

Beitrag über Max Kronheimer (1845-1893) und andere kinder von Heinrich Hajum Kronheimer und seiner Frau Sophie

(Dr) Paul Gardner

Max Kronheimer

Several members of the Kronheimer family migrated from Schopfloch to Australia around 1860, and so our family knew about the existence of two of Haium and Sophie Kronheimer's children (Max and Wolf) who are not mentioned in the original Harburg Project lists. A third child (Rosalie) was identified later.

The earliest mention of Max's presence in Australia that I could find is in a shipping report of arrivals in Victoria, which shows that Max arrived in Melbourne in October 1860 on the *Essex*, out of Gravesend, England. His mother Sophie had died two years earlier. I have no knowledge of whether Max made the sea voyage alone, or was accompanied by another member of the Kronheimer family. The shipping record describes him as aged 14, and gave an estimated birth year of 1846. His uncle Joseph Kronheimer was in the 1860s busily engaged in establishing his tobacco business, which eventually made him extremely wealthy.

The first mention of Max's association with Joseph Kronheimer is dated 1876, in a Melbourne business directory, where he is listed in both the Queen St business address and the private Nicholson St F[itzyroy] address where he lived at the time together with his uncle:

**Kronheimer, Julius (Kronheimer and Co.)
Hamburg**
**Kronheimer, J., and Co. (Kronheimer, Joseph
and Julius; Frankein, Charles; Kronheimer, Max)
tobacco merchants and importers,
21 Queen-st**
**Kronheimer, Joseph (Kronheimer, J., and Co.)
Richey's-terrace, Nicholson-st, F.**
**Kronheimer, Max (Kronheimer, J., & Co.)
Richey's-terrace, Nicholson-st, F.**

Sands & McDougall, *Melbourne Directory* (1876)

Max married (Adele Segalla) and the couple had two children, Aimee (born 12 July, 1891), who later changed her surname to Keynes, and lived in Melbourne until her death on 16 October 1972, and Edgar, who died in infancy in 1893.

Max's death on 24 September 1893 was recorded in two articles in the Melbourne newspaper, *The Argus*:

DROWNED AT SEA, MR. MAX KRONHEIMER LOST OFF H.M.S. VALETTA. A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.

The brief message published yesterday from our Adelaide correspondent announcing the disappearance of Mr. Max Kronheimer off H.M.S. Valetta on Sunday night, while the vessel was steaming to Adelaide, has been confirmed, but the late messages have not assisted to explain away the mystery which is attached to the sad occurrence. Mr. Kronheimer was a nephew of Mr. Joseph Kronheimer, of the firm of Messrs. J. Kronheimer and Co., tobacco merchants and importers, of 334 and 340 Flinders-lane and Hamburg, and he was himself a member of the firm. On Saturday he left Melbourne in the H.M.S. Valetta, intending to go as far as Adelaide and remain there until the next returning mail boat gave him an opportunity to come back to Melbourne. This short trip was undertaken by him, not because of ill health, for his health was good, nor for business reasons, but simply as a holiday excursion. Several of his relatives saw him off, and before the ship left the pier he was in his

usual spirits, and chatted gaily to his friends. He had promised to telegraph when he arrived in Adelaide about some matter of a private nature, and when on Monday no telegram was received from him his friends were somewhat anxious. However, until yesterday morning when they read in *The Argus* of his disappearance from the vessel, they were inclined to believe that he had not communicated with them because he had forgotten, or because he had not had time to get the information he required for the purpose of the message. The news of his death, which was thus learned was supported an hour or two later by a telegram received from the agents of the H.M.S. Valetta, Messrs. Elder, Smith, and Co. Their message simply intimated that Mr. Kronheimer had gone on deck after dinner on Sunday night, and that he was subsequently missed. It added that another message would be sent on the following day (Wednesday), but no further particulars that would tend to explain the occurrence were likely to be obtained. The meagre details of the fatality seem to indicate that Mr. Kronheimer was promenading the deck after dinner, and was thrown overboard by the lurching of the vessel in the violent storm of Sunday night. The supposition that he committed suicide does not appear tenable for a moment. He was 45 years of age, and a married man with two children, residing at Redan-street, St. Kilda. The business of his firm is a prosperous one, and his private fortune a large one, and as in addition his relations with his family and friends were cordial and his health good, his death must be ascribed to an unfortunate misadventure.

“His death must be ascribed to an unfortunate misadventure”, said Wednesday’s *Argus*. The next day’s edition was less confident:

The Argus, Thursday 28 September 1893

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. MAX KRONHEIMER.
ADELAIDE, Wednesday.

In accordance with the requirements of the Marine Board Act, the superintendent of Mercantile Marine (Mr R A L Smith) has made inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Mr Max Kronheimer, a saloon passenger on board the Royal Mail Steamer *Valetta* while on the voyage from Melbourne to Adelaide. Mr Smith is satisfied that Mr Kronheimer must either have committed suicide or fallen over board. The only evidence that he was suffering from any trouble of mind was contained in a letter found among his effects, which expressed grief for a lost infant son.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. MAX KRONHEIMER.

