

Mendelssohn and some Ashkenazi Court Jews

Elias Gompertz of Cleves 1615-89 Glückel of Hameln 1646-1724 m Chaim of Hameln, died 1689
(Electors of Brandenburg)

Elias' son, Kosman _____ m _____ Zipporah

sister of Chaim Hameln m

Berend Lehmann 1661-1730 Halberstadt
(Augustus II of Saxony & Poland)

Leffman Behrends 1630-1714 daughter m Judah Loeb **ben Samson Wertheimer**
 Hanover (*Elector of Hanover*) (*whose son-in-law was Elias Benedict Gompertz*)

Samuel Oppenheimer 1630-1703
 Vienna (*Emperor Leopold I*)

Genendel m Rabbi David Oppenheim of Prague 1664-1736
(nephew of Samuel Oppenheimer)

Frummet Oppenheimer -----Simon Wolf Oppenheimer m Frade, grand daughter of **Leffman Behrends**
 m Josef Guggenheim

Samson Wertheimer 1658-1724 (*descendants related to those of Samuel Oppenheimer*)
 Vienna (*Emperors Leopold I & Joseph I*) *and other Court Jews*)

Abraham Guggenheim
 m Miriam Glückel Cleve

his daughter Chaya Rivka m Rabbi Issachar Berish Eskeles 1691-1753 -----

Fromet Guggenheim 1737-1812 m **Moses Mendelssohn** 1729-86
 Dessau - Berlin

Daniel Jaffe Itzig 1723-99 Berlin m **Miriam Wulff** 1727-88
(Frederick the Great & Frederick William II of Prussia)

Joseph 1770- 1848 – his son Alexander m

Miriam, daughter of Rebecca Seligmann, daughter of
 Bella Salomon 1749-1824 , daughter of Daniel Itzig

Nathan 1781-1852 m

Henrietta, daughter of Elias 1755-1818, son of Daniel Itzig

Abraham 1776 - 1835 m

Leah, daughter of Bella Salomon, daughter of Daniel Itzig

Felix Mendelssohn- Bartholdy
1809 - 1847

Cecily 1760-1836 , daughter of Daniel Itzig
 m Baron Bernhard von Eskeles 1753-1839 ←
 Vienna (*Emperors Joseph II & Francis II*)
Fanny 1758-1818 , daughter of Daniel Itzig
 m Baron Nathan von Arnstein 1748-18

van Geldern of Düsseldorf and Heine of Bückebug
 among old Court Jews of minor principalities (see following chart)

FOOTNOTES

The families of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn and of the Court Jew Daniel Itzig were brought together in 18th century Berlin through ancestral connections and numerous intermarriages, some of which are presented on the above and preceding charts. The distinguished Mendelssohn ancestry focuses attention on some of the most prominent Ashkenazi Court Jews, who played important roles in the 17th and 18th century economic and political history of central Europe.

Many of the Court Jews on the above chart were closely linked by marriages that allowed them to call on a wide network of contacts with local know-how and enabled them to raise substantial funds when required at short notice. The principal patrons of the several families are indicated on the chart in brackets. Thus, several generations of the Gompertz of Cleves were men of business for the rulers of Brandenburg and later Itzig were Court Jews to Kings of Prussia. Connected with Itzig by marriage and associated in their enterprises were Ephraim and Friedländer. Leffman Behrends served the Elector of Hanover while his relative Berend Lehman of Halberstadt was Court Jew to the rulers of Saxony, principally to Augustus the Strong of Saxony who was elected King of Poland.

Samuel Oppenheimer and Samson Wertheimer, whose families were related to each other, became highly important Court Jews in Imperial Vienna, where the descendants of their in-laws such as Eskeles and Arnstein later rose to prominence. “Arnstein & Eskeles” became a most important bank while Fanny, the daughter of Daniel Itzig, otherwise Baroness Fanny von Arnstein, became famous for her salon at the time of the Congress of Vienna. She helped to put the city at the centre of Europe’s cultural map.

The chart serves an indicative function as there are many more Court Jews of note who flourished in this period (such as van Geldern and Heine, distantly related to Leffman Behrends of Hanover and to me). The number of genealogical connections can be guessed from the size of some of these families. Glückel of Hameln, remembered for her Memoirs, had 12 children while Daniel Itzig and Miriam Wulff had 15 children.

Samuel Oppenheimer’s son Simon Wolf established a bank in Hanover, later run by his son Jacob Wolf Oppenheimer, where Mayer Amschel Rothschild was apprenticed around the middle of the 18th century. The political and economic changes of the Napoleonic era led to the rise of new banking families who could respond to the challenges of international finance in which the Rothschilds took an early leading role.