

A Sprig of the Mendelssohn Family Tree

Edward Gelles

The progeny of Moses Mendelssohn, the 18th century German philosopher and pillar of Jewish Enlightenment, possess an illustrious ancestry. Moses Mendelssohn's mother was a direct descendant of the 16th century Jewish community leader and Polish statesman Saul Wahl, a scion of the Katzenellenbogen Chief Rabbis of Padua and Venice.

More widely known than his famous grandfather Moses Mendelssohn is the composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The latter's sister Fanny was also a highly gifted musician, who was overshadowed by her renowned brother. The early generations of the Mendelssohns were connected by marriage to distinguished families of their time, such as the Guggenheim, Oppenheimer, Wertheimer, Salomon, and Jaffe (Itzig), from whose ranks prominent Court Jews and other notables had emerged in Germany and Austria..

In a study of some descendants of my ancestor Saul Wahl I used DNA tests to show that my own lineage exhibited some significant matches with latter day members of the above mentioned old Ashkenazi families.

While the genealogy of the Mendelssohn main line is well documented there has hitherto been a lack of relevant genetic data. Sheila Hayman, who is a descendant of Fanny Mendelssohn, agreed to take a "Family Finder" autosomal DNA test, the results of which are outlined below in so far they shed light on our family connections

Ancestry of Sheila Hayman

As may be seen from the appended family tree of Sheila Hayman, she is the daughter of a Jewish Professor of German extraction and an English Quaker mother. Her genetic roots are very much mixed European and Eastern, as confirmed by the testing company's picture of her genetic origins. The story of the distinguished Hensel and Haymann families has been related by Sheila. My personal interest presently focuses on the earlier (shaded) generations involving old Jewish connections that should have given rise to some shared DNA segments in their present day descendants

8 Beila Rachel Sarah Wahl d. 1756 [descendant of Saul **Wahl**]
m Menachem Mendel Heyman d. 1766

7 Moses Mendelssohn d 1786

[philosopher & leading spirit of the Jewish Enlightenment]

m Fromet Guggenheim d. 1812

[desc *Samuel Oppenheimer* related to *Samson Wertheimer*]

6 Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy (banker) d 1835

m Leah Salomon

[desc David *Itzig* aka *Jaffe*]

5 Fanny Mendelssohn – Bartholdy (composer) d 1847

m Wilhelm Hensel (painter) d 1861

[Fanny was a sister of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy]

4 Sebastian Ludwig Friedrich Hensel d 1898

m Julie von Adelson d 1901 [dr of Fanny *Adelson*]

3 Kurt Hensel (mathematician) d 1941

m Gertrude Hahn [dr of Kurt Hahn of Gordonstoun School]

2 Ruth Hensel d 1979

m Franz K. A. S, Haymann (Professor of Law) d 1947

1 Walter Kurt Hayman (mathematician)

m Margaret Crann

[Parents of Sheila Hayman]

Family Finder Autosomal DNA Tests
Total DNA matches and longest shared segment in cM

	Sheila Hayman	Edward Gelles	Elsa Schmaus <i>Gelles 1st cousin</i>
Sheila Hayman	-	63.95 / 10.11	66.39 / 9.10
Ralph N Baer	68.51 / 9.12	138.46 / 8.10	125.82 / 8.42
Alan Guggenheim	46.92 / 9.29		
J. P. Guggenheim		98.46 / 9.40	90.72 / 10.89
W.M Oppenheim		99.24 / 14.95	113.03 / 12.69
Charles Oppenheim	52.06 / 10.52		71.29 / 9.77
W,R.Wertheimer	77.71 / 13.06	86.50 / 11.29	100.28 / 8.11
M.A. Wertheimer		92.98 / 7.73	108.39 / 25.95
L. Krieger	72.52 / 15.86	116.09 / 15.52	115.73 / 11.50
D, Calzareth	61.43 / 14.98	116.30 / 10.05	145.74 / 10.14
R Salomon	54.85 / 12.48	81.87 / 9.61	123.10 / 11.36
Eugenie Salomon	38.71 / 13.33		
Hillel Jaffe	39.44 / 9.20		85.90 / 12.64
R,A, Jaffe		77.92 / 13.24	72.71 / 11.85
Roy H Stern	91.22 / 10.72	111.31 / 10.51	
Ralph F Rothschild	79.88 / 8.69		
Olga Rothschild		85.98 / 8.45	72.11 / 9.49
Joy B Rothschild		116.45 / 13.61	110.16 / 8.85
J Lowenstein	53.57 / 10.05	122.23 / 11.29	109.12 / 7.82
R Adelson	43.06 / 11.19	62.12 / 16.56	

As Sheila Hayman has a non Jewish mother and numerous forebears of mixed descent her total DNA match with Jewish probands is generally at a lower level. The manner in which genes are jumbled as they pass down the generations can sometimes result in test matches with a proband but none for his close cousin. Where I and my paternal first cousin Elsa Gellis Schmaus show a similar genetic affinity with other probands this can be confidently ascribed to connections with our Gelles line. While my father and mother are distantly related, DNA tests show Elsa's parents not to have any noticeable commonality.

