H** is ambiguous, since on the one hand I limited it to those of us, who are 3rd cousins to Feri Csertán, while on the other hand, it contains all of **B**.

Family reunions

I knew about the Berzsényi reunion of 1941 for years and I learned about the Svastits reunion soon after I retired. Reflecting on them I recognized that the best way to meet one's relatives is via family reunions. My original aim was to have a reunion for both the Berzsényi and the Vargha families in Nemesvita, where you, Daniel had a nice house with a huge yard, ideal for the purpose. However, when I told Attila Tóth about it, he felt very strongly that the Vargha reunion should be held in Balatonfüred, where the family settled after leaving Transylvania. I relented and let Attila organize it – with some help from me. It turned out to be a huge success with a visit to the Vargha graves in the cemetery as part of the program.

For the Berzsényi reunion we had to move to the town's cultural center in view of the large turnout and I was happy that you shared the costs with me, Daniel. Ideally, the costs should be shared by all participants, as it was done for the 2015 gathering of the Berzsényi family. Ideally, the formal part of the program should be short, leaving most of the time for the participants to mingle and get to know one another. As a side activity, one may use the occasion to celebrate the memory of an outstanding member of the family, to view a video about earlier meetings, or have a family-related quiz or some other entertainment for the younger generation. Displays of photographs and other mementoes can also help to make the reunions memorable, as well as the displays of detailed family trees, as we did at the 2005 gatherings of the Berzsényi and Vargha and at the 2017 meeting of the Juhász families.

In the premier issue of *Martrikula*, the virtual journal¹ of the 'MAgyar CSaládtörténet-Kutató Egyesület' (MACSE; in English, the Association of the Researchers of Hungarian Family History) Imre Gyimesi wrote² about the 2005 Berzsényi Family Reunion and its predecessors, while in later issues of *Matrikula*, I wrote³ about my ancestral families, as well as their meetings, if any. Unfortunately, there are such deep-set animosities in some families, that would not allow for a peaceful gathering of its members. At the request of Daughter-in-law AJ (Anita Jo) Barr, I prepared English translations of my writings; they are in **Part 2C**, where I also have specific reports on the various reunions. Presently, my only goal is to emphasize the importance of family reunions as a means to get to know one's relatives, some of whom might also know a lot more about our ancestry than we do. Such reunions should be held both for 'the families at large', as well as for branches thereof, taking into account the 'fruitfulness' of the various families prior to sending out invitations for them.

¹ All of its issues can be reached and downloaded via the link: <https://macse.hu/society/matrikula.php>

² Gyimesi Imre, Berzsényi családi találkozók, *Matrikula*, 1.1 (2011), 29-33

³ Dr. George Berzsényi, Berzsényiek a nagyvilágban, *Matrikula*, 2.1 (2012), 1-13

Dr. George Berzsényi, A szentlászlói és balatofüredi Vargha család, *Matrikula*, 4.2 (2014), 1-11

Dr. George Berzsényi, Svastits-Csertán őseim és rokonságom, *Matrikula*, 4.4 (2014), 1-11

Dr. George Berzsényi, Fritsch-Hudecek véreim, *Matrikula*, 6.4 (2016), 10-27

Dr. George Berzsényi, A pannfalvi Juhászok találkozója, *Matrikula*, 7.4 (2017), 16-30

Genealogical Beginnings

I was always interested in my roots and relatives and was encouraged in that by both of my parents throughout the years. Thus, for example, even during my first three trips to Hungary (in 1976, 1978 and 1983), I tried to visit each of my first cousins and made special efforts to see others as well when the whole family was there in 1978. Upon learning that my mother's first cousin, Márta Grafi neè Juhász moved to Canada to be with her husband and son, I started corresponding with her back in 1980. Prior to our first trip to Australia in 1982, I found out the address of our Bogyay relatives there and made a point of visiting with them. Similarly, I was alert when my mother told me that a distant relative, Gaston Gaál visited there (in Nikla) from Houston, I found his phone number and called him there. But I knew that I must extend my contacts a lot more if I am to learn more about my family.

My starting point was a letter to my sister-in-law Judit on March 14, 2000, asking for the addresses of my second cousins, Géza, Ilona and Antal Svastits, my third cousins, Gini and Cléli Fodor, and the Berzsenyi- Janosits "girls", about whom I knew, but very little. I waited and waited for her response, which was eventually hand-delivered to me by Daniel, who first read the addresses into the telephone on the 11th of September, as I was already making preparations for my first genealogical trip to Hungary that November. Thus, I had the requested addresses in hand when I arrived there and could start my networking with others than my first cousins, whom I also planned to see. I wrote to them and told them that I am on my way to see them soon, and that I will need their help in gathering genealogical data.

When I visited Ilona (Iluska, Ilka) Török neè Svastits, she greeted me by recalling the first time we met in Budapest, when I was living at Kató néni's place and she went there to have Kató néni work on her teeth. She remembered 'Gyurika' opening the door and guiding her to the waiting room – a job I had while living there in 1950-51. After coffee and cookies, she gave me a copy of a letter written to her dad by my father in which he was bragging with his first-born, that is, me, when I was born. I also learned from Iluska that she had an album of music composed by our common Svastits ancestor; I borrowed it, made a copy of it, and later shared it with Imre (Jimmy) Svastics in California, who had a pianist friend. Hence our CD of Svastits music.

Thus, that first visit was great, and so were the others that followed, including the one with Adam as we traveled around the western part of Hungary visiting family and friends over a long weekend. I might tell you about that month in Hungary in greater detail sometime, but for now, let me mention the next visit of mine in 2003, when first with your Mom, then with Daniel, and finally by myself I got to see a whole lot more relatives and others crisscrossing by car, train, subway and/or foot many a mile in Budapest and elsewhere during the extra month I stayed there. I enjoyed that too, and especially so since Mom and Dani got to meet various folks too. But at this point it wouldn't serve my purpose to report on that visit in detail either. Instead, I only want you to have a feel for what it takes to network in person. Hence, on the next page I show you the bunch of visits planned and made (√) or didn't make (x) in 2003 during my time there. As you will see, I was not resting on my laurels!

Of course, my schedule was just as busy on my trips in 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2017 and 2019 too, even though I didn't document them in a similar fashion.

My first glimpses into family history

Dániel Berzsenyi

Growing up in Nikla and being interested in literature even before my high school years, it seems I always knew about my ancestor, Dániel Berzsenyi, Hungary's greatest poet of odes. His children and members of their families were also familiar to me --- partially, on account of the big granite slab on which their names are engraved in the cemetery. I also heard some legends about him and stories about others in the family, but, unfortunately, I didn't take notes or ask appropriate questions. The only exception was when I was in 7th grade and his youngest grandchild, Mariska néni, was in the last year of her life. During that year, I sat with her diligently almost every evening and wrote down the various legends she remembered about her grandfather. I still remember most of them, and I still remember how disappointed I was when years later I learned that she told all of them to many others earlier. Now I am even more disappointed that I kept asking her about her grandfather Dániel, but never about anyone else. And hence I know nearly nothing about anyone else of her generation and the generation of her parents! Naturally, I knew my first cousins on my mother's side, and here and there heard about other Berzsenyi relatives (including Tibor Berzsenyi in Kaposvár and László Berzsenyi in Keszthely), but my knowledge was very limited.

Vargha ancestors

Concerning my Vargha ancestors, I heard my father talking about them some and I also knew that (within the nobility) they were of higher rank than the Berzsenyis, which was mentioned by my father a couple of times when my mother got on a "high horse" bragging with the former Berzsenyi holdings. My father's "trump" was that his Vargha ancestor was a "lófő", the Transylvanian equivalent of a baron, and interestingly, lófő almost translates to high horse. Nobility of such rank was to provide the Duke (of Transylvania = Erdély) a "banderium" (unit) of soldiers equipped and on horseback in case of war. My father also told me about how his father had to mortgage his holdings (and eventually lose them) in order to cover the losses (at cards) of his brother, Károly, and once he took me to see his cousin, Gyuszi bácsi, Károly's son. I also knew about my father's guardian, Gábor Vargha of Szentgotthárd, and I think my father even took me there once. I even met his daughter, Alice néni, at Kató néni's place in Budapest once, when she came over to play bridge, and I knew that her son was in Cuba at the time. I also met Géza, Iluska, and Tóni Svastits in Keszthely once; they were my second cousins on the Vargha side. And naturally, I knew my first cousins on my father's side too.

Fritsch relatives

Concerning my Fritsch relatives, once in Budapest I met with my great-uncle Jóska bácsi, when he came to visit his sister, my grandmother, and I knew that another brother lived in America, but knew nothing more about him. At that time, I didn't even know about the third brother, Emil bácsi, who also lived in Budapest. I learned about him only when my brother moved into the apartment on Hungária körút in the early 1970s; that is when my aunt, Mici néni and my uncle, Gábor (Gabi) bácsi (my father's siblings) vacated the apartment and moved in with Emil bácsi upon his wife's death.

Juhász roots

Concerning my Juhász roots, I knew my Juhász grandmother's brother, Béla bácsi and his family (including Márta néni), and I knew that the Fodor and Barcza families were related to us through the Juhász connection. In particular, my mother told me that Gini and Cléli were the daughters of my Fodor godparents, who died during the war. We met Gini and Cléli once in Balatonfenyves in 1978.

Gyarmathy connections

With respect to my Gyarmathy roots, I knew about "Jancsi bácsi (János Gyarmathy) in Amerika", who was a priest and a favorite relative of the Berzsenyis in Nikla, and sent us coffee, sugar, and other goodies (including some very outdated men's shoes with pointed toes!). And I knew that his nephew, Tihamér, was a painter, whose portraits of Dániel and Farkas Berzsenyi were still somehow in the family's possession. And I also heard about Jancsi bácsi's sister, who was a companion of Mariska néni, as well as another sister, who used to be the postmistress in Nikla.

The Svastits connection

With respect to the Svastits family, I knew that my parents were second cousins on account of having common Svastits ancestors but didn't know the details. And while I knew that the Bogyays were related to us via the Svastits family, I was not sure about the details there either. But I heard time and again that my father favored his Svastits ancestors, and that stuck with me.