ADELAIDE, WEDNESDAY.

In accordance with the requirements of the Marine Board Act, the superintendent of Mercantile Marine (Mr. R. A. L. Smith) has made inquiries into the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Mr. Max Kronheimer, a saloon passenger on board the Royal mail steamer *Valetta* while on the voyage from Melbourne to Adelaide. Mr. Smith is satisfied that Mr. Kronheimer must either have committed suicide or fallen overboard. The only evidence that he was suffering from any trouble of mind was contained in a letter found among his effects, which expressed grief for a lost infant son.

Note the reference to Max’s age (45 years) in the first article. At the time, this led me to believe that he was born around 1848. As we will see later, this was a mistaken belief.

Marriage of Haium and Sophie Kronheimer

One item of information in the original Harburg Project “Family Sheet Heinrich Kronheimer of Schopfloch + Munich” is incorrect, and this has important consequences for interpreting other data relating to the birth of their first child. The Harburg list stated that Haium and Sophie were married on 23 November 1845.

Information provided by David Kurz, who has access to the actual Schopfloch archives held in Munich, indicates that the correct marriage date was 25 November 1844. (The year 1845 is mentioned at the end of the record, but this is a reference to the 1st January 1845, when the year’s entries for 1844 were “abgeschlossen” i.e. closed off for the year. The next large 1845 is the heading for the following year.

Haium Kronheimer, ledig, ahaliger Jude, des
 Grundbesizers Mosab Kronheimer und seiner Ehe-
 frau Meschuloff geb. Bernheimer von Wittenberg,
 geboren dafsel den 19. Januar 1819 und
 die Jungfrau Sophie /Sime/ Bernheimer, ahalig
 Tochter des Grundbesizers Mosab Samuel Kronheimer
 und seiner Ehefrau Rosalia /Gela/ geb. Gersberg
 geboren dafsel den 5. April 1845, werden getraut
 dafsel den fünf und zwanzigsten /25/ November
 1845.
 Rultines und Jungfer aus dem.
 Titel der Befähigung: Oekonom. Haus No 27.
 Abgesprochen Schopfloch, den 1. Januar 1845
 des dafsel Rultines
 Erteloff

für Laufen Ost ¹⁸⁴⁵ Grundes Dienstag und fünf.

Copy of marriage record of Haium and Sophie Kronheimer

Date of Birth of Max (Meier) Kronheimer.

The archives in Munich also contain the Schopfloch birth register, and they show that a baby boy called Meier was born on Friday 22nd August.

Geburtseintrage (Birth Records)

Meier Kronheimer, ehelich erzeugter Sohn des Oekonomen Haium Kronheimer und seiner Ehefrau Sophie geb. Bernheimer von hier wurde geboren dahier Freitag den zwei und zwanzigsten /22/ August nachts ½ 1 Uhr. Die Beschneidung wurde vorgenommen am 30. ejd., wobei Moses Kronheimer ud. seine Tochter Mina Gevattern waren.
Beschneider (? ?) No 27.

This extract does not mention the year, but it was taken from the 1845 register. As a double-check that this is correct, it is possible using a website known as Wolfram Alpha to find out what day of the week was 22nd August 1845. The answer came back within seconds: Friday. Thus Meier, the couple's first child, was born just nine months after his parents' wedding.

Perhaps Meier was already called Max as a young boy in Germany, but the trip on an English ship travelling to Australia in 1860 would have given him the opportunity to drop all reference to Meier. Max is how he is described in all subsequent business and personal records in Australia. When he died by drowning in 1893, he was therefore 48 years old, and not the 45 years described in the first newspaper report of his death.

Two other children of Haium and Sophie are missing from the original Harburg list. One, Wolf (called Woolf in Australia), we knew about before seeing the list, as he, too had migrated to Australia. The other, Rosalie, was previously unknown to me. Her name did not appear on the original Harburg list, but her existence and date of birth (together with that of Meier and Wolf) were discovered later by Rolf Hofmann. Both are mentioned in the archives in Munich.

Wolf Kronheimer.

Wolf was born in Schopfloch on 21 January 1851, migrated to Australia (probably in the 1860s), lived with his uncle Joseph Kronheimer in Melbourne, and died after a few months of illness aged 19 on 19 May 1870. I have a copy of the death certificate from the Victorian register.

Rosalie Kronheimer

Rosalie was born on 30 November 1848 in Schopfloch and died as a young woman on 30 June 1870. Her death, noted by David Kurz, is recorded as a short note in the margin of the birth record held in the Munich archives.

It is significant that all three “missing cases” from the original Harburg record either migrated in their youth or died young (or both). It is therefore not surprising that their lives left little trace in the Schopfloch community.

(Dr Paul Gardner, born in 1939 in Melbourne, Australia, is a retired academic. He is a great-great-grandson of Haium and Sophie Kronheimer.)