



Fleischhauerstraße 1 - The Saalfeld family

Since 1937 the Saalfeld family, Leopold Saalfeld with his wife Helene, née Sternfeld, and their daughter Margot, had lived in a flat on the third floor of Fleischhauerstraße 1 until they were deported to Riga on 6 December of 1941.

They would be sent to a "work assignment in the East", the official letter said. This was the letter which the Saalfelds like many other Jewish families in Lübeck including Leopold Saalfeld's sister Regina Rosenthal and her daughter Fina from Marlesgrube 9 had received a few weeks before.

In his "Memories of a Survivor" Josef Katz mentions Margot Saalfeld too. He writes:

"Everyone has already arrived at the assembling camp.... All in all we are 90 Jews from Lübeck. There is little Margot Saalfeld, a fair-haired girl, fourteen years of age. Margot says she is happy that she will at last live among Jews, but she fears for her mother, who is already over fifty. I am trying to comfort her and explain to her that there will certainly be work for everybody there, also for her mother who can really still do light housework. Yes, she could understand that, replies Margot. But what should the elderly Frau Cohn do there or the old Herr Carlebach? She thinks there's something wrong here." (p.22)

Margot is shown on a picture of the Jewish religious school which was taken on the occasion of a celebration. She must have been between eight and ten years old then, a girl seemingly bright with curly fair hair in long plaits (braids). She is wearing a dark dress and is the only girl in the group of children having no garland of flowers in her hair.



Teacher Siegfried Rottenberg with pupils of the Jewish religious school, ca. 1934/35

Standing from left to right: Margot Saalfeld (1941 deported to Riga), Berta Rothenberg (emigrated to Sweden), Inge Kraskom (emigrated to the US), Jürgen Jaschek (survived Riga, later emigrated to USA), Hanna Winter (emigrated to England), Hanni Rosa Daicz (deported to Riga), Mirjam Häusler (1939 to Sweden) kneeling from left to right: Margot Rothenberg (emigrated to Sweden), Walter Sichel and Hanna Sichel (both escaped to the US in 1939), Adolf Doum, later called Abraham Domb-Dotan (1939 to Palestine).

Margot Fanny (Mirjam) was born in Leipzig on 20 April 1926. Four years earlier her father had moved from Lübeck to Leipzig. Leopold Saalfeld, his Jewish name was Bergold, was born in Lübeck on 19 October 1887. He worked as a sales assistant. Margot's mother, Helene Sternfeld from Baden-Baden, was born on 15 November 1887.

In 1933 the family of three moved to Lübeck, first living with Leopold's father at Marlesgrube 7,

Installation am Verlegeort:



Inschriften am Verlegeort:

Inscriptions of the installations:

HIER WOHNTE
LEOPOLD SAALFELD
JG. 1887
DEPORTIERT 1941
ERMORDET IN
RIGA

HIER WOHNTE
HELENE SAALFELD
GEB. STERNFELD
JG. 1887
DEPORTIERT 1941
ERMORDET IN
RIGA

HIER WOHNTE
MARGOT FANNY
SAALFELD
JG. 1926
DEPORTIERT 1941
ERMORDET IN
RIGA

installation
November 2008

then on the third floor of Huxtortallee 43 and finally at Fleischhauerstraße 1.

Leopold Saalfeld worked as an assistant in four different shops, the owners of which were Jews as well, namely with Noa Honig at Huxstraße and at Schlüsselbuden and at Warenhaus Globus (a department store) at Breite Straße and finally with Norddeutsche Bürstenindustrie Albert Asch & Co (a factory for brushes and brooms). Up to 180 people were employed there. The majority of them were Jews. This "Jewish owned" factory often remained the only possibility for Jews to earn a living.