My mother's help

With respect to Dániel Berzsenyi, my mother did well in keeping me up to date on the publications of his poetry, and in the last few years of her life, she also made an effort to share with me photos --- mostly from my childhood. She also sent me a copy of an important book on the Berzsenyi family by distant Berzsenyi cousin Tivadar Noszlopy, which also contained various family trees. Another Berzsenyi family tree, the one circulated at the 1941 Berzsenyi Family Reunion, was sent to me somewhat later by Tibor Berzsenyi, who also sent me a copy of the document reaffirming the Berzsenyis' nobility. The 1941 Berzsenyi Family Reunion was organized by Tibor's cousin, Zoltán Berzsenyi, who was killed by the Russians in 1945. Moreover, I had a copy (and later got an updated copy too) of a book by Nikla's chronicler, István Hársházi (Pista bácsi), who was a friend of mine dating back to the early 50s. As it turned out, Mariska néni's stories were recorded by Pista bácsi too.

My few notes and many shortcomings

Fortunately, I was always inquisitive with respect to family matters and I hung on to the few notes I took based on the information shared with me by my parents. Unfortunately, I didn't ask enough questions either from them or from others whose paths I crossed over the years. Thus, for example, I didn't inquire from Alice néni about her son, when I visited with her in New York in 1958; and in fact, I didn't keep in touch with her either. There were reasons for it, but none were compelling. In any case, I could have saved myself lots of trouble in my search for Edwige von Zedtwitz, her granddaughter. Neither did I learn much of value from my great-uncle Eugene Fritsch (Jenő bácsi) when I visited him in Los Angeles in 1957, shortly before his death. But at that time, I had no idea that one day I would become most serious about my family's history.

Nevertheless, as you can see from the above, I was not totally clueless about my family when I immersed myself into genealogy. Preparations began at least 20 years earlier and were gradual. But I didn't have the time until retirement to dig into any of it seriously.

Books and journals on genealogy and related fields

In the present write-up I will pay special attention to those books which I own, but also comment on others, from which I copied several pages in Salt Lake City (at the Family History Library) or elsewhere. My greatest treasure is the massive 7-volume book (with a Supplement)

Nagy Iván, *Magyarország Családai*¹, Budapest, 1865,

which I got from my brother. He inherited two sets of it and was kind enough to let me bring one of them with me. I also have a copy of the first half of the updated edition of

Balogh Gyula's *Vas vármegye nemes családjai*²,

which was greatly expanded by Márton Szluha, who published it as the co-author of Balogh in 1998, on the 100th anniversary of the original publication; that's what I call the updated edition. Its focus is limited to the region where the Berzsenyis and many related families lived.

From the next books listed I copied only pages relevant to my research interests. Most of them were family trees of ancestral families of mine.

Kempelen Béla, *Magyar nemesi családkönyv*³, Budapest, 1928,

Kempelen Béla, *Magyar nemes családok*⁴, Budapest, 1915,

Palatinus József, *Vasvármegyei nemes családok története*⁵, Szombathely, 1911,

Baranyai Béla, *Somogy vármegye nemes családai*⁶, Budapest, 1914,

I copied the last book cover to cover (40-some pages) since the Province of Somogy, south of the Lake Balaton is also home to the Berzsenyis and related families. I was similarly interested in the next book too, and I wish I had copied more pages from it

Vasdényey Imre, *Ősi birtokok és birtokosok Somogy megyében*⁷, Kaposvár, 1922,

Finally, I must tell you about the following booklets, which were also valuable in my research,

Daróczy Zoltán, *Nemesi évkönyvek*⁸, Budapest, 1923 – 1937.

It turned out that they constitute only a small part of Daróczy's findings about the nobility, since he also compiled a large (120 volume) database, whose fate is still unknown to me. On the other hand, Imre Gyimesi, my most diligent genealogical co-worker discovered that some of Daróczy's notes are kept at the Lutheran Archive in Budapest and managed to send me Daróczy's notes and correspondence about the Vargha family.

Concerning the following book, please note that its author is not a genealogist, but an expert on the architecture of old castles and manor houses and the topic of the book is a description of such buildings in the Province of Vas. However, since he also discusses the history of those houses, he included extensive genealogical tables of the families who lived in them --- hence my inclusion of the present book. In 2003 we visited the author, and at his house we also met Zoltán

¹ *Hungary's families*

² *The noble families of the Province of Vas*

³ *Hungarian noble family book*

⁴ *Hungarian noble families*

⁵ *The history of the noble families of the Province of Vas*

⁶ *The noble families of the Province of Somogy*

⁷ *Longtime landowners and their holdings in the Province of Somogy*

⁸ *Yearbooks of the nobility*

Molnár, the editor of *Sárvári Hírlap*, who was most helpful to me earlier by sending me copies of articles from various publications. The chapters of the present book first appeared in *Sárvári Hírek*:

Katafai-Németh József, *Vas megye kastélyai és kúriái*⁹, Sárvár, 2002.

At this point, I should also call attention to a couple of genealogical journals, like

Nagy Iván, Komáromi András, Pettkó Béla, *Családtörténeti értesítő*¹⁰, which appeared around the turn of the previous century (1899, 1900, etc.) and had articles of interest to me, and

*Turul*¹¹, Budapest, 1883 – 1950,

which was published by the Hungarian Heraldic and Genealogical Society. I just learned that the latter is available on microfilm from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

More recently, an electronic magazine appeared, named

*Matrikula*¹² (<http://www.macse.org/society/matrikula.php>),

which is under the auspices of Magyar Családtörténet-kutató Egyesület (MACSE, Hungarian Familyhistory – searching Association), where Gyimesi Imre wrote an article about the Berzsényi family reunions, and I wrote one about the broader Berzsényi family. Later I also wrote articles there about my Vargha, Svastits-Csertán, Fritsch and Juhász-Pretsinszky ancestors.

Finally, I want to call attention to several **Family-specific treatises**, which are in my possession.

Foremost among them is

Noszlopy Tivadar, *Berzsényi Dániel és családja*¹³, Kaposvár, 1910,

which has lots of valuable information about my great-great-grandfather and his family, as well as family trees of the Berzsényi and two related families. An original edition of this old book was a present to me by Attila Gyarmathy, a 3rd cousin of mine, who lived in Colorado Springs.

Of the next book I have two editions, of which the original typed version is more to my liking since its 1996 version (published after the author's death) is a bit 'doctored'. Since it appeared after the 'collapse' of communism, they left out the author's sympathetic account of the events in Nikla during the 1919 communist dictatorship of Hungary. Consequently, they also left out the role my Berzsényi grandfather played in the defense of the local leaders after the collapse of that dictatorship. I knew the author well; in fact, I was a friend and admirer of Pista bácsi, so I know he wouldn't have agreed to such an 'editing' job. By the way, more than half of the book is about the life of Berzsényi Dániel in Nikla, and the stories handed down about him.

Hársházi István, *Niklai hagyományok*¹⁴, Kaposvár, 1978.

Not long ago I also managed to pick up a copy of

Asztalos Endre, *Gyarmathy Tihamér*, Budapest, 1979

about the art of Attila Gyarmathy's brother, Tihamér, and then I also received the following bilingual (Hungarian and English) book from Tihamér's son, Gábor, whom I visited in 2000. The

⁹ *The castles and manor houses of the Province of Vas*

¹⁰ *Family history report*

¹¹ A mythical Hungarian bird, possibly like an eagle

¹² Latin term for a book of vital records

¹³ *Daniel Berzsényi and his family*

¹⁴ *Folklores in Nikla*

book is about Gábor and his artistic accomplishments, but it also has a fairly complete history of the Gyarmathy family, and hence my Gyarmathy ancestors.

Koltayné Zolder Klára, *Emlékek, szimbólumok, mitoszok*¹⁵ -- Rádóczy Gyarmathy Gábor
Budapest, 2001.

The next book is a collection of writings about Gábor Döbrentei, who was a 3rd cousin of Dániel Berzsenyi and himself a leader in the literary world. My interest in the book was partially prompted by Sándor Nagy's article in it, which gives some genealogical data about the Döbrentei family, to which he is related too. I visited with Sándor when I was in Hungary in 2011.

Polgárdi Sándor, *Döbrentei Gábor*, Pápa, 2005.

Concerning Lénárd Berzsenyi, I was most happy to get a copy of the following book,

Simon Péter, *Utazás ismeretlen állomás felé & Berzsenyi Lénárd rajzai*¹⁶, Budapest, 1988
from my distant Berzsenyi cousin, Edit Körmendi nee Sólyom at the 2011 Berzsenyi reunion.

On our first trip to Salt Lake City, I also made a cover-to-cover copy of

Andrássy Antal, *Noszlopy Gáspár (1820 – 1853)*, Kaposvár, 1987,

which is an account of the life and martyrdom of one of our distinguished relatives. I also benefited by reading a collection of articles by Attila Bánó. Some of them first appeared in 1995-96 in the magazine *Reform* in the 'Régi magyar családok'¹⁷ column, written by Bánó; interestingly, my former schoolmate Laci Varjú sent me one of those columns; hence I was familiar with Bánó's column before his book,

Bánó Attila, *Régi magyar családok*, Budapest, 2000

appeared in a series of books bearing the same name. I obtained two other books in the same series, partially in order to learn from their organization. They are

Ulrich Attila, Pozsonyi József, *A jobaházi Döry család története*¹⁸, Debrecen, 2009
and

Gilicze János, *A földéaki Návay család története*¹⁹, Debrecen, 2006.

I was also interested in the first one since we have some Döry ancestors, while the second one was of interest to me since we have some Návay cousins.

To conclude this passage, I also want to tell you about two more books. One of them is

*Márványtábla helyett*²⁰, Balatonfüred, 2008,

in which a distant cousin of mine, Anikó Szenfner nee Varga wrote a chapter about the Varg(h)a family. (She gave it to me when I visited her and her father in 2011.) The other one is

Dr. Czeizel Endre, *A magyar költő-géniuszok sorsa*²¹, Budapest, 2012,

which has a chapter about Dániel Berzsenyi and his ancestry. Bandi (a nickname for Endre) was a wonderful friend of mine for some years; I cherish several of his many other books too.

¹⁵ *Memories, symbols, myths*

¹⁶ The second half of the book is about Berzsenyi Lénárd and his drawings

¹⁷ *Long-standing Hungarian families*

¹⁸ *The history of the jobaházi Döry family*

¹⁹ *The history of the földéaki Návay family*

²⁰ *In place of a marble marker*

²¹ *The fate of Hungarian poet-geniuses*

Historical accounts --- Hungarian and regional

Apart from the books in Hungarian, I have five beautifully illustrated books in English, which give excellent accounts of the history of Hungary.

