

STERN, Ludwig,

cattle trade,

19 Bronner Strasse

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Rosalie Stern, née Stern (grandmother), born January 7, 1851, died January 7, 1937, widow of David Stern

Ludwig Stern, born April 13, 1874, deported to Theresienstadt on August 19, 1942, died September 21, 1942 OO **Ida, née Fuchs**, born July 8, 1880, died in 1935

Benno, born March 5, 1907, immigrated to the USA on March 19, 1940

[Ludwig's brother: **Jakob, aka Benno**, born February 4, 1884, died March 25, 1945 in Theresienstadt.]



A society of young Jewish men around 1900. According to documents found in the estate of John Bergmann, Ludwig Stern is the second one to the right (at the back).¹ But the photo on his trade licence (p.510) suggests that Ludwig Stern is perhaps the man to the top left. (Photo: Leo Baeck Institut, NY)

The Stern family came from Michelbach an der Lücke in the district of Hunsrück. Wolf Stern, Ludwig Stern's grandfather, was a merchant and teacher. He left Michelbach and moved to Laupheim to marry Eva Kaufmann in 1839. She was the daughter of the sixth rabbi. Between November 1840 and December 1855, approximately 14 years, they had 14 children. Four of them did not survive their first year. Another stroke of fate was the death of their son Josef who was only 20 years old.² He drowned while swimming in the Riss River in the summer of 1868. His poetic epitaph says:

"He was twenty years old, and on the second day, on the 2nd of Tammuz of the year 628, he went swimming in the Riss River, and the water reached his soul and thus it was no more, for God took it..."³

Wolf Stern fathered 14 children and reached the age of 90. His epitaph describes him as a "wise man who had much knowledge of books [...] and who was old and enjoyed many days".⁴ But his wife Eva only reached the age of 53.

Their oldest son David was a merchant like his father. In 1872, he married Rosalie Stern, who came from Michelbach like David's father, Wolf. Due to the fact that they shared the same family name and came from the same place, it can be assumed that they had family ties.

David and Rosalie were blessed with five children. The family was living in *Bronner Strasse*, in a house that now has the number 19. Their oldest son Saul immigrated to the USA already in 1889. Their youngest son Jakob, who was also called Benno, remained unmarried and was unemployed. He lived in Hanover for some time. One of their daughters, Eva Emma, married a member of the Heilbronner family and stayed in Laupheim. Their daughter Peppi spent her life in Switzerland.⁵

Their second son Ludwig joined his father's business which was a cattle and horse trade. He married Ida Fuchs, who came from Buttenwiesen. They lived in his parents' house together with their only son Benno, who was born on March 5, 1907. When Benno was six years old, his grandfather died; that was one year before the outbreak of the First World War.

On July 11, 1917, during the First World War, Ludwig received his call up papers with an order to report as gunner in the 65th Artillery Regiment with its headquarters in Ludwigsburg. On September 28, 1917, he was probably discharged, as he was already 43 years old.⁶

His son Benno went to the secondary school *Progymnasium in Laupheim* and successfully completed schooling in March 1923. *Progymnasium* must refer to the *Realschule* with a Latin department (*Realschule mit Lateinabteilung*, as was the school's official name).

Aus Stadt und Bezirk.

Laupheim, 19. März. Die Primareifeprüfung an der 7. Realschulklasse in Biberach hat unter anderem mit Erfolg bestanden: Eugen Stammeler, S. d. A. Stammeler, Wirts.

Die mittlere Reifeprüfung (früher Einjähriges) am Progymnasium haben unter anderem mit Erfolg bestanden: Alois Luz, S. d. M. Luz, Steueroberwachmeister, Max Müller, S. d. R. Müller, Wachzieher und Benno Stern, S. d. V. Stern, Handelsmann.

(*Laupheimer Verkündiger*, March 19, 1923)

**Baugenossenschaft Laupheim e. G. m. b. H.
Laupheim.**

**Die jährliche ordentliche
Generalversammlung**

findet am **Samstag, den 17. Mai 1924**
abends 8 Uhr im Hotel Post statt.

Tagesordnung:

1. Mitteilung und Genehmigung der Bilanz und Jahres-Rechnung.
2. Erteilung der Entlastung.
3. Ergänzungswahlen zum Vorstand und Aufsichtsrat.
4. Änderung der Satzungen (§ 44, 47, 56, 59, 60)
5. Neubauten, Grunderwerb.

