

Frank Family History

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1. Dr. Fritz Frank

He was born on 22nd June 1886 in Horb am Neckar.

He was the youngest son of Hugo Frank of Nordstetten bei Horb and Sophie Weil of Nonnenweier bei Lahr, and had three siblings. The parents sold their textiles shop in the centre of Horb in 1899 and moved to Stuttgart. There Fritz Frank attended the grammar school.

After completing his Abitur, Fritz Frank studied Medicine in Bern, Heidelberg and Tübingen graduating in the medical faculty and obtained the doctor title at the University of Kiel. There followed an internship at the Jewish Hospital in Frankfurt am Main. At this time he lived at Gagernstr. 36.

It was in Heidelberg that Fritz Frank met his later wife Raissa Itin, who was studying for her doctorate there. The wedding took place on 3rd August 1914 in Frankfurt immediately before Fritz Frank entered military service as a junior doctor in the field hospital. He was captured by the British, only being released back to his wife in Germany as part of a prisoner exchange in November 1918.



Fritz Frank

After the war, the couple lived in Mannheim, where their son Hugo was born at the end of 1918.

2. Dr. Raissa Frank, geb. Itin

She was born on 15th July 1886 as the eldest of eight children in the south Russian area of Lugansk (today Ukraine).

Her parents, Gregor Itin and Katharina née Meeroff initially lived in Bjelaia Glina on the edge of the Caucasus and later in Rostov on the Don. The father was a corn merchant.

From her 12th year Raissa Itin visited the high school after her previous private home education. She was a very good pupil and achieved the Abitur in 1904.

In Czarist Russia at this time there was a political persecution which extended even to schoolchildren. When one of Raissa's brothers was threatened with imprisonment following a demonstration, and this was avoided only by payment of a bribe, their father decided to send his wife and all of the children to Berlin, where they lived for a year.

Raissa and her two brothers Kolja and Onja returned to Russia. Raissa remained in Berlin and began – as many Russian Jews did – to study Law, since the Imperial Court in Germany was considered incorruptible. Her brother Onja's artistic talents enabled him to find a place at Berlin's painting academy. Her brother Kolja also studied Law, but at Freiburg.

Although Raissa was allowed to study Law in Berlin, it was not possible for Russian students to sit exams in Prussia, or to receive a doctorate. For this reason she relocated to Heidelberg, since the state of Baden allowed this. In 1913 she received the doctor title. Her dissertation carried the title "Der Schutz der Entwicklung des Kindes als ein Problem der Strafgesetzgebung" (The protection of child development as a problem for criminal legislation).

Thereafter she lived in Frankfurt and was employed as a civil servant at the legal protection department in the city.

After her husband was drafted into the military she lived for a year in the hostel of the Jewish women's institute in Neu-Isenburg. From 1917 she moved to Mannheim, where she lived with her husband until their move to Heppenheim.

3. Hugo Frank

Hugo was born on 23rd December 1918 in Mannheim.

As a toddler he moved with his parents to Heppenheim. There he spent his childhood and youth.

As a 15 year-old he emigrated to Palestine in 1933. He changed his name from Hugo to Shlomo and lived in the Children's and Young People's village "The Jewish Junior- and Children's Farm" in Ben Shemen.



Wedding of Fritz and Raissa

4. Sophie Frank

Sophie was born on 16th April 1922 in Heppenheim.

At the age of 13 she emigrated with her mother to Palestine in January 1936, two months after her father. She also changed her name in Palestine to Yael. She married twice. With her first husband she had two children. With the second she had a further son.

During her lifetime she visited Heppenheim twice and remained emotionally closely connected to the town through her happy childhood memories.

Sophie Frank lived until her death in 2019 in the kibbutz Hama'apil in Israel.



Sophie and Hugo in Heppenheim



Raissa with the children Hugo and Sophie

5. History of the Frank Family in Heppenheim

Raissa and Fritz Frank moved with their son Hugo from Mannheim to Heppenheim on 6 March 1919.

Initially they lived at Waldstraße 7 and then at Graf-von-Galen-Str. 7 (formerly Kaiserstraße 17). Here Dr. Fritz Frank established himself as a self-employed doctor. He received his accreditation as a practising doctor the following year. Originally the couple rented the house and in 1928 they finally bought it.

