

The First Pogrom in Gunzenhausen

It is strange that Sigmund Dottenheimer deregisters his wine and liquor store only a year later.

Though the first discriminating acts against Jews had begun by now, it isn't likely that this was the reason.

When Hitler takes power, his followers in Gunzenhausen gained power as well. Every little occasion for marching up and rallies particularly in connection with Julius Streicher are made use of.



20 metres in front of the Dottheim-House in 1935

By the year 1933, there are already many followers of national socialism in Gunzenhausen.

The Nazis harass the Jews with violent words like „ Get ,em, get ,em“ and „The Jews must go, the Jews must go!“.

On Palm Sunday, March 25th 1934, SA leader Kurt Bär and his men break into the Jewish restaurant „Strauß“. They beat up the owners son, Josef Strauß. His parents are beaten up as well and being threatened with a revolver. Bear holds demonstrative talks against Jews in front of the restaurant. On this day, many Jewish men are arrested. Jakob Rosenfelder is hanged. Max Rosenau is found stabbed to death. Both cases are declared as suicide.

A troupe of SA soldiers violently storms many Jewish homes. The men are brought out of their homes and 'herded' to the city prison. The witness Dottenheimer claims that his iron gates were blown up in order to gain access to the house. Dr. Liebl's maid unlocked the front door. The first floor of the house was stormed by ca. 30 persons.

Dottenheimer opened the apartment door on command. Before him stood the accused (Kurt Bär) and arrested him.

The men only had to spend one night in the prison, they were released the next morning. Yet this situation was quite demeaning to the Jews. The destructive behaviour of many of Gunzenhausen's citizens was shocking. Because of this many Jewish families decided to leave town that year.

The Dottenheimers had faith in their name and status in this town, so they decided to stay. Even when the Jewish restaurant operator Simon Strauß is shot to death in the summer of 1934, they still stay. They do however, make sure that son Fred is able to emigrate to America.

Fred leaves Germany

It is unknown who paid for his trip in the USA, but his trip across the great blue ocean begins in 1937.



Fred Dottenheimer on the ship headed towards in 1937

In his passport, we are able to retrace his footsteps. His daughter Faye wrote us:

"With regards to his travels, his passport is stamped in Augsburg on May 21, 1937, Hamburg on May 25, 1937 and Southampton,