Die Mitglieder werden zu dieser Versammlung eingeladen und gebeten, zahlreich und pünktlich zu erscheinen.

Bilanz und Jahresrechnung liegen von heute ab für die Genossen bei dem Vorstandsmitglied B. Heumann zur Einsichtnahme auf.

Laupheim, den 10. Mai 1924.

Der Aufsichtsrat der Baugenossenschaft
Laupheim e. G. m. b. H.

Vorsitzender: L. Stern.

(*Laupheimer Verkündiger*, May
10, 1924)⁸

(*Laupheimer Verkündiger*,
November 27, 1925)⁹

**Baugenossenschaft
Laupheim e. G. m. b. H.**

Samstag, den 5. Dezember 1925,
abends 6 Uhr, findet im Hotel zur „Post“ hier
eine **außerordentliche**

Generalversammlung

statt.

Tagesordnung:

**Beschlußfassung über die Auflösung der
Genossenschaft.**

Um zahlreichen Besuch wird gebeten.

Laupheim, den 26. November 1925.

Der Aufsichtsrat der Baugenossenschaft
Laupheim e. G. m. b. H.:



Vorsitzender: L. Stern.

Ludwig Stern was not only dedicated to the cattle trade, but he was also active in the construction industry of Laupheim. As reported by the *Laupheimer Verkündiger* on May 10, 1924, he was chair of the *Baugenossenschaft* that held its annual general meetings in the hotel *Post*. Already on December 5, 1925, there was discussion about dissolving the *Baugenossenschaft*, which was also announced by the *Laupheimer Verkündiger*. The year 1935 saw the beginning of difficult times for Ludwig Stern. His wife Ida died in January that year at the age of 55. Two years later, his mother Rosalie died at the age of 86.¹⁰ From then on, the family living at 13 Bronner Strasse only consisted of Ludwig and his 28 year old son Benno who was still unmarried. In the directory of Laupheim of 1938, Benno is also listed as a merchant. That is, he was also a part of his father's trade.¹¹ In March 1938, Ludwig Stern had his trade licence renewed again; he was 64 at the time.

Just a few months later, systematic repression of the Jewish businesses began, which literally meant the elimination of their existence. In early November, the situation for Jewish traders escalated sharply. On November 9, 1938, during the *Kristallnacht*, Benno was taken from his house and was deported from Laupheim to Dachau along with 17 other young Jewish men. There they were held in "protective custody".¹³

49 years later, in 1987, Benno Stern wrote a letter to Ernst Schäll describing the inhumane detention conditions in Dachau. He gave a detailed description of the misery and distress of the prisoners and the harassment of the SS, which

resulted in a chronic intestinal disorder from which he was never cured. Once in January 1939, "we had to stand still in the cold and woe betide anyone whom the SS saw moving. [...] Many people died during those two days." ¹⁴

<p>Hierdurch wird bescheinigt, daß der Inhaber dieses Ausweises <i>It is hereby certified that the bearer of this card Il est certifié par la présente que le porteur de cette carte</i></p> <p>Herr <u>Herr Ludwig</u> <i>Mr. - M.</i></p> <p>geboren in <u>Laupheim.</u> <i>born at - né à</i></p> <p>wohnhaft in <u>Laupheim.</u> <i>living at - demeurant à</i></p> <p><u>Ordnung</u> Straße Nr. <u>13</u> <i>Street No. - rue, no</i></p> <p>ein¹⁾ <u>Mitgliedschaft mit d. H. v. J. Jorden</u> <i>is the owner of²⁾ - possède³⁾</i></p> <p>in <u>Laupheim.</u> <i>at - à</i></p> <p>unter der Firma <u>Ludwig Stern</u> <i>for the purpose of trade - sous la raison de commerce</i></p> <p><u>Laupheim</u> besitzt <i>(oder)-Handlungsreisender im Dienst der Firma - den</i></p> <p>Firmen <i>(or) is a commercial traveller employed by the firm(s)¹⁾ (ou) est commis voyageur au service de la (des) maison(s)</i></p> <p>in _____ ist, <i>at - à</i></p> <p>die ein¹⁾ _____ <i>which possess(es)²⁾ - qui possède(nt)³⁾</i></p> <p>unter der Firma _____ <i>for the purpose of trade - sous la raison de commerce</i></p> <p>_____ besitzt - besitzen.</p> <p>¹⁾ Angabe der Fabrik oder des Handelszweiges. ²⁾ State the articles or nature of the trade. ³⁾ Indication de la fabrique ou du commerce.</p>	<p>Personalbeschreibung des Inhabers: <i>Description of the bearer: Signalement du porteur:</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Alter: <u>geb. 13. 4. 1874</u> <i>Age</i></p> <p>Wuchs: <u>mittel</u> <i>Height</i></p> <p>Haare: <u>grau</u> <i>Hair</i></p> <p>Besondere Merkmale: <u>Keine</u> <i>Special marks</i></p>
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Trade licence card for Ludwig Stern, issued by the Landrat in Laupheim. ¹²

