

Remembering St Martin in his birth place

*St. Martin Magyarok, ragyago Csellagui
Johannak Remant Koronajo.
et pocsagnak, es Lohi vaksagnak
in vilaga, B. utra huzaja.
Marton vira*

Remembering St Martin in his birth place

A joint publication by the
National Archives of Hungary
Vas County Archives
and the Society of Picture
Postcard Collectors

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This publication was sponsored by:

- Committee for Legal Affairs and Social Relations of the Municipality of Szombathely
- St Martin Programme Office of the Savaria Turizmus Nonprofit Kft

Materials lent by:

- Berzsényi Dániel Library (Szombathely)
- National Archives of Hungary (Budapest)
- Library of the Archabbey of Pannonhalma
- Rumi Rajki Circle of Friends of Arts (Szombathely)
- Savaria Town Museum with County Powers (Szombathely)
- St Martin Parish (Szombathely)
- Diocese of Szombathely
- Treasury of the Diocese of Szombathely
- Library of the Diocese of Szombathely
- Archive of the Diocese of Szombathely
- BRENNER József
- PITTMANN Ildikó

ISBN 978-963-7227-35-6

Publication plans by:

- NÉMETH József

Printed by:

- Line Design Kft.
- Manager in charge:
GYÉMIS Ildikó executive manager

Szombathely, 2016.

Dear Reader,

The jubilee St Martin Commemorative Year was the occasion for the temporary exhibition organised in close cooperation by the National Archives of Hungary Vas County Archives and the Martinus Religious and Cultural Association to pay tribute to the Saint. Entitled 'Remembering St Martin in his birth place', the exhibition was open to the public between 15 August and 30 September 2016 in Szombathely, in the lecture and exhibition hall of the Archive.

Months of thematic research in the archives yielded a number of new discoveries and resulted in this exhibition. The collection of sources and exhibits was promoted by a most comprehensive cooperation; in addition to archive staff renowned external experts offered their assistance for free, sharing their research results from decades of their professional careers and also a number of institutions and private sponsors lent us exhibits, adding fascinating details to the exhibits on display for the public. The exhibition was funded by the Municipality of Szombathely from its funds earmarked for the programmes of the St Martin Commemorative Year.

The exhibition provided a historical overview of the memories of St Martin and his veneration in Szombathely and in Vas county from Ancient Times to this day. The documentary evidence, certificates, seals, maps, old and contemporary photos, maquettes and works of art looking back centuries on display were a clear attestation of the continuity of St Martin's cult and veneration, showing how deeply the Saint's memories lived and continue to live in his birth place. In addition to wishing to present the public with ordered and modern knowledge, the organisers of the exhibition also undertook to provide an exciting experience to visitors, and to allow St Martin's spirit to touch them.

Over a few weeks' time hundreds of people visited the most successful exhibition ever organised by the Archive. Prompted by the requests we received to do so, we chose to convert the exhibition into an itinerant one as of November 2016 to make sure that it is available for visitors in other towns of Vas county. The exhibition was met with great acclaim, which prompted us to make the materials and information collected available for posterity also in printing, allowing us to disseminate the information. The initiative was embraced by the Society of Picture Postcard Collectors and was sponsored by the Municipality of Szombathely.

Thumbing through the booklet you will find that the people of Szombathely have preserved and cherished the memories of the fact that St Martin was born here and that people have always attributed great significance to this. They have always been proud that the Saint known all over the world started on his path from here. Martin, shining star of all Hungarians and Sabaria's diamond tiara' – this is how an 18th century prayer in the Cantor Book of Vép, also on display at the exhibition, described Martin showing clearly what Martin meant for local people throughout the centuries and how significant his figure can be for people today.

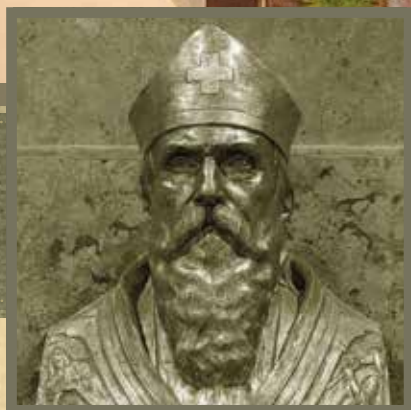
Szombathely, St Martin's month 2016

Dr MŰLEGA Miklós
Archive director





▲ St Martin altar (photo by Németh József)



St Martin's birth house

Legend in Szombathely has it, the northern side-chapel of today's St Martin Church stands on the very spot where St Martin was born in 316.¹ It is even written over the entrance to the chapel, previously inside the chapel on its southern wall: Hic natus est S. Martinus.² Usually people refer to the biography by Sulpicius Severus of the bishop of Tours, venerated as a saint already in his lifetime to support this claim, although the author actually makes no mention of the place or the date of the birth either.³ The main walls of his birth house, which JÁRDÁNYI PAULOVICS István believed to have found in 1944, can't possibly have been standing here since the place had served as a cemetery ever since the foundation of the Roman colony.⁴ So, where does the idea come from then?

Apparently, the tradition goes back to an event in October 791⁵ and to none other than Charlemagne. In the autumn of 791 the King of the Franks led a war against his eastern barbarian neighbours, the Avars. At the time he and his family visited ancient Savaria, the town of St Martin's birth as pilgrims

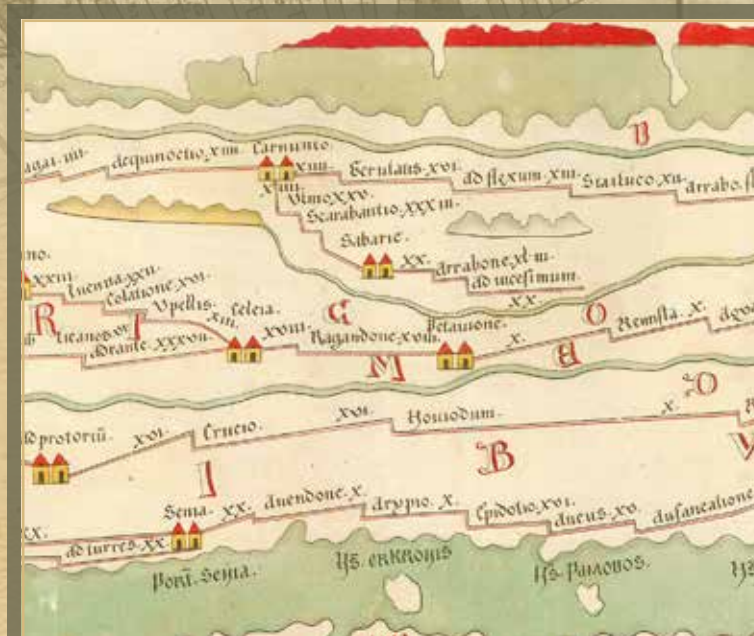
to pay tribute to the patron saint of his family and his country. It seems highly likely that annexing the old province of Pannonia and its major city to his own country were a hidden agenda. Building a Christian Holy Roman Empire as the successor of the former Western Roman Empire could surely not do without the birth place of its great bishop saint, so occupying the place probably made the attack launched with the purpose of gaining territories look like a just and justified one.

To ensure the success of this pilgrimage they needed to find at least the Saint's birth house, for want of any other local Martin relic. If the location of the real house could not be identified, assisted by the knowledgeable high priests escorting him, Charlemagne believed to have found the birth house of his heavenly patron in the burial building housing St Quirine's original grave at the time in the Early Christian cemetery.⁶ The ancient tombstones with christograms found there probably played a major role in the identification.

This is how the burial building of a martyr bishop who had died there earlier (the place of his heavenly birth) became the birth house of another saint bishop who lived there later (his earthly birth place).⁷

Literature and notes

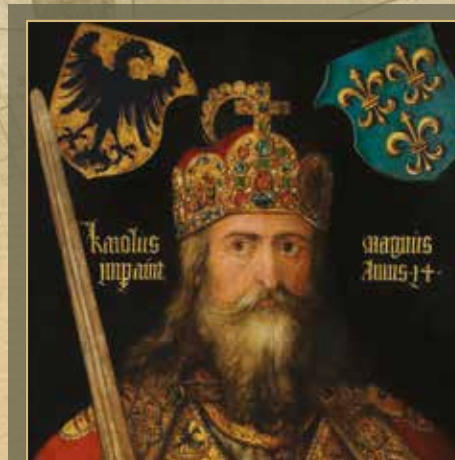
- ¹ GREGORIÁNCZI Pál and Carolus Clusius (Charles de l'Écluse) were the first to write about this ancient tradition.
- ² The 18th century Hungarian historian, Béla Mátyás was the first to report about the inscription: Hungariae Novae Notitia. Membrum III. De Sabaria. Közvetlen B. THOMAS Edit. PROKOP Gyula. = Vasi Szemle, 1959. 2. sz. 53. p.
- ³ Sulpicius Severus: Szent Márton élete. Ford. BORIÁN Élréd, REICHARDT Ába. Pannonhalma, 1997. 28. p.
- ⁴ About the eastern cemetery by P. BUÓZ Terézia: Savaria topográfiája. Szombathely, 1967. 53. 82-83. p. PÉTERVÁRY-SZANYI Brigitta: Savaria keleti temetője a római korban. Szakdolgozat. ELTE BTK Régészeti Intézet Ókori Régészeti Tanszéke. Budapest, 2005. 130 p. LIII. tábla, I melléklet. - Savaria Múzeum. Régészeti Adattár 2208-07.
- ⁵ For the latest summary of the events in 791 see SZÓCS Béla Miklós: Nagy Károly hadjárata az avarok ellen 791-ben. = Arrabona. Múzeumi közlemények, 2006. 44/1. Ünnepi kötet a 65 éves TOMKA Péter tiszteletére, 497-522. p., about the detour to Savaria 504-505. p.
- ⁶ Kiss Gábor: Nagy Károly - Szent Márton szülőhelyének első záródoka. In: Via Sancti Martini. Szent Márton útjai térben és időben. Szerk. Tóth Ferenc, ZÁGORHIDI ZIGÁNY Balázs. Budapest, 2016. 41-57. p. [in printing]
- ⁷ Kiss Gábor: Eine vergessene Episode des Awarenfeldzuges von Karl dem Großen 791. Was hat Karl der Große in Savaria gesucht und gefunden? In: Festschrift Falko Daim zum 65. Geburtstag. [in printing]



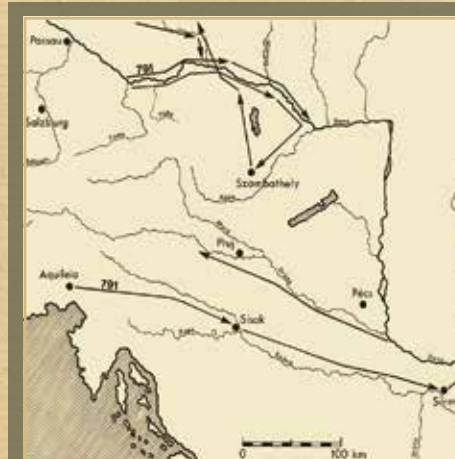
▲ Sabaria indicated in the Tabula Peutingeriana, the roads map of the Roman Empire in the 4th-5th century. Tóth Endre: Római utak a Dunántúlon és a Tabula Peutingeriana. = Vasi Honismereti és Helytörténeti Közlemények, 2008. 2. sz. Melléklet.



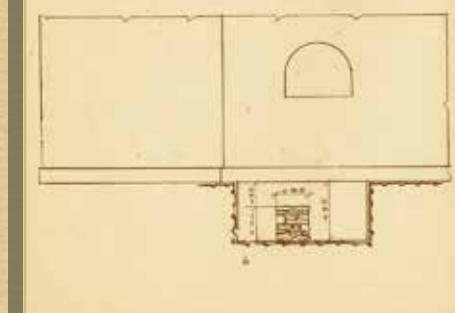
▲ Hic natus est... inscription above the chapel (photo by Németh József)



▲ Portrait of Charlemagne. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/32/Dürer_karl_der_grosse.jpg



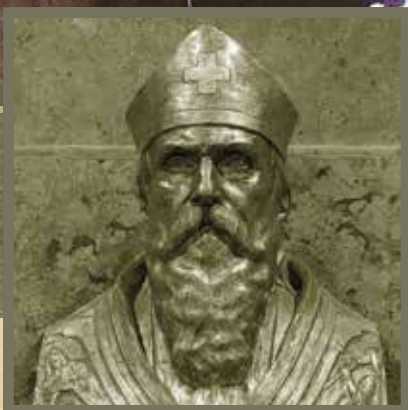
▲ Route of Charlemagne's war in 791 (drawing by Derdák Ferenc)



▲ The unearthed main walls of the birth house' (Acta Savariensia; 4. Szombathely, 1944. 5-6. kép.)



▲ Inner wall of the well (photo by AUGNER Géza, 1998)



St Martin's well

The well linked to St Martin was first mentioned in 1360 in a deed setting out the borders of an estate called Banafölde, later known as Szőkefölde.¹ The medieval legend linked to the well, namely that Martin, dearly as a new-born baby, was christened with the water from the well in the yard of his birth house, was first reported by Carolus Clusius (Charles de l'Éduse), a botanist from the Netherlands in 1585.² The inscription of the well *Hic baptisatus est S. Martinus* was still keeping alive the legend in the mid-19th century.³ This legend cannot be linked to the well-known Martin biography by Sulpicius Severus, since we do know that he was christened at the age of 18 as a soldier in Gaul,⁴ perhaps in Amiens. The origins of the story are rather vague, but it seems highly likely that it is linked to the common myth about his birth house, and might even date back to the same period.

The 18th century Hungarian historian, Béli Mátyás was the first to tell a different story in about 1730, saying that leaving the army Martin returned home to christen his mother here.⁵ An explanation could be that he could not do so in the christening chapel next to

the St Quirine basilica because of the hostile Arians, so he was left with the option of immersing her in the water of the well on the sacred grounds of the Christian cemetery.⁶ This appealing theory is questioned, however, by the fact that Sulpicius Severus says nothing about Martin christening his mother, he states in the biography that her son 'led her away from the pagan fallacies'.⁷ Even if Martin had christened his mother himself, that probably took place somewhere else other than in Savaria.

