

History of Teleki (formerly Tauszig) family's 100 years vine business

This is based on the writings of Andor Teleki (his memoirs and firm brochures), immediate post 2nd World War correspondence of Andor Teleki and Simon Lendner, letters in 1960s and 1970s to Marianne Wates from Simon Lendner and Käthe Brandt, some recent genealogical research arranged by and other information provided by Erzsi Svab, the memoirs of Judit Svab and miscellaneous notes made from time to time. No other research has been carried out and many of the facts as here stated are not verified.

Sigmund Teleki (Tauszig) 1854-1910

Family background

The Tauszig family were a Jewish family from the village of Villány in Hungary where Sigmund (Hungarian spelling Taussig (or Tauszig) Zsigmond),



was born in 1854. The village is about 34 km south of Pecs and 10 km from the Croatian border. Maybe they had vineyards there and produced wine but this is not clear. Sigmund's father, Abraham (see photo), born about 1815 was at one time very successful and was fairly wealthy but lost it all and Sigmund had to support his mother and two younger siblings after his death in 1885. Abraham was a Gewürzhändler¹ which translates in English as a spice dealer or grocer.

Vineyards in Villány

In his 1950 brochure Andor states that Sigmund inherited from his father and grandfather about 5 Joch (7 acres or 3 hectares) of vineyards and 20 Joch (28 acres or 11 hectares) of fields. It could not be correct that this was inherited from his grandfather as Jews could only own land after emancipation in 1867, but his father could have bought it after that date.

The first reference Andor makes to Villány is that in 1902 he lived briefly there with his grandmother, Sigmund's mother, and managed the business there. Sigmund's advertisements from the late 1890s make it clear that he had vineyards in Villány, and also the nearby village of Nagyharsány and was

¹ Article – Rebenzüchter Sigismund Teleki by Andor Teleki

producing grapes and wine there but we do not know how and when these vineyards were acquired.

Wine merchant

Sigmund, as a young man (the photo is from 1875) became involved in the wine selling and trading business as sales executive for a wine merchant company in Würzburg, Germany. During this period he also learned English and French. In 1881 (aged about 27) he returned and established a wine trading business in Rákóczi Street, Pécs, which was also the family home. This business was very successful; he travelled widely exporting wine and even exported to France which was suffering at the time from phylloxera.



The family spent the summers during the 1880s in their vineyard in Makarhegy, Pécs. Presumably this was bought or rented by Sigmund for the purpose of producing his own wine.

In 1895 he was given the honour of K.u.K.Hoflieferant (official supplier to the Court of wine).

Phylloxera

Phylloxera was a disease caused by aphids feeding on the roots of vines. It came into Europe on American vines which were being imported in the middle of the 19th century. The American vines themselves were resistant to it. In the late 1860s vineyards in France were affected with the vines dying and vineyards being destroyed and over the next ten years this spread all over France and began to spread to other countries. After initial failed attempts to eradicate it using chemicals, it was realised that the solution was to graft European vines onto American ones.

The first instance of phylloxera in Hungary was in 1875 and by 1885 it was suffering badly from the devastation. The vineyards in and around Pécs were destroyed in a few years after 1887. If the family had vineyards in Villány we do not know whether they were affected. The government took steps to assist the vineyards affected by importing, and presumably grafting, American vines but these were only suitable for sandy soil and not chalky or other difficult soils.

Foundation of business

Andor dates the foundation of the business from 1890, being the year that Sigmund founded the first large private vine nursery in Hungary, presumably to satisfy the demand for vines grafted on to American stock. He imported a variety of different American vines, mainly Riperia and Rupestris hybrids. These were grown on an already devastated vineyard in Pécs of about 5 hectares. This was presumably the vineyard in Makarhegy.

In 1892 he bought vineyards in Bányatelepe ut (4 joch (6 acres or 2 hectares)) and Kolonia u (16 joch (22 acres or 9 hectares)), on the northern outskirts of Pécs, which had previously belonged to his wife's uncle. These had to be replanted as they had been destroyed by phylloxera. Thereafter they spent their summers at Bányatelepe ut. Had the Makarhegy vineyard been disposed of? This photo from 1896 shows all the staff of the business with their families so it was substantial.



Name change to Teleki

Following emancipation in 1867 Jews were able to assimilate and treat themselves as and become accepted as Hungarians and were playing leading roles in the country. Part of this process included adopting Hungarian names. In 1897 Sigmund changed his surname and that of the children to Teleki.

Government consent was needed for change of name. This was an aristocratic name and was opposed by that family but unsuccessfully². Maybe he thought the name would be good for business. Business advertisements show the change of name at that time from Tauszig Zsigmond to Teleki Zsigmond. In 1898 his brother, Herman, also changed his name to Teleki. His mother, who died in 1915, retained the name Tauszig. His cousin, Andor Schwabach, son of Sigmund's sister Maria, similarly changed his name later taking the name Villány from his home town (he became a well-known writer – he and his father

² My conversation with Franzi Steiner 2005 (the Steiners being family friends of the Telekis)

died at Auschwitz). Sigmund's sons, Andor and Sándor, formally changed their religion to Evangelical in 1915 and 1917 respectively.

Development of vine stocks

The American vine stocks that were being used were however unsuitable for calcareous soil. Research had been continuing on this in France and it had been found that the Berlandieri vine was more suitable. Sigmund had been following



developments and decided to try these but at the time the importation of vines was prohibited because of the danger of infection from another disease – Black Rot. He therefore in 1896, the date of this photo, purchased some seeds from Resseguier, a propagator in Alenya, near Perpignon, France who had been experimenting. (one of his selections – RSB1 is still used).. The seedlings were grown at the Bányatelepe vineyard which had a variety of different calcareous soils. Out of about 40,000

seedlings only about 3000 were of any use and only 10 were pure Berlandieri. He worked on developing appropriate selections, cross breeding with Riparia and Rupestris, over the next five years or so. In 1900 a Berlandieri hybrid appears for the first time in his advertised list of stocks. He was helped in this by István Gombóc who worked for the firm for 40 years, later as a manager³.

Initially growers and the state organisation were sceptical about these new varieties but ultimately, they proved their worth and were widely used in the replanting of the vineyards in central Europe, particularly the Berlandieri x Riparia selections known as 5A Teleki and 8B Teleki. Sigmund gave some selections to Franz Kober, a viticulture inspector from Austria and he, some 20 years later, perfected two varieties known as 5BB Kober and 125Kober. Sigmund's son, Sándor, did further work from 1922 resulting in 5C Teleki. These together with others derived from Sigmund's original selections are amongst the varieties used throughout the world today.

Financial troubles

³ Information from Juti Svab

In 1898 Sigmund was hit by the wine forgery crisis. Because of the phylloxera, wine had become scarce and expensive resulting in wine adulteration being discovered in Pécs. This hit all wine traders whether involved or not. Sigmund had a large stock of wine in hand at the time and this became valueless. This had been financed by substantial bank loans which he was thus unable to repay. The largest part of the business was lost and after that he concentrated on the vine nursery business but was unable to repay the debts. In addition, he became diabetic, his health deteriorated, and he became depressed and bad tempered.