Due to his illness, Benno Stern was unable to undertake long trips. In 1938, he had to decline the invitation to go to Laupheim, which he regretted very much. Benno Stern was one of the last leaving Dachau in 1939.

According to reliable sources, the prisoners were only released from "protective custody" after having fulfilled certain requirements. They were forbidden to speak about the detention conditions, forced to sell their possessions and to leave Germany. ¹⁵ Approximately one year later, Benno immigrated to the USA on March 19, 1940. ¹⁶ Ludwig was the only member of the family who remained in Laupheim. Inevitably, the 66 year old man became a victim of the NS regime.

He had to abandon his house and he was forced to relocate in the rabbinat at 2 Judenberg, which had been converted into a Jewish retirement home. ¹⁷ His younger brother had also been forced to relocate from Hanover to Laupheim into the rabbinat on July 4, 1942. But from then on, all traces of him are lost. The only thing we know is that he died on March 25, 1945.

Ludwig Stern was deported to Theresienstadt on August 19, 1942, where he died on February 23, 1943.¹⁸

After his death, the Nazi government repossessed the entire property of the Stern family consisting of their house, barn, stables, various plots of land and a pasture in Taubenried.

After the war had ended, Benno Stern, as the only heir, applied for the restitution of his family's properties. His petition was accepted and thus Benno Stern was listed in the register as the owner of the aforementioned properties. At that time, he was living in Forest Hills, New York.



In October 1952, the properties were resold to Franz and Maria Kölle from Mietingen.

To this day, the Kölle family lives in the house in the Bronner Strasse that today has the number 19.¹⁹

Sources:

- 1) John-Bergmann-Nachlass, Leo-Baeck-Institut, New York, 1984.
- 2) John-Bergmann-Nachlass. Microfilm No 1834, S.132, 315.
- 3) Hüttenmeister, N.: Der jüdische Friedhof Laupheim. Laupheim 1989. S. 240.
- 4) Hüttenmeister N. S. 367.
- 5) John-Bergmann-Nachlass. Microfilm No 1834 S.132, 315.
- 6) Erinnerungsblatt 1. Weltkrieg 1914–1918 für die israelitische Gemeinde, HdG, 2003/0084/09/01
- 7) Laupheimer Verkündiger, 19. März 1923.
- 8) Laupheimer Verkündiger, 10. Mai 1924.
- 9) Laupheimer Verkündiger, 27. November 1925.
- 10) John-Bergmann-Nachlass. Microfilm No 1834, S. 132, 315.
- 11) Adressbuch Stadt Laupheim, 1938.
- 12) Staatsarchiv Sigmaringen, Wü 126/2, Finanzamt Biberach Nr. 1–19.
- 13) Hecht, C., Köhlerschmidt, A.: Die Deportation der Juden aus Laupheim. Laupheim 2004. S. 10, 23.
- 14) Hecht, C., Köhlerschmidt, A. S. 26.
- 15) Hecht, C., Köhlerschmidt, A. S. 23.
- 16) John-Bergmann-Nachlass. Microfilm NO 1834, S.132, 315.
- 17) Hecht, C., Köhlerschmidt, A. S. 91.
- 18) Hecht, C., Köhlerschmidt, A. S. 117.
- 19) Staatsarchiv Sigmaringen, Wü 126/2 Finanzamt Biberach Nr. 1–19.