



# Our Family

*by*

**Heinz and Thea Ruth Skyte, née Ephraim**

## **The Kahlsbuch of Sugenheim (English Translation, German Original at CAHJP N26/2): Permanent Synagogue Rules of Sugenheim**

The local Jewish community of Markt Sugenheim has up to now not had any permanent rules laid down and many quarrels and disputes have occurred amongst members of the congregation, thus causing both noble local barons at times to be molested by this. Therefore both noble joint rulers, namely

The immediate most honourable Baron, Christoph Friderich, Baron von Seckendorff, Lord of Markt Sugenheim, Unterzenn, Egenhausen, Ober- and Unteraltenbernheim, Rosenbach, Steckenbach, Schornweisach, Weinsgarthsgreuth and Ebart; Knight of the Royal Prussian Order of the "Grosse Schwarze Adler", First Minister, Privy Councillor and President of the Privy Council of His Serene Highness the Elector of Brandenburg Ansbach, Judge of the Imperial District Court of the territory of the Burgrave of Nuremberg, also senior official of the towns and offices of Uffenheim, Mainbernheim, Prichsenstatt, Castell and Stephanberg;

The immediate most honourable Baron, Christoph Wolfgang Philipp, Baron von Seckendorff, Lord of Markt Sugenheim, Deutenheim und Duzenthal, of Ober- and Unterzenn, His Roman Imperial and Royal Catholic Majesty's true councillor, also Knight Councillor of the immediate free Knights of the Holy Roman Empire's most laudable place in the Steigerwald, have condescended to present this current community book to all the local Jewish congregation, according to which they will now be able to carry out their services and other Jewish ceremonies effectively in their newly built communal synagogue, but also be able to punish the malicious and recalcitrants, according to circumstances arising.

### **1.**

Services will be held every Monday and Thursday.

As "shul" (1) must be attended every Monday and Thursday, all those who stays at home on these days, and do not go to shul, will be fined one Kreuzer (2) to be paid to the Community fund.

**2.**

Fines for members who do not come to shul on Yom Kippur Kattan (3)

If a member does not come to shul on Yom Kippur Kattan and can not prove, that either he has been sent somewhere by their noble Barons or has had undeferable business away from the village, he shall either be punished by giving a quarter pound of wax to the Community Fund or he shall not be called up for a month.

**3.**

The Cantor shall properly summon to shul

Whenever there is mynion (4) available, the chasen shall properly summon everybody to shul, so that no one can offer the excuse, that he did not know; If however the cantor forgets to do so and does not issue a summons on these days, he shall, on the first occasion, have to pay ten Kreuzer to the Community fund, but if he forgets it several times he shall be fined between fifteen and twenty Kreuzers or shall even be dismissed.

**4.**

Fines for those who needlessly talk in shul.

No member shall needlessly talk in shul and from Boruch Shema (5) until Shemona Esreh (6) not speak a single word to another, but say his prayers in silent devotion. After this prayer, he can speak only as much as is absolutely necessary, but "Tforim Bedelim" (7) are forbidden or a fine of a quarter pound of wax paid to the Community fund.

**5.**

On High Holidays no one is allowed to lead in prayers

On the High Holidays no member shall be allowed to lead in prayers, but this shall undertaken by the cantor, so that the whole congregation should be satisfied with that.

**6.**

Fines for quarrelling in shul

Whoever quarrels with another in shul or gets involved in a dispute with anybody or belittles another, has to pay a fine of twenty Kreuzer, half of this to be paid to their Lordships, and half to the Community Fund.

**7.**

Fines for pulling, hitting and pushing in shul.

If one or another pulls, hits or pushes another, each shall without fail be fined one florin, one half if this to be paid to their Lordships and the other half to the Community fund; should however the two Community Elders or the Treasurer for friendship's sake conceal this, each one of these shall also

separately be fined and have to contribute one pound of wax, if their partiality is notified by other members of the community.

## 8.

Calling up (8) in shul.

On Mondays and Thursdays two Levites (9) and one Israelite (10), but on Sabbaths three Levites and three Israelites shall be called up in order of their rank. But on the New Year Festival, Feast of Tabernacles, Feast of Weeks, Passover as well as on the Day of Atonement and on the day which is known as "Matnes-jad" (11), the calling up goes round the congregation, a Levite and an Israelite are taken together and the usual order is interrupted.

## 9.

Regarding the calling up of strangers.

When a foreign Jew moves into the village, he shall be called up as the youngest, the last after all the other members. Furthermore if one or other causes problems during or because of the calling up, he shall be fined to pay a quarter pound of wax to the Community fund, for profanation however he shall be punished as ordered in paragraph 7.

## 10.

Regarding the calling up of guests

If an outsider or guest is in shul and is called up out of politeness, so that a local member has to be left out, then that member shall be called up in the following week or on the Sabbath.

## 11.

Calling up for marriages, minion etc.