John Lukács, *Budapest 1900*, Grove Press, New York, 1988

Stephen Sisa, *The spirit of Hungary*, Toronto, 1983

György Balázs and Károly Szelényi, *The Magyars*, Budapest, 1989

István Lázár, *An illustrated history of Hungary*, Budapest, 1989

Domokos Varga, *Hungary in greatness and decline*, Atlanta, 1982

You recently received a copy of Lukács's book, while Sisa's book should be on your shelves for some years already; please read them and share them with your kids. Varga's book is a translation from Hungarian; its original version was published in Budapest in 1974. Though I didn't know Domokos, I knew two of his brothers, Balázs and Tamás. Balázs was a literary expert, who wrote a book (which I have) about Dániel Berzsenyi and was also involved with the setting up of the Berzsenyi Múzeum in Nikla. Tamás was a superb mathematician and one of my main contacts to the mathematical world there until his early death in 1988. They all hailed from the görzsönyi Vargha family, which is not related to our szentlászlói és balatonfüredi Vargha family.

In addition to the above books, I have several others in English, but I don't recommend them. On the other hand, I would be happy to recommend all the books I have on my shelves by Nemeskürty. Unfortunately, they are in Hungarian. I read them all; they helped me to crystallize my understanding of the events which shaped my people, my homeland and history.

With respect to local history, I will start the list with a wonderful book, which taught me a lot about the region that was home to the Csertán and related families. I also learned a lot from its author via our correspondence and enjoyed meeting her

Schandl Piroska, *Szentpéterúr II.*, Zalaegerszeg, 2001.

I am also grateful to the author of the following book

Majthényi László, *Egyházashetye*, 2006,

about the place where Dániel Berzsenyi was born. It appeared in the 'Száz magyar falu könyvesháza' ('A house of books from one-hundred Hungarian villages') series during the celebration of the 1100th anniversary of the country's birth. I also enjoyed perusing

Szaka Zsolt, *Nikla*, 2005,

which is a portrait of the settlement, where Dániel Berzsenyi died. Two other books also covered the same areas: the Provinces of Zala and Somogy, and the westernmost regions, respectively. They are travelogues by an excellent writer.

Tüskés Tibor, *Zalamente, Somogyország¹*, Budapest, 1979

and Tüskés Tibor, *A nyugati kapu²*, Budapest, 1981.

I also have many issues of the *Füredi Historia*, the local history magazine of Balatonfüred, where many of our Vargha ancestors lived and died.

¹ *Along the River Zala, the 'Country' of Somogy*

² *The western gate*

The Mormons

Let me start by emphasizing that rather than ‘Mormons’, one should refer to them as members of the Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). I am greatly indebted to them for the incredible wealth of genealogical materials I could access via their Library. On account of their religious beliefs, they spent years in Hungary in the 1960s putting most available records onto microfilm or microfiche, leaving some copies there and storing others in their library in Salt Lake City. In recent years, the latter became available to the general public first in Salt Lake City, then via their family history centers. There are over 4000 centers in the USA, of which there were 5 in the Denver area alone. All along they had a presence on the internet too, and their offerings there are more and more numerous. I try to take full advantage of their offerings, and in fact, we visited their library too, first in 2008, and then again, the following year.

In 2008 I really enjoyed perusing the books in the Family History Library on Hungarian genealogy, copied pages thereof here and there, and was looking forward to doing the same on our next visit. Unfortunately, that was not possible, since those, as well as some other books were stored in a closed location by then due to space limitations. The process was referred to as ‘compression’. One could request the books, but there was no catalogue of what was available and hence, I was most frustrated. I also learned that some books were available only in digitized form, but we found that the software used was far from user-friendly. Nevertheless, we enjoyed the second visit too, looking at a bunch of microfilms and learning more about their offerings. It would take pages to describe what is available from them at their library, via borrowing and on the internet; let it suffice that they copied nearly everything of genealogical interest, including church and civic records throughout Hungary, and most of it is available from them.

When we lived in Highlands Ranch, CO, I borrowed at least 60 microfilms from their library, but I no longer need to do so since they put most everything onto the internet, including ‘rosters of nobility’, which were compiled periodically since the rule of Maria Theresa (1740 – 1780). The LDS website is:

www.familysearch.org

where one can also find over half-a-million Hungarian ‘death notices’ too. I will discuss them in the next passage.

At this point, let me tell you about the incredible Family History Library in Salt Lake City, which is visited free of charge by nearly 2000 people every day. It opened in 1894 and it is kept open 74 hours every week. It operates on 5 floors. There are about 300,000 books on their shelves, while in their vaults they have 2,400,000 microfilms from all around the world. They also have over 200 computers for their visitors, over 500 microfilm readers, about 40 microfiche readers, about 30 copiers of films, several microfilm scanners and about 20 copiers of the most versatile variety available to everyone. At any one time there is room for close to 400 people who can sit at the tables on the various floors and there are 20-25 volunteers on each floor to answer the questions of the visitors. At no time did we end up waiting for a machine and it took less than 30 minutes to get any of the films and books we requested. Even the prices for making copies are most reasonable; in 2008 they were 5¢ per page if the copies were made from a book or journal, while 23¢ each if the copies were made from a microfilm. No wonder, they call it the genealogists’ Mecca! I hope to go back yet once more to their library.

Death Notices

In Hungary since the middle of the 19th Century it became a nationwide custom to send out cards of bereavement upon a loved one's death. At first, it was done only by the nobility, but later it was adopted by the bourgeois class too, and nowadays most of the city dwellers send out such notices too. They are mailed to relatives and friends of the deceased and contain important genealogical information --- hence my interest in them. In Hungarian the name for such a notice is gyászjelentés¹ or partecédula² (also spelled particédula). Such notices were around in England during the Victorian era, but they didn't spread to the other English-speaking countries as far as I know.

I knew about such notices since my childhood days in Hungary, and I also remembered that Tibor Berzsenyi, a distant cousin of mine had a collection of them. Since that collection was inherited by my brother upon Tibor's death, I was able to make a copy of it during my month in Hungary in 2000. To a great extent, my first tree of the Berzsenyi family was built using that collection of about 60 death announcements. I reproduced a couple of them below in order to illustrate the information found on such notices. The first one is a simple one of my maternal grandmother, which gives the maiden and married names of her children making the announcement in the first two lines; her married and maiden name in larger letters (and the fact that she was a widow³); the fact that she died in Nikla on May 17, 1949 in her 75th year in the next two lines; and lists her closest relatives mourning her at the bottom of the page. The latter include her brother and sister-in-law in the first column, her sons-in-law in the middle column, and her grandchildren (including me as the 3rd one) in the third column.



¹ It translates to 'report of bereavement'

² 'cédula' is a Hungarian term for a 'slip of paper'

³ özvegy, abbreviated özv. in Hungarian

Naturally, I didn't learn anything new from my grandmother's death notice, but the following one was full of new genealogical information for me. Kornélia Berzsényi was one of my grandfather's 4th cousins; in her death notice even her grandchildren's spouses, and her great-grandchildren are listed, along with her nieces and nephews.



Later I learned that there is a huge collection of more than half-a-million such alphabetized and downloadable notices on the website of the Mormon Church, and I took full advantage of them. They were copied in the 1960s from the collection held by the Széchényi Library in Budapest and are accessible either on the site

www.familysearch.org

or the alphabetized

http://www.rakovszky.net/E1_LSG_ObitsIndex/GYJ-NevIndex.shtml

or, more recently, the digitized

<https://dSPACE.OSZK.HU>,

where one can also search for other key words, like the name of the town or cemetery or the names of the mourning family members. There are a couple of other smaller collections there including the one held by the Lutheran Church's archives; I don't know whether those were copied too. In general, the cards are tastefully decorated with kneeling angels, festive crosses, sorrowful maidens, and wreaths, but everything in black, the universal color of mourning.

Seeing the wonderful genealogical use of such notices, Kay and I decided to transplant the idea to present-day USA via her internet business www.kayscards.com, which she initiated in 2004. The start was most promising, and our hopes were high, but sickness put an end to the business. We still have a bunch of blank and beautiful cards as reminders, and we still believe that the idea was viable even in this electronic age in which postal letters are no longer in vogue. Hopefully, Kay will write about her internet business venture much more extensively than this brief mention. Her site is no longer accessible, its name was also taken over by others.

Useful websites

While there are virtually hundreds of useful websites available for genealogical research, most of them have very little utility when it comes to researching one's Hungarian roots. Thus, for example,

www.Ancestry.com

came in handy mainly in the case of my Fritsch ancestors and relatives, since several other members of our family came to America either after World War II or in 1956, when my father and I came to the USA. Via Ancestry.com, we were able to peruse census records, various ships' passenger lists, etc. I also put some inquiries on Ancestry's 'Message Board'.

Another genealogical site of some utility is

www.MyHeritage.com,

where one can display family trees for free, as long as they are of modest size. I have a Juhász family tree there, to which I invited my Juhász cousins to contribute additional people, data, pictures, etc. It was a mistake. The tree got too big, and I was asked to remove it or pay a certain charge. I paid the charge for a few years, but after downloading the information on it, I was ready to remove the tree. Seemingly, I didn't have to, but they made it inactive when I stopped paying for it. Recently I reactivated it, i.e., paid again in view of the upcoming Juhász family reunion next May. One positive aspect of this software is that it calls your attention to persons on your tree, who happen to be on other people's tree too, and allows you to contact the managers of those trees. I took advantage of that feature several times.

I also have a Fritsch site on MyHeritage.com, but I have been neglecting it lately.

I also submitted myself for DNA analysis, but the matches they reported were of not much use. On the other hand, when we put in Kay's DNA data (she used www.Ancestry.com for hers), she got a number of viable 'hits'.

I should also tell you that there are three competing Svastits trees on this website, of which at least one is well-maintained with pictures too. Being a cousin to the managers of those trees, I am a member on all three, and hence, I am periodically informed of happenings within the Svastits family. I can also download the pictures from their sites too.

Thirdly, but most importantly, I must credit yet once more the LDS website,

www.familysearch.org,

which continues to be a wonderful source of information about my ancestors and relatives not only in Hungary, but throughout the world. And yet with one more tip of the hat to Imre, I can view at my leisure some microfilms which he downloaded from somewhere and was nice enough to share with me. As a consequence, I have on the laptop two reels of vital records of communities in the Province of Zala, which are of interest to me on account of the Vargha-research.

In Hungary, the most important source for genealogical information is the

www.radixindex.com

where I posted several messages and had some successes with respect to the Berzsenyi and Vargha families over the years. It was initiated by Bogárdi János, who compiled an incredible wealth of information on it. Many of my successes in finding relatives were due to that site. For

example, that's how I found my Tolvéth relatives too. On the other hand, I put two inquiries about my Fritsch relatives with no avail.