Andor Teleki (1884-1953)

Sigmund's son, Andor (photo from 1905) was involved, on and off, with helping his father and learning the business and science involved, and in 1902 wrote his first brochure on "The Correct Selection of the American Rootstocks". He did his military service from 1903 – 1904. He then stayed, as previously mentioned, with his grandmother in Villány and managed the business there for a few months before going to Vienna. He returned in Dec 1906, as his father was becoming too ill, and worked on the sale and export of the rootstock for him until May 1907 when he left to join a bank in Budapest. In 1907 he published his book "Die



Rekonstruktion der Weingärten", the reconstitution of vineyards. This is a 200 page book detailing the different rootstocks available. In 1908 he helped with harvesting and mentions in his memoirs that it was a very good year

Move to Villány and Sigmund's death

It seems that in about 1907 Sigmund and his wife Matild, moved to the family house in Villány, which thereafter was where the business was conducted. Judit describes it as a large house at the beginning of Paraszt utca, opposite the Szentháromság statue, i.e. on the main square. The house was built on stone



foundations, but its walls were made of adobe in the construction of the last century (19th). It had a huge yard, with a flower garden in front, a guest house, and then stables, where the women cut the canes in the winter, then kitchen garden and tennis court down to the meadow. The house still exists and this photo was taken in 2004:

Sigmund died there on 20th August 1910, aged 55, from pneumonia brought on by the diabetes, being buried in the Jewish cemetery. The death was registered by his sister's husband Sándor Schwabach (he and his son died at Auschwitz). The body was moved in 1930 to the Jewish cemetery in Pécs where his daughter, Teréz (known as Trusci), had been buried in 1918.

Andor wrote in his memoirs about his father: - “. He was a very clever, diligent and good man and it was only misfortune and bad health that made him inaccessible in his last 10 years. It was wonderful how he had been able to look to the future and recognised the value of the vines that made our house famous later.”

From 1910 and First World War

Andor and Sándor Teleki take over business

At the time of their father's death, Andor, aged 27, was working for a bank in Budapest and Sándor was aged only 19 (photo from 1909). Sándor was known in the family as Sanyi but Sándor is used here. (The English equivalent is Alexander). Andor left the bank and moved to Villány on 1st Sept 1910. The two of them took over the running of the business, Andor on the organisation side, having acquired substantial business experience



over the previous 10 years, and Sándor running the vineyards. It is not known what the financial arrangements with their mother were. It had substantial debts of over 100,000 Korona (about £4000 (£480,000 today) or \$20,000 (\$700,000 today) dating from the wine crisis which, because of his ill health, their father had not been able to reduce. However, with hard work they were able to make a profit of 40,000 Korona in the first season and had paid off the debts in three years.

The photo shows Andor (front) with Berlandieri x Riparia Teleki 8B vines in 1910.

Andor and Sándor expanded the business,

Andor travelling frequently to Budapest and Vienna making contacts and new customers, modernised the vineyard management and in 1911 expanded the vineyard in Villány. They also in that year opened their first vineyard in Austria at Sollenau, south of Vienna. This comprised 2 hectares of land.⁴



Sigmund's widow, Matild (photo from 1915) (born Matild Spitzer 1861), moved back to the house in Rákóczi Street, Pécs. This was sold in 1918⁵ and replaced by a house in Marx Street where she and her brother Beni Spitzer lived until their respective deaths in 1931 and 1937. She suffered from tuberculosis and the family remembered her as a permanent invalid.

Andor's marriage

In Oct 1912 Andor married Magda Lukács (born 1893) and moved to Budapest. Her father, Sigmund Lukács, was wealthy and owned a business, Ludwig Bernauer, which imported and refined oil. He died within two or three weeks of their marriage, and Andor, having acquired an interest in the business as his dowry, took over its management.

The photo is of their reception at Villány on their engagement – Sándor to the left of Magda and Trusci to the right of Andor



⁴ Letter of 1969 Lendner to Erzsi Jilly

⁵ Andor's memoirs

The children of this marriage were Sigmund, born 14th October 1913, known initially as Bubi and then Syd the latter being used here; and Marianne, born 2nd May 1915, known as Babi which name is used here.

This provided him with a very substantial income of over 40,000 Korona in addition to the 10,000 Korona from the vine business. However it took most of his time and the vine business, now operating profitably, he was able to leave to Sándor to manage.

There is no information as to how profits were divided between them at any time. One assumes it was equally but may be at this time Sándor drew all the income as Andor does say that it was only sufficient work for one person.

First World War

On the outbreak of war in July 1914 Sándor was immediately called up as a reserve officer of the f38-artillery regiment in the 13th army. He was then on



active service throughout the war, first for 3 years on the Serbian front, then in Carparthia and later also in Italy.

Andor was also called up and was on active service on the northern front in Galicia,

although this mainly involved advancing and retreating, until December 1914 when he returned sick.

It seems from his memoirs that he was then officially engaged by the Ministry of War to procure oil for the armed forces from Romania, until it entered the war against Austria-Hungary in August 1916, and from elsewhere by smuggling through Switzerland. He describes the dangers of the latter.



In 1915 he rented a flat in 4 Brucknerstrasse, Vienna, and the family moved there. May be this was done as a base for his work for the government, although there had also been the suggestion before the war that he should move to Vienna to expand the oil business in Austria.

He was thus presumably able to continue managing the oil business which thrived during the war because of the demand for oil and workers were probably exempt from military service. The business did, however, collapse completely at the war end.

With Sándor away and Andor presumably engaged full time with oil, the business in Villány deteriorated during the war. Their mother, with ill health and no business experience, was not able to take on the management. There was a severe labour shortage and no demand for vines as no one was planting vineyards. The only compensation was that the price of wine went up.

In the summer of 1917 Andor was called back to active service, the family returning to Budapest to live with Magda's mother. He was sent to the Romanian front as a lieutenant commanding a munitions column and then in charge of munitions at Divisional command. There was not much action and this was boring. After 3 months he contracted dysentery and fearing that it might be typhus was sent back to a field hospital and ultimately ended up in János Sanatorium in Budapest. In April 1918 he was released from military service for six months so, in the event, did not have to return. In the meantime Sándor had received a serious sword wound on his head on the Russian front and was recovering in a Budapest hospital. Andor succeeded in getting him released from further duty as being self-employed in agriculture.

Post war revolution and occupation

Sándor returned to Villány and Andor was in Budapest. He and Magda and presumably the children lived in a room at the oil business in Váci-ut. Revolution broke out on 1st November 1918 and the Serbs occupied the Baranya region which included Pécs. Andor hurried to join Sándor to discuss what could be done to save the business, the journey taking 24 hours instead of the usual 4 and hurried back to Budapest before the demarcation line was closed. For the following 1 ½ years Pécs and Villány were under Serbian control and it was not possible to travel there. The brothers did not see one another again until the summer of 1920, after the position of the boundary between Hungary and Yugoslavia had been fixed. Until then there was the possibility that the area would be retained by the Serbs and included in Yugoslavia.

