

# HENLE, Sofie,

## Sammellager Dellmensingen

Translated by: Sabine Neumaier  
Supervisor: Renee Remy, M.A. Deutsche Linguistik  
Staatlich geprüfte Übersetzerin für Englisch und Technik  
Fremdspracheninstitut der Landeshauptstadt München

*ROLF EMMERICH*

**Sofie Henle**, born December 16, 1856 in Laupheim, died July 27, 1942 in Dellmensingen assembly camp

Sofie was born as the eighth of eleven children of Elkan Henle, a master carpenter, and his wife Klara (née Adler). She was the only child of the family who would be buried at the Jewish cemetery in Laupheim. On the gravestone, which was not put up until the year 1945, the family name Henle is mistakenly spelt "Hänle". In 1984, after her father's death, Sofie and her mother moved to Neu-Ulm where her older brothers Jakob and Berthold already lived. Evidently, Sofie Henle remained unmarried.



In the photograph, you can see Sofie at the far left.

In old age, she was brought from Neu-Ulm to a nursing home in Heggbach. In 1941, she was taken to the Jewish nursing home (formerly the rabbinate) in Laupheim. At the beginning of 1942, she was apparently transferred further to the detention camp in former Dellmensingen Castle. The castle had to be leased by the Jewish Religious Community of Württemberg beforehand. One hundred twenty people from all over Württemberg were to be quartered there, however, in practice it turned into a cramped transit camp for the concentration camps with abominable hygienic conditions. Low-quality food was only available in small amounts and medical care was not available at all.

On 27 July 1942, Sofie Henle died in Dellmensingen and was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Laupheim (grave S 30/6). Thereby, she narrowly escaped the last deportation from Laupheim on 19 August 1942.

The photo montage of 1890 (next page) shows the Henle children, partly with their spouses, grandparents and parents. One of the brothers, Moritz Henle, a cantor and composer in Hamburg, had the picture taken. He can be seen at the right edge of the picture together with his wife Lina Franziska and their two children Alwin and Paul.

At this point in time, Sofie Henle, twelfth from right (on the left, at the table in the centre of the picture), still lived in Laupheim together with her parents. The other siblings had, for the most part, already moved to the USA, but also to Stuttgart, Nuremburg and Ulm/ Neu-Ulm.



*Dellmensingen Castle (Foto: K. Neidlinger)*

## **Dellmensingen Castle: a forgotten crime scene of Nazi racial fanaticism**

Dellmensingen Castle, nowadays vacant and seemingly in need of restoration, was used for racial political aims of the Nazi state between 1942 and 1945.

In March 1942, a Jewish "old people's home" was set up there. About 120, mostly older Jewish people from all over Württemberg were involuntarily quartered there. The state had taken away these people's homes and then quartered them in frequently changing collective centres. Their traces were to be covered and their last trips to extermination camps in the East were to be camouflaged.

The Jewish old people's home in Dellmensingen existed merely five months: On 19 August 1942, all occupants were brought to a collection camp on the Killesberg in Stuttgart and three days later to the Theresienstadt concentration camp. Already in March 1942, three of the people living in the old people's home were deported to the Izbica concentration camp in Poland. None of them returned after the war.

Eighteen people died during their stay in Dellmensingen. They were buried at the Jewish cemetery in Laupheim, however, gravestones set up not set up for them until the end of the war. Sofie Henle is among those people: She was the only one of all the Henle children to go on this last journey back to her birthplace, Laupheim.

From autumn 1942 on, 23 Slovenian families, which had been classified by the SS as "capable of being Germanised", were brought to the once again vacant Dellmensingen Castle.

To begin with, the children received German lessons and were then taught at primary school in Dellmensingen. The fathers worked mostly for the Magirus GmbH in Ulm. These families were not in Germany by their own free will but rather had been deported for racial-political reasons, so in July 1945 all of them returned to their native country.

(source: Dorfchronik Dellmensingen)