We can, therefore, regard both versions of the story as mere legends. The only true element in the story is the well itself, which is old indeed, probably dating back to Roman times, though it was rebuilt a number of times⁸ in the Middle Ages. Also in Modern Times, it functioned as the public well of the village Szentmárton, supplying also the Dominican monastery with water. In 1938 a statue was erected at the well and they installed a pump to supply the statue with water. An archaeological examination took place in 1992, and since 2008 the brim of the original well is indicated by a protruding limestone soffit, which frames a round, dark green granite plate, featuring an engraved depiction of the town in the late 18th century.⁹

Literature and notes

¹ Kiss Gábor: A szombathelyi Banafölde birtok 1360. évi határainak helymeghatározása. = *Specimina Nova*, 2002. 1. sz. (hereinafter: Kiss, 2002) 267–276. p.

² Carolus Clusius leírása Szombathely városáról 1585-ben. Közli Tóth Endre, ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY Balázs. = *Lapok Szombathely történetéből*, 1999. 72. sz. 1–3. p. (Panniculus Ser. C; 117)

³ A magyarországi városok physiognomiája catholicus szempontból. VI. Szombathely, Veszprém, Keszthely és Kőszeg. = *Religio*, 1853. 17. sz. 129. p.

⁴ Sulpicius Severus: Szent Márton élete. Ford. BORIÁN Előd, REICHARDT Aba. Pannonhalma, 1997. (hereinafter: Sulpicius, 1997) 32. p.

⁵ Béli Mátyás: *Hungariae Novae Notitia*. Membrum III. De Sabaria. Közteszi B. THOMAS Edit, PROKOPP Gyula. = *Vasi Szemle*, 1959. 2. sz. 53–54. p.

⁶ Kiss Gábor – Tóth Endre – ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY Balázs: Savaria-Szombathely története. A város alapításától 1526-ig. Szerk. ENGEL Pál. Szombathely, 1998 (hereinafter: Kiss – Tóth – ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY, 1988) 229. p. (Szombathely története: I)

⁷ Sulpicius, 1997. 35. p.

⁸ Kiss – Tóth – ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY, 1988. 187–188., 226–228. p.

⁹ MANGLIÁR László: Megszépült a szobor környéke. A Szent Márton-szobor környezetének rendezése. = *Vasi Építész és Mérnök*, 2009. 2. sz. 10–12. p.



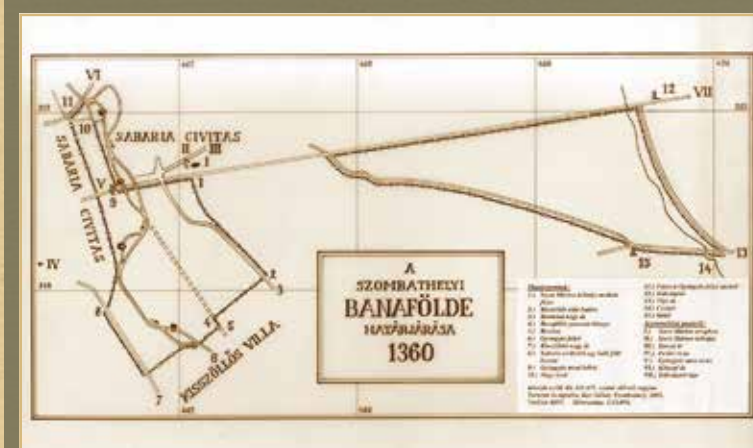
▲ Survey drawing of the St Martin well (drawing by DÉRÁK Ferenc, 1998)



▲ Portrait of Carolus Clusius
<http://kratko.rs/post/kratkopisi---tulipmanija>



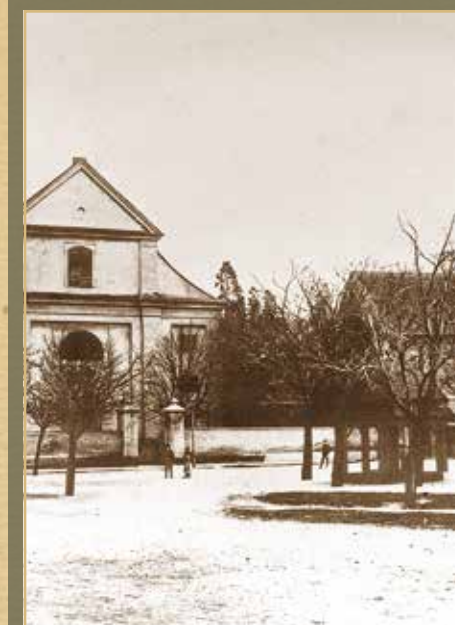
▲ Portrait of Béli Mátyás
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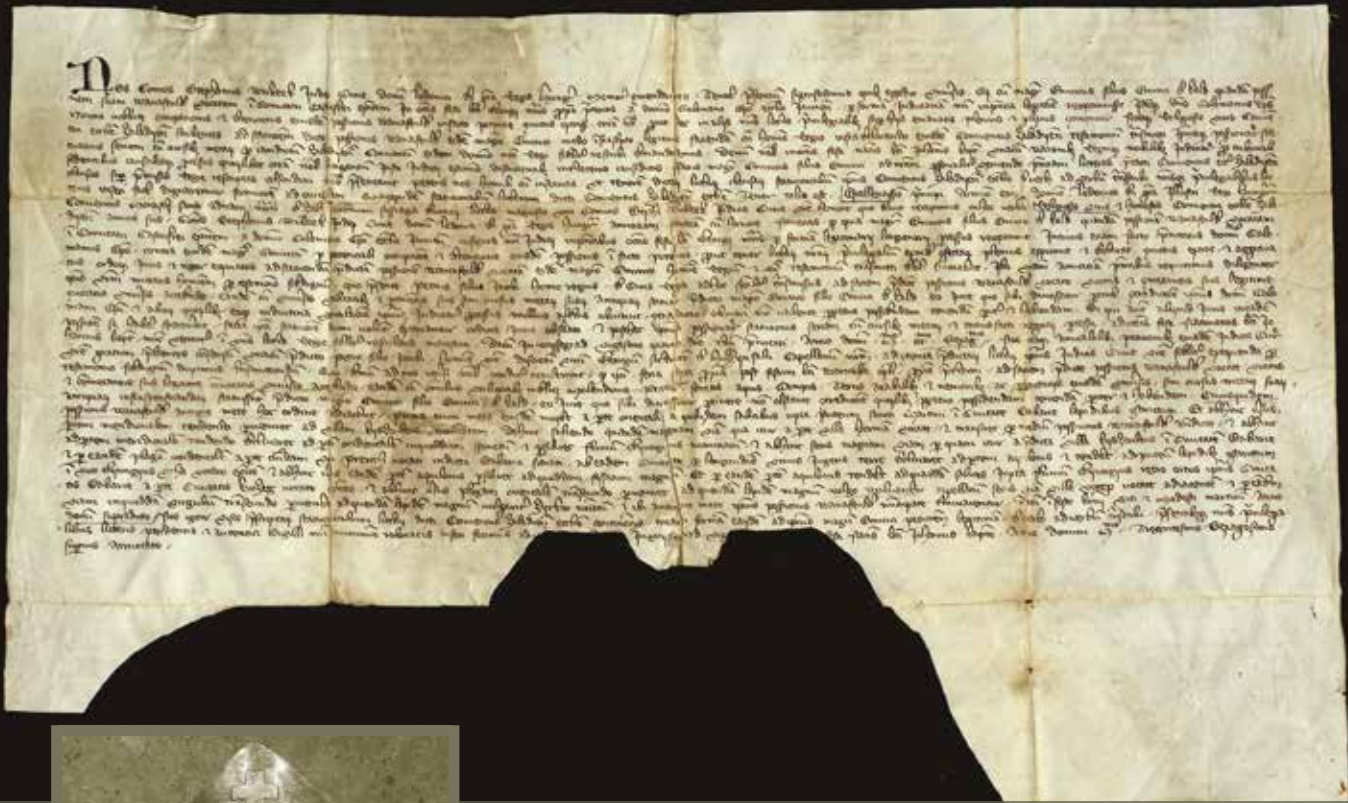
▲ Map of the Banafölde estate (drawing by Kiss Gábor, 2002) Kiss, 2002. 276. p.



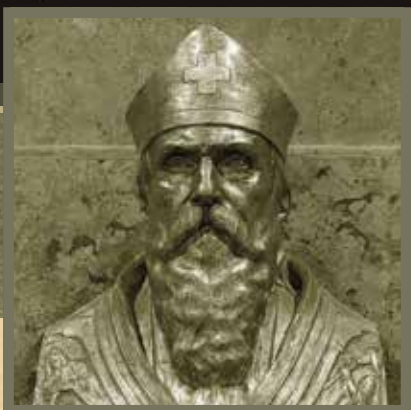
▲ Covering the contemporary well (photo by MÁYER László, 2016)



▲ The square in front of the church with the St Martin well (photo by KISS János ca. 1910, private collection)



▲ Deeds of the Zala convent by High Court Judge BUREK Imre.¹



The medieval parish

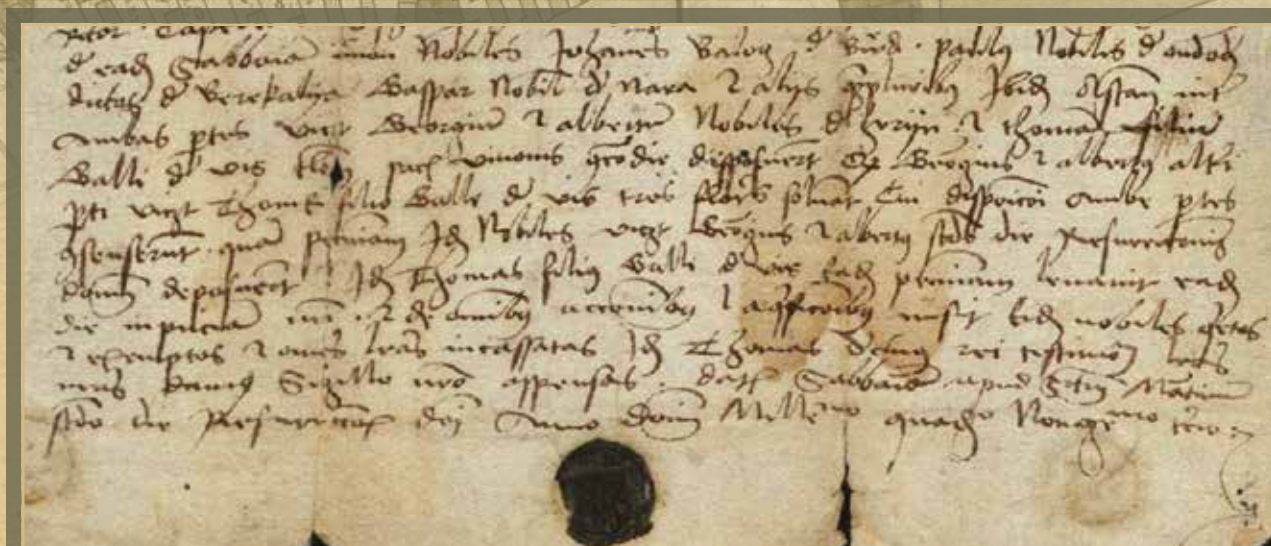
Following the collapse of the Roman Empire the town was severely hit not only by the wars triggered by the Migration Period but also by natural disasters, including in all probability, the earthquake in 456. The town did, however, carry on and continued to flourish as attested by its name with a Latin origin. In the Middle Ages locals believed to hear the word 'Sabbatum' (Saturday) in the name Sabaria. We have very few sources concerning the town's life back then because its archives in Némétújvár/Güssing, where they were moved as a precautionary measure, were burnt to ashes in 1606 by Némén Gergely's hajduk troops together with the castle itself. A few surviving deeds and certificates, however, aptly show the ceaseless

presence of St Martin's veneration, the centre of which was the church built in the Saint's birth place, in the village of Szentmárton near Szombathely. The stone well in front of the church was used in 1360 as a well-known landmark.² This church, in addition to the church in the castle, also served as a parish church. The names of a number of the parish priests, who performed both official church³ and secular assignments, have survived. They, too, indicate their relationship to St Martin; one of them dated his letters as 'at St Martin's' just like Popes date their letters at 'St Peter's'.⁴ Making donations, people also did not neglect their parish church, dedicated to St Martin.⁵ In 1525 Bishop GOSZTONYI János of Felsőszéleste, Vas county, used particularly kind words to describe his beloved town, 'shows remarkable commitment to our faith, in particular to St Martin,

bishop and archbishop (!) of Tours, who was born here. Formerly a powerful city (civitas), the place has now been relegated to being a market town (oppidum), which is plagued by grinding poverty that its old noble shine is hard to see.'⁶ – his words remind the reader of historical works by Bonfini.

Literature and notes

- ¹ St Martin's well is mentioned on 15 June 1360: 'iuxta puteum sancti Martini in civitate Sabariae lapidibus constructum'.
- ² Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (hereinafter: MNL. OL) Diplomatikai Levéltár (hereinafter: DL) 101675.
- ³ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Vas Megyei Levéltára (hereinafter: MNL. VaML) DL 134: MNL. OL, Diplomatikai Fényképtár 261655.
- ⁴ MNL. OL DL 19991.
- ⁵ MNL. OL DL 058263.
- ⁶ MNL. VaML Szombathely város levéltára, oklevelek, irományok Fasc. I. Nr. 1, Fasc. 6. Nr. 143.



▲ Certificate issued by István, then parish priest of the St Martin Parish of Szombathely, 8th April 1493. Dated as 'Datum Sabariae, apud sanctum Martinum'. (MNL. OL. Q. Mohács előtti gyűjtemény, DL 19991.)



