



# Our Family

by

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## THE SELIGMANN FAMILY

The Seligmann family, one of the oldest Baiersdorf families, its history going back to the 17th century, is still remembered in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the David and Fanny Seligmann'sche Stiftung which endowed the Staedtische Kindergarten (Municipal Nursery School). Although all members of this family had left Baiersdorf by 1850, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century their descendants made endowments for the building in memory of their families and their Baiersdorf roots. The building stands in Seligmannstrasse and was enlarged and modernised during 1994/95, the street reverting to its former name.

The Seligmann family can be traced back to ISAAK who had lived in Baiersdorf and died there in 1680.

His son ABRAHAM was born in Baiersdorf and was married to Minkele (Mina), daughter of Akiba of Fuerth. Abraham was head of the "Armenwesen" (poor relief) and the "Krankenwohthaetigkeitsverein" (Charity for the care of the sick) of Jewish community of Baiersdorf. He died as a widower on 11 July 1775, Minkele having died on 29 January 1764.

Their son JOSEPH ABRAHAM was born in Baiersdorf and died there in 1805. Joseph became bar-noss (President) of the Baiersdorf Jewish Community. Nothing further is known about him or his son ISAAK (Itzig), who died in Baiersdorf in 1833.

DAVID ISAAK SELIGMANN, son of Isaak (Itzig), was born in Baiersdorf on 21 March 1790. He was a weaver by trade and later a peddler in wool <sup>(1)</sup> and sealing wax and may eventually have manufactured the latter. In 1818 he married Fanny STEINHARDT, born in 1799 in Floss (some records state Sulzbach). Other records also state that he was a mirror manufacturer. David and Fanny had a large family all born in Baiersdorf, though further research is necessary to establish some dates of birth:

- Joseph SELIGMANN 15 November 1819
- Wolf SELIGMANN about 1820/1821
- Jacob SELIGMANN
- Rosalie SELIGMANN 1826
- Jesaias SELIGMANN 11 August 1827
- Hermann SELIGMANN 6 December 1828

- Babette SELIGMANN
- Lippmann SELIGMANN
- Abraham SELIGMANN
- Isaak SELIGMANN 2 December 1834
- Sophie SELIGMANN 1839

Fanny also established a shop selling drapery in their house in Judengasse. She died in 1841, two years after the birth of their daughter Sophie. Her widower David tried to carry on her business but, after most of his family had emigrated to the United States, he with his son Hermann also left Baiersdorf for America. He died there in 1845.

JOSEPH SELIGMAN(N) (16 November 1819 Baiersdorf - 25 April 1880 New Orleans). After his elementary education at the Jewish Elementary School in Baiersdorf he attended the Gymnasium Fridericianum in Erlangen <sup>(2)</sup> between 1832 and 1833, followed by studying literature and languages at the University of Erlangen. In 1837 Joseph emigrated to the United States and worked in Philadelphia. He managed to save money to pay for the passages of his brothers Wolf (William in USA) and Jacob (James in USA) who followed him already in 1838 and 14 year old Jesaias (Jesse in USA) in 1841. They worked together peddling drapery and setting up drapery and clothing businesses in the surrounding area, gradually expanding the merchandise business. On a visit to Baiersdorf in 1848 Joseph married his cousin Babet STEINHARDT and they both returned to the States. Already in 1860 Joseph (together with William) set up a bank house J & W Seligman & Company in New York and appears to have been the driving force in the establishment of an international finance house set up by all the brothers soon after the end of the American Civil war. The firm had soon branches in various parts of the United States and also in Europe in Frankfurt am Main (Seligman & Stettheimer), Paris (Banque Seligman) and London (Seligman Brothers Limited). Joseph was head of the New York bank. The bank became involved in the financing of railroads and also in the Panama Canal Syndicate. Joseph was chairman of the commission that laid out the New York elevated railroad system. <sup>(3)</sup> He died in New Orleans on 25 April 1880. The New York branch of the bank came then under the leadership of his brother Jesse. Joseph and Babet had nine children amongst these were:

