



Our Family

by

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THE MERZBACHER FAMILY

The earliest known member of the Baiersdorf Merzbacher family is ISAAC JOSEPH MERZBACHER, who was born in Fuerth (1) about 1759 (died Baiersdorf 24 March 1836). If or how he is connected to Wolf Merzbacher and Alexander Merzbacher, named in an 1807 Fuerth address book is not known. He was a tobacco dealer, received Baiersdorf "Schutz" in 1786 and on a 1797 list is recorded as married to Arona (2) and had an eight year old son Baerla born around 1789.

It is assumed that Arona may have died around 1800 and that Isaac married his second wife Reitz AUB (3) (about 1767 - 14 August 1837 Baiersdorf). If and how Reitz fits into the Aub family is not known. The following children of Isaac and Reitz are recorded in Baiersdorf registers:

- THERESE MERZBACHER, (about 1803 - August 1888 Baiersdorf) married Josef FEISTMANN. They had the following children: Louis FEISTMANN and Philip FEISTMANN.
- KAROLINE MERZBACHER (15 February 1806 - September 1882 Vienna). In Munich on 20 March 1838 Karoline married Israel OBERMAIER.
- MARX (MAX) MERZBACHER (24 January 1807 Baiersdorf) married Jette RAU (born 7 February 1811 Baiersdorf - 1867 Baiersdorf) on 27 February 1838. Max was a fur and skin (?leather) merchant in Baiersdorf and, after the death of Jette appears to have moved to Nuremberg, where he died on 27 January 1882.

Children of Max and Jette:

ROSINE MERZBACHER (1 November 1838 Baiersdorf - 17 August 1918 Bamberg). Rosine married a ROSENFELD (first name unknown).

ISIDOR MERZBACHER (9 January 1840 - 6 December 1843 Baiersdorf).

HELENA MERZBACHER, born 8 February 1841 Baiersdorf.

JOSEPH MERZBACHER, born 19 March 1842 in Baiersdorf, attended the Gymnasium Fridericianum in Erlangen between 1852 - 1855. (4) He married Helene BERLIN.

GOTTFRIED MERZBACHER born 9 December 1843 in Baiersdorf. After his school education in Baiersdorf and Erlangen he served commercial apprenticeships in Paris, London and Petersburg. He settled in Munich and in 1868 opened a fur business there. Gottfried started mountaineering in the Alps and eventually gave up his business to pursue mountaineering full time. He was the first managing to climb several of the peaks there. Amongst these in 1881 was the "Totenkirchl" in the Wilde Kaiser group by a route which is still known as the "Merzbacherweg". In 1891 Gottfried started organising climbing expeditions and explorations of the Caucasus and to map the area. The map became known as Merzbacherkarte (Merzbacher's map). He received many awards and in 1907 the University of Munich honoured him by bestowing an honorary doctorate on him. (5) Professor Dr. h.c. Gottfried Merzbacher died in Munich on 14 April 1926.

MATHILDE MERZBACHER (1 March 1843) a stillborn girl was born on 3 August 1846.

CLEMENTINE MERZBACHER. It is not certain if Clementine, born in Baiersdorf on 10 July 1857, was also a daughter of Max and Jette. Clementine married Isidor SCHLOSS on 27 May 1877. They settled in Strasbourg.

- JULIUS MERZBACHER was born in Baiersdorf on 28 January 1809. He was married to Jette GOTTESMANN, who died in Baiersdorf after childbirth on 31 December 1845. Four children are recorded of this marriage, all born in Baiersdorf: Resla MERZBACHER (8 February 1841), Lazarus MERZBACHER (25 June 1842), Ludwig MERZBACHER (26 April 1844), Jette MERZBACHER (5 November 1845 - 26 February 1846).

The second wife of Julius was Fany SONTHEIMER. Children: Anton MERZBACHER (9 May 1848), Siegmund MERZBACHER (4 August 1849), Paulina MERZBACHER (22 September 1851), Bertha MERZBACHER (5 November 1856).

- JETTE MERZBACHER (born Baiersdorf 30 November 1810) was married to Loeb SCHLOSS (9 November 1813). They settled in Speyer.
- ABRAHAM MERZBACHER (13 April 1812 Baiersdorf) (6) was privately educated and in 1828 studied at the Talmudschule in Fuerth.(7) He entered the Gymnasium Fridericianum in Erlangen in 1833 and in 1834 transferred to the Wilhelmsgymnasium in Munich, where he passed his "Abitur". (8) He then studied philosophy at the University of Munich and gained qualification as Rabbi and may possibly have officiated in Ansbach for a short time though this by no means certain. On 26 June 1844 in Munich he married Anna (Nany) OBERNDOERFER (born Ansbach 14 August 1818), daughter of Joseph Nathan OBERNDOERFER of Ansbach. They settled in Munich, where Abraham became a banker and numismatist and authority on Hebrew script and research. Their five children were born in Munich: Eugen MERZBACHER (4 December 1845), Amalie MERZBACHER (6 January 1846 or 1847), Kathinka MERZBACHER (22 July 1850), Ida MERZBACHER (4 June 1853), Friederike MERZBACHER (17 April 1859).

Abraham was until 1873 a partner in the Munich bank J.N. Oberndoerfer. He died in Munich on 4 June 1885.

- SARA MERZBACHER born in Baiersdorf in 1814, married Moritz ENGEL of Baiersdorf.

Footnotes

- (1) Dr. Erich Midas article "Zur Geschichte der Juden in Fuerth" (History of Jews in Fuerth) published for Roshana 5699 (1938) by the Jewish congregation of Fuerth: "In 1807 J.G Eger, police Secretary, wrote an address book of Fuerth". In this Wolf Merzbacher, "Schutzjude" is named as owner of house #158 (in Botengässlein). Alexander Merzbacher, Jewish school teacher, owned house # 316 (in Gelaitgässlein) in 1807.
- (2) Information Ralph Baer.
- (3) Information David Bernheimer.
- (4) Ursula Muenchhoff.
- (5) Ilse Sponsel.
- (6) Date of birth recorded by Ursula Muenchhoff. Different records give different dates.
- (7) Wolfgang Oppelt: Aus der juedischen Geschichte Baiersdorf (From Jewish history of Baiersdorf) on the 180 anniversary of Abrahams birth.
- (8) Ursula Muenchhoff.