



Our Family

by

Heinz and Thea Ruth Skyte, née Ephraim

The Laubheims of Bibergau

Bibergau

Bibergau is another small village in Lower Franconia, where ancestors of the Sahlmann/Scheidt/Skyte families at one time used to live. It lies some 4 km west of Dettelbach, and about 1 km north of the Dettelbach - Wuerzburg road in rich agricultural country. Wheat, barley and beet are grown here. At the beginning of the 19th century many farms had vineyards, but most of these had disappeared by the end of the century.

In the middle ages land and property in the village was owned by the Bishopric of Wuerzburg, the Benedictine Convent of Kitzingen and the Counts of Castell, but gradually passed to the Order of St John of Jerusalem as well as to several worldly and ecclesiastical knights who, in the 18th century, sold property and subjects to the University of Wuerzburg.

In 1650 "Schutzjuden" of the Order of St John were living in the "Judenbaraque" in the village. During the 18th century Bibergau had one of the largest Jewish communities in the District of Kitzingen, some living under the "protection" of the Order of St John, others under that of the University of Wuerzburg. Jewish children attended the Catholic school. In November 1859 it is recorded that Jews of Bibergau had to pay 20 fl for their pupils. "This payment constituted part of the regular income of the Catholic teacher of Bibergau".

There was a synagogue and later also a Jewish School in the village. By adding two floors above the synagogue accommodation for a Jewish teacher was provided on the first floor. Above this, on the second floor, a school room and synagogue for the women had been established (date?).

As in other villages as the result of the abolition of the "Judenedikt" in 1861 Jews left the village for towns in large numbers. Jewish children attended the Catholic school and there appears to have been no Jewish teacher for religious instructions at some stage. In 1883/4 the community, which by then had only 10 members and who were religious, campaigned for the school to continue. Agreement regarding the rate of payment for a teacher for religious instruction could not be reached. In 1884 there were some moves regarding the winding up of the congregation. The district rabbinate of Wuerzburg and the district authority of Kitzingen appeared to have finally come to an agreement. In 1900 the Bibergau Jewish congregation was compulsorily dissolved and amalgamated with the

congregation of Dettelbach. By 6 September 1904 the membership of the Bibergau congregation had shrunk to eight, six of these being members of the Laubheim family, one of whom (Max) was also in the process of moving to Dettelbach at the end of that year. The amalgamation of the two communities finally took place on 24th April 1906, the few then remaining Jews in Bibergau joining the Dettelbach congregation. The Bibergau synagogue was sold by Dettelbach in 1907.

Population of the Village

Year	Houses	Families	Inhabitants	Catholics	Protestants	Jews
1812			399			131
1818	92	103	499			
1835	92	110	547	388	10	149
1870	115	110	553	468	8	77
1910			500			6
1939		107	475			4

The Laubheims of Bibergau

Seligmann Loeb,

Great-great-grandfather of Sali Scheidt and his brothers and sister, was born in Urspringen around 1750. Urspringen is a village in Lower Franconia north west of Wuerzburg, which had belonged to the principality Castell, before this territory became part of the Kingdom of Bavaria. On 24th January 1781 Seligmann Loeb was granted "Schutz" by the University of Wuerzburg to settle in Bibergau. Shortly after that he appears to have married his first wife Sara, who had been born in Bibergau. When in 1816 the Bavarian "Judenedict" of 1813 also became effective in Bibergau, the Grand Duchy of Wuerzburg having come under the rule of Bavaria, Seligman Loeb adopted the family name of Laubheim (Laubheimer or Laupheim). After the death of Sara, Seligmann remarried. His second wife, Rebecca, came from Sommerach, a village on the Main north Kitzingen. Both lived to a ripe old age dying in 1835 and 1844 at the ages of 85 and 91 years respectively.