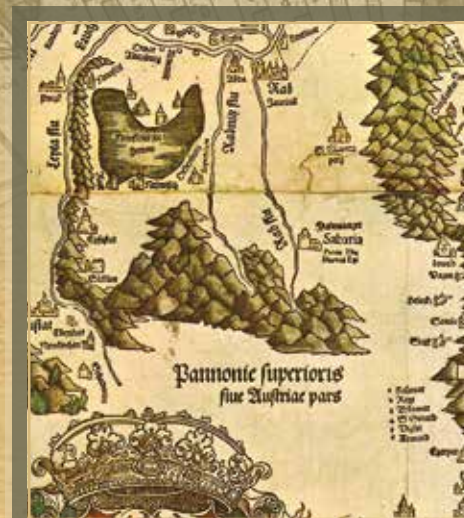
▲ Mentioning of the donation made to the St Ladislaus altar of the St Martin Church of Szombathely, 12 April 1512 in ecclesia sancti Martini episcopi et confessoris Sabariae existentii



▲ Bishop of Győr GOSZTONYI János reinforced the grants deed issued in 1525 by bishop HEDERVÁRI János in 1507, 'non mediocrem religionem, affectionem etiam in divum Martinum presulem et archiepiscopum Turonensem, cui est patria et natale solum'.

sumi inseri et inscribi facimus, easq; acceptamus ratificamus approbamus et precipue ob loci commoditatem, nobilitatem, quia clavis et porta Regni, Situs amantissimus haberi, non mediocrem religionem affectionem etiam in divum Martinum, Praesulem et Archiepiscopum Turonensem, cui est patria et natale solum, olim amplissima Civitas nunc instar oppidi redacta, et nimia paupertate usq; adeo oppressa, ut vix antiquae nobilitatis vestigia appareant, cincta deniq; hinc atq; illinc duobus fluminibus altero gemmeo, altero aureo vocatis confirmamus perpetuo valituras - In cuius rei memoriam firmitatemq;

▲ The scrivener copying the grants deed by GOSZTONYI added 'NB' = nota bene, that is, Attention! to the part describing the fact that St Martin was born in Sabaria.



a daemonio quendam et psallentibus continuo liberavit. In agro Meidentis, immanente tempestate, percussisque messoribus, vastata caetera regione sola sua messis intacta permansit. Annos vixit octoginta, ac tanta praepolluit sanctitate, ut futura divinitus inspirata praediceret, & omnia morborum genera curaret. Tercio nonas Januarii inter divos relata.

Haud parum equidem laetor me hanc naſtum occasionem, quum a procella Unica multos ejus numen exemerit, divi Martini Pannonici non vitam, sed titulum potius esse scripturum, ne, in Pannonica historia potissimum, Pannoniorum decus vultu subleccere. Martinum, Severus ait, Sabaria, Pannoniae oppido, oriundum, altum Ticini, ne infans quidem parentibus ortum, quamvis orthodoxa fide carent. Pater tribunos militum fuit i ipse, a pueritia, primum sub Constantio, deinde sub Juliano Caesare, meruit, quamvis invitus, quando a teneris annis fuit Christo, optimo maximo, stipendium facere voluit. Sed quum, ex edicto Imperatorum, filii veteranorum nomina dare cogerentur, vi adactus, militari sacramento obstrictus est. In comminationes filii fuit mira benignitas, inaudita charitas, patientia cum humilitate singularis. Ante baptismi tricennum militavit, quo quidem tempore, omnia sic pietatis officia complevit, ut e stipendio nihil, praeter quotidiano victu necessaria, reservavit. In Ambianensem porta, vesaniente hyeme, destitutum pauperem, disiecta ense chlamyde, contexit. Insequenti nocte Christum Salvatorem vidit in somnis, ex parte tectum, qua horridulum rogatorem pie donarat, & dicens: *Martinus, adhuc catechumenus, hac me veste contexit.* Natus annos duos de viginti baptismate initatur, Barbaris Gallias invadentibus. Quum Julianus, coacto exer-

A bronze bust of a bearded man, likely a pope or high-ranking clergyman, wearing a mitre. The bust is set against a textured, light-colored background.

With his biography on Martin Sulpicius Severus practically made the Saint's popularity spread all across Europe. His birth town, Sabaria was indicated on numerous maps and several old pictures. The earliest example is the world map from the late 13th century, kept now at Hereford Cathedral, England.¹ The clarifying description ('Sabaria sancti Martini') underlines its significance the place owes to one of the most popular saints in Europe. Although placed somewhat incorrectly in Lázár's map printed in 1528,² but the town is clearly identified as St Martin's town and an important location. Based on Severus, historians such as Kézai, Ransanus, Bonfini and many more never failed to mention Pannonia's pride place. Reporting about the town of Kőszeg besieged by the Ottoman army in 1532 and the victory of the Hungarian defending forces, Paolo Giovio described a legend in which he explained an intercession by Martin, patron saint of Szombathely. The Ottomans said that they heard the

yelling of the guards rushing out of the castle when they glimpsed a rider with his sword drawn, threatening them. Beyond doubt, it was the figure of St Martin, who always protected the people of Szombathely in difficult times with his shining powers of safety and security: this mirade is also attested by Nicolizza (captain JURISICH Miklós) from whom I heard this story in Vienna once they were freed from the siege after a long inquiry.”³

Within the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary the connection between Martin and Sabaria has always been seen as a given thing. Already King St Stephen prayed to him and the Synod of Szabolcs county ordered he be venerated as one of the most important patron saints of Hungary. In 1395 King Sigismund made a Holy Mass donation for the St Martin Chapel of the church in Brassó. (Braşov, Romania), underlining that Martin was born in Sabaria and his significance for the nation.⁴ The chronicles of the Spis (Szepes) Diocese mentions Szombathely in its 1508 section: 'In diser Sted ist der Heil Martinus gebohren dessen Fest mit gebratenen Gansen defeuert

vird', that is, 'St Martin was born in this town whose day is celebrated with roast geese'.⁵ The fact that St Martin's veneration spread beyond Szombathely is attested by the Cantor Book of Vép, Vas county, from the 18th century⁶ and also by the hymn book of Varsány, Nógrád county, from roughly the same period.⁷

Literature and notes

- hortium milites castigando atq; item uerberando nihil proficissent, pugna finis est impositus. Reserebant Turcae se integri erumpentis ab arce praesidij strepitum clamoremq; passasse, equitemq; districto gladio ipsis subeuntibus committantem in aëre conspexisse, eam procul dubio extitisse diui Martini speciem, qui Sabrienese omnibus dijs temporibus cetero tutelari numine consensuisset. Ceteri etius miraculi fides apud Nicolizian relinquetur, à quo demum obsidione liberato, Viennæ eam rem longa percircustatione didicimus. Porro Habraimus pudore atq; ira uehementissimè conturbatus, dum ui Nicolizian animum perurincere nequit, honestissimis oblati conditionibus expugnat, data enim fide publica euocatus ad se in castra, cum summo honore uerborum

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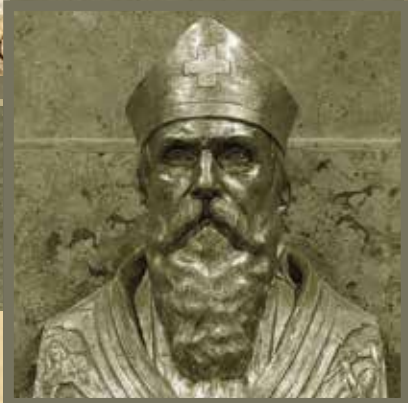
Angyal N. Kővecze vála.
Dücsö E. Marionny. Magyar ország
nak drága. Kép gyűmölése. Bülcen
Bembahelyt az mi örömünkre.
B. életű és adakozó volti tellyes se-
leben. Kieit r. se sőt örök dücsőség.
Uti Jelen állé rut mezitelen koldu-
meg ruházta. Kapitány Leven öce nem
uiala.
Püspök korában maga ruháját
egy koldúnak adta. Kieit kei. Angyal
kezei takarant.
Tanuló Kere. tenei ma. B. Marion-
tel adakozó lenni. Bülcöködökkel ja-
vadoi közleni. &c.
Ugyan. Angyal N. Kővecze vála.

▲ 18th century. Section of the Cantor Book of Vép: hymn about St Martin, born in Savaria (Berzsényi Dániel Library)

▲ 18th–19th century. Hymn book of Varsány with a song about St Martin. (Library of the Pannonhalma Archabbey)

Qua quidem rationes pro impetranda nobis alleviatione, seu nos allatas, litteras
quoniam authenticas Dominicaliter veritatis copulavit, signis, iuravit & Promoverunt
sufficiens. Incommodis ac Hostilitatibus oneretur. Accederet quod
Siquidem Divus olim Ferdinandus secundus Dei Grae Romanorum
Imperator & Rex Hungarie, felicis & Auguste reminiscens Prædecessor
Matris vray Sacrae, tempore quo Iustorum Vericorum Regem nostrum
suum, intra Octavam Festi Beati Martini Episcopi & Confessoris
Proelio Vicit, vitæ exivit, Oppido Sabarie, uti Loco Natali eiusdem
Sancti, in Reuerentiam eiusdem ex speciali sua Devotione propriis
instructu, ab eius temporis contributionibus, clementissimæ exemplo
nales Privilegium presentibus genuine copialiter annexum con
cessit. Quapropter ad eandem Matrem vray Sacrae, uti
gentilium humili de dem. Sicut.

▲ Not dated (second half of the 17th century). Application to the magistrates of Szombathely to the monarch requesting the reduction of taxes.



Early Modern sources

Szombathely's relationship to St Martin was shaped primarily by King Ferdinand II's grant. On 16th November 1632, on the 'fifth day of St Martin's eight' as they put it at the time, his greatest enemy, King Gustav II Adolf of Sweden died in the battle of Lützen, which proved to be a turning point in the Thirty Years' War. To commemorate the event, King Ferdinand issued a Royal Charter of Privileges on 25th April 1636, exempting the town from paying royal taxes.² In return, however, he ordered that the town had to give the St Martin Parish a fund of 40 forints annually, out of which 5 forints were to be spend on alms, another 5 forints on holy masses and 30 forints were to be spent on the renovation of the church.³ It was probably on the intercession of archbishop PÁZMÁNY Péter, which earned the town this privilege (it is known that a few years before arranged a papal permission for the town to have

pilgrimage rights⁴). It seems highly likely that he suggested the drafting of the granting deed to the King himself. The town's magistrates always met the requirements of the grant deeds in full.⁵

Even when the church was deprived of its rank as the town's parish church by the bishop of Győr and was later handed over to the Dominicans, St Martin's veneration did not dwindle in the least, on the contrary, it flourished even more.⁶ The Dominicans were keen to embrace St Martin's cult, and their superiors in Rome fully supported them in this.⁷ The information that St Martin was born in Sabaria went so much down as common knowledge that the good people of Szombathely kept referring to this whenever they requested something, be it exemption from one tax or another, protection against the excesses of their squire's officers or against the ravages of Prince Rákóczi's Kuruc forces, using the fact as a mandatory justification.⁸

Literature and notes

- ¹ 'When (King Ferdinand II ...) overcame and killed his enemy, King Gustav of Sweden in battle on the fifth day of Martin's eight, the Confessor's Day, he granted exemption from taxes to the market town of Sabaria, birth town of the Saint to honour him.'
- ² Stephanus Schönvisner: Antiquitatum et historiae Sabariensis ab origine Pestini, 1791. 318–320. p.
- ³ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Vas Megyei Levéltára (hereinafter: MNL VaML) Szombathely város levéltára. Acta miscellanea (hereinafter: SZVL AC) Fasc. Y. No. 42
- ⁴ HANUY Ferenc PÁZMÁNY Péter bíbornok, esztergomi érsek Magyarország herceg-prímása összegyűjtött levelei. Petri Cardinalis Pázmány.. epistolae collectae. 2. köt. Budapest, 1911. 302. p.
- ⁵ MNL VaML A Szombathelyi Domonkos Rendház iratai. Rendi iratok (hereinafter: SZDR Rir.) No 20
- ⁶ MNL VaML SZDR Rir. No 37
- ⁷ MNL VaML SZVL AC Fasc. FF. No 7
- ⁸ MNL VaML SZVL AC Fasc. Y. No 39, 98

Augustinus Imperator, Dñs Dñs
Aobis Conventus
Humillimam precibus orationum subjectionem. Affli,
ctum hoc vrum Oppidulum Sabariense, Locum
alias Patritius, seu Natalis S. Martini iam
Ab Religionem ptho, a primana sua fundaver ad Episcopum Janzenden
licam, in vtr estionacis pcedens, licet jam a multis estionacis Annis
turbulentis temporibus, a diversis Dñs vris Dñs ptribus, Epis Dñs ptribus
incomente pmpore
obsecrati

▲ Not dated (from after 1655). The magistrates of Szombathely requested protection from the monarch against the excesses of the squire's (bishop's) officers. This town of ours, Szombathely, which is St Martin's birth town, and has belonged to the Diocese of Győr ever since its foundation, has been awarded and granted by its squires, that is, the bishops of Győr a number of privileges and liberties a number of times for keeping relentlessly to its Catholic faith in these troubled times, which privileges and grants have been confirmed by successive diets of this country...

CAPUT QUARTUM
... et a vobis Oppidanis Sabariensibus, praesentes de huius a solutione con
tributionum, seu Decimarum nostrarum Regiarum non ordinatarum, quam ex
ordinatarum, subsidiorumque, & Lauri Camerae vobis, nobis, & ad Ca
meram nostram provenire debentibus, in perpetuum eximendis duximus, &
supportandos. Et ita quidem, huiusmodi addita conditione, ut iidem Sabarien
ses in huiusmodi per nos eidem gratiose relaxata Dñe Regia recogniti
nem, & uberiori supervenient divina benedictionis indubiam spem in pia
humilitatis animis semper forendam, quadraginta florenorum hungaricorum
expensis, sequenti modo, rite, & infallibiliter per singulos annos facere de
beant, & teneantur. Primo itaque iidem, Iudei, & Iurati cives Sabarienses,
pro tempore constituti, & in postremum constituendi, incipiendo videlicet in
hoc iam currenti anno, Iunius dehinc, & perpetuis semper temporibus, an
nuatim, in Festo eiusdem divi Martini, Loci Plebani, pro tempore consti
tuto, nunque in ipsa ade sancti Martini summum diem celebrant, ad altare
quinque florenas hungaricas sollemniter offerant, & alios similiter quinque flo
renas pauperibus, & mendicis in elemosynam eodem die distribuunt. Item ad
restauracionem etiam altarium, vel paramentorum comparacionem, prout ne
cessitas se se offeret, decem florenas iidem contribuant. Denum ad Decem

▲ 25th April 1636, privileges by King Ferdinand II to the people of Szombathely in the book by SCHÖNVISNER István published in 1791

... et a vobis Oppidanis Sabariensibus, praesentes de huius a solutione con
tributionum, seu Decimarum nostrarum Regiarum non ordinatarum, quam ex
ordinatarum, subsidiorumque, & Lauri Camerae vobis, nobis, & ad Ca
meram nostram provenire debentibus, in perpetuum eximendis duximus, &
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ses in huiusmodi per nos eidem gratiose relaxata Dñe Regia recogniti
nem, & uberiori supervenient divina benedictionis indubiam spem in pia
humilitatis animis semper forendam, quadraginta florenorum hungaricorum
expensis, sequenti modo, rite, & infallibiliter per singulos annos facere de
beant, & teneantur. Primo itaque iidem, Iudei, & Iurati cives Sabarienses,
pro tempore constituti, & in postremum constituendi, incipiendo videlicet in
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nuatim, in Festo eiusdem divi Martini, Loci Plebani, pro tempore consti
tuto, nunque in ipsa ade sancti Martini summum diem celebrant, ad altare
quinque florenas hungaricas sollemniter offerant, & alios similiter quinque flo
renas pauperibus, & mendicis in elemosynam eodem die distribuunt. Item ad
restauracionem etiam altarium, vel paramentorum comparacionem, prout ne
cessitas se se offeret, decem florenas iidem contribuant. Denum ad Decem

▲ Not dated (1710s). Application (draft) by the Magistrates of Szombathely to the monarch, not to expose this little town, an estate of the Diocese of Győr and the birth town of St Martin, Bishop of Tours, to all sorts of perils...