If someone is Barmitzvah (12) or a bridegroom or a "Spinnholz" (13), or has a "Gevatterschaft" (14) or Britmle (15) or his wife leaves the child bed, then he shall also be "called up" on that Sabbath or holiday, but in order that nobody gets this honour for nothing he has

## 12.

what he has to pay into the Community fund for this.

to let "Mishe Berach" (a special blessing) be made and to offer a contribution, a gift to keep the shul in good repair, for which he however shall only have to pay a quarter pound of wax immediately after the end of Sabbath. Equally a "Balsegen" (16), when he leaves "the Balsegen", at the punishment of the "Iser" (17), has to be called up in the following week as well as on Sabbath; as long as he remains "Balsegen", he can not call himself up, unless he has been given the permission by the whole congregation.

## 13.

Regarding the "Mizpha" (18)

The "Mizpha" shall be offered at two Pfennig (19) and shall after that be auctioned by the members. Whoever offers most shall be given such and, whatever he promised, he has to pay when the appeal has gone round the whole congregation, but whoever does not pay can however be called into the "Iser" by the two Elders and the Treasurer. However the "Mizpha", which one buys on Simchat Thora (20) for the whole year, has to be paid within six weeks or one shall be punished as above.

#### 14.

Fines for quarrelling about stands.

If members quarrel or perhaps even come to blows with one another about the stands then the squabblers shall each pay a fine of one florin, half to their Lordships and half to the Jewish community and the squabblers shall be placed opposite each other in the shul for a year.

#### 15.

Fines for moving of stands

Whoever dares to move the stand of another out of malice and, during the prayer, when he has to take three steps backwards, inconveniences him, shall give a quarter pound wax, so that all disorder in shul shall be stopped and should proceed quietly and respectfully. If however such a quarrelsome member does not let this punishment be a warning to him, disregards it and continues with his malice, then he shall be put into the "Iser" (banned).

#### 16.

Regarding the "Actoma" (21).

A foreign Jew, who only moves in after the building of the local synagogue or one who will be taken into "Schutz" in the future, shall pay eighteen rhenish florins, a son of a local Jew four florins and a daughter of a local Jew shall give eight rhenish florins "Actoma", paid in cash, such money will be used for common expenses.

#### 17.

Regarding the treasurer

A different man shall be Treasurer every year in order according to his rank, he shall furthermore be exempt from rendering formal accounts of his income and expenditure, as members trust that anyone in that position will act according to his Jewish conscience and will not defraud the Community Fund.

Power of the Elders and the Treasurer

The Treasurer together with the two Elders together have the power to impose fines and the "Iser", as described in this "Kahl" book, and can rely on the assistance of the authorities to deal with any obstinate ones.

**18.**

The Elders shall, if possible, support the Treasurer in the collection of the money and not ignore it, but have any obstinate ones sent into the "Iser", and so or any other permitted way, force them to pay the contributions.

**19.**

Engagement of a chasen

For the engagement of a chasen the votes of those "Ballarogum" (22) and those who have children to be taught shall be valid, though these shall choose a competent person, who is capable to be a teacher and also thoroughly understand the slaughtering, and who can also prove his previous behaviour and origin with reliable documents.

**20.**

Wages of a chasen

The wages of the chasen shall be determined in three parts, namely

1/3 from those who study

1/3 from "Erach" (23)

1/3 from heads of households

Rules regarding children

a boy at thirteen, but a girl at the age of eleven shall attend cheder (24), and

a "Kumisch" child shall daily learn for 1 hour

a "Tphillo" child 1/2 hour

and an Aleph Behs (25) child 1/4 hour.

**21.**

Paying the Chasen

Every member, who lives in the village and has a child, has to contribute towards the Chasen as much as if he had an Aleph Behs child, which also goes for those, who have small children, which are yet not capable of learning.

**22.**

Dismissing a Chasen

No members who are ill disposed towards the Chasen can demand that he should immediately be dismissed. As it requires the most votes of "Ballaragum" and those with children at school, to engage a Chasen, so the same applies to have him dismissed.

**23.**

Assessments as agreed by the Jewish Community on 5<sup>th</sup> November of the current year

Eyssig 2600 fl  
Jacob Callmann 3000 fl  
Meyer Jacob 1800 fl  
Gump 900 fl  
Loew 1100 fl  
Laessar 600 fl  
Beerlein Callmann 900 fl  
Simon Goez 200 fl  
Nathan Lazarus 400 fl  
Nathan Salomon 100 fl  
Joseph 150 fl  
Hirsch 350 fl

These assessments to be for three years, if however in the meantime anyone should receive an inheritance, his assessment has to be newly calculated; if he however increases his income through his trade, before the end these three years, this shall not be taken into account. So that, as far as their Lordships are concerned, it shall remain at the above assessment.

