



Our Family

by

Heinz and Thea Ruth Skyte, née Ephraim

THE GERNGROS(S) FAMILY

EPHRAIM HIRSCH GERNGROS was born in Treuchtlingen in 1803. In 1830 he settled in Baiersdorf , taking over the "Matrikel" of the late Moses Seligmann Huetten, dated 11 October 1830. His occupation is recorded as "Faerbermeister" (master dyer). About that time he married Carolina (born about 1807), who died in 1831 in childbirth.

Ephraim married his second wife Klara (Clara) BONTÉ (1) in 1832. The family lived Forchheimerstrasse 3. Johannes Bischoff mentions a memorial tablet on the house in 1953 in honour of their sons Ludwig and Wilhelm (2), both honorary citizens of Baiersdorf. Ephraim and Klara both eventually moved to Nuremberg, where their sons had settled. They are buried there on the old Jewish cemetery in Baerenschanzstrasse, grave # 1000. (3)

Children of Ephraim and Klara:

- Theres 23 June 1833 - 10 June 1846, Baiersdorf
- Hirsch September 1834, died aged three weeks, Baiersdorf
- Doreth 10 November 1835 Baiersdorf
- Ludwig 1 May 1839
- Philipp Wilhelm 28 September 1843
- Sophie 25 November 1847 - 8 December 1848 Baiersdorf

Of their remaining three children:

DORETH married Jakob STRAUSS of Altenkunstadt (further research is necessary).

LUDWIG GERNGROS attended a commercial school in Fuerth followed by an apprenticeship, as employee and traveller with Mayer Kohn in Nuremberg. In 1864, in partnership with Moritz Frauenfeld, he founded a very successful wholesale hop business in Nuremberg. He married Julie TUCHMANN of Dessau (4), (28 December 1845 Uehlfeld (5) - 1 April 1923 Nuremberg) on 11 March 1866. He retired in 1899.

In 1901 Ludwig Gerngross was made an Honorary Citizen of Nuremberg. the Bavarian "Kronenorden" (a royal order) was bestowed on him and became "Ritter von Gerngross". He was associated with many monuments and works of art in Nuremberg, amongst them the monuments of the Prince

Regent, that of Emperor Wilhelm I and the Neptunbrunnen. He was a great collector of works of art and made numerous endowments to charitable causes.

In 1905 Ludwig von Gerngros made a donation towards the building of the Seligmann'sche Kinderheim in Baiersdorf and was duly made an Honorary Citizen of Baiersdorf. He also established the ambulance service of the Bavarian Red Cross in Baiersdorf in 1907. (6)

Ludwig died in Nuremberg on 3 October 1916 and he and his wife Julie are buried on the new Jewish cemetery in Schnieglinger Strasse.

WILHELM GERNGROS, who had dropped the name Philipp, had attended the elementary school in Baiersdorf and, as his elder brother, then attended the commercial school in Fuerth. In 1866 he joined the wholesale hop business of Ludwig in Nuremberg and became its manager. In Baiersdorf on 30 May 1869 he married Emilie (Milly) FRAUENFELD, who had been born in Pittsburgh, USA.

Wilhelm retired from the very successful family firm in 1898, aged only 55 years. He also followed his interests in art and social welfare and eventually also set up many endowments.

In 1905 Wilhelm also contributed towards the building of the "Seligmann'sche Kinderheim" in Baiersdorf and was made an Honorary Citizen of Baiersdorf. In the same Year his wife Milly died. He endowed the "Wilhelm und Milly Gerngros'sche Stiftung" for the benefit of poor widows and orphans of members of the Voluntary Fire Service of Baiersdorf in 1906.

Wilhelm held many honorary posts in the following years. Amongst these were as treasurer of the "Suedwestafrikanische Spende Mittelfrankens" (Donation of Central Franconia towards South-west Africa), treasurer of Bavarian State Exhibitions, and many more. As his brother he made numerous donations to artistic and welfare organisations. In 1913 the "Ritterkreuz des bayerischen Kronenordens", a knighthood was bestowed on him.

Wilhelm, Ritter von Gerngros, died in Nuremberg on 5 June 1925.

The Memorial Book to the memory of Jewish Members of the German Army, and Marine issued by the "Reichsbund juedischer Frontsoldaten" in 1932 records the following: names:

Justin GERNGROSS, born 23 April 1883 Nuremberg, died 20 July 1916. He was a member of the 5th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 21.

Hermann GERNGROSS, born 18 February 1887 Nuremberg, died 23 October 1914. He was a corporal in the 3rd Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment 1.

If or how they are related to the above Gerngros' of Baiersdorf is not known. Further research is clearly required.

Footnotes

(1) Probably a daughter of Hirsch Bonté and Theres Kohn of Baiersdorf.

- (2) Johannes Bischoff: Baiersdorf - Entwicklungsgeschichte einer fraenkischen Kleinstadt (History of the development of a small town in Franconia).
- (3) Horst Gemeinhardt in: Aus der juedischen Geschichte Baiersdorfs. Number of grave mentioned in 1917 will of their son Wilhelm.
- (4) Horst Gemeinhardt.
- (5) Inscription on gravestone.
- (6) Horst Gemeinhardt: Zur gesellschaftlichen Stellung der Juden in Baiersdorf um die Jahrhundertwende (Contributions by Jews in Baiersdorf around the turn of the century).