... et a vobis Oppidanis Sabariensibus, praesentes de huius a solutione con
tributionum, seu Decimarum nostrarum Regiarum non ordinatarum, quam ex
ordinatarum, subsidiorumque, & Lauri Camerae vobis, nobis, & ad Ca
meram nostram provenire debentibus, in perpetuum eximendis duximus, &
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nuatim, in Festo eiusdem divi Martini, Loci Plebani, pro tempore consti
tuto, nunque in ipsa ade sancti Martini summum diem celebrant, ad altare
quinque florenas hungaricas sollemniter offerant, & alios similiter quinque flo
renas pauperibus, & mendicis in elemosynam eodem die distribuunt. Item ad
restauracionem etiam altarium, vel paramentorum comparacionem, prout ne
cessitas se se offeret, decem florenas iidem contribuant. Denum ad Decem

▲ Rome, 1658. The superior general of the Dominicans approved the request by the members in Szombathely, allowing them to sing St Martin evening hymns.

... et a vobis Oppidanis Sabariensibus, praesentes de huius a solutione con
tributionum, seu Decimarum nostrarum Regiarum non ordinatarum, quam ex
ordinatarum, subsidiorumque, & Lauri Camerae vobis, nobis, & ad Ca
meram nostram provenire debentibus, in perpetuum eximendis duximus, &
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humilitatis animis semper forendam, quadraginta florenorum hungaricorum
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beant, & teneantur. Primo itaque iidem, Iudei, & Iurati cives Sabarienses,
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hoc iam currenti anno, Iunius dehinc, & perpetuis semper temporibus, an
nuatim, in Festo eiusdem divi Martini, Loci Plebani, pro tempore consti
tuto, nunque in ipsa ade sancti Martini summum diem celebrant, ad altare
quinque florenas hungaricas sollemniter offerant, & alios similiter quinque flo
renas pauperibus, & mendicis in elemosynam eodem die distribuunt. Item ad
restauracionem etiam altarium, vel paramentorum comparacionem, prout ne
cessitas se se offeret, decem florenas iidem contribuant. Denum ad Decem

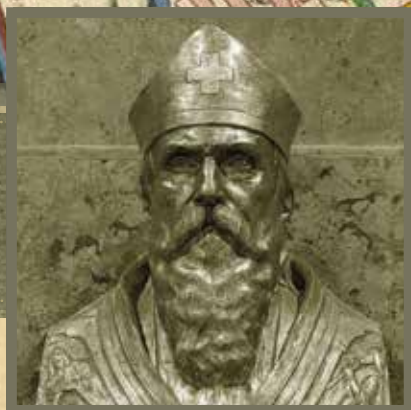
▲ Not dated (late 17th century). The Dominican convent confirms that the donations required by the privilege deeds by King Ferdinand II had always been duly met by the town.

... et a vobis Oppidanis Sabariensibus, praesentes de huius a solutione con
tributionum, seu Decimarum nostrarum Regiarum non ordinatarum, quam ex
ordinatarum, subsidiorumque, & Lauri Camerae vobis, nobis, & ad Ca
meram nostram provenire debentibus, in perpetuum eximendis duximus, &
supportandos. Et ita quidem, huiusmodi addita conditione, ut iidem Sabarien
ses in huiusmodi per nos eidem gratiose relaxata Dñe Regia recogniti
nem, & uberiori supervenient divina benedictionis indubiam spem in pia
humilitatis animis semper forendam, quadraginta florenorum hungaricorum
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beant, & teneantur. Primo itaque iidem, Iudei, & Iurati cives Sabarienses,
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quinque florenas hungaricas sollemniter offerant, & alios similiter quinque flo
renas pauperibus, & mendicis in elemosynam eodem die distribuunt. Item ad
restauracionem etiam altarium, vel paramentorum comparacionem, prout ne
cessitas se se offeret, decem florenas iidem contribuant. Denum ad Decem

▲ Not dated (1730s). Dominican prior Füssi Pius requested funds from the town to renovate the St Martin well.



▲ Szentmárton in the land survey of 1857. (MNL VaML A Vas Megyei Levéltár térképeinek gyűjteménye. Kataszteri térképek)



Szentmárton, the village

The village of Szentmárton lies along the left bank of the brook Gyöngyös, in the eastern parts of present-day Szombathely, where the eastern cemetery of the ancient town was located, and which was in constant use for some 2,000 years until 1962, even if with a reduced area.

The village had been established on the northern side of the free area framed by the junction of two roads leading from Szombathely to the east – the road to Zanat and the old Bálványkő road. At the end of the 13th century there is an indirect mentioning of the place in the deeds, but the name of the village first appears in the documents in 1509.¹

Built around the church, the village was hit by disasters during the Middle Ages, and part of it was probably destroyed and rebuilt under the name of Újfalú (New Village) in the 16th century.² In the Diocese census of 1570 the owner of the village is named as partly the bishop

of Győr and partly the local parish priest.³ During the Middle Ages both Szentmárton and the town of Szombathely had its own parish.⁴ However, as the latter ceased to exist in the mid-16th century, so from a church administration point of view the village ended up in a rather special situation: Szombathely's cemetery lied within its territory and its only parish next to it.

The situation changed fundamentally in 1638, when Bishop of Győr Draskovich György – against protests from the people of Szombathely – settled the Dominican monks here, handing over the building and the estates of the parish to the Order.

Thanks to its favourable geographical location the village started to grow; a number of craftsmen and merchants started their business here, while transportation provided great opportunities for the locals to earn some extra income. Enjoying nationwide popularity at the time, Engel I. L.'s soap and candle factory operated here in the late 1800s.⁵

As the town was extending to the surrounding areas and because Szentmárton and Szombathely was closely linked both economically and demographically it was only natural that the village officially became part of Szombathely in 1885.

Literature and notes

¹ Kiss Gábor – Tóth Endre – ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY Balázs: Savaria-Szombathely története. A város alapításától 1526-ig. Szerk. ENGEL Pál. Szombathely, 1998. 64. p. (Szombathely története; 1.) 210. p.

² https://archives.hungaricana.hu/hu/urbarium/hu_mnl_ol_e156_a_fascl19_no006 (Retrieved on 7th October 2016)

³ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Vas Megyei Levéltára (hereinafter: MNL VaML) Helytörténeti cédulakatalógus (hereinafter: Hc) Szentmárton. 5. p. (MNL Dic. Vas II. köt. 6 158. 24. f.)

⁴ Tóth Endre – ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY Balázs: Források Savaria-Szombathely történetéhez. A római kortól 1526-ig. Szombathely, 1994. 68. p. (Acta Savariensia; 9.)

⁵ MNL VaML Hc Szentmárton.



▲ The nearly 2000-year old cemetery (photo by MÁYER László, 2016)



▲ Part of an etching by TISCHLER Antal showing the village of Szentmárton, Stephanus SCHÖNMEYER: Antiquitatum et historiae Sabariensis ab origine ... Pestini, 1791 [1. p.]



14	Imre Waga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	János Waga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	Egyenés Gál	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	Lászlós Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	György Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	Miklós Waga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	János Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	György Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	Miklós Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	Stephán Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	Rita János Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1
	György Baga	Inquil.	Ser.	1

▲ Excerpt from the squire's deed on Szombathely from 1656

Szent Mártony, serf village of the parish. It lies around the St Martin church, it is not known what rights the church has to the village, to venerate St Martin, who was born here; even his christening well can be found here. In the village the serfs have 15 acres of land each. They provide villeins' services to their parish priest and to the town of Szombathely, their names are as follows on the next page.



▲ Village of Szentmárton on the first military survey map made in the late 1700s (www.hungaricana.hu)



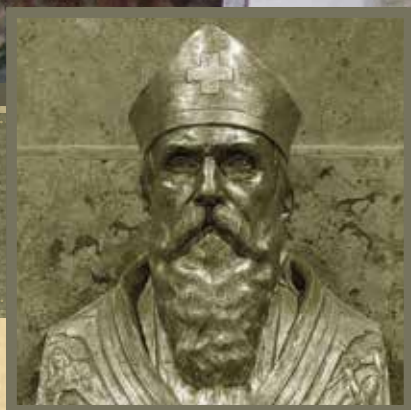
▲ Szentmárton on the second military survey map made in the early 1800s (www.hungaricana.hu)



▲ View of the St Martin Street from the Franciscan church in 1905 (BÉRENYI Gábor's picture post card collection)



▲ The shrine of the Church today (photo by Mayer László, 2016)



The Church of St Martin, Szombathely

The medieval history of the church began in mid-October 791 when Charlemagne, King of the Franks, visited the birth town of St Martin¹, patron saint of the king's family and his empire, during his war against the Avars. Assisted by his knowledgeable high priests, the king believed to have found the birth house of their heavenly patron in one of the cultic or burial buildings in the Early Christian cemetery of the time. The grave stones with christograms unearthed here probably played a major role in the identification.²

The history of the medieval building³ can be briefly summed up as follows.

The first church that was definitely dedicated to St Martin was probably built after 826. However, we know nothing about the building itself, which is mentioned in a deed with the forged date of 885, as only a few graves in its cemetery survived the devastations in later periods.

During the times following the foundation of the Hungarian state a church with a wooden frame was built to replace the previous building, whose walls was reinforced with posts set right next to one another. In 1102 the

church with an arched shrine, built from reused old Roman bricks from Sabaria, belonged to the Diocese of Győr, though it was the property of the Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma. A square-shaped shrine with groined vaults, and painted probably in the mid-14th century, was added to the church at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries.⁴ By that time a tower had already been built on the western façade. In the 15th and 16th centuries the church was further extended in Gothic style by adding a chapel and a sacristy on the northern side. In the Middle Ages the church had altogether six altars, the stone slabs of four of them are still in place.⁵

The building was badly damaged in 1606 during the Bocskai War since it stood outside the town's walls and without any defences, its interior was almost completely destroyed.⁶ After the war the town did what it could to renovate the ancient parish church by arranging fundraising campaigns.

In 1638, however, rather unexpectedly Bishop of Győr DRASKOVICH György handed the building over the Benedictine order, settling down in Hungary again. The monks wasted no time to rebuild the church to meet their needs. For example, they built a new tower, and made a new entrance

towards their newly built monastery. The reconstructions, however, were of temporary nature only and did little to improve the building's generally bad state of repair. The problem was eventually remedied by the new Baroque church built in 1668.⁷

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² Kiss Gábor: Eine vergessene Episode des Awarenfeldzuges von Karl dem Großen 791. Was hat Karl der Große in Savaria gesucht und gefunden? In: Festschrift Falko Daim, zum 65. Geburtstag. [in printing]

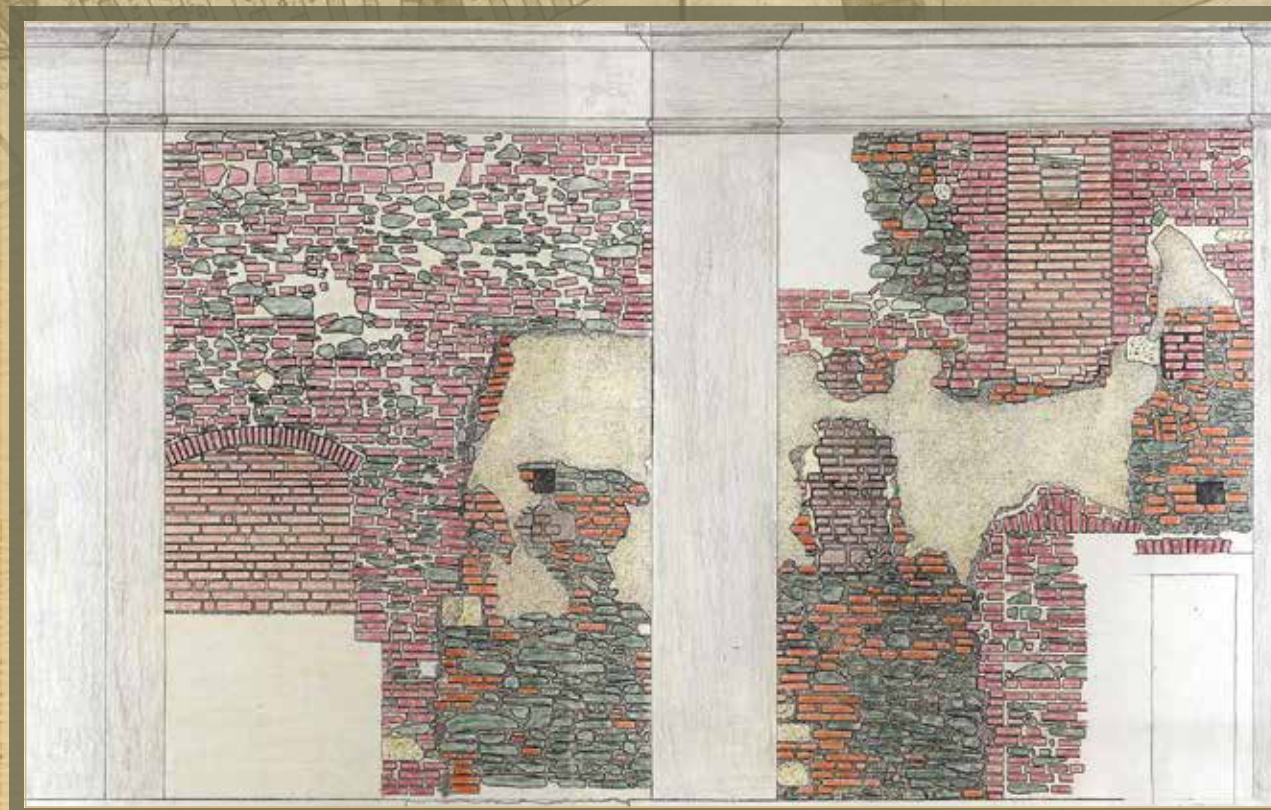
³ Kiss Gábor – Tóth Endre – ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY Balázs: Savaria-Szombathely története. A város alapításától 1526-ig. Szerk. ENGEL Pál. Szombathely, 1998. 121–123., 185–187. p. (Szombathely története; 1)

⁴ Kiss Borbála: A szombathelyi Szent Márton-templom szentélyének középkori falképtöredékei. = Lapok Szombathely történetéből. 2004. 122. sz. 1–5. p. (Panniculus Ser. C; 185)

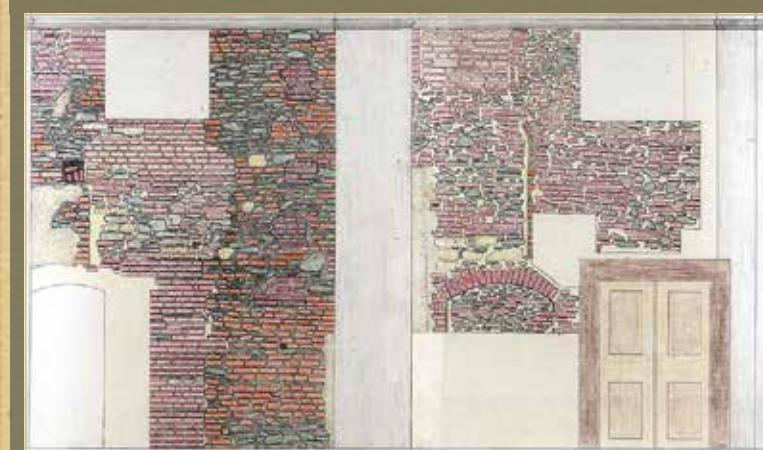
⁵ Kiss – Tóth, 2002 p 359, p 372

⁶ DOMINKOVITS Péter: „Ségly nemzetek lévén...” A Nyugat-Dunántúl Bocskai István 1605. évi hadjárata idején. Budapest, 2006. 74. p.

