

The Julius Braunschweiger family

Ringstraße 14

The businessman Julius Braunschewiger (*1895) was married to Selma (Stern) in 1900 from Frankenhausen near Eschwege. The couple had three children:

Paula born 4/11/1926

Alfred born 20/06/1928

Reni born 18/4/1936

At the beginning their family lived together with father Daniel Braunschweiger in the house identifies as No 1 Schlosss Strasse. When the widower Daniel Braunschweiger sold his house in 1934, the young couple rented for a short while from the Munstermann's in Ring Strasse. When the Oppenheimer family immigrated, the Braunschweiger's moved into the house at Ring Strasse 14. They rented until they could purchase in 1939.

Julius was a front line soldier in the First World War and as a result was left with 60% war injuries. Because of his war injuries he suffered occasional epileptic seizures. That is why he did not go to the KZ Buchenwald when the arrest occurred during the November program in 1939. He was to be sent back home according to higher orders. That was upsetting to the local police department in Burghaun.

As told, of the evening of November 10 when Julius was recieting the evening prayer at the supper table " suddenly the Mayor came into the room and screamed at Julius: in the morning there are the Seizures and in the evening you are able to read out of the Kosher book!" After the November program it was clear that there is no more real future for Jewish people in Germany, and the Braunschweiger parents tried to provide a secure place for their children. First they had to separate from little Reni, who was put into trust of the Kindertransport to Great Britain; probably on June 10, 1939. Reni such a young child would not have had a chance to survive in any camps, and had a new life and home with her new English parents who adopted her.

On July 25, 1939 Paula also went on the Kindertransport of the Jewish Welfare Service in Frankfurt a.M. saving her to England. For Alfred evidently there was no more room on the transport, and therefore he stayed with his parents in Burghaun, where he celebrated his Bar Mizwa with his parents, as was told by Alfred himself.

During a berry picking excursion in the late summer of 1941 with his friend Nathen Strauss, Julius Braunschweier, was again taken into custody and sent to serve for several weeks in " Landesarbeitsanstalt" Breitenau (agricultural work camp) on September 19. At the time this was considered a prisoned concentration camp. From there, again he was released and sent home where he arrived December 06.

Two days later came the big farewell from Burghaun. On December 08, Julius and Selma Braunschweiger, together with their son Alfred were deported the Riga Ghetto. There Selma died in June 1943 – probably a sacrifice of selection. Julius was in the liquidation transfer of the Rigaer Ghetto on November 1943, and transported to Auschwitz, where he was murdered.

Alfred survived several concentration camps, and made it back to Burghaun, after being saved from the KZ Stutthof. He was just 17 years of age. Asking him why he chose to return to Burghaun, he said; " my parents are dead, of my two sisters I do not know anything at

this time, where should I possibly have gone? Therefore, after the war, I returned to my birthplace”.

First he went to see his parents home, but it was not vacant, and none of his parent's furniture or households goods were left; everything was gone.

He stayed in Burghaun for two years, and lived with old neighbors until he finally immigrated to relatives in the USA in October 1947. Through the connections of a professional search team he soon made contact with his sister Paula who got married in the meantime and had immigrated to Canada with her family where she died in February 1996 after a serious illness.

In the year 1997 Alfred saw his sister Reni again for the first time since their separation. He reported in New York: “ I knew where my sister lived, I was told of her address, Reni had no knowledge of her heritage, and that she came to England as a baby. The assumed parents did not want her to know about her past. Only after her adopted parents had passed away, did I then contact her.

I had promised the assumed parents previously, that I would not seek to contact my sister. Yes, I believe, Reni did not know anything of her past, and she did not demonstrate a desire to know. She apparently had a very good life with her English parents they appeared to be very wealthy. She had no idea of the history or tragedy that befell her biological parents, only now she would know.