Similarly worthy of attention is the site

<http://www.macse.org/society/kezdolap.php>,

of Hungarian Society for Family Research, which has a number of worthy databases too in addition to featuring *Matrikula*, the online publication, where I published articles about the Berzsenyi, Vargha, Svastits – Csertán, Fritsch and Juhász - Pretsinszky families, whose English versions are in **Part 2C**.

MACSE just turned 9 years old in 2020, has about 1000 members, and both its databases and membership are in growth. I joined it in its 2nd year, and have been most satisfied with its utility, which I have not even explored to its full extent.

Even more importantly, in 2015 an opportunity arose with respect to subscription to Arcanum's ADT system,

<http://adtplus.arcanum.hu>.

MACSE negotiated for its members a reasonable price, and I took advantage of it. As a consequence, I can peruse over 8 million pages of materials, covering over 200 scientific journals, as well as countless number of daily, weekly and other magazines, telephone books, family history books, etc. With only a few hours of search I've already had huge benefits from it including information about my father's older brother, various members of the Juhász family with the forename 'pannfalvi', as well as about Ferenc Fritsch / Zsigray's death, articles about my mother's successes as a horse rider and driver of carriages and lots and lots about Dániel Berzsenyi.

A somewhat unexpectedly useful site is

Facebook,

where I maintained a closed Berzsenyi Família and an open Juhász Family site until recently. At this point, I hope to have someone else reopen the Berzsenyi site, while I consider abandoning the Juhász site for good. But even more importantly, I managed to 'hook up' with relatives, whom I could not locate otherwise, and I managed to learn some basic facts about others who were not willing to share any information. There are other 'social media' gathering places too, but thus far I have avoided them.

We also used

<https://www.truepeoplesearch.com/>

and even subscribed for brief periods of time to the

<https://www.whitepages.com>

in order to locate people in the USA and I happily used

Hungary's equivalent 'Tudakozó',

<https://www.telekom.hu/lakossagi/tudakozo>

which allowed me to find many relatives over the years. In fact, my newest approach in locating Berzsenyi relatives is predicated on that service. Last, but not least, I must mention the

Óskereső

database of the Lutheran Church which made it possible for Jenő Sólyom to compile his wonderful book on the Berzsenyis and increase to near 10,000 members Imre's Berzsenyi Tree.

Networking

Being isolated in small towns throughout my mathematical career necessitated extensive correspondence with other mathematicians in order to do research, stay abreast of various developments, and to be effective in programs in which I had a part. In other words, I learned about the importance of networking long before I got into genealogy. When I got into it, even though I knew bits and pieces of my family history ever since childhood, I also knew that to learn more, I must do a lot of correspondence with relatives, relatives of relatives, friends and even not so friendly souls in Hungary if I want to succeed. They knew things I didn't know, they had access to information that I didn't, and now that communism was at least formally over (since about 1989), they were free to share their knowledge with me. During the years of communism, it was not even advisable for us to meet, much less to correspond about our families. But now they could send me family trees, which were preserved by their families, introduce me to some other members of the family and give me addresses and telephone numbers, so I could establish contact with them too.

Looking back, I estimate that at the time of my retirement I corresponded with only about a dozen relatives, exchanging mainly Christmas greetings with most of them. Since then, that number grew to over 100, not counting those 15 to 20 others who never responded to my inquiries. It could be that some of my letters were never delivered, since postal service is not like it used to be. Neither are manners, and so it is possible that some of the recipients just didn't bother to respond. Fortunately, some of my other friends made up for them by sending me valuable genealogical information, knowing that I might be interested.

In particular, I learned that many of my relatives know more about our common ancestors than I do, and some are willing to share their knowledge. I also enjoy getting to know them, since part of the fun of doing genealogy is to learn about one's kin. They are alive and you can interact with them, whereas one's ancestors, at least at my age, are all gone.

While I don't like the idea of possibly leaving out individuals whose help was essential to my research, I want to single out the following relatives and friends as the most outstanding ones. Their names appear following the family's name with which they helped me the most.

Bárány --- cousin Szabolcs Horváth and cousin-in-law Karcsi Kertész

Barcza --- cousin Imre Maár and researcher Balázs Aczél

Berzsenyi --- brother Zoltán; cousins Béla Adamecz, Éva Berzsenyi-Janosits, Gyuri Dormán, Jancsi Huiber, Mihály Ittész, Mariann Nagy, Lenke Ungár, Tibor Onodi, Marika Bojsza, Ida Koren, Kálmán Széchenyi, Attila Vámos, Géza Várady, Zoltán Várady, János Zergényi, Tamás Piri, Jenő Sólyom, Zsuzsa Vadnay, Veronika Patthy, Miklós Pathy and wife Anna Klemm, Anna Harsányi neé Patthy, Csabi Zambon and Barbara Wittmann neé Tószegi; and friend József (Jóska) Darabos

Csertán --- cousin Feri Csertán and friend Piroska Schandl

Fritsch --- cousins Gábor, Terike and Gabi Forrai, researcher Zsolt Zsigray, Fr. Sebastian, cousin-in-law Tekla Wache and her son, Laci Tornyi

Gyarmathy --- cousins Attila, Feri, Kati and Gábor Gyarmathy and Maya Weltler

Hudeček --- son Adam and friends Márk Görbe and Ladislav Blazek

Juhász --- cousins Sándor Barcza, Márta Juhász, Judit Bozzay, Hédi Fodor, Norbert Forró and Tamás Tevely; and friend Zoltán Cserveni

Pretsinszky --- cousins Márta Juhász, Hédi Fodor and Edith Boros Dahrouge and friend Attila Nagy

Saáry --- cousin Géza Várady

Svastits --- cousins Sándor Bánó, Baba Bursák, Márta Juhász, Éva Pirooska, Iván Petres, Egon Svastits, Jimmy Svastics, cousin-in-law Mandi Borokai and cousin Kornél Szemerédi

Szelestey --- cousin Attila Szelestey-Polgár

Thulmon --- brother Zoltán and cousin Beáta Baán

Vargha --- brother Zoltán; cousins János Bánfalvi, Ágota Gombás, Kató Baranovits, Klári Borók, Miklós Kovács, Miklós Péterfia, Csilla Varga, Anikó Varga, Attila Tóth, Ilka Svastits, Bálint Varga, Judit Varga and Lajos Varga; and friend Béla Puskás

Missing from the above lists is my closest research associate and dearest cousin-in-law,

Imre Gvimesi,

who not only helped a lot with most of the above families, but helped me even with the Family Tree Maker (FTM) program to which I introduced him back in 2005. Without Imre's wonderful help I may not have succeeded with much of my research – hence, his name is bolded, underlined and displayed.

mostly to Imre's the humble beginning in 2005, when I had only 970 members in the Berzsenyi Clan, we grew to nearly 10 times that many in 15 years! Kay and I visited Imre and Eszter in 2019; the pictures taken then.

We continue to stay in touch and help one another in what- ever we can.



In particular, it is credit that from my beginnings of mine in only 970 members in the Berzsenyi Clan, we grew to nearly 10 times that many in 15 years! Kay and I visited Imre and Eszter in 2019; the pictures shown here were

in touch and help one another in what- ever we can.

Vital records

By vital records one usually means birth, baptismal, marriage and death certificates and/or copies of the registration of such data from the record books kept by various churches and/or civic authorities. Since most such books in Hungary were copied cover to cover by the members of the Mormon Church in the 1960s, I was able to request microfilms containing such data at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City during our visits there. Later I could order them for viewing at the Family History Center on Easter Avenue in Denver, that one being the closest to our home. I perused over 60 of them over the years. Fortunately, with more and more of the microfilms getting digitized and available on the internet, I can do much of the work at my computer at home.

In Denver I could also make copies of the microfilms I ordered – page by page, just like the original books were copied. That way I could view those pages at my convenience on my computer and share them with others as well. But the copying called for a special machine, which they might not have at the nearby center here in Wisconsin. There was only one such copier back in Denver too, and that machine was often not operational or used by someone else. Thus, there were difficulties with that process as well.

The situation in Budapest is a lot more similar to that in Salt Lake City, except for the fact that one has to request the films a couple of days, rather than a couple of hours earlier. At least that was the case, when I went to the National Archives there on Váci út with my close co-worker Imre Gyimesi, who has managed to work himself through thousands of microfilms over the years. Hence, his data base is truly enormous compared to mine.

At this point I should mention that one of my other sources for vital records was a questionable benefit of anti-Semitism, since some laws were passed in Hungary around 1940, requiring all persons who held public office, including officers of the military, to prove their Christian ancestry up to and including their grandparents. Consequently, everyone rushed to collect copies of relevant birth and baptismal certificates, and a lot of them survived the ravishes of World War II, as well as the communist era. Some copies thereof are in my possession too.

I must also emphasize that the Kingdom of Hungary, which was home to most of my ancestors, is no longer there. At least not in the way it was in historical times. With the unjust Treaties (i.e., Dictates) of Trianon (1920) and Paris (1947), only 28% of its former territory was left intact, and only 36% of its population is still under Hungarian rule. The rest became part of Rumania, Poland, Italy, Austria and the former Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Soviet Union. Therefore, the Serbs, Slovaks, Rumanians, and others had nearly a hundred years by now to ethnically cleanse those areas of everything that was formerly Hungarian. In some areas even the vital records were “doctored” appropriately, including the changing of names so as to make them more Slavic, Rumanian, etc.. Moreover, in most places most of the authorities, including those in the archives, are as uncooperative as possible towards the Hungarians. That goes for the Austrians too, both in Vienna and at the private archives of the Habsburgs. Even back in the 1930s, when my father was researching his roots, he ran into such difficulties. As a consequence, we don't know to this day which of the any villages named Szentlászló in Transylvania (Erdély) was the ancestral home of the Vargha family.

Nevertheless, my search for vital records, including my own baptismal certificate continues. There are still some nagging questions with respect to my Juhász ancestors, Vargha, Fritsch and other relatives, which I would love to answer.

Other records

I am well aware of the incredible usefulness of a variety of sources other than vital records, but it is extremely hard to figure out what is available, how can one access such data, and what may be relevant in one's research. Thus, for example, I know about the incredible benefits of

census data

in the USA, since it helped me locate my paternal grandmother's parents when they came to America to join their youngest son here. On the other hand, I have yet to locate comparable records in Hungary in spite of the fact that I know about regular censuses there too.

