

Family Bernhard and Ernestine Braunschweiger

Bahnhofstrasse 12, today 20, front changed

Ernestine Braunschweiger née Jakob, born 1891 was from Breitenbach Herzberg. She was married to Bernhard Braunschweiger, born 1880 in Steinbach, who was a brother of David Braunschweiger, their neighbor in the semidetached house. The couple had one daughter:

Herta, born 1914

Around 1900 Bernhard's father, cattle dealer Mendel Braunschweiger, had bought the semidetached house at Bahnhofstrasse and had moved there from Steinbach with his big family.

When Emperor Wilhelm called to arms on first August 1914, Bernhard Braunschweiger went to war with his comrades as a patriotic German soldier. He died "for the fatherland" on 9th April 1916.

Ernestine is said to have sewn for the villagers to add a little to her small pension which she received as a war widow. Her daughter Herta, who had to grow up without her father, attended the Jewish school at Burghaun and later became an trading apprentice. After finishing her apprenticeship around 1931, she went to Fulda by train every day to work at the Ansbacher and Kugelmann shop in Heinrichstrasse as a clerk.

In January 1939 both mother and daughter were still in Burghaun. Under the pressure of persecution, they applied for passports for emigration on 23rd January 1939. As their destiny they named South-Rhodesia! Obviously the two women had heard of a possibility to escape to Africa. No matter where to, just get out of Nazi-Germany! That was the motto at that time. However, it obviously did not work out, only a vague hope remained that could not be realized.

In the course of 1939 Ernestine and Herta must have left Burghaun and moved to Frankfurt in the hope of surviving in the big city. Until 1941 they lived there at Baumweg 33.

Herta managed to flee from Frankfurt to London just in time. There she married dentist Erwin Lewek from Berlin, who died in the 1950s. Since Herta did not feel at home in London without any relatives, she relocated to Israel and stayed with relatives of her husband's. Finally, in the 1960s, she came to New York.

Ernestine Braunschweiger still tried to join her daughter in London in 1941, a container with her belongings was already on the way. She herself managed to get to Hamburg with bag and baggage, but something was wrong with the sponsorship papers necessary for emigration. So she had to go back to Frankfurt to Baumweg 33. From there, she was deported to Ghetto Minsk together with eleven other Jews from Burghaun who had come to Frankfurt for shelter on 11th November 1941. Presumably she fell victim to a brutal murder operation there.

Of course, the container with the family's belongings never arrived in London.