



Our Family

by

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The Gutmanns in Fuerth

Samuel GUTMANN

son of Amson Gutmann and Fanny née Schloss, was born in Sugenheim on 6 August 1861. On 1 October 1877 he started an apprenticeship in Fuerth with S. Schloss & Co, the firm of his uncle Samuel Schloss, younger brother of his mother Fanny. The firm manufactured and sold tools used in the shoemaking trade. It had its premises at Stern-gasse 18, opposite the firm Forchheimer & Schloss, the business of Max Schloss (see **The Schloss Family**). The 1884 address book of Fuerth shows that he was at that time a Clerk/Salesman with S. Schloss & Co. He continued to work for the firm until 27 July 1887, when he became a third partner in Forchheimer & Schloss, his uncle Max Schloss and his cousin Heinrich (son of Max by his first marriage) being co-partners.

On 30 August 1887 Samuel Gutmann married his cousin Sophie Schloss, born in Fuerth 7 February 1865, the eldest child of Max Schloss by his second marriage to Amalie Dormitzer. Samuel and Sophie Gutmann made their home on the second floor above the business premises at Stern-gasse 19.

Unfortunately little could be discovered about Samuel Gutmann as all his records are missing from the Town's archives.

In 1902 Samuel and his cousin and brother-in-law Heinrich Schloss built a new house next door at Obstmarkt 1, the ground and first floor being business premises and the upper two stories living accommodation. Samuel and Sophie Gutmann moved into the 2nd floor apartment of the new house.

Samuel Gutmann in May 1918, then being well over 50 years of age, received the "*Koenig-Ludwig-Kreuz*", a medal awarded in recognition for services for his country behind the front line during World War I. Samuel Gutmann retired from Forchheimer & Schloss at the end of 1936. Samuel and Sophie had bought a place in the Jewish Old Age Home (Altersheim) in Nuremberg in 1938.

In August 1939, shortly before the departure of their daughter and son-in-law Frida and Sali Scheidt from Fuerth to England, they wrote to their grandsons already living in Leeds, amongst other things expressing their worries about the future. In November 1938 a liquidator had been imposed on the business and the house Obstmarkt 1, of which Samuel Gutmann was co-owner, which were forcibly "sold" by the Nazi administration.

They continued to live in the Home in Nuremberg until their deportation to the Concentration Camp Theresienstadt. Their last address in Nuremberg was Johannisstrasse 17. In a Red Cross message to his daughter Frida dated 1 September 1942 Samuel gives his new address as "*Judenrat Theresienstadt Protektorat fuer Samuel Gutmann Nuernberg*". They were numbers 145 and 146 on the list of Jews deported from Nuremberg to Theresienstadt on 10 September 1942. The "*Transportsleiter*" (leader of the transport) of the deportation was their nephew Adolf ROSENTHAL, son of Sophie's half sister Karoline (Lina) née SCHLOSS and Jacob ROSENTHAL of Nuremberg, both g-g-g-grandchildren of Isaac of Sugenheim.

Samuel died in Theresienstadt already on 22 September 1942. (1) Sophie's death is reported as 3 February 1943.

Samuel and Sophie had three children, Frida, Justin and Amalie.

Frida GUTMANN,

our mother (mother-in-law) was born in Fuerth on 28 September 1888. She attended the "*Volksschule*" (Elementary School) between 1895 - 1898 followed by seven years secondary school education at the "*Hoehere Toechterschule*" in Fuerth. During 1905 and 1906 she attended a "*Pensionat*", a finishing school, in Heidelberg.