In March 1919 the communist regime of Bela Kun took power and Andor describes how he managed to save the money held by the oil business. People were fleeing to Austria if they could as conditions under the Social Democratic government there were better. In May he decided to go to Switzerland, as conditions in Austria, although better, were not that good, and managed to obtain permission to emigrate with bribery and proof of his place of residence in Vienna. After a brief stay in Vienna, they travelled on to Switzerland where he managed to obtain permission to live in and near Lucerne, staying in a variety of hotels. He arranged an office from where he was able to conduct some business and visited Vienna in Sept 1919. However, the value of the money he

had rapidly depreciated against the Swiss franc and they had to leave in March 1920 and return to the flat in Vienna, which thereafter was their home and the base from which Andor conducted the trading side of the vine business

In March 1920 Andor entered into an agreement with his mother-in-law to divide the oil business between them and he took the factory in Lang-Enzersdorf, Vienna. This is to the northwest of Vienna on the Danube opposite Klosterneuburg. He refurbished the refinery there but later realised that the capital available to him was too small to be competitive and he reduced the business in 1926. The Hungarian business collapsed in 1922 leaving only a piece of land which, on his advice, she later sold, the proceeds providing her with an income. This presumably left Andor free to concentrate on the vine business. The subsequent history of the oil business and premises does not really concern us although it remained a part of Andor's and his family's business activities until the sale of the land in the 1950s.

In May 1920 the family travelled to Villány, which they had to do via Zagreb in Jugoslavia as the way from Hungary was still closed, and stayed until August. The two years under Serbian control had caused much unpleasantness and damage but at least they had escaped the communist regime. Sándor had been imprisoned for a few days for some patriotic utterances he had made. This stood him in good stead with returning Hungarian workers.

The business had suffered during the war because of their absences and the shortage of labour. It had only been possible to maintain it poorly with the help of Italian prisoners of war. However, the vineyards of their competitors in the production of American vines had suffered worse and a large part of the state's vineyards and those of their main competitor went to Romania. Many vineyards had collapsed during the war and no new ones planted, so that there was now a great demand for American vine stocks for replanting and they were thus in an advantageous position to take advantage of this. Prior to 1920 it had not been possible for them to satisfy the demand in Austria and Czechoslovakia because of being on the wrong side of the demarcation line and appalling transport conditions.

1920 – 1938

Expansion of business – 1920s

At the end of 1918 they purchased 200 joch (284 acres or 114 hectares) of land in Villány from the parcelling out of the Schaumburg-Lippeschen estate. Andor

mentioned earlier in his memoirs that the Schaumburg-Lippeschen champagne production had been transferred to Villány in 1912. Schaumburg-Lippe was a German principality, the smallest in the German Empire, and this sale presumably arose following the collapse of the German Empire in 1918. This was a very large area in comparison to the sizes previously mentioned and does not correspond with areas mentioned below. May be some of it was sold off later. This clearly indicates the concentration of the business in Villány rather than Pécs as it seems to have been in Sigmund's day

The land was planted out to provide cuttings and came into production in 1922. They were thus able to satisfy the high demand and charge very good prices because of the lack of supply elsewhere. There was keen reconstruction of the vineyards, ravaged by phylloxera and war, in Austria and Czechoslovakia. In Austria the government was supporting agriculture including vineyards with protective and other measures. This meant favourable market potential which Andor, in Vienna, took advantage of. They became the main suppliers of the Austrian vineyards. Not only could they get good prices for their own products but were able to import large quantities from Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia and Italy so that the business grew very satisfactorily.



To assist him in Vienna, Leopold Glatzmayer (photo on the left), aged 20, was employed in 1919 and on 1st Sept 1923 Simon Lendner (born 9.10.1906) joined the business as an office assistant and bookkeeper. Little did the



latter know that the future of the firm in Austria would ultimately lie with him.

In the meantime, Sándor had been experimenting to improve the American stock selection and his 5C Teleki selection dates from this time. This is the earliest of the stocks to ripen, so good for northern vineyards. This is still widely used throughout the world today. As previously mentioned, this is also the time that Franz Kober in Austria perfected the selections known as 5BB Kober and 125 Kober derived from some of Sigmund's original seedlings. In the 1935 brochure, Andor writes that of the original seven varieties there remain just the 8B and 5BB which are reliable. The older stock vineyards have the original mix but they are now concentrating on 8B, 5BB and 5C.

Andor writes that through his connections with the agricultural corporations and his superior business ability over his competitors he was able to make a good turnover and profit. He attributes success mainly to the expertise and service that he gave to customers so that the name of the firm was known not only in Austria and Czechoslovakia but in every other European and even overseas countries where vines for reconstruction were needed. The international vine business was very difficult, involving expertise, experience and financial ability and there were often problems to overcome. These including being a foreigner in Austria, which nationalistic competitors would try to take advantage of but the experts, customers and friends remained loyal to him. He refers to being a foreigner but this is probably a reference to anti-Semitism rather than being Hungarian.

Sándor's marriage

In 1922 Sándor married Erzsébet Lauber (1904-1964), known as Bözsi and



referred to as such here. The photo is on their honeymoon on the balcony at 4 Brucknerstrasse. They lived in the old family house in Villány, but sometime in the 1930s purchased a building in the central square of Pécs adjacent to Saint Sebastian Merciful church where they used the top floor as a pied de terre, the lower part being let. The children of that

marriage were Judit, born 18th January 1923, and Erzsebet, born 8th February 1925, known respectively and referred to here as Juti and Erzsi.

4 Brucknerstrasse, Vienna

In 1924 Andor and Sándor purchased the house 4 Brucknerstrasse, in the 4th district of Vienna in their joint names for 250,000 Schillings, which Andor wrote was a very good investment. It is near the centre of Vienna and immediately opposite the French embassy, built by France in Art Nouveau style at about the same time – 1906. The photo from 1935 shows the embassy on the left and the house to the right of the



lamppost. As already mentioned, Andor had been renting the first floor since 1915 and it had been the family home since 1920.

Kottingbrunn, Austria

In 1925 about 8 hectares of land in Kottingbrunn, not far from Sollenau, south of Vienna, was bought and vineyards established there. This became the main centre of operations in Austria with production of root stocks, grafted vines and grapes for production of wine and as table grapes.



The nursery at Kottingbrunn became a centre for study receiving many visits from students and experts.

This photo is a group portrait photo of workers who were engaged in doing the grafting of grape bearing vines onto the rootstock. Syd appears in the photo as a boy of 13.



It was visited on the 24th April 1927 by Dr Michael Hainisch, the first President of Austria. In this photo the President is in the centre with the white beard and Andor and Babi are at the end of the front row on the right.



Sigmund Memorial bust



In Hungary, on the 20th anniversary of his death in 1930 the business erected a memorial bust to Sigmund at the wine press house Kerekhegy in the Nagyarsány vineyard. Nagyarsány and Villány are adjacent villages with the Teleki vineyards being in both. This photo shows a local councillor making a speech after the unveiling before a large crowd. The photo below shows the press house with vineyards in front and the bust on the plinth in front of the wall. The press house still exists in good condition having been recently renovated.