But there were also non-Jewish people among those who worked there, like the mother of Werner Olhorn from Lübeck, who clearly remembers the factory at Moislinger Allee 39/41 on the corner of Finkenstraße, and also Herr Asch, an elderly gentleman with a soft facial expression, and Herr Saalfeld, who was the head of receiving and shipping. He was slender and of medium height, wore glasses and his hair was cut in a short stubble style. Sometimes Werner Olhorn, then 12 or 13 years old could collect the factory's scrape wood with his bogie car or handcart. Those cast off pieces, especially the beach hardwood, were well suited for heating. A few times his mother also sent him to the Saalfeld's apartment at Fleischhauerstraße, to give them flowers, strawberries or haricots from their garden plot. In this way he got to know Frau Saalfeld, a small, more corpulent woman with a very distinctive nose, who offered him "Kuchen auf Oblaten," a German specialty consisting of cake served on a sugar wafer. Above all Werner Olhorn was impressed by her daughter Margot, who – as he remembers – was always busy with her homework when he came. She was a very pretty girl with curly hair. His mother had told him at one time or another that the Saalfeld family suddenly was no longer there for they had been taken away. Up until 1941 his mother had worked in the brush factory, which after Aryanization was called Norddeutsche Bürstenindustrie Hess & Olie. Afterwards she was conscripted to work with Dräger producing gas masks. Margot Fanny (Mirjam) was born in Leipzig on 20 April 1926. Four years earlier her father had moved from Lübeck to Leipzig. Leopold Saalfeld, his Jewish name was Bergold, was born in Lübeck on 19 October 1887. He worked as a sales assistant. Margot's mother, Helene Sternfeld from Baden-Baden, was born on 15 November 1887. Normal 0 21 In 1933 the family of three moved to Lübeck, first living with Leopold's father at Marlesgrube 7, then on the third floor of Huxtortallee 43 and finally at Fleischhauerstraße 1.

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The Saalfelds belonged to a group of Jewish families, who had lived in Lübeck for a long time and before that in Moisling, a suburb of Lübeck, and in 1848 were required by the Lübeck government to take on fixed family names, which in the past had not generally been that common among Jews.



A section from the announcement of the Landgericht (i.e. regional court) of 1848; published in Ingaburgh Klatt: "... dahin wie ein Schatten ", Lübeck 1993, p.15

Accordingly the above Landgericht's announcement reads: "Abraham Samuel and his son Samuel Abraham have adopted the name Saalfeld".

Their son Samuel Abraham Saalfeld was born in Moisling in 1811. With his wife Mindel (also known as Minna), née Baruch, he had six children, who were born between 1846 and 1858. Starting in 1873 the Lübeck address records listed him as a trader, "on the right side of lower Aegidienstraße No.698", which is No.20 of today's Schildstraße, as it was named later, where today we find an air raid shelter. Here he lived and worked until his death in 1886. His wife died four years later in 1890. The family continued living in the house. Here the eldest son Selig Samuel, also called Siegfried, set up his business as a varnisher with a "Lager von lackierten Blechsachen" i.e. stockroom of varnished sheet metal products, later he ran it as a business for "Mobilien- und Antiquitäten" i.e. furniture and antiques at Marlesgrube 14. Diagonally opposite (kitty corner) from him his brother, master clockmaker Jacob, 12 years younger and the youngest of the six siblings, also had an antique business in the building at Marlesgrube 7, which also was his property. In 1907 Jacob became a Lübeck citizen, and his brother Siegfried in 1908. They both married women of the Levy family at Segeberg. Jacob and Fanni Saalfeld had four children, Franziska, Leopold, Regina and Mindel. Siegfried and Rosa Saalfeld had a son, Albert.

Their unmarried siblings continued living at Schildstraße 20, whereas another brother married and moved to Hamburg. In 1913 their youngest sister Hannchen died at the age of 58, in 1915 brother Ruben Rudolf had an accident and "his body was found drowned in Krähenteich, a pond next to Mühlenbrücke." Now only Friederike Saalfeld still lived at Schildstraße 20, and until 1932 was listed as a pensioner in the address records, before she moved to the seniors' home of the Jewish community at St.-Annen-Straße 11.

In World War One Albert Saalfeld, the only son of Siegfried and Rosa, volunteered to serve in the military and was killed in action in October 1917. His wife Klara from Bitterfeld, who had lived with her child at her parents-in-law's in Lübeck during the war years, returned to Berlin, where her daughter Ruth had been born on 30 July 1914.

Soon afterwards the elder children of Jacob and Fanni also left Marlesgrube. In 1920 Franziska married the Hamburg bank clerk Siegmund Mindel and in 1923 their son Julius was born, and in 1924 their son Werner. Leopold Saalfeld moved to Leipzig in 1922.