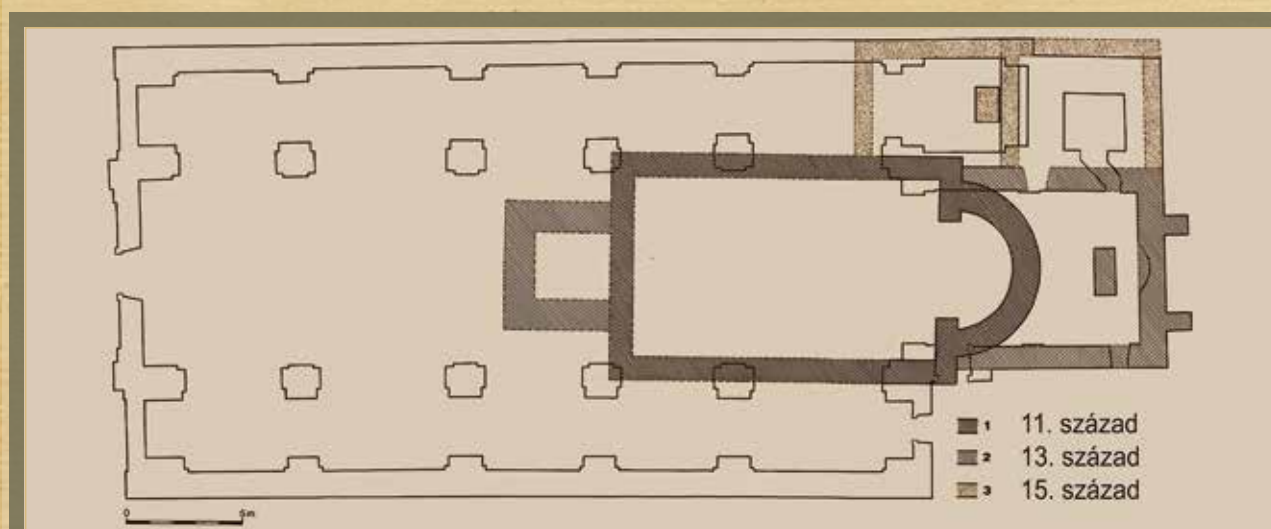
⁷ Kiss Gábor – ZSÁMBÉKY Monika: A szombathelyi Szent Márton-templom a domonkosok idején, 1638–1950. Szombathely, 2012. 4–9. p.



▲ The northern and the southern walls of the shrine (research sketch by DERDÁK Ferenc, 1993)



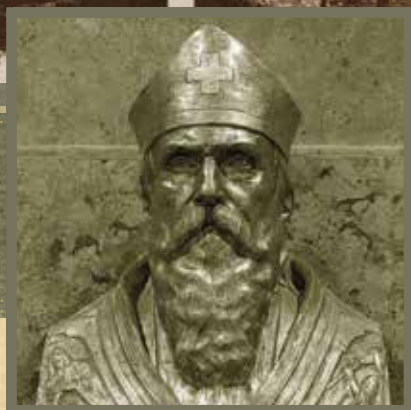
▲ Reconstruction of the 15th century shrine (drawing by FOKI Éva, 1993)



▲ Layout of the medieval church with the construction periods indicated (drawing by DERDÁK Ferenc, 1998)



▲ The square in front of the church with St Martin's well (photo by KNEBEL Jenő, ca. in 1910, private collection)



The Baroque St Martin Church

30 years after the Dominicans settled down in Szombathely, in 1668 BATHYÁNY Erzsébet, the widow of ERDŐDY György, committed to build a new church.¹ Led by the Italian master builder, Carlo della Torre², the construction works were completed in 1672, but the interior can't have been complete at the time. Built with a single nave and one transept and a row of chapels, the Early Baroque building had altogether ten altars. The church and the monastery, lying to the south of the church and already completed by the time, could not be joined since the cemetery, which belonged to the town's parish that had moved to the Virgin Mary Church in the castle in 1638, was lying in between. North of the cemetery, BATHYÁNY Erzsébet built a hospital on a plot of land owned by the Dominicans. Meeting her request in her last will, as the founder of the hospital and of the church she was buried in the crypt of the church, built for her under the Rosary Altar.

The altars and the pews you can see today were made between 1730 and 1750 after crypts had been built under the transept, the nave and the chapels. At

the time the church was re-dedicated to the Holy Trinity and St Martin's veneration was relegated to a chapel.

It wasn't until the 20th century that major changes took place. A new oratory was in 1924 and, designed by WÄLDER Gyula and required by the foundation of the new parish, a second transept was built in 1930. To enhance the seating capacity of the church, its interiors were converted into a three-nave space, which had room enough eight altars only. These construction works allowed the two wings of the monastery to be connected with the church itself. This is how today's building finally took shape, although back then there was a high wall separating the seduction of the monastery from the parish building.

Merely two decades later, when the religious orders were dissolved in Hungary in 1950, the Dominicans had to leave the place. It has been the Diocese of Szombathely that has been taking care of the church ever since. Visitors can admire the medieval walls of the shrine since 1992. The full external renovation and the reconstruction of the interiors, including the restoration of the original state of the altars, had been completed by the Commemorative St Martin Year in 2016.³

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² KOPPÁNY Tibor: Carlo della Torre, a Batthyányak 17. századi építész. Művészettörténet – Műemlékvédelem 4. HORLER Miklós születésnapjára. Budapest, 1993. 347–348.; ZSÁMBÉKY Monika: Carlo della Torre szerződése a szombathelyi Szent Márton templom építésére. = LSZt, 1997. 57. sz. 1–2. p. (Panniculus Ser. C.; 75); Uő: Carlo della Torre szerződése a szombathelyi Szent Márton templom építésére. = MÉ, 1997. 1–2. sz. 83–86. p.

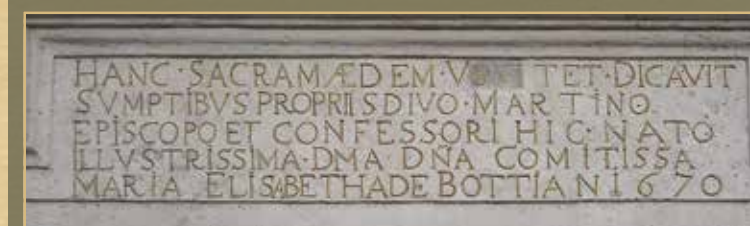
³ A szombathelyi Szent Márton Plébánia évkönyve, 2016. Felelős kiad. SCHAUERMANN János. Szombathely, 2016. 54–71. p.



▲ St Martin with the monastery (etching by Johann Christoph Winkler, 18th century)



▲ Portrait of the founder, widow BATHYÁNY Erzsébet (Formerly on display in the mansion of Vép, today held in an unknown place by the ERDŐDY family, the photo of the portrait is on display in a tableau in the corridor of the St Martin Visitors' Centre)



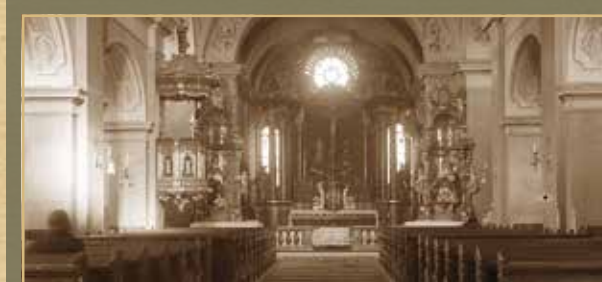
▲ BATHYÁNY Erzsébet's building inscription above the entrance of the church, 1670 (photo by Kiss Gábor, 2012)



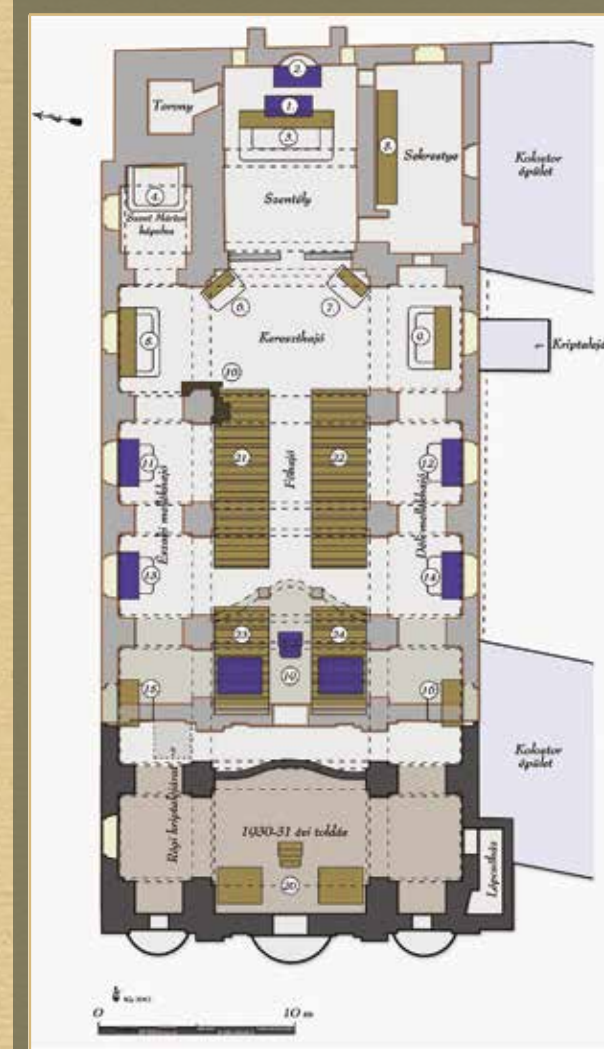
▲ South-east view of the monastery (photo by KNEBEL Jenő, 1920s, private collection)



▲ The square in front of the church between 1930 and 1935 (St Martin Parish)



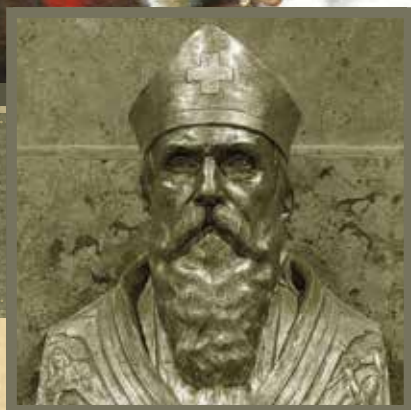
▲ Church interior after 1930 (St Martin Parish)



▲ Layout of the modern church (survey and drawing by ISZTIN Gyula, 2012)



▲ St Martin and the beggar, by an unknown painter (MA), mid-17th century (St Martin Parish)



St Martin's veneration at the Dominicans of Szombathely

With the Dominicans settling down in the village of Szentmárton in 1638, the practice of St Martin's veneration changed fundamentally. Deprived of its rank as a parish church, the church and the village lost a key link to Szombathely. Also, the new paraliturgical customs introduced by the Dominicans such as the rosary, as well as the strengthened cult of other saints—St Dominic, the Virgin Mary—changed local Martin traditions. This is clearly shown by the fact that the church was re-dedicated from the ancient St Martin to Holy Trinity, rather popular in 18th century.¹

The monks, however, tried to maintain and further develop also the old traditions. Soon after settling down here, they asked the master of the order for permission in 1658, to allow them to celebrate the Holy Mass and say their prayers on Wednesdays to the honour of St Martin, just like they do so to the honour of St Dominic on Tuesdays.²

They celebrated St Martin's Day with particular festivity. They would have two sermons, one in Hungarian and another one in German; the festive mass and the vespers the day before were held with music.³ This was the only day when the Martin relic, held in the church and as attested by the Dominican's archives received from King Matthias's treasury, was put on display.

After 1635 Szombathely joined the St Martin celebrations. King Ferdinand II granted the town exemption from royal taxes in a royal charter, provided the town paid 5 forints to the poor, 5 forints to the priest celebrating the daily mass on St Martin's Day and 30 forints for the church's needs on this day.⁴

Pope Pius VI granted full pilgrimage rights to the church in 1779, promising absolution of all their sins to those who visited the church, were to a confession, received Holy Communion, and prayed for the elimination of heresy and for the glory of the Church between the afternoon of

the day before St Martin's Day and the evening of the festival.⁵

The Dominicans committed to carry on the legacy of St Martin's care services when, encouraged by the monastery's prior, BATHYÁNY Erzsébet founded a hospital in Szentmárton. In 1929 the church became a parish again and was actively connected to the town's life. During the Great Depression its first parish priest, BADALIK Bertalan was also appointed the chairman of the town committee for the destitute.

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² SZALAY János: A szombathelyi Szent Domonkos-rendiek lelkipásztori működése, 1638–1938. Szombathely, 1938, (hereinafter: SZALAY, 1938.) 123. p.

³ Ibid.

