

English version:

Maria Benedikta Lohfink

Stadtstraße 11 (house torn down)

According to Hubert Ziegler from Hofbieber, Maria's grandnephew:

“Maria Benedikta Lohfink was born on 20th November 1875 as the sixth child of Kilian and Margaretha Lohfink from Burghaun. She had four sisters and five brothers and had a birth defect. She was hearing impaired and visually handicapped and therefore also mentally retarded. She grew up protected in her childhood home and attended the catholic school in Burghaun from 1882 to 1890, but left school without graduating. After dropping out of school she stayed in her parents' house as was usual with children like her at that time. She helped with the housework and later she also worked for some farmers in the fields. She was thrifty and obedient and worked with her parents on their farm, the Happertshof, which her father had built up. Later she lived with them at Stadtstrasse 11.

When first her father died in 1917 and then her mother in 1918, it was hard for her to know what to do. Maria could not live with her sister-in-law whose husband had died as a soldier in Russia in 1915 since it was already hard enough for her to survive the harsh winter with her four children. Finally Maria was admitted to the Landeshospital Merxhausen, a sanatorium for the mentally disabled, on 12th July 1918 at the age of 42.

According to her medical record, Maria carried out simple tasks in the kitchen and the sewing room. Under instruction, she worked diligently, was always well-behaved and content, quiet and clean. With age, however, she became increasingly impassive and lived withdrawn and self-absorbed.

Following official directives, she was moved to Landesheilanstalt Eichberg on 13th June 1941 and from there to even another so-called sanatorium on 3rd July 1941. This was the final entry in her medical record. The sanatorium mentioned was Hadamar where many disabled people were murdered under the nazi policy of euthanasia. Usually, the newly arrived were killed in the gas chambers in the basement the very same day, but since 114 people had arrived that day and the capacity of the murder machinery at Hadamar was 100 people per day maximum, it is possible that Maria died on 4th July. Date and cause of death in the official records had been faked by the Hadamar administration to deceive relatives and officials.