Ancestral names of some probands

Ralph N. Baer

Oppenheim, Carcassone. Guggenheim, Baer, Hess, Kohn

Alan Guggenheim

Guggenheim, Brilin, Bluhm, Cohen, Goldschmid of Hameln, Gompertz

Julia P Guggenheim

Guggenheim, Phillips, Bernheimer, Einstein, Dreifuss, Hess, Kohn, Levi, Heyman, Neuberger

William M Oppenheim

Oppenheim, Goldschmidt, Kahn, Herz, Hess, Daub Dewald

Debra Calzareth

Baer, Krieger, Blum, Loewenstein, Rothschild, Wertheimer

Lorie Krieger

Krieger, Baer, Blum, Herz, Hirsch, Loeb, Marx, Reis, Rothschild, Oppenheimer, Salomon, Wertheimer, Kallman

Michael Aaron Wertheimer

Wertheimer, Brilin, Bruelle, Goldschmidt-Hameln, Gomperz, Oppenheimer, Salomon,

Roy H Stern

Stern, Strauss, Hirsch, Susskind, Bamberger,

Gerald Stern

Stern, Strauss, Loewenstein, Loeb, Hecht, Kahn, Marx, Wertheimer

J. Loewenstein

Loewenstein, Baer, Rothschild, Oppenheim, Hirsch, Klein, Sternfels

Ronald Stephen Loewenstein

Loewenstein, Oppenheim, Baer, Krieger, Meyerson, Spiegel, Wertheimer, Guggenheim, Rothschild, Kohn, Salomon

Ralph F Rothschild

Rothschild, Bernheimer, Oppenheim, Katz, Marx, Wachs,

Joy B. Rothschild

Rothschild, Kahn, Cohen, Schloss, Wertheime, Guggenheim, Krieger, Loewenstein, Stern, Spiegel

Walter Spiegel

Spiegel, Gumperz, Schlesinger, Wallach, Schloss, Salomon

R. Salomon

Salomon, Baer, Stern, Loewenstein, Guggenheim

Bearing in mind that Sheila Hayman is less than half Jewish and that our common genetic background may be many generations in the past and really beyond the effective range of the available DNA tests, the above compilation of data supports the assertion that we both have an area of genetic interest in a nexus of old families including Guggenheim, Oppenheim, Wertheimer, Salomon, Jaffe and others. The size of some of the shared autosomal DNA fragments listed above suggest some common ancestors a few hundred years ago but do not establish their individual identities. Uploading the autosomal and X-DNA data from the *Family Finder* and from other providers such as *23andme* and *ancestry.com* on to the website of *GEDmatch* helps to establish a estimate of genetic distance (in number of generations) to most recent common ancestor, which is generally an underestimate due to inadequate allowance for periods of inbreeding in many Jewish families.

GEDmatch : Matches of DNA segments above 7 cM

Total shared DNA, longest shared segments, genetic distance to MRCA

	Sheila Hayman			Edward Gelles		
Edward Gelles	42.4	8.9	5.3			
Ralph N Baer	33.7	12.8	4.4	164.7	11.0	3.2
Alan Guggenheim	36.0	11.4	4.3	78.3	8.8	4.7
Steven Guggenheim				37.1	12.6	4.3
Wm M Oppenheim				100.2	15.0	3.6
W.R. Wertheimer	70.9	17.4	3.8	87.2	13.0	3.7
L. Krieger	62.6	17.5	3.9	115.3	16.0	3.5
D. Calzareth	38.6	16.8	4.3	116.3	9.0	4.5
R. Salomon	20.7	13.7	4.7	24.4	8.7	5.9
Joy Rothschild	40.5	7.6	6.2	114.0	9.8	3.7

Sheila Hayman has significant autosomal DNA matches with other Guggenheim, Oppenheim, Wertheimer, and Salomon probands.

Sheila and I are only distantly related. However, she has similar matches with my paternal first cousin Elsa Gellis Schmaus and with Susan Lee Weinstein, who is my paternal second cousin once removed being descended from my great-grandfather Hirsch Leib Weinstein, Chief Rabbi of Solotwina. The Weinstains (also sometimes found as Reinstein) and our mutual in-laws of the Spiegel family may well have come originally from the Rhineland nexus

Conclusion

Sheila Hayman and Edward Gelles show autosomal DNA matches with present day descendants of a group of prominent German Jewish families that point to the importance of their family nexus for both Hayman and Gelles family trees.



Fanny Mendelssohn Bartholdy
Fanny Hensel 1842 painted by
Moritz Daniel Oppenheim

MEMORIAL PLAQUE at the BUNDESRAT in BERLIN

