Presented here by Ulrich (Uli) Pfingstler, is a history of the area that is known as The Zabergäu, which is part of the geography around the former Nike Guided Missile Base - Charlie Battery - 3rd Missile Battalion - 71st Artillery, located on top of the Heuchelberg.

Uli, who at the time lived in Brackenheim, is a friend several of us knew while stationed at the Battery in the late 50's and early 60's time frame.

We are pleased and grateful for all of Uli"s efforts, his contribution to the Charlie Battery historical record, which continues to ever expand, and the renewal of old friendships.

!... Vielen Dank Uli ...!
The Romans came into this region (elsewhere partly before) at about the pe-
period of 000 and stayed here for about 200 - 300 years. They occu-
pied with their legions but also "civilians" and old "retired sold-
iers" settled and farmed here. There are still very many ob-
jects of witnesses found of this period. Rests of old build-
ings, monuments, castles (called Castells), statues, farms etc. - Even word and expressions of their lan-
guage (Latin) came into our language till today - for instance: window -
german = Fenster - Latin = fenestra, wine = Wein = vino, stone - wall = Mauer = mura, street = strasse = strada etc. -

Due to the fertility and also to the climate this region was preferred by the Ro-
mans very much - (they called the Zabergäu "little Italy"). - Temporarily Ger-
manic tribes had settled beside the Romans - they lived beside each other - lived
in peace or also not and got sometimes "mixed-up", did trade, fought each other
etc. -

Generally the Romans settled at preferred places: Along the rivers (Rhine, Neck-
ar, Donau etc.) because of fertility, warmer climate, water (very important)... they
built, founded little places, farms, already "towns" like for instance Koln = Köln,
(Colougn? = Lat. Colonia (colony) at Rhine River etc. - They had high culture in
architecture, literature, ways of life etc. It is very funny: Germanics had writing
(called rune) but did not document their history nor customs, lifestyle etc. - All
the documents about Germanics were made by the Romans who described the
Germanics in detail (Tacitus). A real irony of history...

Later - about between 200 - 300 p.Chr. - because of too much "robbery" and

he "Zabergäu" is the region between two hill-rows called Heuchel-
berg (in the North) and Stromberg (South). "Charlie" was, as you
know, installed on the Heuchelberg. Unfortunately I could not find
out the explanation for the names for they seem to be very old...
(Strom = current, Heuchel = Hypocrisy, but this makes no sense, possibly it
might go back to the Celtics).

The “Zaber” is a little “river” starting at Zaberfeld running from west to east and
flowing in Lauffen into Neckar - River. Gau or gau (an old expression) means
"region" - altogether it spreads out about 30 km. The Zaber runs in the middle
of the "valley", through Pfaffenhofen, Guglingen, Brackenheim, Meimsheim to
Lauffen...

Kleingartach and Niederhofen etc. are located "over the hill" - Heuchelberg, their
valley is the " Leintal" (Lein = also a little "river" - Tal = valley). The Lein also runs
to Neckar river.

The region has been settled since very ancient times. Before there was an origi-
nal population (so called Stone - Age) which is not so much explored.

About 600 years before Christ the Celts started to settle - they withdrew or
were chased away, or also slaved (maybe also mixed up) by the Romans who
did unite for this purpose even with the Germanics at about the year 000.

The Celts looked about like the Germanics (tall, blond - hair, blue - eyed) but the
language was completely different (today Gallic - still spoken in Scotland, Wales
and Ireland where they withdrew via France). There are still "witnesses" found
from their time... Names like Zaber, Neckar seem to be of Celtic origin...

The Romans came into this region (elsewhere partly before) at about the pe-

THE ZABERGÄU
von
Ulrich (Uli) Pfingstler aus Lauffen am Neckar
As mentioned before the region was (and still is) very fertile. So agriculture goes far back and today wine-agriculture is dominating because of high rentability. Over here wine is not something to drink - it is still a tradition, religion... but also a real science. It is discussed if the Romans started it over here or whether it came here later (see Wein = vino)... in fact they have produced a very good wine in our region since ever formerly (till about the 1950’s -1960’s) working in the vineyards was most manual and very hard - one could compare some activities even as hard as manual wood-cutting. - Since about 25 years they also discovered the grapes are very good for producing champain (called Sekt) and so they do it - Some Sekts are absolutely comparable to the champain of the Champagne in France - but much cheaper...