⁴ TÓTH Ferenc: A szombathelyi várospolitikai és a Szent Márton-kultusz. = Vasi Szemle, 2014. 1. sz. 10. p.

⁵ SZALAY, 1938. 124. p.



▲ Éliás Widemann: Portrait of DRASKOVITS György, bishop of Győr ([https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draskovics_György_\(püspök\)](https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draskovics_György_(püspök)))



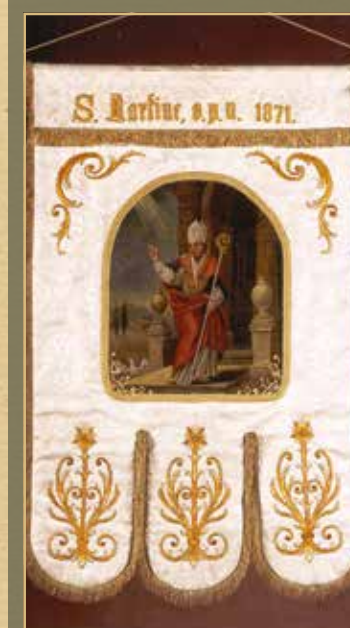
▲ The monastery in the mid-18th century, part of an etching by Johann Bernhard Hermann (Library of the Diocese of Szombathely)



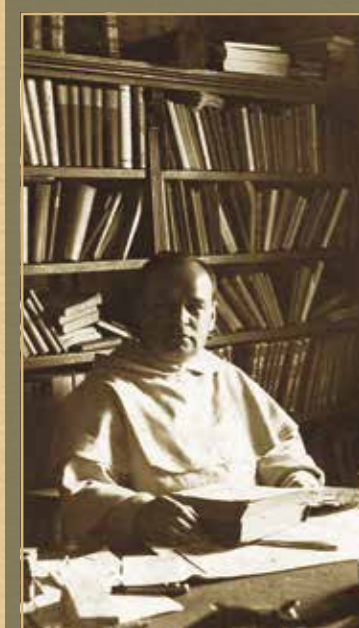
▲ St Martin reliquary (St Martin Parish)



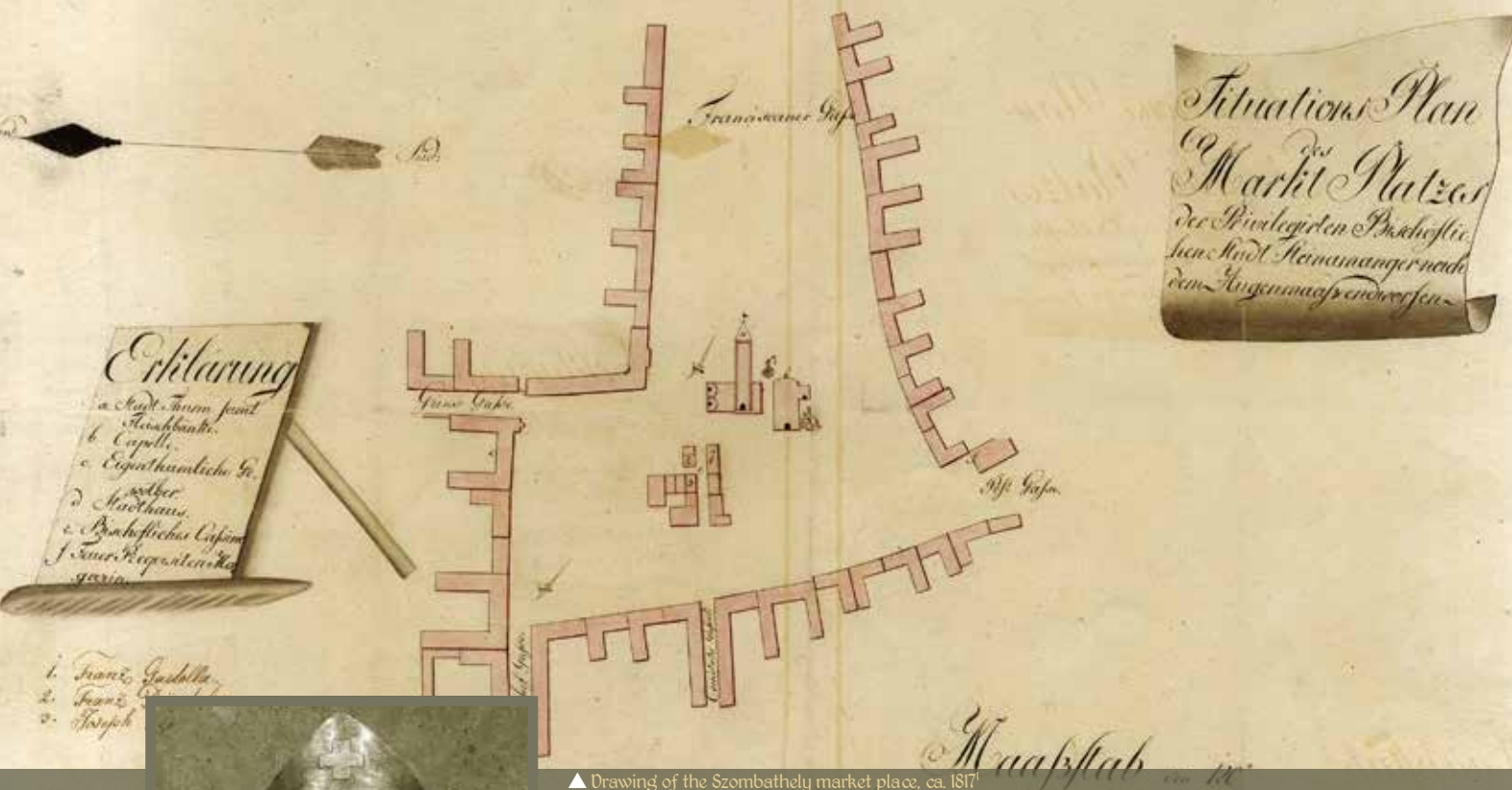
▲ BATHYÁNY Erzsébet, the founder of the St Martin (Bishop's Palace, Szombathely)



▲ The Rosary Society's procession banner with St Martin, 1871 (St Martin Parish)

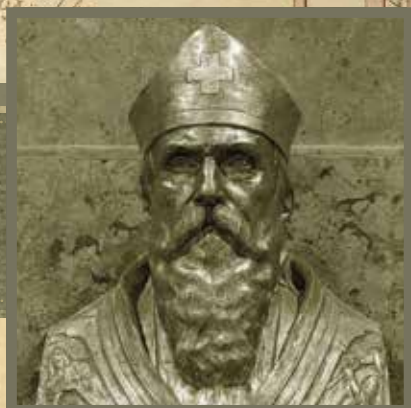


▲ BADALIK Bertalan, the first parish priest of the modern-day St Martin Parish (A Collection of the History of the Dominican Order, Vasvár)



▲ Drawing of the Szombathely market place, ca. 1817

The city tower of Szombathely



Dating back to the Middle Ages, the tower in the city's market place was probably built in roughly the period as the city walls were built in the 15th century.² It was first mentioned in 1585 in a description by Carolus Clusius (Charles de l'Écluse), physician and botanist from the Netherlands when the tower already had a clock.³ Originally, it was probably topped by a pyramid roof, covered by shingles, its top floor probably had an external wooden corridor with wooden rails so that guards could walk around the tower to have a good look around. There was probably a flight of wooden stairs leading up to this floor. The door to the tower was located on the west side where the daily markets were held. The firefighting equipment was held on the ground floor from where you could access the dungeons in the tower's cellars.

The tower probably had the copper Baroque roof in the late 17th century, the floor of which served as a lookout floor for the guards,

rendering the former wooden corridor unnecessary. Cut from a copper plate, St Martin's gold-plated image was attached as a weathercock to the copper sphere at the pinnacle of the roof. The tower had two bells, a smaller and a larger one. When the tower of the St Martin church underwent renovation works, they used to toll the bells of this tower.

In the course of the centuries the tower was damaged a number of times. Its fate was sealed in the fire of 1817 it fell victim to. The tower was so badly damaged that the council wanted to demolish it, triggering such resistance from locals that in the end the council decided to rebuild the tower instead. They agreed on the condition that a tower similar to the old one would be built. For the time being, the old tower was covered with a temporary plank roof. The new tower was designed by Frantz Stampf, who added yet another floor to the walls. To replace the Baroque roof, the design had a flat pyramid roof and a Classicist building all around the ground floor area. Due to a lack of funds,

however, the plan was shelved and the building was eventually demolished in 1837.⁴

The altar of the market's chapel, next to the tower also featured St Martin's statue.⁵

Literature and notes

¹ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Vas Megyei Levéltára Szombathely város tanácsának iratai. Peres iratok. Polgári törvényes perek Fasc. PP. Nr. 754.

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³ Carolus Clusius leírása Szombathely városáról 1585-ben. Közli Tóth Endre, ZÁGORHIDI CZIGÁNY Balázs. = Lapok Szombathely történetéből (hereinafter: LSZt.), 1999 72. sz. 1-3. p. (Panniculus Ser. C; 117.)

⁴ BENCZIK Gyula: A szombathelyi város-torony. = LSZt., 1996. 42. sz. 1-4. p. (Panniculus Ser. C; 55.)

⁵ B. DÖRNER Mária: Adatok a szombathelyi piaci kápolna történetéhez. = Savaria. A Vas megyei múzeumok értesítője, 1977-1978. 329-362. p.



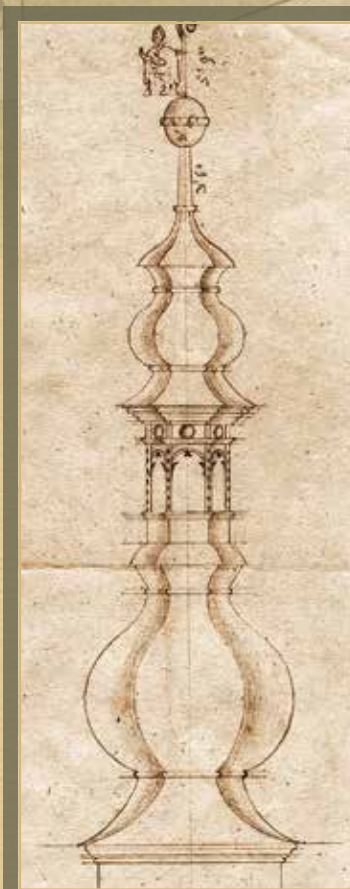
▲ A reconstruction drawing of the medieval city tower (Kiss Gábor)



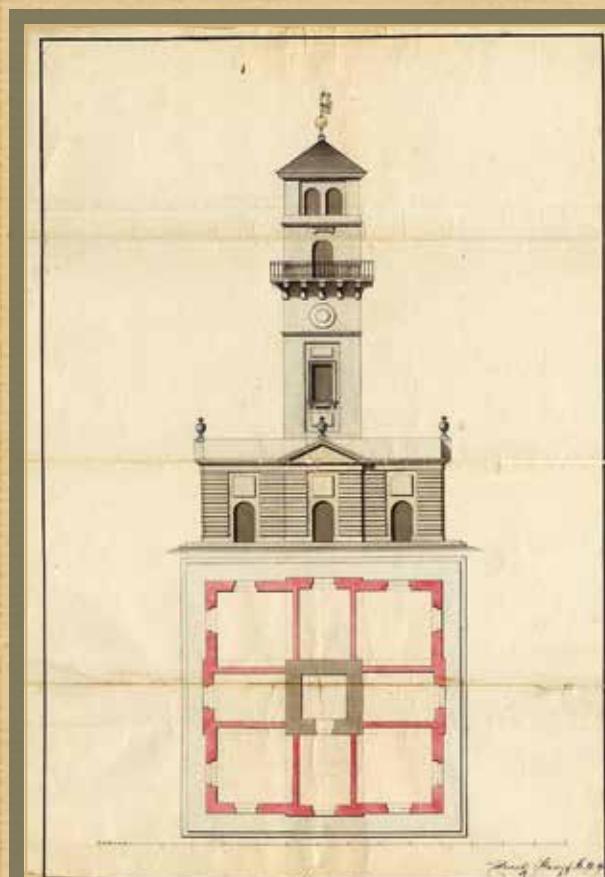
▲ Szombathely's medieval seal (photo by Rosta József, 1998)



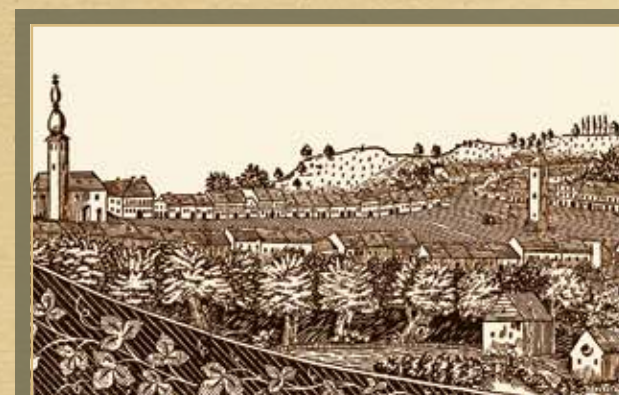
▲ Image of the city tower in the map sketch of Szombathely in 1762 (Savaria Múzeum Történelmi Osztály (hereinafter: SM TÖÖ))



▲ Design of the Baroque tower roof (MNL. VamL. Szvt. ir. Tanácsulési iratok Fasc. 135. No. 52.)



▲ Reconstruction design of the city tower, eventually not implemented after 1817 (MNL. VamL. Szvt. ir. Ptp. Fasc. PP. No. 754)



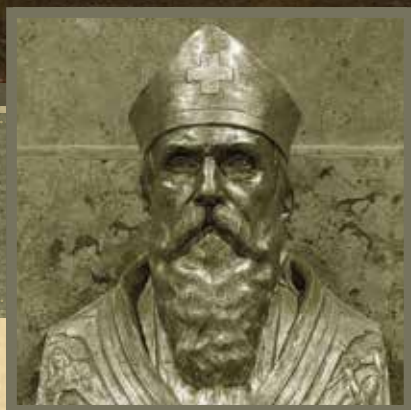
▲ The tower, covered with planks of wood, in the master's certificate of a Szombathely guild, ca. 1820 (SM TÖÖ Ltsz. HL. 68.40.)