In November 1911 Frida became engaged to Salomon (Sali) Scheidt of Kitzingen, whom she married in Fuerth on the 24 March 1912. (For further details see "OUR FAMILY part 1 THE SCHEIDTS OF MAINSTOCKHEIM")

Amalie GUTMANN,

always known as Malchen or Lia, was born in Fuerth on 5 September 1895. Lia must have done some service during the 1914/18 war, as in December 1917 she was awarded the *Koenig-Ludwig-Kreuz*, a decoration in recognition for services behind the front line during World War I. She married Richard SCHEIDT, younger brother of Sali. (For further details see "OUR FAMILY part 1 THE SCHEIDTS OF MAINSTOCKHEIM")

Justin GUTMANN,

only son of Samuel and Sophie Gutmann was born in Fuerth on 7 November 1890. He was a talented artist and a few of his drawings are still in possession of the family. After his formal school education at the *Humanistisches Gymnasium* in Fuerth he had spent two years at a Swiss "*Pensionat*" (Residential School). The Register of Citizens of Fuerth records that "Heimatschein I" was issued for two years on 24 July 1906 and that he left for Switzerland. He was there together with three friends, Alfred Bendit of Fuerth, [...] Crailsheimer (Fuerth) and [...] Dengler (Nuremberg). Whilst there, all except Alfred Bendit contracted Typhoid Fever, from which Crailsheimer died. Dengler and Justin recovered after having been critically ill. Dengler later died of appendicitis.

In the summer of 1909 Justin and his friend Alfred Bendit went to Austria on holiday, where they both died as a result of a mountaineering accident near Reutte. The manner of their deaths always was something of a mystery and what really happened will probably never be known. His parents and, to a lesser degree his sisters, never talked about it and the following notes were compiled largely from numerous daily contemporary newspaper reports ("*Nordbayerische Zeitung*" 21.8.1909 - 15.9.1909 and "*Fuerther Central-Anzeiger*" 13.9.1909 - 15.9.1909).

It would appear that on Tuesday 17 August 1909 at 7.45 a.m. they had arrived from *Linderhof* at the *Hundingshuetten* (a mountain hut). They left at 8 a.m., saying they intended to climb the "*Geyerkoepfe*" and would return in the evening. They left one rucksack with clothing. When they failed to return search parties were sent out, which found a visiting card of Justin's in a glass bottle at a mountain cairn. This indicated that they had climbed the East Summit. Another rucksack was found in a cave near "*Neualpe*", also overcoats, an open water bottle, a half-full beaker and bread. In the rucksack were field glasses and a camera with film, which was immediately developed and revealed photographs of the ascent. The *Geyerkoepfe* were not considered very difficult, particularly as both men had taken part in a six months' mountaineering course whilst attending the Swiss "*Pensionat*".

Their parents had meanwhile arrived and stayed at the *Alpenhotel Ammersee*, from where Sophie and Samuel Gutmann wrote a very sad letter to their daughters Frida and Malchen in Fuerth, which is in our possession. They were accompanied by their nephew Adolf Rosenthal, who also signed the letter. There followed a long period of uncertainty and much speculation until the finding of their bodies was reported on 13 September, nearly four weeks later. They were found on the south-eastern side of the mountain in an inaccessible ravine. One theory advanced was that they had spotted mountain deer whilst eating in the cave, hence the unfinished meal etc. and followed them from the easier west face to the more difficult eastern side. The reports state that they were found together with peaceful expressions on their faces, but another report says that their watches stopped at 11 p.m., that they had fallen 30 meters and had suffered heavy injuries, mainly to their heads.

Further conflicting aspects are the visiting card written and signed by Justin, which is also in our possession, and which must have been damaged by water at some stage, but words like "*ein ungluecklicher Zufall*" (an unfortunate event) are recognisable. Frida Scheidt, Justin's elder sister, always insisted that the two friends had died from starvation and not from their injuries.

The papers also reported large crowds "from all walks of life" at Fuerth station when the coffins arrived by train. There was some unruly behaviour by a mob, when there were some delays in unloading the coffins. At the funeral, which took place on Tuesday, 14 September 1909, at 3 p.m., the papers report that the "enormous crowds behaved in a dignified manner unlike the rabble, who created embarrassing scenes the night before". Police were on duty to control the crowds. Both Justin Gutmann and Alfred Bendit are buried side-by-side in the New Jewish Cemetery, Erlangerstrasse, Fuerth.

The Fuerth Register records that their bodies were found on 11 September 1909 in the Alps (*Geyerkoepfe*).

Footnote

- (1) Death Certificate Theresienstadt