New buildings in Villány

In the same year of 1930, they purchased the buildings of the former



Schaumburg-Lippeschen champagne works in Villányi, mentioned above, for the very low price of 60,000 Pengö (about \$12,000 then and \$200,000 now) and this magnificent structure became the main buildings and wine cellars of the business and was shown on the front cover of the firm's brochure. (They were demolished in 2001/2 by the then owners when upgrading.)

Included in the purchase, but separate from these buildings, was a villa which became the home of Sándor and his family in place of the old family home (photo 1934). The latter was used for other purposes including the housing of workers in 1945. The villa was situated near the Kalvaria church. It was still standing in 1980, being used as a kindergarten, but had been demolished by 1998. The old house still exists.



Österreichische Rebshulen Teleki and other companies

On 1st October 1932 the business in Austria was incorporated as Österreichische Rebschulen Teleki gmbh (Austrian Vine Nurseries), with Andor and Sándor having equal shareholdings of 13000 Schillings. In addition, Leopold Glatzmayer had 2000 Sch, their lawyer Dr.Zweiganthal 2000 and Franz Heinz 2000 making a total shareholding of 32000 Sch. In the 1935 brochure Mr Glatzmayer is described as Geschäftsführer (manager). It also refers to Mr Lendner and Mr. Nassau as officers and Mr Leopold Prechtel in Kottingbrunn. In

1936 the shareholdings were all increased by one third except for the lawyer's. The land at Kottingbrunn and Sollenau was presumably transferred to the company at this time as from later correspondence it seems clear that it owned the land.

There is no other information about Mr Nassau, although he is referred to in a letter from Mr Glatzmayer in 1946. From the later correspondence it would



seem that Mr Heinz, although a shareholder in the vine company, was in fact responsible for the oil business. This dates back to 1915 as Andor states that he would have been able to give evidence of Andor's residence in Vienna at that time.⁶

This photo is of Mr Prechtl who was the manager at Kottingbrunn

Separate companies were formed in in 1933, Palestine (Oriental Vine Nurseries Teleki) in 1934 and Czechoslovakia in 1935. Vines were grown in Palestine but it is not clear whether the others were merely trading companies or also had vineyards.

Sándor had established a vineyard in Daruvar, Croatia with Mr Bresslauer. Initially this was beset by many hailstorms but later improved. This produced about 1 to 2 million vines per year. In 1925 he attempted to establish one in Manzano, Italy with Dr Dorigo but this proved to be unprofitable so was soon given up.

Business activity

The best year was 1925/26 when, despite devastating hailstorms in Villány a large number of vines were sold in Romania and Italy at good prices. 1931/32, being the beginning of the Great Depression, was a catastrophic year.

Competitors were selling well below the cost price and they had to sell at a loss.. Conditions improved after that and in 1935/36 they achieved their biggest turnover although prices were lower than before the commencement of the depression. In 1935 they were exporting rootstock cuttings of 8B, 5BB and another variety and also grafted vines for the production of a variety of Austrian grapes. They were exporting not only to Europe and Russia but also North and South Africa, North and South America, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Palestine, Cyprus. They were not able to compete with France and Italy in price because of overland travel costs, higher wages, social payments and taxes but hoping that the Palestine branch would help.

⁶ AT letter of Feb 1946

By 1935 the firm's Austrian vineyards had expanded following the establishment of a new vineyard in M. Neusiedl (Markgraf Neusiedl⁷, north-east of Vienna) to produce rootstock cuttings. This comprised about 3 hectares and was rented⁸. There were then 17 joch (24 acres or 10 hectares) in Austria producing rootstock and 6 (8 acres or 3 hectares) for the production of table grape varieties for grafting. At the experimental nursery in Kottlingbrunn they had 60



different varieties of table grapes. The annual production in Austria was about 1 million rootstock cuttings and 200,000 – 400,000 grafted vines. The photo is of table grape vines in Kottlingbrunn.

In Hungary the annual production was 6 to 8 million rootstock cuttings and 1 to 2 million grafted vines. In

addition, 1500-2000 hectolitres of wine were produced, sold under the Teleki name including a Chateau Teleki. There were vineyards and other agricultural property in Pécs, Villány, Nagyharsány and Beremund, which is south of Villány near the Croatian border. There were vineyards in Pászto and Gyöngyös, north-east of Budapest. The reason for the latter was probably to be present in this famous wine producing region with the land probably being rented.



The photo is of Teleki-Kober 5BB stock with probably Sándor in the foreground.

In 1936 in his memoirs Andor wrote: -“The business is now one of the most important, if not the most important, business of its kind in the world. In 1910

⁷ Letter from Glatzmayer of Jan 1946

⁸ Ditto. Area calculated by deducting Kottlingbrunn (8) and Sollenau (2) from total

they had about 20 Katastraljoch [10 hectares] of vineyards and now about 80 (presumably about 60 in Hungary). There was hardly any stock production (presumably grafted vines as opposed to American rootstock) before the war whereas now they graft about 3 million of their own and purchase more when needed. However, the most profitable side of the business is trading in vines which is carried out in Vienna and other foreign places where we turn over a great number of vines. This is possible through cooperation with our affiliates and sister companies.”

It is not known what the financial arrangements between the brothers was and no accounts prior to the 1950s have survived. The relationship between them may not have been easy. Their characters were different. Andor, being demanding and intolerant, would have been a difficult man to work for or with. Sándor felt bitterness towards him although the reason is not known.⁹

Other activities and awards

Andor (photo 1934) was very involved in the international vine growing business and attended and addressed international congresses in Conegliano, Italy (1927), Barcelona (1929), Rome (1932), Budapest (agricultural congress) (1934), Lausanne (1935). In 1935 there was also an Austrian vine congress in Vienna and a Hungarian one in Pécs. At the latter the opportunity was taken to invite the participants to Villány and entertain them there. This photo at



Sigmund’s bust is on that occasion. In the front row from left – 4 Erzsi, 5 Babi, 6 Magda, 7 Juti, 11 Bozsi, 15 Sándor

⁹ Erzsi’s husband, Pongrac Jilly talking to his daughter-in-law Karen Jilly c.2008

Andor was a greater writer and throughout his life contributed articles to most of the vinicultural journals writing in German, Hungarian, French, English, Italian and Spanish in all of which languages he was fluent. He acquired the ownership of the Allgemeine Weinzeitung, the oldest wine newspaper in Austria, although it seems to have ceased publication around 1930, presumably because of anti-Semitism. In 1946 he had the idea of reviving this but presumably nothing came of it.



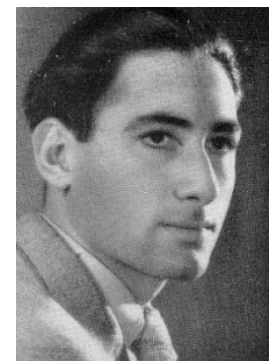
Both Andor and Sándor received the honorary title Oberregierungsrat (higher government adviser) from the Hungarian government for services to the vine industry. An obituary notice gives the date 1924 for Andor's so Sándor's may have been at the same time. This was the formal title always used when addressing them.