1924 Fanni Saalfeld died at the age of 67 years, so Jacob stayed alone with his youngest daughter Mindel, as Regina married the trader and second hand arts dealer Max Rosenthal, but remained close by in the neighbouring house at Marlesgrube 9. In 1928 her daughter Fina was born.

In 1935 severe changes in the family resulted from four deaths of family members. At the end of February Selig Saalfeld died of heart disease in his flat at the age of 88 years. According to the death certificate, made out by the Jewish physician Horwitz, he had also suffered from senile dementia.

Only a month later Max Rosenthal died at only 50 years. Tuberculosis as well as a growth on his larynx had led to fatal choking fits at the General Hospital.

Friederike Saalfeld broke her hip from a fall. Pneumonia caused her death in hospital at the end of November 1935.

Finally on 25 December 1935 Jacob Saalfeld died of acute heart disease like his brother who was twelve years his senior.

If the family had before considered leaving Germany, the newly arisen situations with all the concerns about the sick, the mourning of the dead, including the funeral arrangements, and the definitely growing financial problems they would hardly have had the chance to organise their emigration. The sale of the houses at Marlesgrube 7 and 14 as well as Schildstraße 20 would have brought only a small amount of

In February 1936 Siegfried Saalfeld's widow Rosa moved to St.-Annen-Straße 11, the seniors' home of the Jewish community. In 1937 Mindel Saalfeld moved to Schweinfurt and later to Hamburg.

At that time Margot had already been attending Geibel-Mädchen-Mittelschule after completing four years at Domschule, but she had to leave it after 9 November 1938. A decree of the 15th of November prohibited "Jews from attending German schools" and already two days prior to the decree Geibel-Mittelschule had reported to the school administration that Margot Saalfeld was leaving Class 4a. (Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, Amt für Schulwesen 879. Jüdische Volksschule)

What happened to Margot after 9 November 1938 can be reconstructed from the documents of Jewish schools at the Hamburger Staatsarchiv. First she attended class at the Jewish elementary school in Lübeck for a few months, was then transferred in November 1939 to the Jewish girls' school in Hamburg, the Israelitische Töchterschule at Karolinenstraße 35. Soon afterwards that

school became the only Jewish school in Hamburg, and was then called the Jewish Elementary School. Margot travelled the round trip by train every day and "only had lunch with a family in Hamburg, with whom she was acquainted. Her class teacher was Herr Eldod, who together with his family was also deported to Riga.

On 4 December 1939 Margot wrote into the autograph book of her school friend Steffi, who emigrated with her parents to Uruguay at the end of 1939:



"Schau vorwärts, - nicht zurück! Neuer Mut ist Lebensglück. Zur Erinnerung an Deine Margot Saalfeld".

i.e. „Look forward – not back! New courage makes life a success. Something to remember your friend Margot Saalfeld by.”

Entry by Margot Saalfeld in the autograph book of Steffi Winterberg, née Hemmenschlag on 4 December 1939

On 28 March 1941 Margot left the school at Karolinenstraße and was by the Jewish domestic science school Heimhuderstrasse 70 on a trial basis starting on 1 April 1941. During the next months she also lived at the Jewish orphanage at Papendamm 3, Hamburg, until the evacuation order brought her back to her parents to Lübeck.

In the months following the whole family was driven from their home and their family unit was destroyed. Leopold and Helene Saalfeld and Margot as well as Regina Rosenthal with Fina lost their lives in Riga. Whether they already died from cold and hunger at KZ (concentration camp) Jungfernhof in the first winter or if they were among the victims of the two mass shootings in the Bikernieki Forest of Riga, is not known.

Mindel Saalfeld and the eldest sister Franziska with her husband and sons were deported to the Lodz ghetto in Poland at the end of October 1941. We don't know if they were among the people, who were gassed in Chelмно, Poland.

83-year-old Rosa Saalfeld was deported to Theresienstadt, Czech Republic, on 19 July 1942 and died there two months later. Only her daughter-in-law and her granddaughter Ruth had left Germany in time escaping to the USA.

At the Hall of Names of the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem we find three Pages of Testimony in memory of Margot Saalfeld and her parents Leopold and Helene, filled out in German and Hebrew by Sara Sternfeld, a sister-in-law of Helene.



Page of Testimony for Margot Saalfeld at the memorial Yad Vashem, Jerusalem

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[Previous document](#) • [Locations](#) • [Victims](#) • [Next document](#)