SCHUTZBRIEF (1)

issued by the Julier University Wuerzburg accepting
 Seeligmann Loew of Urspringen into their protection in Bibergau
 24 January 1781

Nachdem hohe Herrschaft den Juden Seeligmann Loew leedigen Stands von Urspringen auf sein unterthanigstes Bitten in dero Schutz in Biebergau, so lang Er sich und die Seinige wohl verhalten werden, dergestalten gnadig an- aufgenommen hat, dass Er zu gedachten Biebergau wohnen, daselbst und anderstwo aufrichtig, redlich und rechtlich handeln und wandlen - dahingegen aber nebst dem jaehrlich zu gebenden Schutz Geld von nun an, und was Er sonsten der Herrschaft und Gemeind zu reichen schuldig ist, mit dortiger Gemeind die burgerliche sowohl persohnliche als

andere Giebigkeiten herkomlicher massen tragen helfen - beynebst dass Er keinen Bruder, Schwester, noch andere Befreunde, als welche unter erwehnten diesen Schutz nicht begriffen seind, ohne sonderbare Erlaubnis zu sich nehmen und lange Zeit bey sich behalten solle; Als ist dessen zu mehrerer Urkund und Rechtfertigung ihren Juden Seligmann Low gegenwartiger Schutz-Brief ertheilet - mit dem gewöhnlichen receptorats Signet bedrucket und unterschrieben worden, so geschehen

Wuerzburg, den 24. Janer 1781
Hochfurstl. Wuerzburg. Universitaets-Receptorat-Amt

Translation:

As noble rulers have granted the most humble request of Jew Seeligmann Loew of Urspringen, of bachelor status, and have most graciously accepted and taken him under their protection here in Biebergau, as long as he and his shall be of good conduct, so that he can live in the said Biebergau and honestly, upright and lawfully trade and traffic there and in other places, for which he shall from now on, apart from the usual annual protection money and anything else he is obliged to give to the rulers and community, help to bear together with the community there any civil as well as personal and other customary dues, he shall also not take in and accommodate for lengthy periods any brothers, sisters or acquaintances, who are not included under this protection. In witness and justification thereof this Letter of Protection has been given to their Jew Seligmann Low and has been stamped with the usual acceptance seal and signed.

It came to pass
Wuerzburg, the 24th January 1781
The Reception Authority of the Julius University of the Grand Principality of Wuerzburg.

Maier Laubheim,

son of Seligmann, was born in Bibergau in 1784. He received his "Matrikel" on 14 March 1821 and on 12 May 1821 married Esther Frank, daughter of Moses and Boula Frank, who probably originated in Burgpreppach. Maier Laubheim was a butcher in Bibergau. This was one of the few occupations Jews had been allowed to practice prior to the edict of 1813, as most other crafts came under guilds, from which Jews were excluded. Another effect of the 1813 edict was that Jews were now allowed into agriculture and to buy land. Records show that in 1830 Maier Laubheim was one of ten Jews owning farms in Bibergau. Maier and Esther had six children:

- Hanna Laubheim, 5 July 1823.
- Samuel Laubheim, 31 May 1825.
- Samson Laubheim, 14 December 1826.
- Aaron Laubheim, 26 July 1828.
- Eva Laubheim, 26 July 1830.
- Jakob Laubheim, 17 May 1832.

Esther Laubheimer died on 23 June 1864 and Maier on 16 January 1870. They are both buried on the Jewish cemetery in Schwanfeld. Their youngest daughter

Eva Laubheim was born in Bibergau on 26 July 1830. On 9 February 1853 she married Salomon Sahlmann of Burghaslach in the Burghaslach Synagogue. (2)

Maier's business was carried on by his sons and grandsons. It is known that his son Jakob was still a butcher in Bibergau in 1904. His grandson Sigismund then still lived in the village, but grandsons Moritz and Max had moved to Dettelbach. The butcher business is supposed to have still been in existence in the 1920/30s. The premises stood where the central milk collection point for the village is now. The cattle were slaughtered there on the lower level and the meat sold on the ground floor. "Herr Laubheimer" is said also to have delivered meat to outlying villages in the area.

Thea Ruth Skyte

1989, updated 1991

Footnotes

- (1) State Archive Wuerzburg.
- (2) CAHJP HM432.