Sandor was vice-president of Viticultural Society of Hungary.¹⁰

In 1927 Andor published a revised version of his 1907 book *Die Rekonstruktion der Weingärten* entitled *Der Moderne Weinbau*. For his achievements in research etc he received various honours – Ritterkreuz in 1927, Offizierskreuz in 1930 (These were Austro-Hungarian Empire awards but perhaps he meant the Austrian Republic equivalent), the French Merite Agricole in 1930 and a Tunisian honour in 1935.

Andor's son Syd became involved with the business in the late 1930s following various studies in economics and viticulture, obtaining a doctorate, and practical experience and language learning at their associates, Dr Faes in Lausanne and Dr Dorigo in Manzano, and the publication of his book *Weinbau und Weinwirtschaft in Ungarn* (Viticulture and wine production in Hungary) in 1937. His father had arranged for him to have the same sort of experiences as he had as a young man with a view to bringing him into the business.



His daughter, Babi, having received some secretarial training and also having spent time in Lausanne, worked in the office with Mr Glatzmayer and Mr Lendner.

¹⁰ Death announcement in an Italian journal

The company through Mr Glatzmayer also became involved in the wholesale wine business in Vienna, its wine cellar being at Reisnerstrasse 5 in the 3rd District. This seems to have been some form of equal partnership between him and the company.¹¹

¹¹ Letter from Ainsworth Wates to Syd Teleki of 5.5.1953 – Mr Glatzmayer has a 50% interest in the cellar business.

Second World War

The Anschluss

Some information concerning the business in Austria following the commencement of the Nazi period at the Anschluss (merger with Germany) in March 1938 and during the 2nd World War can be gleaned from letters which have been preserved from 1945/6 by Andor, Mr Lendner and Mr Glatzmayer. The way the Arianization laws of the Nazis seemed to work is that Jews were forbidden to engage in most professions and were forbidden to own property. They were thus forced to sell at knock down prices. It seems that it was well known that Teleki was a Jewish company. It had already, following the Nazi takeover in Germany, had difficulty in exporting to Germany for this reason¹². It therefore had to be liquidated. However, what appears to have happened is that Mr Glatzmayer, not being Jewish and having contacts with the Nazi party, possibly through his wife and sister-in-law, was appointed the liquidator and then took no action to pursue it. Indeed, he went further than this in that he had considered it advisable to become a member of the Nazi party. The land at Kotingbrunn was, by arrangement with Andor and Sándor at a meeting in Budapest, transferred into Mr Glatzmayer's name. Mr Glatzmayer writes that he did suffer accusations in the party of protecting Jewish property, instigated by the rival firm Kober-Kohlfürst, which is referred to again later in this history, in an attempt to prevent the transfer. Business continued at Kotingbrunn during the war under the management of Mr Prechtl although on a reduced scale due to shortage of labour.

Mr Lendner was a practicing Jew and went "underground" during the Nazi period, his employment by the company ceasing on 30th June 1938. He was formally employed from 15th Oct 1940 to 24 Feb 1945 as a lacquer sprayer by the furniture making company of Johann Prutscher, grandfather of Pius Prutscher, a school friend of Syd, Pius's father having some connection in the Nazi party who helped. (The idea, as told by Syd¹³, was that as this work was dangerous, he would die anyway so the Gestapo could leave him alone!) Through the assistance and being married to a non-Jew, who refused to divorce him when requested, he managed to survive although many in his family died and he was the sole survivor of the family living in Austria at the end of the war.

¹² Letter from Mr Glatzmayer to Andor Jan 1946

¹³ My conversation with Syd in July 1987

Syd left Vienna for Switzerland on the 12th April 1938 having received threats and Babi left for England at about the same time. Andor was also under pressure from the Gestapo but, although he was travelling frequently abroad during 1938 and 1939, he did not leave Vienna finally until December 1939, although he gave his date of leaving as 15th August 1939¹⁴. The business's Swiss company – Plants De Vigne S.A. was at Rolle on the Lake of Geneva, west of Lausanne. Andor had acquired a flat and a bank account in Lausanne some time previously and this enabled him to claim Swiss residence¹⁵. Syd's address in 1939 was in Morges, which is west of Lausanne on the way to Rolle, so maybe this was the flat referred to. In January 1940 Magda writes that they were looking for a furnished flat in Lausanne¹⁶, so presumably the one in Morges was not suitable and they wanted a better one in Lausanne. Their address in 1946 was 32, Avenue Mon Repos, so this was probably the flat they found in 1940. Syd registered as a student although working for the company but ultimately had to leave Switzerland and he managed to get to South America.

What is not clear is how the family succeeded in keeping 4 Brucknerstrasse. The managing agent was Franz Wache, who continued to manage and collect rents throughout the war. After the war he was accused of being a Nazi and imprisoned for six months. In a letter to Andor he said this was a lie and to the contrary he had lost positions in the profession during the war, having been accused of protecting Jews. Mr Lendner wrote that of course he would deny it as all Nazis did. However, it seems possible that it is thanks to him that the property was protected. Also, Syd stated¹⁷ that Andor paid a bribe to the Gestapo to obtain their agreement not do anything if he left the country. Possible, the owners being Hungarian citizens made a difference. This did not help the company which was an Austrian company.

The oil business and/or properties at Lang-Enzersdorf under the management of Mr Heinz also do not seem to have been affected.

Liberation 1945

Following the liberation of Vienna by the Russians in April 1945 the positions were reversed. Mr Lendner took control of everything working from his home Allmannsdorferstrasse 28, Wien XII, being given the necessary authority by Andor and also by October receiving official government appointment as the

¹⁴ Letter to Lendner 20th Feb 1946

¹⁵ My said conversation with Syd

¹⁶ Letter to Ainsworth Wates 26th Jan

¹⁷ My conversation with Syd in 1987

administrator of Kottlingbrunn, where Mr Prechtl was still the local manager and continued as such. Anything owned by Mr Glatzmayer, being a member of the Nazi party, was put under state management and an administrator appointed. Mr



Glatzmayer had had to serve in the army in the last few months of the war. He had invested much in the wine cellar at Reisnerstrasse (see photo) which had done well during the war, but following the Russian occupation it was looted and he lost everything. His flat was badly damaged in the Russian attack and much of the contents stolen, so that he moved with his family to Linz where he obtained some employment. A Mr Rusek managed to get himself appointed as administrator of the

wine cellar business through a police connection and also made an abortive attempt to get control of Kottlingbrunn. Mr Lendner had to take action to get himself appointed. As the liquidation was not completed and had been commenced under duress it was possible to reverse this and revive the company.

The wine cellar was recovered and continued to be operated by Mr Glatzmayer, this being his main occupation thereafter. It was owned equally by the company and Mr Glatzmayer and run under the name Weinkellerei Glatzmayer.

Andor was not able to get permission from the allied occupation authorities to return to Vienna until September 1946. The flat in Brucknerstrasse had been let during the war, the rear part to Pius Prutscher. The front part including the office rooms had been vacated soon after the end of the war but Pius was not able to vacate until about the time of his return.