I also know about the importance of

passenger lists

of ships coming to America. In particular, we managed to verify that Jenő Fritsch, my father's uncle came to the United States in 1905, that his parents joined him in 1910, and that my Fritsch grandmother came out for her father in 1921. Unfortunately, such data doesn't seem to be available for ships leaving the shores of America, and thus I don't know how long my grandmother was here. Neither do we know how long my great-grandfather was in America when he first came here in 1888.

I am very certain that

land -, probate -, military - and tax - records

could also be of great use in my research if I could locate such records. While I am fairly sure that the Mormons made copies of such records too, it is far from easy to identify the ones that might be relevant in my case. Fortunately, I managed to befriend one of the researchers at the Military Archives in Budapest, who sent me my father's military records, as well as the death record of my uncle, Bálint Vargha, who died in action during World War II. The latter was of great importance since it gave me the birthplace of Bálint, and from that I could figure out that my Vargha grandfather must have died in Solymár, which I later verified independently.

In my researches I also managed to utilize

rosters of nobility

in Hungary, which came into existence during the rule of Maria Theresa (1740-1780) and were compiled periodically from then on. Their purpose was to ensure that only those who could prove their nobility should be exempt from taxes. Such rosters are of great genealogical value since oftentimes they list all males in the recognized noble families, and thus one can also learn relationships, as well as the names of those who were alive at the time of the roster. Fortunately, I got some copies of such from a Hungarian website, and made good use of them.

Next, I must call attention to

city directories,

whose utility is probably great too. I found them for Budapest from the year 1900 and later, and I know that there were some for Pécs, but I didn't see the latter. The same goes for

cemetery directories

too, of which I located one in Schenectady, NY to discover that it was not my Fritsch great-grandfather, but his wife, my great-grandmother, who was buried there. In Hungary the only cemetery whose online directory I found is the famous Kerepesi úti temető, whose website,

<http://www.agt.bme.hu/varga/foto/kerepesi/kerepesi.html>

allows one to see which famous people were buried there. Among many others, I found the grave of the famous composer Kacsóh Pongrácz, whose wife was a relative of the Csertán family, and hence of Feri. While I don't know of any other cemetery in Hungary which has an online directory, I do have a copy of

Puskás Béla, *Temetők üzenete*¹, Kaposvár, 2001,

which was a gift to me by its author, who also gave me copies of some of his other books and helped me with important genealogical findings too. Béla is the director of the association of funeral homes in the Province of Somogy, and the book is a collection of descriptions and photographs of the gravesites of the most important people of Somogy. With respect to many of them, there is also some useful genealogical data concerning the family.

As in other countries, the newspapers carry some

obituaries

in Hungary too, but thus far I have found few of them.

More generally, some of my genealogical information is based on the

headstone inscriptions

seen on our walks in various cemeteries, since my trips to Hungary always include a visit to the cemeteries of Nikla and Keszthely, where my parents and grandparents are buried (with the exception of my Vargha grandfather, whose gravesite in Solymár was plowed over during the years of communist dictatorship). On other occasions, I also wandered around in the cemeteries of Pustakovácsi, Balatonfüred, Csongrád and Vrácsik (now Újvárfalva), where some of my ancestors and relatives are buried.

As a fitting finale to this page, I reproduced on the right the obelisk and the marble slab from the cemetery in Nikla, where my parents and many of my Berzsenyi ancestors are buried in the family crypt. It was one of the starting points for my genealogical research and one of my favorite locations in Hungary.



¹ *The messages of cemeteries*

Regrets and Such

One of my big regrets goes back to 1951-52, when we lived with my great-aunt, Mariska néni in the house that later became the Berzsenyi Museum. Babi néni and her family were in the first room, Mariska néni in the second room, while my mother, Zolti and I in the third room from left to right as you walk in from the veranda. The fourth room was still in disarray and was a storage room. In general, Mariska néni's evening meal, a simple soup or such was prepared by my mother, and she would come over to our room to eat it. It seemed too good an opportunity for me to miss talking with her after she finished her meal, so I regularly asked her questions about her famous grandfather, sitting there, taking notes like a reporter. Over the months she related to me about 15-20 episodes from the life of Dániel Berzsenyi, and I happily wrote them down, hoping to publish them someday. It was only much later that I learned that she had already told those same stories to others as well, and they had already appeared here and there. And it was only much later that I realized that instead of her grandfather, who died long before she was born, I should have asked her about her parents, her siblings, and about her own life. Thus, I know absolutely nothing about my great-grandmother Mária Gyarmathy, whereas I had a chance to learn a lot about her.

My other genealogical regret is that I didn't ask my father to reminisce about his parents, siblings and youth. I got the bare facts, like the maiden name of his maternal grandmother, Hudeček, and that she came from Brno, Moravia, but nothing more. Of course, he was barely 12 when his father died and he was "shipped off" almost immediately to military school, but still, he had memories, and I should have asked him about them. The only story I recall concerns some rock candy placed among the pebbles by my grandfather. It seems he was returning from a trip and surprised his children that way; prior to that, they had never seen such candy. Of course, I failed to ask appropriate questions from my mother too, but in her case, I learned some insights anyhow, since she often recalled the wonderful days of her youth and her joys riding horses and taking part in equestrian competitions. She was also young, barely 17, when she lost her father, but it is sad that her only story about him concerned the need for being quiet so as not to disturb him since his heart was troubling him.

When visiting Jenő bácsi (my great-uncle Jenő Fritsch) in Los Angeles I also failed to ask questions, take notes, and learn from him about his parents, the origins of the Fritsch family, and his own life and circumstances over the years. Thus, I ended up wasting time and energy in the search for his father's grave in America, whereas it was his mother, who died here. And I still don't know when he (Jenő bácsi) got married, when he moved to Los Angeles, and I never asked him to show me pictures of himself and his parents, though I am sure he had some.

I will leave my many other (and not only genealogical) regrets to Part II of my reminiscences. For the present I just want to say that none of you will ever be burdened by such thoughts, since I am doing my best to tell you everything I know, regardless of whether you asked about it or not.

More seriously, you should ask questions while you can. Ask lots of them, and write down the answers too, even if it is just on a slit of paper. None of you should have any regrets later about all the questions you could have asked.



Further Credits

In addition to the initial impetus from my parents, there were many-many friends and relatives who were wonderfully helpful to me during my search for my roots and identity. Foremost among them was your mother, whose similar endeavors and accomplishments provided the best encouragement for my efforts. While I am very competitive in most everything, in this area I found it soothing to be cooperative, and I am happy with the knowledge that we helped one another a lot. Nevertheless, I must credit her for helping me in my searches on the internet and in all manners of computer usage.

I must also credit my brother, your Zolti bácsi, for making his collection of letters and other family memorabilia available to me whenever I asked for the opportunity to peruse or make copies of his materials. They included our parents' correspondence and picture albums, as well as various papers of our distant cousin, Tibor Berzsényi, along with a dossier of Tibor's uncle, Zoltán Berzsényi (†1945), on the organization of the first Berzsényi family reunion of 1941. In particular, I was happy to copy Tibor's extensive collection of nearly 60 death notices of various family members, which turned out to be gold mines of valuable information, with most of them giving not only information about the deceased (date, place, and cause of death, place of burial, etc.), but also listing the members of the grieving family and delineating everyone's relationship to the deceased. Zolti bácsi and Judit néni were also helpful in locating some relatives at a time when I barely knew of anybody except for my first cousins. Hence, during my first genealogical visit to Hungary in November 2000, I was able to visit several of them for the first time. This started the avalanche, which led to the hundreds of contacts I presently maintain via letters, phone calls, e-mail messages, as well as occasional visits.

It would be impossible to make a complete list of all the various individuals who helped me in various ways in my searches. Hence, I will limit myself to just a few, hoping that the others will not be offended by their omission. This list is still growing, but I had to stop somewhere --- for the present, at least.

The above-mentioned Tibor Berzsényi (†1993) gave me my first copy of the Berzsényi family tree that was adopted at the 1941 Berzsényi family reunion. I later learned about the shortcomings of that tree, but it was an excellent starting point.

The initial Vargha family tree, which was the basis for the search of my Vargha roots and relatives, came to me from my cousin, Miklós Kovács (†2018). Later I found it among my father's papers too with his additions and corrections, but I thank Miklós for it. Interestingly, the same tree was also shown to me by my cousin, Iluska Török (née Svastits, †2021), so it must have been around for some time at least in our branch of the family.

My first Svastits family tree was given to me by Márta néni (†1996, Márta Grafi née Juhász, my mother's first cousin) when we visited her in Canada. Since my parents were second cousins via the Svastits connection, that tree was of particular interest to me. It was also Márta néni, who rekindled my interest in the music of my great-great-grandfather János Svastits, for which I am particularly thankful. I always appreciated the greatness of my other great-great-grandfather, Dániel Berzsényi, but knew too little about the compositions of my Svastits ancestor. With respect to the Svastits family tree, I was also helped a lot by Iluska's sister-in-law, Mandi (†2021, the wife of Antal/Tóni Svastits, †2010), who was the most knowledgeable about the family) and Ivan Petres (†2008), another Svastits cousin of mine.

My initial suspicion that there must still be some Vargha relatives in Balatonfüred, where my ancestor, György Vargha II settled (and died in 1703), came via a letter shared with me by Klári Kovács, the wife of my cousin, Gyula (Gyuszi) Kovács, in November 2000. The letter was written to her mother-in-law, Ili néni (my father's younger sister), by someone named Jolán (whose last name was Kasza, as I later learned) from Balatonfüred in 1971, in which she enclosed a different version of the Vargha tree, with herself included in it. She also inquired about my father and other close relatives of mine with such an obvious familiarity that I knew I had to track her down. That happened some 2 years later with the help of a distant Thulmon-cousin, Bea Baán, of Balatonfüred, who got me together with my Vargha-cousin Attila Tóth.

Attila is a nephew of Jolán Kasza, who turned out to be a third cousin of mine. Not only did Attila inherit his late aunt's interest in family matters, but he was most enthusiastic about having a Vargha family gathering too, which I helped him to organize in 2005. Through Attila I got to know several Vargha and Varga relatives, including Lajos Varga, who became the honored elder of our gathering held at his children's place. It was this Lajos bácsi, who earlier found the ancient Vargha graves in the old Lutheran cemetery, including that of my great-great-grandfather Lajos Vargha, as well as that of his great-great-grandfather György Vargha II mentioned above.