- ISAAK NEWTON SELIGMAN (1855 - 1917). Isaak took over the New York branch of the bank after the death of his uncle Jesse.
- EDWIN ROBERT ANDERSON SELIGMAN, born 25 April 1861 in New York He was educated at Columbia University, New York <sup>(4)</sup>, and the Universities of Berlin, Heidelberg, Geneva and Paris. In 1888 he married Caroline BAER of New York. He became an American political economist and Professor of Political Economy and Finance of Columbia University New York In 1908 he was a members of President Roosevelt's Commission on Statistical Reorganisation. Amongst other positions he held were Chairman of Mayor's Tax Committee, member of Advisory Committee on United State Census 1919. He was also associated with the Institut de France, Accademia dei Lincei, Rome; Russian Academy of Science, Leningrad; Société d'Economy, Paris; Laureat of the Belgian Academy of Science. He also published several works on taxation and economics. He died in July 1939.

WILLIAM (WOLF) SELIGMAN(N) (about 1820/21 in Baiersdorf) had emigrated in 1838. All the Seligmann brothers dropped the second "n" of their surname in the USA, being then known as Seligman. Most of them also changed their first names and Wolf became William Seligman. William together with his brother-in-law Max Stettheimer, husband of his sister Babette, set up W. Seligman & Company in St. Louis. During the American Civil War he became supplier of uniforms

to the army. After the end of the war he moved to Paris to found a branch (Banque Seligman) of the family finance house there.

JAMES (JACOB) SELIGMANN had also emigrated to the United States in 1838 and there changed his name to James Seligman. He was involved in the New York family bank.

BABETTE SELIGMANN born in Baiersdorf emigrated in 1842 with some of her siblings to the United States, where she married Max STETTMEIER in 1846. Max joined William SELIGMAN in the firm W. Seligman & Company in St Louis. Babette and Max had at least one son: EUGENE STETTMEIER, who married his cousin Grace SELIGMAN, daughter of his uncle Henry SELIGMAN.

ROSALIE SELIGMANN, born in Baiersdorf in 1826 emigrated in 1842 with her sister Babette and brothers Lippmann, Abraham and Isaac to join the elder brothers. Around 1850 she married MOSES LEHMAIER (29 November 1819 Baiersdorf) who changed his name to Morris LEMAIRE. Rosalie died in 1905. Louis LEMAIRE, one of their six children, set up the Rosalie Lehmaier Foundation in her memory which helped to finance the building of the Baiersdorf Children's Home.

JESSE (JESAIAS) SELIGMAN(N) was born in Baiersdorf on 11 August 1827. In 1841 14 year old Jesaias, later Jesse Seligman, also emigrated and joined his brothers in America. Together with his brother Henry (Hermann) they set up a textile and dried goods business in New York. He opened a dry goods store in New York in 1848. Around 1850, during the Californian gold rush, he as well as his brothers Henry (Hermann), Leopold (Lippmann), and Abraham moved to California and established a wholesale clothing business in San Francisco. <sup>(5)</sup> Textiles for this were replenished by their brother Isaac, who travelled fairly often from New York to England to buy textiles and sending them back from there by sea to San Francisco. Jesse later joined his eldest brother Joseph in New York. After Joseph's death in 1880 Jesse became the head of the New York branch of the bank. He was married to Henriette HELLMAN and died in Coronado, California on 23 April 1894. Jesse and Henriette were the parents of seven children:

HENRY (HERMANN) SELIGMANN born in Baiersdorf on 6 December 1828 changed his name to Henry Seligmann. After working with his brothers in various parts of the United States Henry returned to Germany in 1868 and opened a branch of the Seligman bank there, later being joined by his brother Abraham. Henry married Regine LEVI <sup>(6)</sup> (1838 - 1911). In 1904 Henry endowed the David and Rosalie Seligmann Foundation in memory of his parents which, together with the Rosalie Lehmaier Foundation and donations also given by Ludwig and Wilhelm GERNGROS to their home town, built the "Kinderheim" in Baiersdorf. Henry SELIGMAN was made an honorary citizen of the town when the Home opened the following year. In honour of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1908 a plaque was fixed to the old Seligmann family home in Judengasse. Henry died in Frankfurt am Main on 20 February 1909. Henry and Regina had at least one daughter GRACE SELIGMAN, who married her cousin Eugene STETTMEIER.