▲ Location of the tower in the decorative tiles of today's Main Square (photo by MÁYER László, 2016)



▲ Part of the painting depicting the great fire of Szombathely in 1749 (Franciscan Parish of Szombathely)



Reports by foreign travellers from the 16th–19th centuries

Physicist and botanist Carolus Clusius (1525–1609) from the Netherlands described his visit to Szombathely on 3rd April 1585 as follows. There is a well a bit further away, it is said to be the well in whose water St Martin was immersed when he was christened. Next to the well there is a little church which is said to have been built at the place where Martin's parents once lived and where he was born. Entering the church, you'll find a nearly regular stone square on the wall on the left hand side. On the left side of the shrine there is a little chapel with St Martin's seated stone statue on its altar, rather small, but with a relatively large head compared with other the rest, boasting a trimmed beard and wearing a priest's or a doctor's hat.¹

During his journey in 1669 and 1670, including a visit to the town of Szombathely located where the brook Perint joins the brook Gyöngyös, the English physician, Eduard Brown (1642–1708) found the facts that Ovid died in Sabaria and that the inscription on the tombstone written by the poet of the

Roman golden age himself remarkable enough to mention them in his diary. (The author has his doubts here since the story starts with the words 'Many say and believe that...' and he recorded the tombstone poem on the basis of hearsay only 'as they say here...'.²)

The fine details and the precision of the descriptions make the reports by the Anglican vicar Richard Pococke (1704–1765) and his nephew, Jeremiah Milles (1714–1784) stand out from among other descriptions from the same period. Following the traditions of the Grand Tour, the two English gentlemen made a detour from Vienna to visit Szombathely in April 1737. Pococke's brief description of the town was published as early as in 1745.³ In his diary Milles identified Szombathely with the ancient Sabaria and described its carved stone relics and ones with inscriptions. When writing about the history of the town, he also mentioned Ovid's tradition and Quirine's death. He mentioned one of the chapels of the Dominicans' church as St Martin's birth place and quoted the chapel's inscription: Hic Natus est Sanctus Martinus'. Putting the Saint's birth to 335, he also pointed out major landmarks of his life such as

the fact that his father was a tribune in Constantine the Great's army, that he was christened at the well in front of the church and his meeting with a nearly naked beggar.⁴

When staying in Szombathely about 100 years later Marshall Mar-mont (1774–1852), Duke of Ragusa mentioned the antique findings and the wonderful cathedral only, but he found it important to point out that By the way, the town is the home town of St Martin, bishop of Tours.⁵

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- ² SZAMOTA István: Régi utazások Magyarországon és a Balkán félszigeten, 1504–1717. Budapest, 1891. 311. p. (Olcsó Könyvtár: 290)
- ³ Richard Pococke: A description of the East, and some other countries. Vol. 2. London, 1745. (hereinafter: Pococke, 1745.) 244. p.
- ⁴ Milles's travels. Original manuscript. British Museum. Manuscripts Add. 15771. Vol. 8. (hereinafter: Milles. BMM) 17–26. fol.
- ⁵ Tóth Ferenc: A raguzai herceg Szombathelyen. = Vasi Szemle, 1999, 5. sz. 611. p.



▲ Portrait of Richard Pococke (painted by Jean-Étienne Liotard, 1740) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Pococke#

Sabaria is famous for having been the birth place of St. Martin Bp of Tours, & place of martyrdom of St. Quirinus Bp of Siscia. the former was born here at healthful parents his father being tribune under Constantine & great, & he afterwards one of his guards. the place of his birth is pretended to be in a chappel on the left hand of a high altar in a Dominican church, where they have written in great letters
Hic Natus est Sanctus Martinus
near a church stands a well in which they say he baptised his mother after he was christened. his than faith

▲ Part of Milles's travel diary (Milles. BMM 24. fol.)

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We went to Scharbon, where there would be Scandantia, but there are no sort of antiquities there; it is but a large town, and was formerly named by the Turks. Dicsomogy is, without doubt, Colonia Claudia Sabaria, the name, on account of the name, would place it at Scharbon, where no antiquities are found; it is in fact, that the prefect of Pannonia (called here) and Augustus Valerius, after the Augustus fortress was possessed emperor at this place; but Scharbon is not at Scharbon. We saw at Scharbon several pieces of granite pillars: It is probable that Dicsomogy was a fortress in this town, for there are two inscriptions to him, with the name of Dicsomogy, as it was from all his inscriptions by an order of the Emperor: These are found either in Scharbon, and from various miles about the town. They have a story, which seems to be without any foundation, that Ovid was buried here. It is said, that St. Martin was born at this town in these hundred and thirty-five, his father having been a tribune under Constantine the Great.

▲ Szombathely's description in Pococke's book (Pococke, 1745, 244. p.)



▲ Portrait of Jeremiah Milles (painted by Nathaniel Dance-Holland, ca. 1765–1780)



▲ Birds' eye view of Szombathely (etching by Tischler Antal, 1791) (Stephanus SCHÖNWIENER: Antiquitatum et historiae Sabariensis ab origine ... Pestini, 1791 [1. p.])



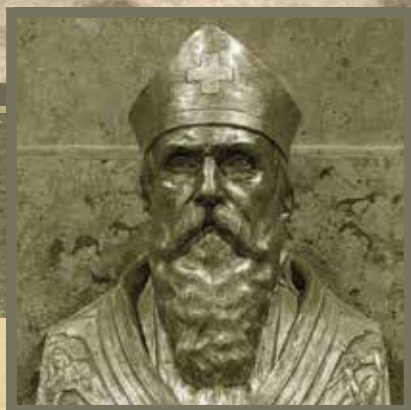
▲ Szombathely in the map of the Diocese by Kencsics József published in 1807. (Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Vas Megyei Levéltára Térképgyűjtemény T 128.)



▲ Part of the banner of the Tailors' Guild of Szombathely featuring the city, ca. 1820 (St Martin Parish)



▲ The procession starting from the Szentmárton parts of the town (MOLNÁR József's collection, photo by Haber Henrik)



The St Martin celebrations in 1913

Count MIKÉSZ János, the Bishop of the Diocese of Szombathely, was appointed in 1912. The bishop was trying to make sure that St Martin, the patron saint of the Diocese is present in the Cathedral not only in his spirits but also physically—in the form of a relic. The Saint's minor relics were held in the Dominican church only and in the chapels of the Bishop's Palace and the seminary.¹

At the bishop's request the archbishop of Tours gifted a fragment of the Saint's skull to the Diocese. Sent to receive the relic, the delegation returned to Szombathely from France on 13 June 1913. To give St Martin coming home to his birth place a worthy welcome, grand celebrations of unseen scale were organised in Szombathely in concerted efforts by church and secular authorities alike. Worthy of a triumph procession, the relic was carried all over the streets of the inner city on 15th June, Sunday as part of a grand procession, starting from the church of the Szentmárton parts of the city to the Cathedral where it was meant to be kept.²

In line with ancient church traditions, the streets and squares the procession passed through were decorated with garlands made of green twigs and flowers. The houses were adorned with flags, decorative carpets were hung from windows and the main entrance of the Cathedral was adorned with drapes. The procession was led by military guards of honour, followed by school children and a group 100 little girls, dressed in white, scattering rose petals in front of the horse-drawn coach carrying the relic. Amidst the tolling of bells they were followed by priests, bishops, and monks; the leaders and high-rank officials of the city and the county, as well as the members of countless societies; and finally by pilgrims from parishes in rural areas, singing church songs. To round off the celebrations a festive open air mass was held at the Main Square, bursting at the seams with people. The relic was placed on the Cathedral's altar in an ornamental herma made for the occasion, thus creating another major centre in town, dedicated to the Saint's veneration.³

Some 30,000–40,000 people participated in the event, which is

an unprecedented figure in the town of ca. 30,000 inhabitants at the time. Enjoying rapt attention, the event was documented by countless photos and several articles were published to report about it in the press both locally and nationwide. Later a book was published to preserve the event for posterity.⁴

The success and the significance of the celebrations lied in the fact that by addressing the people of the Diocese the event was no longer an internal affair of the Church but it became a celebration involving all layers of society.

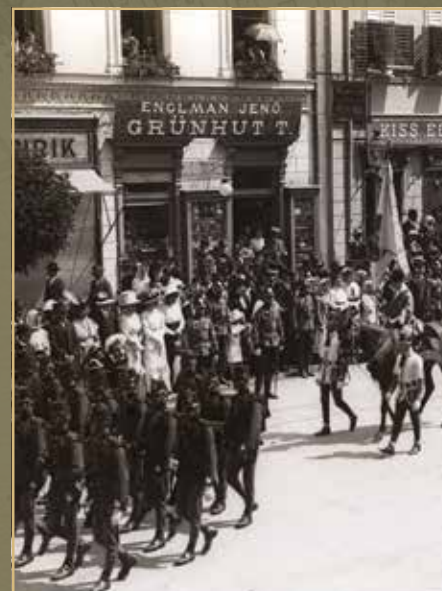
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³ MEGLEGA Miklós: Az 1913. évi szombathelyi Szent Márton-ünnep. In: Előadások Vas megye történetéről. 6. Szerk. MAYER László, TILCSIK György. Szombathely, 2015, 149–176. p. (Archivum Comitatus Castriferrei: 7)

⁴ CSEMPESZ János: Szent Márton ereklyéinek hazahozatala. 1913. [Reprint edition, 2013.] 144. p.



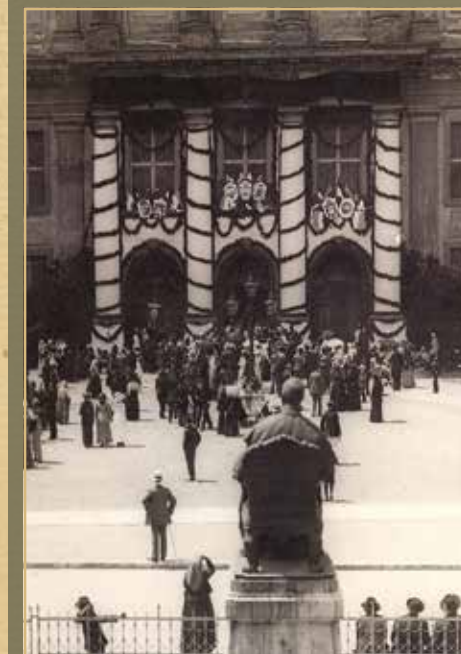
▲ The military guards of honour leading the procession, followed by count ERDŐDY Péter (Antoine Sélosse's collection, photo by KNEBEL Jenő)



▲ The group of 100 girls scattering flower petals, walking ahead of the coach carrying the relic (Antoine Sélosse's collection, photo by KNEBEL Jenő)



▲ The festive coach carrying the relic passing through the main square (MOLNÁR József's collection, photo by SZILÁRD Tódor)



▲ The adorned main entrance and hallway of the Cathedral on the festive day (Antoine Sélosse's collection, photo by KNEBEL Jenő)



▲ Bishop MIKÉSZ János arrives at the Cathedral, together with the Archbishop of Pannonhalma and the Bishop of Győr (Photograph Collection of the Archives of the Diocese of Szombathely)

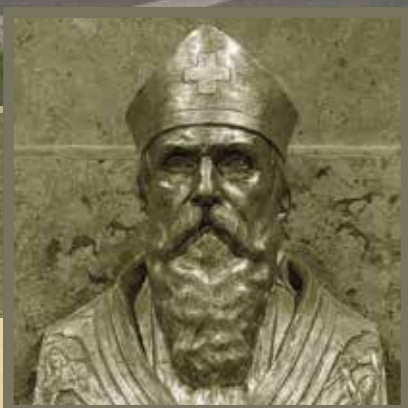


▲ Bird's eye view of the main square in its festive best on a picture postcard of the time (MOLNÁR József's collection, photo by SZILÁRD Tódor)



▲ The St Martin church and the statue today (photo by MAYER László, 2016)

The St Martin statue at the well



The events that made a great difference to create this work of art commemorating St Martin are, among others, as follows: The rather bad state of repair of the well in front of the Dominican church, eminent anniversaries and events in 1938 such as the 900th anniversary of King St Stephen's death, the Eucharistic World Congress in Budapest and the 300th anniversary of the Dominicans settling down in Szombathely. Set up in 1937, the statue committee invited design proposals from across the country. Those putting in a proposal had to meet an 11-point set of criteria, which specified, in addition to the way of the implementation, that: 'The subject of the statue: Bishop St Martin christens his mother. The figures of the statue must be at least life size, the statue must be made of bronze and the well must be made of quality stones. The construction costs of the well statue may not exceed 10,000 pengős.' Prompted by the announcement in local and national papers more than 20 sculptors and architects requested the application package. After heated

discussions the jury evaluating the applications submitted invited the three most successful applicants for another round. From the second round the duo of the sculptor RUMI RAJKI István² and the architect PÁZMÁNDY István, overcoming KALOTAI KREISZL Ottó and FÜLÖP Elemér from Felsőőr, was declared winners. The two-figure bronze well statue by RAJKI István, preserving the local tradition of St Martin christening his mother here, a tradition linked to both the town and the county in so many ways, also regarded as a pinnacle of his career, was officially unveiled on 2nd October 1938 amidst festive celebrations.³

In 1996 the Rumi Rajki Circle of Friends of Arts had the statue restored. Its immediate vicinity underwent major reconstructions in 2008 and 2009. As the first phase of the constructions a commemorative stone, protruding from the ground, indicating the place of the original well and the ornamental night lights were built. In the second phase the pedestrians' pavement across the square was widened and carved stone banks were placed where the pilgrims of the Via Sancti Martini can read the following sentence in six languages:

Born in Savaria, St Martin, who shared his cloak with a beggar, christened his mother upon returning home.⁴

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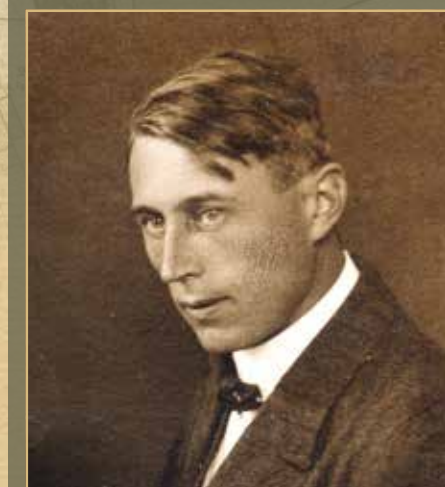
² For his life and works see MNL. VaML., A (Rumi) RAJKI család iratai (hereinafter: Rajki ir.); Rumi RAJKI István. Összeáll. NAGYVÁRADY Nóra. Szombathely, 2004. 80 p. (Vasi életrajzi bibliográfiák; 39); SALAMON Nándor: Rumi RAJKI István szobrászművész élete és alkotásai. Vasszilvágy, 2009. (hereinafter: SALAMON, 2009.) 205 p.