Sándor's death

In Hungary Sándor died on 28th June 1942 at the age of 51. Anti-Jewish laws similar to the German ones were introduced between 1938 and 1941 and the family thinks the distress caused by this may have contributed to his death from heart failure. There are also suggestions by his acquaintances that he committed suicide, which may have been done by deliberately not taking medication¹⁸. There is



¹⁸ Erzsi's husband Pongrac Jilly to their daughter-in-law Karen c.2008

evidence that the family tried to falsify its Jewish origins¹⁹. The management of the business was taken over by his widow Bözsi (the photo is from 1930), it being already in her name pursuant to a declaration made in January 1941. She was a gentile and catholic so this was safer. How this fits in with Andor's half ownership is not clear. The property in Pécs was probably at that time transferred to his children.

Juti had been at the agricultural university in Budapest for training so that she could work for the business. She came home to help her mother during the summer holidays and became a counter signatory for the bank but needed to complete her course. Erzsi stayed at home to help. They were however able to rely on the staff, Mr Toncsi for production and office assistants Margit and Frida.

Final years of Hungarian business

Juti passed her final exams in May 1944. In the meantime, the German occupation and Nazi terror had commenced in March. Margit and Frida, both being Jews were deported. Fortunately, although a Jew was defined as a person who had at least two grandparents born Jewish (which would have included Juti and Erzsi), there was an exception where the Jewish father was wounded in the First World War and received the "Signum laudis" award for heroic behaviour. They thus escaped deportation although their lives were threatened on at least one occasion.

The business continued with difficulty and the vineyards were in good condition until the Russian occupation in April 1945. Juti wrote that Villány was flooded with Russian and Bulgarian troops. The village was evacuated and there was a short token resistance. They returned after a few days to find the house ransacked. Men had been made prisoners so they had to help with the pruning of 25 hectares of vines which was a hopeless job. They were then informed that they had to produce 2 million vines per year for the Russians as part of the reparations payable by the Hungarian government for 3 years. Unaware of the situation there Andor and Mr Lendner had been hoping that they would be able to supply stock for the Austrian vineyards for which there would be a high demand²⁰! István Gombocz, who had worked for Sigmund and was treated as part of the family was a great help. Jani Svab, whom Juti married on 1st July 1945, was also working for the business.

¹⁹ False death and adoption certificates

²⁰ Letter from Lendner to Bözsi 16.1.1946

There are conflicting accounts of labour shortage. Juti's memoirs states that upon protesting that they did not have the manpower, they were supplied with 40 Swabian internees who were housed in the old family house. Andor writes, reporting on letters from Bözsi, that the labourers were mainly from the Swabian German speaking ethnic group which predominated in the area, that they were expelled from the country and replaced by Hungarians who were not familiar with the work which affected production.²¹ Nevertheless they had produced 420,000 grafts and 900,000 rooted vines, although there was nothing over for exporting after satisfying the reparations.

In 1949 all the family property, including vineyards, buildings, the house in Villányi and the house in Pécs were nationalised by the Communist government which had seized power in 1947. This was, of course, without compensation.

Austria – post war

As a consequence of Sándor's death in 1942 his shares in the Austrian company Österreichische Rebschulen Teleki (referred to henceforth as "ORT") were registered in Bözsi's name in 1948. What happened to his half of 4 Brucknerstrasse is not clear. It seems to have become owned by his children Judit (known as and referred to here as Juti) and Erzsébet (known as and referred to here as Erzsi) so must have been given to them by Bözsi. This is referred to again later.



In 1948 other changes were made in the ORT shareholdings to reflect Mr Lendner's now dominant role in the company. He had not previously been a shareholder. The previous lawyer's shares and Mr Heinz's shares were transferred to him and transfers were made by Andor, Bözsi and Mr Glatzmayer so that the shares were held as to 35% each by Andor (this photo from 1949) and Bözsi, 20% by Mr Lendner and 10% by Mr Glatzmayer. In April 1949 the capital was increased from S.33.333 to S.100,000 being divided pro rata to the existing shareholdings.

²¹ Letters to Lendner 20.2.1946

With the business being in Austria only, circumstances were very different from before the war. Although there was again the opportunity to sell vine stock for the replanting of vineyards, the supply from Hungary was no longer available and what could be produced in Kottlingbrunn was limited. The business was therefore much smaller although an additional 3 hectares of land were purchased in 1962 from the Schloss Kottlingbrunn.

Syd remained in South America, in Colombia and then Venezuela, and did not return to work for the company, although invited by his father to do²². This is referred to again below. He worked in viticulture in Colombia, but not on behalf of the company. In 1948 he moved to Venezuela because of the riots in Colombia²³ and after initially working in viticulture was employed by an oil company²⁴. It seems from newspaper articles that he had good contacts in those countries and was instrumental in trying to encourage viticulture.

Teleki Rebanlagen

The changed circumstances were reflected in the formation on 20th April 1950 of Teleki Rebanlagen und Weinhandels Aktiengesellschaft [in English - Teleki Vineyards and Wine Trading Limited] (referred to hereafter as “Teleki Rebanlagen”) with a capital of S.1,000,000, divided as follows: - Andor 520,000, his wife Magda 160,000, Lendner 200,000, Glatzmayer 100,000 and the business’s lawyer Dr Neureiter 20,000, Bözsi having no share in the new company. The land at Kottlingbrunn and Sollenau remained in the ownership of ORT, Bözsi having a 35% interest in this company, but the production and trading was carried out by Teleki Rebanlagen.

Andor Teleki’s death

Andor died on 2nd April 1953 suddenly of a heart attack. This was only a month after a two months’ visit to South Africa to explore the possibilities of trade with that country. He submitted an article about this for publication to the Österreichische Weinzeitung on 30th March, as mentioned in his obituary in that paper. Obituaries were included in many vinicultural journals, amongst others in Austria, Switzerland, Italy and France.

²² Letter from Käthe Brandt of 18.11.65

²³ From his Colombian grandson, David Teleki

²⁴ Divorce papers

His shares in both companies were divided equally between his widow, Magda (in photo 1956 on right), Syd and Babi (now Marianne Wates and residing in England - in photo on left). Consideration was given to the possibility of selling the company but it was decided against this, an important factor being that the vineyards were in



the Russian occupation zone which would have depreciated the price²⁵. This might have been an opportunity for Syd to return and take control of the company but, for reasons given below, he did not do so. Magda understood nothing of the company's affairs and left the management entirely in Mr Lendner's hands who thus took over sole management of the company. Mr Glatzmayer's involvement was presumably restricted to the management of the wine cellar business.

Andor's half interest in 4 Brucknerstrasse was left to Babi's children subject to a life interest to Magda.

On 7th July 1955 Teleki Rebanlagen was converted into a GmbH. The Geschäftsführer were Magda, Lendner and Glatzmayer with any two being able to sign.

In June and September 1955 there was a company reorganisation, the reasons for which are not known and which is difficult to understand. The capital of Teleki Rebanlagen was increased by S.159, 000, ORT acquiring S.157, 000 and the balance being divided pro rata. The capital of ORT was increased by S.110,000 and most of the shares in ORT were acquired by Teleki Rebanlagen, except for Bözsi's, leaving the shareholding as Teleki Rebanlagen 56.3%, Bözsi 35%, Lendner 6.7% and Glatzmayer 2%.

