

Max and Selma Victor

Bahnhofstrasse 20, today number 11

Max Victor was a son of salesman Bernhard Victor and his wife Jette born Levi. As second youngest child of six siblings he was born on 27th December 1884 in Burghaun.

Max continued his late father's business with butchery supplies in his parents house in Ringstrasse 20, today number 22. He developed it into a very successful business that was well-known far and wide. Max supplied the farmers and butchers of the region with machinery and equipment for slaughtering and processing animals as well as with intestines for the production of sausages. He must have been a very capable and respected businessman known for his good products and fair deals. Both Jewish and Christian contemporary witnesses remember the barrels filled with all kinds of intestines that he kept at his premises in Ringstrasse, and also the corresponding stench. He was away on business a lot to buy goods while his old mother was in charge of the shop. She died in 1933.

Contemporary witness Franz Koch who sometimes worked for the Victors as a student until about 1923, remembers: "Max was an industrious man. When the Sabbath was over, he traveled to Hamburg in smart clothes and went shopping. Every day his goods arrived by train. I had to fetch it then. When the third Reich started, Max told me: 'Franz, if I have to leave some day, you can have all my stuff, I'll give it to you.' Max could have emigrated to America, but he thought the Nazis would not stay long."

Around 1930, Max Victor married Selma Gruenbaum, born 1903, from Salmuenster. The couple moved into Bahnhofstrasse 20, former Krach's house, in January 1931. They lived on the second floor. The business premises were still at Ringstrasse. Contemporary witness Christiane Doll remembers: "Max, he truly was somebody, like an actor. And later, he was already far beyond marriage age then, he married a beautiful woman, and she must have been quite well-to-do, too. They wanted to settle here big time, with a big house and business." That is probably why Max Victor bought the neighbor's house in 1933 which he let at first. However, due to the political circumstances, the intended expansion of his business never happened.

Max and Selma Victor must have left Burghaun in October or November 1938, before the Night of Broken Glass. Direct cause might have been the lawsuit against them for employing an "Aryan" cleaning lady. Max Victor had to pay a fine of 1500 Reichsmark because he had violated the Nazi law "for the protection of the German blood and German honor"!

In Frankfurt Max and Selma Victor lived at Westend in Liebigstrasse 23 until on 19th October 1941 between 6 and 7 in the morning armed SA men entered the apartment by force. They demanded that the couple comply to the following decree immediately and without resistance:

“Herewith you are notified that you have to leave your apartment within two hours. The commissioned officials will stay with you until you have packed your suitcases, then they will accompany you to the collecting point... In addition you have to put a sign around your neck stating your name, date of birth and identification number.”

After the degrading clearance process at the collecting point in the central market hall, Max and Selma Victor were deported from Frankfurt to Lodz in the occupied territories of former Poland together with approximately 1150 people on this first big transport the following morning. The train arrived at the station directly adjacent to the ghetto on 22nd October. Of the people on that transport, only three survived. Selma and Max Victor were not among the survivors.