#### 24.

Matzo meal

The costs of grinding Matzo meal and the scraping out of the mill have risen, and up to now this had not been calculated by weight, but everybody had to pay the same. This shall be altered, as it is unfair, and in future the cost shall be calculated according to weight.

#### 25.

Subscriptions to the Synagogue

Whatever shall in future be required for the upkeep of the Synagogue, shall be divided half to be paid by the "Erach" and half by heads of households.

#### 26.

"Pletten" (26) for guests

If guests have to remain on festive or holidays, different "Pletten" have to be provided each day; if there are any sick guests, who are no longer able to be sent away, these shall be sent to the Chasen, the cost for this however has to be paid each day by a different "Balbajas", for which he however gets one "Plett" back from the box.

Their funerals

Should a guest die and has no funds for his funeral, then the cost have to be taken out of the Community Fund.

#### 27.

Deciding factors regarding "Pletten"

"Pletten" are to be allocated as follows - eight for heads of households and two per each hundred of capital; as only half of the capital shall be assessed, the Elders and the Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper assessment of these; the Chasen however shall give these out properly and impartially, so that the poor do not suffer too much, and the rich, on the other hand, receive too little, otherwise one pound of wax shall be given to go to the Community Fund, every time the Chasen becomes aware of an incorrectness.

**28.**

Purim

On Purim nobody shall dare to disguise himself or walk about in fancy dress with lights and torches or he shall pay a fine of one florin to their Lordships; and

Simchat Thora

On Simchat Thora all Jews and Jewesses shall refrain from their amusement of "werfen" (?). otherwise they must give a quarter pound of wax to the Community Fund and pay a fine of 1/2 fl. to their Lordships.

**29.**

Trading on Sundays and Holidays

On Christian Sun-, Feast- or Holidays no Jew shall any longer dare to go into the house of a Christian, either before or after church, or wait for him in the street, and, under the pretext of a good profit, induce him to trade, otherwise he shall pay a fine of one florin. As Jews are left in peace on their Sabbath, so they shall let the Christians celebrate their Sun- and Holidays peacefully.

**30.**

Loyal Prayers in synagogue for their Lordships

As it is the duty and obligation of every subject to pray for their rulers, so the whole Jewish Community shall also observe this in their synagogue for both noble Lordships, according to a formula approved by their gracious Lordships.

**31.**

Fines for recalcitrants

Should anybody attempt to act against these regulations in any way, he should in the first place be admonished by each of the Elders and by the Treasurer and be threatened with punishment, should he however still disobey, then he shall be excommunicated.

**32.**

Publication of this "Kahlsbuch"

In order that no member can plead ignorance, the Elders shall have this book read now immediately by the Chasen to the congregation in shul, clearly and word for word, and than every year at Whitsuntide, so that its contents are observed precisely and without fail.

As documentary evidence and confirmation their noble Lordships, the Barons have graciously consented to place their own signatures and the impression of their hereditary baronial seal to this "Kahls" book.

Markt Sugenheim, the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1756

Christoph Friedrich, Baron von Seckendorff (Seal)

Christoph Wolfgang Philipp, Baron von Seckendorff (Seal)

*Translation by*

***Thea Ruth Skyte***

## **Footnotes**

- (1) Shul = Synagogue
- (2) Kreuzer = Coin (60 Kr. = 1 florin)
- (3) Yom Kippur Katan = "Small Yom Kippur", the day before Rosh Chodesh (beginning of a month) on which a special prayer is said as on the Sabbath and Holydays, also a fast day.
- (4) Mynion = Quorum of 10 adult males.
- (5) Boruch Sh'ma = A special prayer
- (6) Shemona Esreh = A silent prayer said standing
- (7) Tforim Bedelim = "Vain words"
- (8) Calling up = Men are "called up" to witness the reading of passages from the Tora. It is an honour.
- (9) Levite 2<sup>nd</sup> rank of a Jew. Jews are ranked in 3 groups: 1) Cohens, the priests, 2) Levites, lower priests and 3) see below
- (10) Israelites = the people
- (11) Matnes-yad = Three festivals, e.g. Purim, on which money or gifts are offered
- (12) Barmitzvah = 13<sup>th</sup> birthday of a boy, when the boy reads the portion of the Torah for that week
- (13) Spinnholz = A celebration, usually in the house of the bride before a wedding.
- (14) Gevatterschaft = God-father
- (15) Brismile = Circumcision, the "Gevatter" holds the baby during this.
- (16) Balsegen
- (17) Iser = Ban



- (18)** An honour
- (19)** Small coin
- (20)** The last day of Succoth
- (21)** Actoma = "Moving in" money
- (22)** Ballarogum = Inhabitants of the place
- (23)** Erach = Assessment
- (24)** Cheder = School for Jewish religious instruction
- (25)** Kumisch" (5 books of Moses), "Tphillo" (prayer Book) and Aleph Behs (alphabet) = divisions of age groups of children
- (26)** Pletten = Tickets for people who are allowed to take guests.