



Our Family

by

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The Mainzers of Gaukoenigshofen

Jews in Gaukoenigshofen were first mentioned in 1555 Court records of Ochsenfurt. In 1769 is the first mention of a synagogue in the village, which was rebuilt in 1790 and altered in 1842.

Statistics

Year	Inhabitants	Jews
1910	739	80
1933	723	54
21.3.1942		29
13.7.1942		3

The Mainzer family is certainly recorded around 1800 when Aron Mainzer and his wife Karolina Maier lived there. They had at least two sons:

- Falk Mainzer, b. 1801 Gaukoenigshofen
- Moritz Mainzer, b. 8 July 1814 Gaukoenigshofen

"The family Mainzer has for several generations been successful in the cattle trade and later also as general merchants. Their commercial success also brought general recognition and Hess Mainzer (son of Falk) was the first Jewish member of the municipal council in 1888". (1)

Moritz Mainzer

the younger on the two sons born 8 July 1814, married Esther Sahlmann, younger of the two daughters of Joseph and Mathilde Sahlmann, on 18 August 1852. Moritz had a trade licence to deal in an "Open shop" with "Schnitt und Spezereiwaren", and continued the business started by his father, where the whole Mainzer family had helped. After the death of his father, his mother continued to hold a "Hausierpatent" and this was used to hawk anything that the family was unable to sell in the shop around the area. Thus the family accumulated considerable wealth. Moritz Mainzer had already bought his own house in 1843. The family played a big role in the trade of cattle and merchandise and, by also following their retail business, managed to increase their fortune.

Moritz was an important member of the Jewish Community of Gaukoenigshofen, becoming its president. The Mainzers were the only Jewish family in Gaukoenigshofen to belong to the "Cohens", the ancient order of Jewish priests.

In 1876 Moritz was the first Jewish citizen to be elected to communal office and served on the Committee for the Relief of the Poor (Armenpflegschaftsrat).

The family of Moritz and Esther were all born in Gaukoenigshofen but nearly all eventually left the village:

- Aron, 22 June 1853 - 31 July 1872.
- Salomon, 14 April 1854.
- Karoline, 14 April 1856, lived in Zeil.
- Isaak, 13 February 1858 - 13 December 1869 Mainstockheim.
- Babette, 17 May 1860.
- Rebecca, 1862.
- Sigmund, 1863, lived in Nuremberg.
- Joseph, 26 December 1866 - Spring 1932 London.

At the beginning of the 20th century the family is said to have been at its height, they were well off, considered to be refined ("vornehm"), and were greatly respected in the village and "nearly belonged to the local dignitaries". (2)

Moritz Mainzer died in Gaukoenigshofen on 17 November 1888 and Esther Sahlmann Mainzer on 26 March 1910. Their son, Isaak, attended the "Hirsch'sche Institut" in Mainstockheim and died there of scarlet fever in 1869. (3) Esther and Moritz youngest son Joseph moved to London. He died in Islington, London. His death is recorded in the March 1932 register of deaths.

Daughter Babette had married Max Sichel, a horse dealer from Aub in 1885. As only one of their nine children remained in Gaukoenigshofen the business gradually lost its importance. Their daughter Klemi Sichel continued to keep the shop until ill health forced her to give it up in the 1920s and the family died out in Gaukoenigshofen.

Children of Max and Babette were all born in Gaukoenigshofen:

- Mathilde Sichel, 19 January 1887, deported Izbica.
- Karolina Sichel, 1887, deported Auschwitz.
- Ernst Sichel, 9 August 1888, deported Riga.
- Klemi Sichel, 1890 - 1931 Gaukoenigshofen.
- Moritz Sichel, 11 April 1893, deported 24 August 1942 to Majdanek.

- Hanna Sichel, 1895.
- Julius Sichel, 10 March 1896 - 1984 New Jersey.
- Joseph Sichel, 1896, emigrated USA.
- Lina Sichel, 1905.

Footnotes

- (1) Michel Thomas: Die Juden in Gaukoenigshofen 1550 - 1924 (Jews in Gaukoenigshofen 1550 - 1924).
- (2) do.
- (3) Records Protestant Church Mainstockheim.