In the organization of the much larger Berzsenyi Reunion, I was immensely assisted by my distant Berzsenyi-cousin, Éva Berzsenyi-Janosits, who was tireless in gathering addresses of lots of relatives. In that endeavor, I was similarly helped by Berzsenyi-cousins György Dormán, Béla Adamecz and Mariann Kovács too, as well as by my wonderful cousin-in-law, Imre Gyimesi, who turned out to be my closest and most tireless coworker in genealogy over the years. Imre and I have accomplished a lot since 2005, with many of our successes being major breakthroughs in the search for my roots.

With respect to my maternal grandmother's Juhász family, one of my starting points was a manuscript by Márta néni about her life and origins that she prepared for her grandchildren. Much later I learned that one of my third cousins, Hedwig Szabó (Hédi, née Fodor) already did a fair amount of research on the family, and hence we could join forces. Further help came from various notes based on my mother's recollections and later by a cousin of Hédi, Zoltán Cserveni.

Concerning my Gyarmathy roots, I always (?) knew that Mária Gyarmathy was my great-grandmother (as the wife of Farkas Berzsenyi) and that János Gyarmathy (Jancsi bácsi, who sponsored us – my father and me – in 1956, when we wanted to come to the United States) was a second cousin of my mother via Mária's brother. But my knowledge was very limited till I learned more about our common ancestors from my 3rd cousin Attila Gyarmathy, whom I discovered in nearby Colorado Springs. Later, via the son of Attila's brother, Tihamér Gyarmathy, I came into contact with a 4th cousin, Ferenc Gyarmathy, who shared with me his father's and his own extensive database about the Gyarmathys.

I am also thankful to my 3rd cousin, Ferenc (Feri) Csertán, for sharing with me his informative write-up about our common Csertán ancestors and for providing me a guided tour (along with our dear friend, Piroska Schandl) in the Province of Zala, where the Csertán and Svastits families lived. Feri's great-grandfather and Krisztina Csertán (the wife of János Svastits) were siblings. Feri and Piroska were introduced to me by Iluska, who also led me to a cousin via the dukai Takách line (my great-great-grandmother Zsuzsanna Takách, Dániel Berzsenyi's wife, was from that family). That cousin's daughter, Judit Lőrincz-Véger has also been most helpful not only

with respect to our common ancestors, but also in verifying that my paternal grandmother was indeed born in Sopron, as well as in helping me stage the 2011 Berzsényi Reunion in Sopron.

Finding the resting place of my paternal grandfather, Jenő Vargha, was another complicated adventure, for which the military historian, Péter Szabó, and the director of the funeral homes of the Province of Somogy, Béla Puskás, were responsible. Both of these friends of mine helped me in various other genealogical matters too, and I am most thankful to them.

To learn about the ancestors of my great-grandmother, Franziska Hudacsek, I had to engage the services of a genealogical consultant, Ladislav Blazek of the Czech Republic, who did an excellent job.

At this point you might think that my list of kudos should soon come to an end, but, fortunately for my benefit, that's not the case. There were many more friends and relatives who helped me enormously in my efforts, and I am most thankful for that.

In locating my Vargha cousin Edwige von Zedtwitz, I was helped by an old friend József Kiss of St. Louis. With respect to my Barcza ancestors (and various other valuable pieces of genealogical information), the late Imre Maár, a distant cousin of mine was helpful. Erzsébet Nagy n^èe Noszlopy assisted me in finding more Berzsényi descendents, and so did András Szabó, who let me copy his father's excellent account on the related Oppel family. From Csilla Rátónyi n^èe Varga, I learned about the Varg(h)a family's connection to various historically famous Hungarians like István and Katalin Dobó, György (I and II) and Ferenc (I and II) Rákóczi, etc. And my former high school mate, József Csöndör, introduced me to István Bogyay, who not only shared with me his extensive findings on the Bogyay family (related to us via the Svastits family), but also initiated me into the research procedures at the Hungarian National Archives in Budapest. More family trees were shared with me by Berzsényi cousins Mária (Mädi) Papala n^èe Vidos (koltai Vidos tree); Attila Vámos (Vámos, Hampek, Udvardy, ráczkévi Eötvös, derecskei Fodor, Berzsényi trees), Géza Várady (sárosi Várady and vámosi Saáry) and Csaba Zámbon (csáfordi Tóth, dukai Takách, galánthai Lelovich, nagyváradi Móricz, Zámbon and rugonfalvi Kiss trees). Moreover, I was happy to receive a Tevely tree from my late Juhász-cousin Tamás Tevely; several Thulmon trees from my Thulmon-cousin Bea Baán; and a Zedtwitz family tree from Alice Boeck n^èe Zedtwitz. And yet many more additions to the Vargha family tree were provided by Vargha-cousins Bálint Varga and János Bánfalvi, for which I am particularly thankful.

In my endeavors I was also ably assisted by Svastits-cousins Egon Svastics (who also provided me with lots of relevant historical reading materials); Éva Makay n^èe Svastits (who also guides me most expertly in my readings); Ilona (Baba) Komáromi n^èe Bursák (who sent me lots of photos about her branch of the family), Dóra Csima n^èe Svastics (whose list of addresses was invaluable to me); Berzsényi cousins Ida Sebe n^èe Koren (who kindly shared with me her Berzsényi documents); Gizi Berzsényi n^èe Kovács (who helped me find our Berzsényi relatives in Canada); Zsolt Berzsényi (actually, there are three of them, here I am thinking of the one in Szombat-hely), who showed me the Berzsényi statue there among other sites of interest; Juhász-cousins Gini Vaszary n^èe Fodor, her sister Cléli Nagy n^èe Fodor, Judit Bozzay and her mother, Krisztina Bozzay n^èe Návay (who all work hard with me in my efforts to locate the rest of my Juhász cousins); and my friends László Varju, originally from Csurgó, and Magdi Takács n^èe Fellai, originally of Nikla.

Gergely (Gergő) Loch deserves a paragraph of his own for his help with the Svastits music, as well as for sharing with me information about Endre Spur, which I would have missed otherwise.

This way, I can write a ‘More about ...’ piece about this highly accomplished relative of mine and his wife.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the help and moral support of my even closer cousins Kató Seleny nèe Bosnyák (†2022), Márti Birck nèe Bosnyák, Lenke (Hugi) Németh nèe Ungár, Gaston Ungár (†2016), László (Laci) Köllő (†2015) and Fred (Frici) Grafi (†2018), whose continuing interest in my project is most appreciated.

In closing this section, I should mention that in addition to the books already listed above, I greatly benefited from a bunch of others, of which I mention now only the most pertinent ones in no particular order. Since they are in Hungarian and are scattered on my shelves too, it would be a bit of a challenge to identify them anyhow. In any case, you should be mostly interested in my comments.

Egyházashetye (a book by the mayor of Egyházashetye prepared for the celebration of the 1000th anniversary of the establishment of the Kingdom of Hungary in 2000), sent to me by its author, László Majthényi;

Csalogányok völgye (a book about Lengyeltóti, published in 2000), sent to me by Berzsenyi-cousin György Dormán;

Nemesvita, the nemes község életrajza (an informative book written in 2001 by Wodianer-Nemessuri Zoltán about Nemesvita) given to me by Ági’s uncle, Ferenc Eke, who was most helpful in helping us (Daniel, Ági and me) in the preparations for the Berzsenyi Family Gathering of 2005 in Nemesvita;

Nikla (written in 2005 by Zsolt Szaka, a teacher in Marcali, with too much emphasis on walking tours to and from the village) sent to me by my friend, István Varga, when he headed the Berzsenyi Society in Kaposvár;

Kujtorgók – portrék, riportok (a 1997 publication of short sketches of people by my Berzsenyi Society friend, István Varga); and

Száműzöttek a Hortobágyon (a 2006 publication of memories about the deportation camps of 1952-53, edited by Dániel Kováts) was sent to me by Éva Makay nèe Svastits, through whom I also got to know Dániel Kováts, who is a literary historian.

Needless to say, I also learned a lot from many other books throughout the years. At this point, I wish to call attention only to a handful of authors, whose works strongly influenced my views in recent years. This time, following each author, I list their relevant books in parenthesis and briefly comment on their over-all effect.

Endre Czeizel (*Aki költő akar lenni, pokolra kell annak menni?; Élet/leltár; A magyarság genetikája*) was first called to my attention by Bea Baán (who sent me a writing of his about the genius of Dániel Berzsenyi). The formal introduction was accomplished by Terri Glenn King in a truly unexpected manner. Since then I met Czeizel, became friends, and learned a lot about genetics from his books. I am still learning.

István Nemeskürty (*Kis magyar művelődéstörténet; Meddig várjunk?; Mi történt velünk?; Mi magyarok; Parázs a hamu alatt; Magyar századok; Magyarnak számkivetve; Tüzes józanság*) was introduced to me by Egon Svastits by presenting me with the first book listed here. Later he gave me several others, I bought some, and the last one was presented to me by Éva Berzsenyi-Janosits --- it is an excellent Berzsenyi-study by an outstanding historian.

Magda Szabó (*Régimódi történet; Ókút; Abigél; Für Elise*) was one of Hungary's most celebrated writers, who was not allowed to publish her novels until after 1958 --- hence I knew nothing about her until a copy of her *Régimódi történet* was given to me by Éva Makay née Svastits just a few weeks ago. I am learning a lot from her autobiographical/genealogical/historical novels!

Béla Puskás (*Temetők üzenete; Kaposzserdahely; Kaposfüred*) continues to write excellent accounts of the history of settlements in the Province of Somogy, and I learned a lot not just from his writings, but from the selection of his sources too. When I met him in 2005, he also gave me a copy of a book (*Hölgyek, urak és csodabogarak*) by his friend, József György Lékai, which was also enjoyable and informative. It was also through Béla that I linked up with Zoltán Valér Cserveni, who is a sought after accomplished genealogist. Since he is a cousin of some of my Juhász-cousins, I continue to benefit from his friendship.

Next, I must return to Imre Gyimesi, whom I consider an outstanding researcher, without whose help I wouldn't be much further than I was in 2005. I was not badly off then, as far as my genealogical accomplishments are concerned, but with Imre's help I have managed to cover a lot more areas than I could ever hope to. On the basis of his findings, I consider Imre an expert genealogist too. Recently, through him, I also came into contact with János Gudenus, whose books on the Hungarian aristocracy are well-known. He is also building a general Hungarian genealogical data base (among others), which has already helped me a lot. I am hoping for similarly good results from my correspondence with yet another well-known genealogist and writer, Márton Szluha, whose initial help was great too. While he made some crude mistakes in his writing about the descendants of Dániel Berzsenyi, it was helpful for him to have discovered the second grant to the Berzsenyi family. I learned a lot from Hetyéssy's writings and notes too, and I am pleased that various fellow researchers finally recognized his importance too.