³ For a summary on the well statue see SALAMON Nándor: A szombathelyi Szent Márton-szobor története. 1-2. rész = Vasi Honismereti és Helytörténeti Közlemények, 2008. 4. sz. 18-41. p., 2009. 1. sz. 68-84. p.; SALAMON, 2009. 142-163. p.; Egy remekmű születése. A szombathelyi Szent Márton-kút szoborkompozíció keletkezéstörténete. Időszaki kiállítás 2016. október 4. – 2017. március 31. Kiállításvezető. Írta, szerk. Tóth Csaba. Szombathely, 2016. 52 p. (A Szombathelyi Egyházmegye Kincsei)

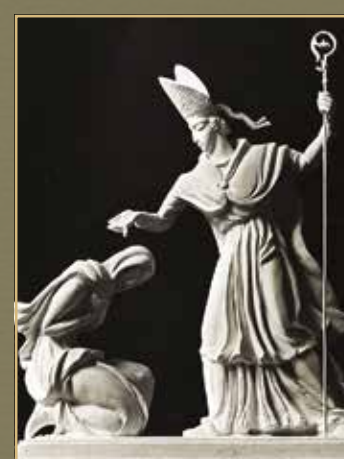
⁴ MANGLIÁR László: Megszépült a szobor környéke. A Szent Márton-szobor környezetének rendezése. = Vasi Építész és Mérnök, 2009. 2. sz. 10-12. p.



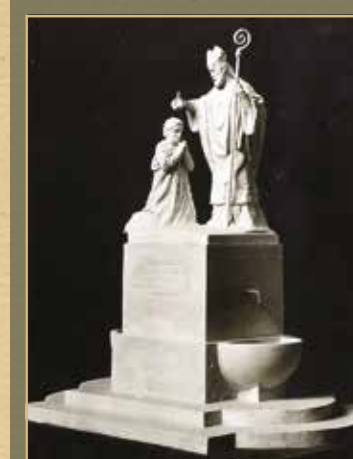
▲ The St Martin well (photo by KNEBEL Jenő, ca. 1910, private collection)



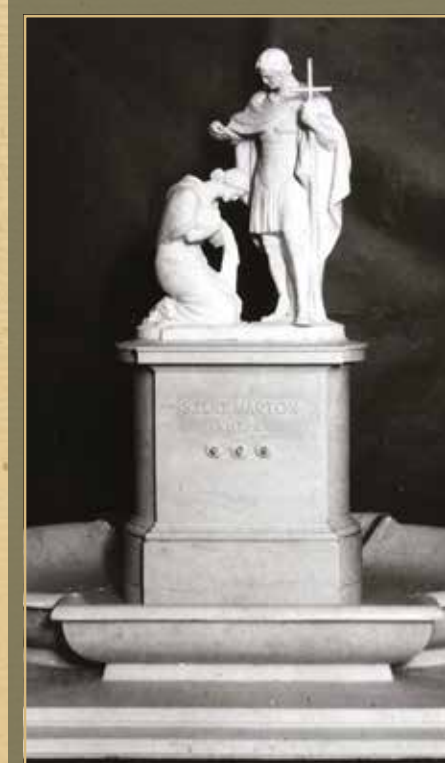
▲ Photo of Rumi RAJKI István, 1922. (MNL. VaML. Rajki ir. fényképek)



▲ First application design by Rumi RAJKI István, 1937 (MNL. VaML. SZV Pg. Közig. ir. 3407/1938)



▲ Application design by Istók János, 1937 (MNL. VaML. SZV Pg. Közig. ir. 3407/1938)



▲ Second application design by Rumi RAJKI István, 1937 (MNL. VaML. Rajki ir. Szent Márton-szobor fényképei)



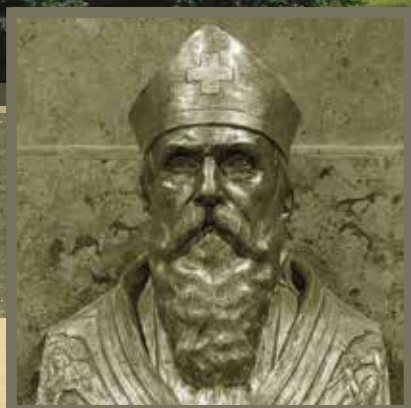
▲ Erecting the bronze statue, 28 September 1938 (St Martin Parish)



▲ Festive unveiling of the St Martin statue. On the pulpit: mayor dr. UJVÁRY Éde, 2nd October 1938 (photo by HABER Henrik. St Martin Parish)



▲ The St. Martin church in Újkörtvélyes (Zahling, Austria) with foundations dating back to the 13th century (photo by Sema Ferenc, 2016)



Churches dedicated to St Martin within the historic Vas county

Constituting a single administrative unit ever since the foundation of the Hungarian state, the historic Vas county included large areas in Slovenia and in Burgenland, outside today's state borders. When locating the churches dedicated to St Martin, we have found a rather even distribution across the region.

In deeds dated before the Battle of Mohács (1526) nine villages and towns with a church dedicated to St Martin are mentioned: 1102 – Szombathely; 1238 – Zsédény; 1288 – Tilaj-Nagytilaj; 1337 – Varsány-Jánosháza; 1342 – Kolta-Nemeskolta; 1376 – Nádasd; 1400 – Pöse-Gyöngyösfalu; 1429 – Körmend; 1461 – Sárvár.¹

In addition to those above, another five villages have St Martin in their names as their patron saint: 1213 – Rábaszentmárton, Sankt Martin an der Raab, Austria; 1325 – Kemenesszentmárton; 1365 – Martjanci also called Szentmárton before the battle of Mohács, then Martjanc (a shortened form of the Slavic name), Mártonhely from 1907 on, Martjanci after the Treaty of Trianon, Slovenia;² 1410 – Hegyhátszentmárton; 1496 – Őrszentmárton, Sankt Martin in der Wart, Austria.³ We also have villages (10) whose churches are believed to be of medieval origin, based on their

architectural styles, or had a parish church which was destroyed long ago and found only by archaeologists, though not mentioned in the deeds in connection with or relating to St Martin before the Battle of Mohács: 1627 – Csöpc-Kerkafő-Cepinci, Slovenia;⁴ 1633 – Vámoscsalád;⁵ 1672 – Csajta-Schachendorf, Austria;⁶ 1672 – Némethőv-Deutsch Schützen, Austria;⁷ 1697 – Doroszló-Kőszegdoroszló; 1697 – Girolt-Németszentgrót-Gerersdorf-Sulz, Austria; 1697 – Nagyfalu-Mogersdorf, Austria; 1697 – Söpte; 1697 – Szolárd-Újkörtvélyes-Zahling, Austria; 1698 – Vasvár.⁸

In the historic Vas county altogether 24 medieval St Martin churches could be located, nine of whose dedication has changed by now – the churches of Jánosháza, Körmend, Nádasd, Sárvár, Szombathely, Vasvár, Cepinci, Mogersdorf and Zahling.

In 2005 the Council of Europe declared the Via Sancti Martini, the European St Martin Cultural Route, granting it the same status as other cultural routes dedicated to renowned persons who contributed to shaping Europe. The Hungarian section of the nearly 2,500 km long route from Szombathely, Hungary to Tours, France you can cover on foot includes five villages and towns within the Diocese of Szombathely – Gyöngyösfalu, Körmend, Kőszegdoroszló, Nádasd, Szombathely – that are proud to have a church dedicated to St Martin.⁹

Literature and notes

- ¹ BENCZIK Gyula – FEISZT György: Vas vármegye középkori egyházas helyeinek adattára. In: Primus inter omnes. Tanulmányok BÉDY Vince születésének 150. évfordulójára. Szerk. ARATÓ György, NEMES Gábor, VAJDA Ádám. Győr, 2016. (hereinafter: BENCZIK – FEISZT, 2016) 607., 608., 610., 612., 613., 618., 616., 618., 619. p. (A Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár kiadványa. Források, feldolgozások; 25.)
- ² Ivan Zelko: Prekmurje do leta 1500. Pomurska založba. Murska Sobota, 1982. 62. p.
- ³ BENCZIK – FEISZT, 2016. 616. p.
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- ⁵ THURY Etele: Kis Bertalan és MUSAY Gergely dunántúli ág. hitv. ev. püspökök egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyve, 1631–1654. = Magyar Protestáns Egyháztörténeti Adattár, 1907. 100. p.
- ⁶ HÁZI Jenő: Die kanonische Visitation des Peter Tormásky Archidiacons von Eisenburg aus dem Jahre 1674. Eisenstadt, 1961. (hereinafter: HÁZI, 1961.) 61. p. (Burgenländischen Forschungen; 46.)
- ⁷ HÁZI, 1961. 37. p.
- ⁸ Szombathelyi Egyházmegyei Levéltár A Püspöki Hivatal iratai. Canonica visitatio. KAZÓ István vasvári prépost egyházlátogatási jegyzőkönyve, 1697–1698. 10–11., 149., 157., 174., 333., 674. p.
- ⁹ Via Sancti Martini. Szent Márton Gyalogos Vándorút Kercaszomor–Domonkosfa–Szombathely–Rajka közti szakasza. Összeáll. ORBÁN Róbert. Szombathely, 2010. 14–20. p.



▲ Painted by Johann Rath, Austria, in 1857, the main altar painting of the church in Kőszegdoroszló features the glorified bishop St. Martin, accompanied by angels (photo by Feiszt György, 2016)



▲ Baroque altarpiece featuring the Amiens scene in the church of Rábaszentmárton (Sankt Martin an der Raab, Austria) (photo by Sema Ferenc, 2016)



▲ St. Martin church of Csöpc (Cepinci, Slovenia) with foundations from the 13th century (photo by ORBÁN Róbert, 2016)



▲ Wax seal of the Parish of Rábaszentmárton with St. Martin and the beggar



▲ The stained glass in the church of Gyöngyösfalu was donated by Szluha Dénes from Verbő, with family origins in Nagycsömöte (photo by Feiszt György, 2016)



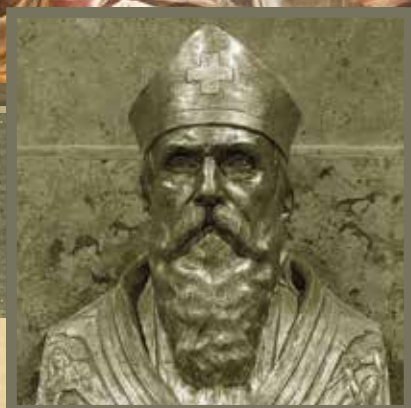
▲ Bishop St. Martin's death in the 14th century fresco of the church in Mártonhely (Martjanci, Slovenia) (photo by ORBÁN Róbert, 2016)



▲ The footprint designed by the French sculptor Michel Audiard, which takes pilgrims all the way along the St. Martin Route (photo by Feiszt György, 2016)



▲ KONTULY Béla: Scenes from St Martin's life, 1941–1942 (wall painting in the new chapel of the Seminary of Szombathely)



St Martin's Diocese

We owe the revival of St Martin's cult to PADÁNYI BIRÓ Márton, the Bishop of Veszprém (1745–1762), who dedicated several churches to his patron saint in the era of the Catholic renewal. PADÁNYI probably contributed to the fact that Szombathely's first secondary grammar school, founded by ZICHY Ferenc, the Bishop of Győr, was named after the city's renowned native, St Martin.

The foundations of St Martin's cult in the Diocese of Szombathely were laid by the first bishop of the Diocese, SZILY János when he offered the Diocese, founded in 1777, to the Saint's patronage, and also when he worked hard to spread the Saint's veneration. In addition to the Diocese, he offered the seminary founded in 1781 to the Saint's patronage, and made sure that as many and as renowned as possible scientists and artists look into or work with the life of the Saint. This is how St Martin inspired Stephan Dorfmaister,

Anton Maulbertsch, or Josef Winterhalder. Commissioned by Bishop SCHÖNVISNER István – the eminent Jesuit historian – published a book about Szombathely in 1791, paying great attention to the bishop of Tours.¹

Using the bell of the previously demolished Virgin Mary parish church, the bishop had a new bell weighing 1077 kg made in 1795, with the inscription: 'Divo Martino Episcopo Sabariae nato Sacrum.' Also in 1795 he established a foundation to fund payers in the Cathedral on the 'fifth day of 'St Martin's eight' and on St John of Nepomuk's Day.²

After SZILY's death St Martin's cult diminished, although Bishop HIDÁSY Kornél had STORNÓ Ferenc paint his figure in the new chapel of the Seminary in 1884. His veneration was picked up again during the term of Bishop MIKES János, who published a book about St Martin in addition to organising the reception celebrations of the relic in 1913.³ The publishing house of the Diocese was also named after the Saint and at the Bishop's request the monarch donated

ornamental canon's crosses to the members of the chapter, depicting St Martin.⁴ His successor, GRÓSZ József, had St Martin painted in the centre of the new, third chapel of the Seminary by KONTULY Béla. In the Communist Era the Saint's cult nearly vanished, and could be rekindled in his native town only after the changing of the political system.

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¹ GÉFIN Gyula: A szombathelyi egyházmegye története. I. köt. SZILY János, HERZAN Ferenc gróf bíboros, SOMOGY Lipót, és BÖLCS András püspökök élete és működése. Szombathely, 1929. (hereinafter: GÉFIN, 1929.) 134. p.

² GÉFIN, 1929, 58. p.

³ For further information see MELEGA Miklós: Az 1913. évi Szent Márton-ünnep. In: Előadások Vas megye történetéről. 6. Szerk. MAYER László, TILCSIK György. Szombathely, 2015, 149–176. p. (Archivum Comitatus Castri-ferrei; 7.)

⁴ BAKÓ Balázs: „Non confundar” – „Nem szégyenülök meg”. Megemlékezés gróf MIKES János püspökről. = Vasi Szemle, 2005. 6. sz. 747. p.



▲ SZILY János, first Bishop of Szombathely (1777–1799), founder of St Martin's veneration in the Diocese (Bishop's Palace of Szombathely)



▲ Franz Anton Maulbertsch: The miraculous St Martin, 1791 (Cathedral of Szombathely)



▲ Stephan Dorfmaister: St Martin in shining glory, 1791 (the painting was held on the altar of the Seminary between 1791 and 1884, and today it is on display in the Bishop's Palace)



▲ Canon's cross of the Vasvár-Szombathely Chapter, 1913



▲ Part of the bronze gate of the Cathedral of Szombathely, 2016



▲ Bishop of Szombathely Mikes János (1912–1935) (Bishop's Palace of Szombathely)



SABARIA.