ISAAK SELIGMANN (1834 Baiersdorf - 1929 London). Together with his brothers Lippman (Leopold) and Abraham and sisters Babette and Rosalie, Isaak also emigrated to the States around 1842. He continued his education in New York, attending college there. After finishing his education Isaac joined the family business and often travelled to England to buy goods. He eventually moved to England, where he looked after the London branch of the Seligman bank. In 1913 after the death of his brother Henry, Isaak made a further donation to support the David and Rosalie Seligmann Foundation and was also granted the Freedom of Baiersdorf on that occasion. Isaak was married to Lina MESSEL. They had four sons and three daughters, the eldest of his sons

- CHARLES DAVID SELIGMAN, born 31.October 1869 in London, was Senior Partner of Seligman Bros., Bankers of 18 Austin Friars, London E.C.2. He was knighted in 1933. He held many appointments amongst these the following: Director Commercial Union Assurance Co., member Advisory Committee of the Export Credits Department. of the Board of Trade (1921-1940), member of the Overseas Development Council of Board of Trade, Hon. Council General for Austria in London. <sup>(7)</sup> In 1929 Charles David Seligman had founded the Charles Seligmann'sche Stiftung for the upkeep of the Children's Home in Baiersdorf. He also became an Honorary Citizen of Baiersdorf. Charles married Eva Henriette MERTON in 1899 and died on 11 December 1954.

ABRAHAM SELIGMANN also emigrated with some of his siblings in 1842. He and his brother Lippmann (Leopold) set up a branch of the bank in San Francisco. Abraham and Leopold were not very successful. Joseph, the head of the business, sent Abraham to Frankfurt/Main to work there under the control their more successful brother Henry. Abraham married Johanetta ALTHOF. Their daughter CLARA SELIGMAN was born in Homburg on 24 July 1870.

LIPPMANN SELIGMANN changed his name to Leopold SELIGMAN. After working with his brother Abraham in San Francisco Leopold was eventually sent to London to work there with his brother Isaak. Further research is necessary.

- HERBERT SPENCER SELIGMAN <sup>(8)</sup>, son of Leopold, (1872 London - 1951). After attending St. Paul's School in London he entered the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich and graduated in 1892. In the Royal Artillery he fought in South Africa and in World War I from 1914 - 1918 in France, commanding various army groups. Having been promoted to Hon. Brigadier General after the war he served in the Territorial Army until 1935. <sup>(9)</sup>

SOPHIE SELIGMANN the youngest of the eleven children of David and Fanny was born in Baiersdorf in 1839, two years before the death of her mother. Little is known about her or when she came to the United States. On 5 February 1884 Sophie, now known as Sarah, married a Sam M. COHEN.

## Footnotes

- (1) Encyclopaedia Judaica, Jerusalem 1972, Vol. 14.
- (2) Ursula Muenchhoff: Juedische Schueler des Gymnasium Fridericianum Erlangen 1815 - 1861 (Jewish pupils of the Gymnasium Fridericianum Erlangen).
- (3) Who was Who in America - Historical Volume 1607 - 1896.
- (4) Philo Lexicon and Who Was Who 1929 - 1940.
- (5) Ilse Sponsel: Aus der juedischen Geschichte Baiersdorfs.
- (6) According to the late Evelyn Whaley three Seligmann brothers married three Levi sisters from Worms. Henry married Regina. Further research is required.
- (7) Who Was Who 1951 -1960.
- (8) According to Who was Who 1951 - 1960 Brig.General Herbert Seligman was a son of Leopold.
- (9) Encyclopaedia Judaica, Jerusalem 1972, Vol 14.

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