Concerning fellow-researchers, I must welcome the appearance of Tamás Piri as a Berzsenyi researcher, who brings the extra strength of being an expert in informatics. Writing his own family search program, he is the only one who can produce reports other than the manufacturers of the store-bought software allow you to have.

I am similarly happy for the appearance of Jenő Sólyom on the scene, since his use of the Lutheran Church's **Őskereső** site allowed him not only the verification of the data already available in Imre's database but added more data to it and expanded the database by close to 20%. Jenő's alternative form of our database is richer too, but rather cumbersome in printed form, requiring nearly 600 pages. As long as it is on one's computer, it is much easier to navigate in it.

Moreover, I must mention the help I received from Attila Nagy, interestingly, from Balatonfüred, who connected me to the Tolvéth-descendants of Vince Salamon – thereby learning more about my lone 3½-cousin. Attila also helped me with respect to the availability of more information concerning some of my ancestral families and in digitizing Feri Csertán's account on our Csertán roots.

In conclusion, I must emphasize that it takes a lot of help from others to do genealogy from across the ocean over which there are no bridges!

A Life in Scholarship

I thought about this title a long time, since it sounds a bit pretentious, which is far from my personality. But the term fits me well, since not only was my working life spent in scholarship, but even as a child I was a ‘scholar in the making’. And since retirement, nearly all of my actions were those of a scholar. That was so in my mathematical work, in my literary studies, and most certainly in my genealogical research too. Thus, I might as well face the facts and reality.

As a young kid, I approached the life and works of my famous ancestor, Dániel Berzsenyi with the hope of publishing the anecdotes I learned from my great aunt, and as a high school student, I had serious ambitions both as a budding poet, as well as a student of the lives and works of Hungary’s greatest poets. I had hopes of doing well enough on Hungary’s yearly literature competition to gain entry to the university there, knowing full well that they might not accept me otherwise on account of my family’s background. Since my mother’s family were landowners and my father a military officer fighting with the Germans in World War II, I was an ‘enemy of the people’ on both counts in communist Hungary. Thus, entry into the universities would have been denied to me otherwise.

Even into the high school in Csurgó, it took special considerations for me to be admitted in spite of my outstanding grades. The children of officers of the former armed forces, which fought against the Russians, were labeled undesirable elements in every walk of life. The same went for former landowners, who were accused of exploiting the working classes. They, that is, we were marked ‘osztályidegen’, i.e., aliens to the class of the proletariat, which was the privileged class under communism. It took a special request by Ferenc Kővári, the principal of the school in Nikla, to Magda Jóború, the Undersecretary of Education, to make an exception for a descendent of one of the greatest poets of the country. And even then, I had no assurance of being able to continue my education.

Returning to my scholarly tendencies, I should mention that by then I subscribed to *KöMaL* (*Középiskolai Matematikai és Fizikai Lapok*, Hungary’s famous high school mathematics journal) for more than a year. So, I recognized how far behind I was in my mathematical development compared to the best of Budapest and some other larger cities. Hence my attempt to switch to my other favorite subject, literature.

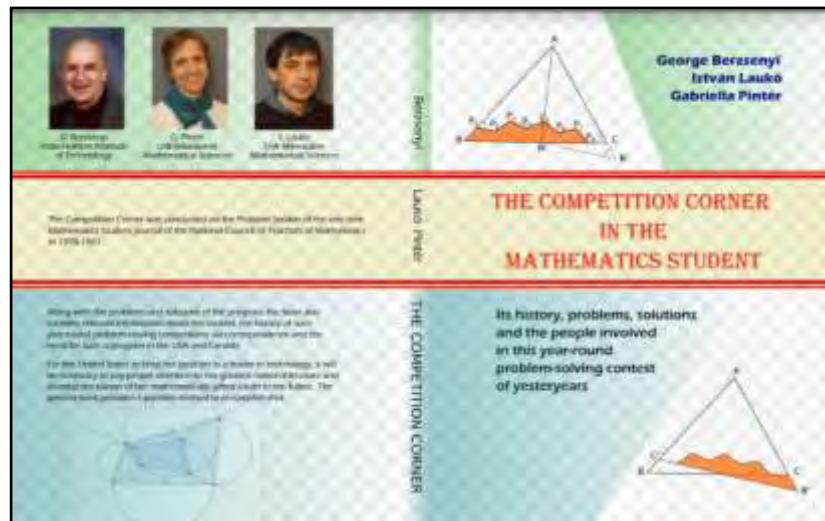
At this point I should also mention my extensive readings of the encyclopedias at the home of Jolán (Adamecz) néni, who put me up time and again in Marcali as I was catching an early train there back to Csurgó. More precisely, to Somogyszob, where I had to change trains --- seemingly, I did such things with a lot of confidence then. But the nights prior to boarding the train, I spent with Jolán néni’s wonderful books, from which I learned a lot.

It was not until midway in graduate school that I resurfaced as a scholar once again --- naturally, in mathematics then. Partly, in my research in the theory of discrete analytic / monodiffic functions, and partly in topology to which I partially switched even before completing my dissertation in the former area. Later I also ventured into other areas, like number theory, and even further afield, when I got more and more into the ‘business’ of making up problems for various competitions. Naturally, I had to do some serious preparations for my classes too, mastering new areas of mathematics, like numerical analysis, operational calculus, partial differential equations and others, as well as computer algebra systems like *Maple* and *Mathematica*, and software like LaTeX, Reflex and other more ordinary packages for ordinary activities. Even recently, I had to

learn a new and difficult program called *PicTeX*, to draw the figures in Part 2 of my *IMTS* book. While I am well aware of the fact that learning new things in this fast-changing world is a natural activity for everyone, my approach is that of a scholar even in such mundane matters. And that's the case even for the FTM (Family Tree Maker) software, which I had to master for genealogy.

There (in genealogy) too I go about everything as a scholar must not only in my search for new results, but also in the organization of data, and especially in writing about it. I do so with total devotion to the work at hand in the most scholarly manner. In other words, just like I transferred my writing skills from Hungarian to English, I am transferring my scholarly attitudes from mathematics to family history and beyond. While I no longer expect to make any splashes in the literary field, at the very least I hope to explain to some extent what made Hungarian poetry so outstanding, and in particular, why our ancestor, Dániel Berzsenyi, is so great. Moreover, I hope to shed some light on some of the historical events affecting my ancestors, so as to better explain their lives and times, as well as my rich inheritance from them. Rather than measuring them in gold or acres of land, I will point to the values they passed down to me, and through me to all of you.

By the way, you should be aware that even as I was working on the present volumes, I did a fair amount of work on the book whose cover is shown here; it is yet another collection of problems and solutions. And since I had a couple of wonderful co-authors on this one, I couldn't slack off either. In other words, I needed to do serious scholarship there too.



In closing I should mention that scholars are often retiring, less social and very single-minded. I think I might have aged a bit, got different glasses and put on a different shirt in a different state and a different house with different bookcases in the back.

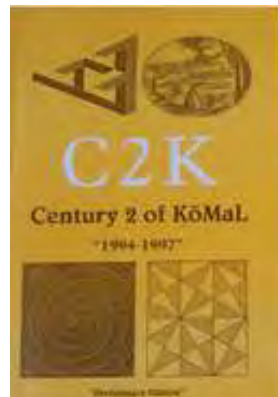
While earlier, I had hundreds of books and volumes of journals on mathematical topics, nowadays they are mostly on genealogy and history, with only a few mathematical favorites among them.



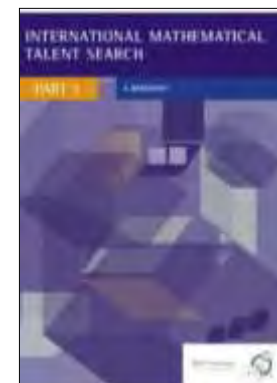
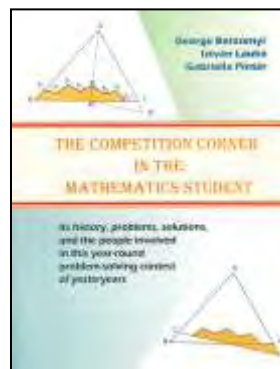
Reflections on me as a writer

I have been writing this and that for many a year. First, I attempted poetry, but I soon abandoned that, recognizing that it's not my forte. Then I poured my thoughts into letters to my parents, relatives and friends, whom I left behind in Hungary. As I made friends here, I tried to keep up with them too – hence, even more letters followed. My mathematical friends joined the crowd too, as well as the students who worked with me on my various programs; there were times when I had over 700 files on mathematical friends alone, in addition to over 100 files on students with whom I corresponded regularly. In those days my files on my mathematical correspondence filled nearly 3 filing cabinets. In recent years much of the exchanges are done via e-mail, and most of that is no longer around. Neither is there much evidence of the many letters I wrote, in spite of the fact that for years I kept copies thereof. The only exceptions are the ones I wrote to my parents between 1972 and 1986 (those I retrieved from my brother in 2011) and various others which have genealogical contents.

I did a fair amount of writing in mathematics too. Six volumes of problems and solutions are credited to me, with **Contest Problem Book V** as its co-author (with the late Steve Maurer) being the first, to be followed by **C2K: Century 2 of KöMaL – 1994-1997** as an associate editor (with Vera Oláh, the editor and Elizabeth and Katalin Fried as my fellow associate editors) and the **USAMTS Problem Book** in Korean, with AoPS (the Art of Problem Solving) and me listed as co-authors. These were followed by the **IMTS Problem Books** in 2 volumes, with me as their author and the **Competition Corner in the Mathematics Student**, with me as its co-author (with Gabrielly Pintér and her husband, István Laukó as the other co-authors). They are shown below. The first is held by granddaughter Alex, while the third one is held by grandson Jackson.



There were also the research articles which I published – they can be seen at the Berzsenyi High School in Budapest, Hungary, where I deposited them. Most of them are technical, and hence of little interest outside my special fields of complex analysis, number theory, combinatorics, etc. Some are more of a pedagogical bent, but those too are semi-technical. Later I wrote some regular columns in various publications for talented high school students; those are more intelligible



by the layman. Hence, I will have a bit more about them later. The same goes for the collections of problems in book form or otherwise; later I will comment on them too. This time I mention my mathematical writings only to reemphasize the fact that writing has been a vital part of my life throughout the years. For completeness, I should also add that I did a fair amount of ‘administrative writing’ too, ranging from proposals to reports and to hundreds of letters of recommendation throughout my professional life. While I did a good job at those too, I prefer to forget about them all.