Magda's death and Syd

Magda died on 26th March 1959 from cancer and her shares were inherited by Syd and Babi.

It is necessary to write something here about Syd's character. His father must have had the intention and hope that he would ultimately take over the management of the company. This however would have meant working

²⁵ Letter Ainsworth Wates to Syd 8.5.1953

together but their personalities, similar in many ways, clashed. Andor was not an easy man to get on with, expected a lot and was intolerant. In 1941 when Syd was exploring the possibility of going to Canada, Babi wrote that it would be good for him to be able to start somewhere on his own and get away from his father. Thus, although invited to come back by his father after the war he did not do so, although this may also have been due to the difficulty of getting a visa. They were both ambitious and had grand ideas but Andor had the ability to put them into practice and succeed whereas Syd appears not have had this. He did not have the patience to apply himself consistently to achieve a particular objective and was too optimistic in thinking through his grand projects.

Added to this Syd spent what money he had freely and was generous so he was always seeking some quick way to make it. The family had lived well, money appearing to be no problem. Due to his success in business Andor was wealthy. Whether this was entirely honestly obtained is not known²⁶. Clearly, he was not averse to using bribery and influences to achieve objectives, as would have been the case during the First World War in obtaining oil for the German and Austrian armies and may be to save his property and life in the Second World War.



Syd (photo 1961) considered the company to be too small and not worthwhile his spending time on. Both after his father's and mother's deaths he wanted to liquidate or sell the company²⁷ so that he could do something more ambitious with the proceeds. He was not therefore initially interested in becoming involved. He still had a residence in Venezuela where he had married in 1952 but from December 1958 lived in Europe, either in Germany, where he was involved in a project relating to the manufacture of blast furnaces, or in Brucknerstrasse where he had a room. He did not return to Venezuela. His wife did not want to come to Europe so they remained separated and contact with her was not maintained. He later ascertained that she had gone to the United States in 1960.

²⁶ My conversation with Franzi Steiner in 2005

²⁷ K.Brandt letter to MW Nov 1965

Mr Lendner's personality was quite the opposite of Syd's – hard working, with attention to detail and careful not to take risks. He must have managed to cope well with working for Andor. He developed a good relationship with the specialist state authorities and with other vineyard owners, whereas Andor's relationships had been difficult, and he was thus able to forward the interests of the company, which was small in comparison with some others in the business, particularly the firm of Kober-Kohlfürst which was 10 times the size. In 1965 he was elected chairman of the Verbandes der Rebschülbesitzer (Society of vine nursery owners).²⁸



Having spent his inheritance pursuing, amongst other things, the project in Germany which came to nothing and not having any income, Syd wanted to sell his shares in 1963. The outcome was that Babi bought half his shares in 1964 for about S.130, 000²⁹ payment being made by instalments from dividends. He wanted then to become involved in managing the company but had really lost his opportunity as there was only need for one manager in the small company and it would not have been possible for him and Mr Lendner to work together. It was however arranged that he would be employed by the company and be paid a salary of S.5000 per month, later increased to S.6000, with a view to his supervising the activities at Kottingbrunn. This was not a success; he was absent much of the time and did not get on with the employees. Thereafter he did the occasional useful work for the company and the salary continued as a sort of pension until he was able to draw a state pension when it was reduced.

In 1966 - 71 he was in contact with vine producers in Germany and had a project to develop further rootstocks from the Teleki 5C and to merge the firm with German producers but this was considered unrealistic and rejected by Babi on Mr Lendner's advice.

The name of Teleki Rebanlagen und Weinhandels Gmbh was changed to Teleki Rebanlagen Gmbh in 1960 and Syd and Babi were appointed Geschäftsführer but with Mr Lendner having power to act on his own.

Wine cellar

²⁸ Ditto letter

²⁹ Deduced from letter SL to MW 6.9.65

The history of the wine cellar is unclear. The deletion of Weinhandels from the name would indicate that the company was no longer involved in wine trading after 1960, although its grapes were always sold to the wine cellar. Until then the wine cellar address appeared on the notepaper. However, ORT still had a half interest in it including, presumably, the property in the Reisnerstrasse. In 1969 the partnership was dissolved³⁰ and ORT received S.200, 000, Mr Glatzmayer's shares in ORT were transferred to Teleki Rebanlagen and those in Teleki Rebanlagen to ORT. This left ORT being owned as to 93.3% by Teleki Rebanlagen and 6.7% by Mr Lendner. Mr Glatzmayer ceased to be a Geschäftsführer in 1970. He had brought his son-in-law, Mr Ambrosi, into the business but his sons were not interested. Mr Ambrosi died in 1978 so the business was closed down then and presumably sold.

Company's activities

There were two parts to the business of the company. One was the growing of vines, root stock for the production of cuttings for sale and for grafting, selling grafted vines and the production of grapes to produce wine sold by Mr Glatzmayer. The other was the export of vines (presumably both root cuttings and grafted vines). There was some exporting to Germany but the main business was the annual export to Czechoslovakia, dealing with the appropriate branch of the government. There was an understanding with Kober-Kohlfürst that they would have the business with Germany and Teleki with Czechoslovakia³¹. The vines exported were primarily imported from Italy (Mr Busetti seems to have been the main contact there but there may have been others) but also some grown at Kottlingbrunn. This business originated after the war when political relations between Czechoslovakia and Italy were bad inhibiting direct trade between the countries.³² However prices ultimately became too high in Italy and vines were imported from Romania. By 1978 the Czech business had ceased and they were importing from Romania and France just for sales within Austria

A letter from Mr Lendner in 1960 gives an example of activity. 200,000 grafted vines were sold to Czechoslovakia, 150,000 being imported from Italy and 50,000 being bought from Austrian producers. Their own production of root stock was insufficient to satisfy the demand in Austria so they imported 310,000 from Italy partly to sell and partly for their own grafting.

³⁰ Letter Lendner to Erzsi Nov 1969

³¹ Letter SL to MW 13.1.71

³² Letter Ainsworth Wates to Syd May 1953

The import/export business provided most of the profit, the growing at Kottingbrunn and Sollenau just paying for itself. It was however important to keep this going because of the name. Prior to 1971 there was only one year when there was no profit and no dividend paid. Then there appear to be years with large losses and large profits. The earliest accounts still available are from 1959. In that year there was a turnover of S.1,685,000. There is no information as to how this was divided between the export business and inland sales. The profit was S.132,000. To convert this roughly to English pounds these figures are £23,000 (equivalent to £425,000 in 2017) and £1800 (equivalent to £33000 in 2017).

The wages and presumably social security payments paid for the office in Vienna in that year were S.222,618. This was presumably for Mr Lendner, Gyuri Brandt (see below) and may be the chauffeur, Mr Hager. Assuming 2/3rd was Mr Lendner's this would be S.150,000 (£1900 or £35000(2017)). In addition, he would have received 30% of the dividend of S.60000

Management changes

Mr Prechtl, who had been the manager at Kottingbrunn since the 1930s retired on 31st December 1961 and was replaced by Mr Kurt Ohrenberger (referred to as Ing (short for Ingenieur) Ohrenberger) who had joined the business a little earlier. From 1960 to 1962 the trading profits were sufficient for improvements to be made to the buildings at Kottingbrunn and for the additional 3 hectares of land to be purchased as already mentioned above.