They started a very good marketing with the Haberschlacht wine all over Wurttemberg (one part of our state) In the 1950’s... 50 this wine became especially famous and very well known... The other wines of Stockheim, Neipperg, Brackenheim etc. were about of the same standard but not so well marked... Meanwhile all over the region around Heilbronn they improved very much... Today they are all comparable but still the (red) wines of the Zabergäu including Lauffen gain very many prices,(golden and silver medals German wide) in competitions.

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They also improved marketing like a real modern business - before it was considered and practiced as “farmer’s work” and also (except Haberschlacht) as a very local “thing” - the Wurttembergers were much known for drinking their wine themselves and did not “export” elsewhere... The wineries (cooperatives, also private possessions) have become very modern enterprises concerning business, methods, equipment, management, marketing, methods of production etc.

The settlement of the region(s) goes far back in history. When they date it on a special year - like Haberschlacht 750 years (1229 - 1979), Stockheim 1000 years (950 - 1950), Brackenheim 700 years (1280 - 1980) etc. - So this doesn’t mean the real begin of the place as population, settlement etc. but the very first
mentioning in any official document, mostly in ecclesiastical titles, also in documents of knights, dukes, counts or of the proprietors of the place... So people discovered the “birthday” of their place by this way as a reason for celebrating and also for reputation “... our place is older than yours... “ also in prospects, brochures etc. etc. --

By the way it might be worth mentioning that Stockheim is the only place which stayed Catholic after reformation far around especially due to the regime of German (or Teutonic) knights Order.

All the Zabergäu and also other distant regions were protestant. Because of this situation they were very isolated (only one other family in the Zabergäu was Catholic) and had their problems with the environs for instance for getting partners to marry etc. If they did “nothing find in the village” they had to go far to other catholic communities...

Also this situation changed completely after 1945 when very many other influences come “over the land” as people from other lands of catholic religion (whose ancestors had emigrated maybe centuries before) had to be integrated in “protestant regions” as well...

Also there were no wars, battles (see Haberschlacht), conflicts etc. of tactical or strategic importance except may be - so considered - the battle (Schlacht) near Lauffen (1534) when the Duke of Wurttemberg (Duke Ulrich) regained his territory (Duchy Wurttemberg) from Austrian regents.

After the World War II the situations all over Germany and so also in the Zabergäu changed completely in every respect - partly abruptly, partly stepwise. Indeed each family had been touched in any way from war-influences and also the following consequences.

A profound change happened with Brackenheim and the villages around when Hausen, Durrenzimmern, Meimsheim, Botenheim, Neipperg, Haberschlascht, and Stockheim were united to one community with Brackenheim as the municipal center - the “Capital”- in the 1970’s. Now the places around Brackenheim got the additional name as for instance “Brackenheim - Haberschlacht” etc. At the beginning this caused indeed much change in administrations etc. Now “Big - Brackenheim” has some more than 10000 inhabitants and is also the largest “red - wine area” of Wurttemberg...

This is a general description about the origins and also some about the development of the zabergäu. All the events of history like reformation, Farmer rebellion against knight’s etc. regimes, 30 - years - war (1618 - 1648 very cruel), Napoleon, foundation of Germany as political state, world - war I and II of course touched the region but describing would be too voluminous for this entry.
Standort/Location
Oberes/Unteres Zabergäu, Upper/Lower Zabergäu,
Brackenheim, Lauffen

Landkreis/County - Heilbronn
Region - Franken
Regierungsbezirk/State Capital - Stuttgart
Land/State - Baden-Württemberg

Einwohnerzahlen/Population

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ort</th>
<th>Einwohnerzahl</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brackenheim</td>
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The Zabergäu And The Leintal Detail Map
This is a wonderful panorama of The Zabergäu, with the village of Stockheim below. Actually this photo shows only part of the valley. If you refer to the detail map you will see it really starts around to the right and back to Zaberfeld. We can see, up and a little to the left of center, the city of Brackenheim. Then, a little further in the distance and to the right, is Lauffen am Neckar. The villages to the left of Brackenheim are probably Dürenzimmern and Nordhausen. The high hills to the right is The Stromberg, and defines the other side of the valley opposite the Heuchelberg.