As a writer, I am basically a columnist. Much of my mathematical writing falls into the category of columns, and even many of my letters could be characterized in that manner. One might say, it is in my blood or genes, except for the fact that none of my ancestors were so inclined. Thus, I conclude that it is an acquired style which fits my personality.

The mathematical columns I authored are many, at least in comparison to other mathematicians’ output. In addition to the 41 in *Consortium* (“Problems, Puzzles, & Paradoxes”) and the 41 in *Quantum* (“Mathematical Investigations”), I had some such columns in *Mathematical Competitions* (“ICME-6” and “For your Bookshelf”), *Quantum* (some items in its “Happenings”), and the *Mathematics Student* journal (an earlier version of “For your Bookshelf”). Moreover, my problem sections in the *Mathematics Student* (“Competition Corner” in 20 issues), *Consortium* (“USA Mathematical Talent Search” in 37 issues), *Mathematics and Informatics Quarterly* (“International Mathematical Talent Search” in 44 issues), *Math Horizons* (“Problem Section”), and *Arbelos* (“Kürschák Corner”) fall into that category too. I also had a couple of other aborted efforts earlier at Lamar, and to some extent my newsletters (for the Sabine Area Teachers of Mathematics while I was its president and for the USAMTS for 7 ½ years) may be considered as collections of columns too.

My regular correspondence with family and friends felt like writing columns too, as well as my writings to my kids, especially since the computer age allowed me to address them as “Kids” and the messages went to all four of them with some regularity via e-mail. Finally, our Christmas letters became regular many years ago; they too felt like columns, where one had to develop a specific style, get used to space limitations, and be timely time and again.

Initially, it was probably my regular correspondence that shaped my style towards columns, but I must also give credit to Martin Gardner, whose “Mathematical Games” column in *Scientific American* was a favorite reading of mine for years. In my column in *Quantum* and to some extent in *Consortium*, it was him whom I tried to emulate. Unfortunately, the readership of neither of these publications ever compared to that of *Scientific American*, and hence I never had a chance. And thus, I had to settle for less. Nevertheless, to this day there is still nobody in mathematical circles, whose output in writing columns for talented high school students comes even close to mine!

On the home front, I should not forget about my “Walks and Talks” with my son, Adam either; they too were like columns, with a specific theme prompted by my eldest’s needs, carefully worded and selected for each occasion. We discussed topics like “Giving versus taking”, “Blood is thicker than water”, and many others. In fact, Adam remembers a bunch more than I do, and it may be that some were not even from my walks and talks. Thus, I better leave the completion of those columns to him. He is a good writer, just like our other children, and he might even make me famous for those columns.

Thanks to Genealogy

In the present section I will reflect on the various benefits and blessings for which I credit my work in genealogy since my retirement. For specifics concerning the various people to be mentioned, the reader will be directed to other parts of this document; the present account will be, somewhat intentionally, mostly fragmentary.

Transition from mathematics to genealogy

As described elsewhere in more detail, my interests in genealogy date back to my childhood days. Hence, my recent work in it didn't really have an abrupt start upon my retirement in 1998 (or more officially, September 1999). And, unfortunately, I was not able to put everything aside and devote myself to genealogy at that point either. First, there was a lot of work to be done in order to settle down in our house and new surroundings, which could not be postponed. In the meantime, I also had an operation on my right hand for Dupuytren's contracture and had to spend a lot of time in physical therapy afterwards. And there was a lot of unpacking and organizing to be done not just among the household items, but among my mathematical books and papers too. Moreover, there were still some mathematical activities that kept me busy. Some were leftovers from my previous activities, like the USA Mathematical Talent Search (USAMTS), for which I was still preparing the problems for several years, and the International Mathematical Talent Search, which I kept alive for a few more years even though I ended up evaluating the solutions submitted to it and preparing the column (in *Mathematics and Informatics Quarterly*) on its problems and solutions. Some of my other mathematical activities were even more time and attention demanding. They included a lecture in Riga, Latvia in 2000, service on the Problems Committee of the International Mathematical Olympiads in Washington, D.C. in 2001, membership on the Australian Mathematical Competition's Problems Committee in 2002, participation in a conference at Berkeley in 2004, celebration of the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics program in Budapest in 2005, and work with the Templeton Foundation at Princeton in 2007. Thus, even when I made an honest effort to devote most of my time and energies to genealogy in the Fall of 2000, there were lots of other things demanding my attention.

Hence, the transition from mathematics to genealogy was smooth, rather than abrupt. As I reflect on it, I also recognize that the progress could have been easily followed by keeping track of the contents of my filing cabinets. At first, there were 4 of them, filled mostly with mathematical notes, papers and correspondence. In time, I gradually reduced the mathematical content to less than 1 cabinet, I turned over another cabinet to your Mom, and I am well on the way to fill the remaining three with genealogical papers and correspondence. Similarly, my bookcases are now mostly for books dealing with family history, while my extensive mathematical library is now at the Berzsenyi High School in Budapest. That too happened gradually; the last 9 of the 64 boxes of books were sent there only in 2007.

Probably the biggest benefit of my genealogical work is that upon retirement I never had a moment of pondering on what to do with myself and with all the time I used to spend on mathematical activities in the past. Many others are less fortunate, and don't know what to do with themselves at the end of their careers. They drive not only themselves but others around them crazy, as well as often into premature death.

Parallels with mathematics

I was also fortunate in that genealogical research turned out to be akin to mathematical work in more ways than one. There I never limited myself to just one branch, and hence it was natural not to limit myself to just one family in genealogy either. There the solution of every problem led to new problems to be addressed, and I found the same to be true in genealogy. Moreover, both are exacting and rewarding. Thus, my transition was a natural one.

Writing articles, letters, etc.

I also found that my knack for writing came in just as handy in genealogy as it did in mathematics. In the former, I was among the most prolific mathematicians engaged in popularizing mathematical ideas among talented students at the high school and beginning university level via regular columns for them in nationwide publications like *Mathematics Student*, *Quantum*, *Consortium*, *Mathematics and Information Quarterly*, and *Math Horizons*, as well as in privately circulated ones like the *Newsletter of the USAMTS*. I also corresponded a lot with other problem posers and solvers, as well as students involved with my programs. Hence, only my clientele had to be replaced with relatives and other enthusiasts of family history. Of course, first I had to identify them, but with proper diligence, that was relatively easy.

Writing was always second nature to me, and hence I didn't mind writing a lot of letters. I did so anyhow all my life, since in 6th grade I was writing to my mother in Nikla from Budapest, then I wrote to my father from Nikla to Füzesgyarmat during his deportation, and from Csurgó, where I was in high school, to Nikla to my parents. And then from America I wrote to family and friends in Hungary fairly regularly. And even here in the USA, I kept up with my friends in other cities as I moved around. Moreover, I kept in touch with various relatives around the world, whom I got to see during my travels later. They included Pál Bogyay's family in Australia (related via the Svastits line, but I didn't yet know how) and Márta néni's family in Toronto, Canada (she was my mother's first cousin and good friend). One of the benefits of my genealogical work was that I got to know many more of my relatives either in person or at least via letters, phone conversations or e-mail messages.

Distant relatives come to the rescue

My interest in even very distant relatives stems from the recognition that often they know more about my ancestors than I do. They may have documents, pictures, or family trees that are of interest to me too, like a postcard photo showing one of my Svastits great-grandmothers (Emilia) sent to me by the widow of a distant Berzsényi cousin. Though I knew a lot about her, that was the first picture I ever saw of Emilia Svastits. And it was a similarly distant Thulmon cousin, Bea Baán, who managed to reconnect me with my Vargha relatives in Balatonfüred, who later helped me with the organization of the 2005 Vargha Family Reunion.

Return to literary interests

Yet another benefit of my work in genealogy is that it encouraged me to return to my interest in Hungarian literature, which was very close to my heart in my youth. In particular, since I always loved my great-great-grandfather Dániel Berzsényi's poetry, it was most natural to immerse myself even more in his works and various scholarly writings about him, which in turn paid off in genealogy. For example, one of his letters led me to research our relationship to the Döbrentei

family, and hence establish contact with two members of that family, who are important and valuable Hungarian intellectuals today. At this point I should mention yet once more that such research would not be possible without the incredible help of my close associate, Imre Gyimesi, who does the detective work in Hungary's archives for me.

Autobiography in disguise

Naturally, I would not be writing the present monograph if I would not have spent several years already researching my family history, for I wouldn't have anything to write about. Which is not quite true, since paging through it, one must surmise that it is an autobiography in disguise. Which is true, but that was never intended. It just so happened that including the story of my life was a natural extension of writing about my family. Moreover, I wanted Y'all to know more about me, my career, as well as my journey from being a poor little Hungarian boy to my present status in life. That journey was even more adventurous and educational than I thought, and it gives me great pleasure to share with you my reflections on it. I hope you will also learn from it and pass on some of the wisdom that I share with you on these pages. One of them is that when one writes about past events, not only do many half-forgotten details come back, but everything makes more sense in retrospect, and one truly realizes that everything happened for a reason.

Organizational skills

As an organizer of mathematical programs, I spent over 30 years of my life in a variety of leadership positions. Not the kind of guy who gives the speech and collects the applause, but the one who makes things work, because he does a major share of the work himself. Time and again, I was the organizer behind the scenes and more often than not the programs were of my own creation. Moreover, most of them were big, since my goals were always sizable, but all within reason. At this point I mention these aspects of my mathematical life only for the following reason: I found that my strengths were transferable to genealogy, and I enjoyed the organization of comparable programs in genealogy too. As examples, I mention here my input into the organization of the Berzsenyi Family Reunions of 2005, 2011 and 2015, the essential role I played in bringing about the Vargha Family Reunion of 2005 and the Juhász family Reunion of 2017, as well as the present manuscript. Our work with the Family Tree Maker program, which yielded a 28-foot-long Berzsenyi Tree is another example. Yet another is our homepage, www.berzsenyifamily.net.

Fulfilling my parents' dreams

Lastly, but not least importantly, let me mention that I strongly believe that by my extensive work in genealogy, I am fulfilling my parents' implicit dream of calling proper attention to the contributions made by members of our family. They were both very family-minded and brought us up to be of similar attitude. Hence, I strongly believe that both of them would have been very pleased with the success of our family gatherings of 2005 and the subsequent ones (not just the Vargha and Berzsenyi, but the Svastits and the Juhász as well). I think the present work would also meet their approval; that thought makes me happy that I chose genealogy instead of collecting butterflies.



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