In 1958 Magda's sister Katharina ("Käthe") Brandt (in photo) and her husband Gyuri came from Hungary to live with Magda, one reason probably being to be at hand to care for her because of her cancer. Gyuri was a banker and became employed by the company to assist with bookkeeping. There is no information as to what help Mr Lendner had before this. He continued until he became too unwell when Käthe herself took his place. Her first letter to Babi about company affairs was in 1963 Gyuri died in 1967. In 1972 she was appointed a Geschäftsführer in place of Syd.

The photo on the next page taken on a visit to Budapest in probably 1969 shows from the left Babi, Mr Lendner, Käthe, Juti, Juti's husband, Janos, and her daughter, Zora.



Purchase of Sandor's family shares

In 1965 Teleki Rebanlagen purchased from Juti (now Judit Svab following her marriage in 1945 to Janos Svab) and Erzsi (now Erzsébet or Elizabeth Jilly following her marriage to Pongrac Jilly and living in USA) their half share in 4 Brucknerstrasse for S.600,000 payable over 6 years³³, their mother, Bözsi, having died in November 1964 at the age of 60. This was payable out of the profits of the company which, as mentioned above, had previously been used for various improvement works at Kottingbrunn. On the 11th December 1969 their 35% share in ORT, inherited from their mother, was purchased by Teleki Rebanlagen. The company paid S.147,000³⁴ being double the share capital.

Their half share in the property had in fact been transferred much earlier to the company, possibly in 1952³⁵. The purpose of this would have been to remove evidence of Bözsi or her children having an asset in Austria which could perhaps be seized by the Hungarian government. It was shown in the accounts of the company but presumably fictitiously and there is correspondence indicating that it was treated as belonging to the company. However, the accounts do not show any rent so this was probably put aside in a special bank account.

³³ Letter from Käthe of 29.9.1965

³⁴ Letter Lendner to Erzsi Nov 1969

³⁵ There is no record of where this date comes from.

Erzsi Jilly (photo from about 1960 on left) used money to purchase a cosmetics



shop when she still lived in Hungary and Juti Svab (photo from about 1969 on right) to pay for TB treatment so this must have come from this account. Juti's share of the proceeds of sale of the shares, and perhaps also the house, were held in a bank account with Kathrein & Co³⁶ and remitted to her when needed.



She used the money to purchase a one bedroom apartment in Budapest, and to build a house on her plot of land at Balaton Lake,³⁷ which had been bought by Sándor and which somehow had not been nationalised.

Merger of ORT and Teleki Rebanlagen and shareholder changes

On 3rd June 1970 ORT was liquidated and the two companies merged with the shareholdings: - Marianne Wates S.504,507 (50.35%), Sigmund Teleki S.168,135.6 (16.78%), Simon Lendner S.303,606 (30.3%), Dr Neureiter S.25,751.4 (2.57%) . Total 1,002,000. It seems that the reason this had not occurred earlier was that there was a tax disadvantage which no longer applied because of a change in the law.

In practice following Andor's death the company was controlled and managed by Mr Lendner and it was his business and livelihood. He had a substantial shareholding and when Syd needed to sell his remaining shares to raise money, he purchased those in November 1972 for S.250,000 thus giving him a 47.7% interest and Syd ceased to be a Geschäftsführer. In September 1973 following the death of Dr Neureiter Babi purchased his shares from his widow. Mr Lendner always considered himself to be working for the Teleki family and was anxious not to obtain a controlling interest in the company although the purchase of these shares would not have done so.

Last years of the business

As Mr Glatzmayer's wine selling business closed in 1978 the company ceased production of grapes and the vineyards were either let to other producers or were left unattended. There appears to have been only 1 hectare of the total of 11 hectares at Köttingbrunn which were used for growing vine stock. Newly grafted vines had since the war always been grown on rented land. The land at

³⁶ Information from Eva Henhappel

³⁷ Information from Erzsi and Zora Svab

Sollenau was already let. A letter from Mr Lendner to Erzsi Jilly in 1969 when purchasing her and Juti's share in ORT describes the poor state of the land at that time.

Both Mr Lendner and Käthe Brandt were 72 years old in 1978 and were looking to retire. Consideration was given to selling the business to one of the other vine producing companies with whom they worked together when importing vines – Kober Kohlfürst and Tschida. However, it was decided to sell to Mr Ohrenberger, the manager at Kottingbrunn. The house and outbuildings were sold with effect from 1st January 1979 for S.1,500,000. The trading business was sold for S1,200,000 on the basis that it was gradually passed over with the final payment being made in 1985. He took over the business jointly with his son Gerd. Gerd still runs the business there today but it has been merged with Kober Kohlfürst.

The photo below shows Babi and Mr Lendner on a visit to Kottingbrunn in 1981 with Mr Ohrenberger's son.



Thus, Mr Lendner was finally able to take partial retirement in 1985 and the vine business ended after nearly 100 years. Käthe Brandt had died in 1981. Whether she had stopped working before then is not recorded. It had originally been intended to liquidate the company but because of the capital gains tax that would be incurred it was decided that there was no reason that it could not continue as just a property holding company with its assets being a half share in 4 Brucknerstrasse and the land at Kottingbrunn which was let. The land at

Sollenau was sold in 1985 and some of the land at Kottingbrunn was subsequently sold.

There was thus continuing work to be done and although his daughter, Eva Henhappel, took over some of his work towards the end of his life, and she had been appointed a Geschäftsführer in 1981 in place of Käthe Brandt, he continued to go to the office regularly until not long before his death on 20th September 2001 at the age of 95 having worked for the company for nearly 80 years.

Although still with the name Teleki Rebanlagen (Teleki Vineyards) the company continues as a property investment company under the joint ownership of Marianne Wates' and Simon Lendner's descendants and managed by the latter.

Hungary addendum

In Hungary, with the end of communism, the vineyards and buildings that formerly belonged to the family were acquired by a company, Csányi, which subsequently in 1998 was given permission to use the Teleki name for its wine so that Chateau Teleki is again sold in Hungary. In return the family receives 50 bottles per year. The buildings purchased in 1930 (see photo on an earlier page) were however demolished in 2001/2 and replaced by modern buildings.

Sigmund became honoured and remembered in Villány in various ways. At the Wine Museum, situated with its cellars in buildings formerly belonging to the family, a section is devoted to him; there is a plaque commemorating him; a school named after him and a road. In 2000 a replica of the bust that had been erected in 1930 at the press house in the vineyards, but which had since, in the 1950s, been stolen, was erected in the centre of the town outside the wine museum. This photo shows Sigmund's great-great-grandson, Zsolt Balasko, who spoke at the unveiling ceremony in the absence of Juti who was unable to attend.



Brian A.Wates – December 2022