In 1922 daughter Sophie arrived. The same year, Dr. Raissa Frank registered a legal advice centre for women in Heppenheim.

From 1923 onwards, Dr. Fritz Frank was, on top of his occupation as a doctor, also the Director of the clearinghouse for panel doctors for the region Bensheim-Heppenheim. From 1930 to 1935, he was

President of the Jewish community of Heppenheim. The meeting room was in the synagogue on Schlossberg (Nathan-Friedmann-Platz today). The family was very happy in Heppenheim.

On 1st April 1933 he was ejected from his position as President of the clearing house for political reasons. This cost the family the majority of their income. It was only because he had served on the front in World War I and been awarded the Iron Cross that he was allowed to continue with his medical practice. But he experienced boycotts, discrimination, and a reduction in doctor's fees, since many patients left.

After Hugo had turned his back on Germany in 1933, the rest of the family now felt forced to do the same. The impending restriction of registration of new doctors in Palestine meant their emigration was now a matter of urgency. So in November 1935 Fritz Frank went alone to Palestine. He looked for professional opportunities and prepared for his wife and daughter to follow.

The Franks' house was sold under price to the local cigar manufacturer Gustav Pfattheicher in 1935. Raissa and Sophie lived until their departure in 1936 with the Merciful Sisters of the St. Vinzenz Convent in Heppenheim.

6. Family Servant Magdalena Zimmermann

The servant and nanny Magdalena Zimmermann, known as "Lene", entered the Frank household in Horb as a 14-year-old in 1884. She came from a Christian farming family in the neighbourhood. All of the Frank children spent much time in the house of these Christian neighbours and took part in their everyday life – the children were not to learn a world of contrast.

Magdalena Zimmermann worked for 45 years in the service of the Frank family in Heppenheim. She died at the age of 59 and was buried there in the cemetery.

7. Connection to the Buber Family in Heppenheim

At the same time, Martin and Paula Buber were living in Heppenheim, the families knew each other. Dr. Fritz Frank was their family doctor, daughter Sophie Frank was the friend of Buber's granddaughter Barbara.

In the novel of the novel "Muckensturm – Ein Jahr im Leben einer kleinen Stadt" (Quirkiness – a year in the life of a small town), published by Paula Buber in exile in 1953, the beginnings of Nazi rule in 1933 is described. In it, the Jewish doctor Dr. Marcus plays a roll, which was clearly based on Fritz Frank. A new edition was published in 2008 under her name Paula Buber.

8. Life in Palestine

The first years were difficult. At home German was spoken. Learning Hebrew was the priority, but Fritz Frank struggled and remained all his life a German Jew, a so-called "Jecke". The children called themselves Shlomo and Yael and both learnt the national language perfectly, as did Raissa.

Dr. Fritz Frank struggled despite all efforts to find a footing as a doctor because the registration of his own practice was almost impossible due to the flood of new doctors in Israel. As he wrote in a letter to Paul Geheeb in 1936:

Jerusalem 2. II. 1936.
Tajal Piroo street

Lieber Herr Geheeb!

Die Jugend über mich war so schön, dass ich mich selbst nicht mehr gekannt habe. Ich habe aber sofort einen Abzug an meine Frau nach Heppenheim geschickt, da es sehr wohl tut, dass mich jemand mit deutschen Augen zu sehen beliebt, wie sie es zu tun pflegt. In meinem Testamenten haben sich nicht sofort räumliche Schritte zum mich geübt. Das erklärt sich aber dadurch, weil hier sozusagen in jedem Haus ein Arzt wohnt, u. es gilt ab. glänzende Niederlassungsgelegenheit 3 Häuser zu finden ohne Konkurrenz. Die Gebäude von 12-15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100 ist eine Tadel aus, fürchten Jahrtausende. Hier werden wir zu einem kleinen hässlichen u. ungesunden Kisten nicht auch unendlich zu werden, von dieser anfängliche Vorkurs uns auf die Herausgabe stellt.

Seit 8 Tagen ist meine Frau u. Tochter hier. Es war für uns alle kein leichter Abchiedschluss von Heppenheim, obwohl zum Schluss die Erörterung unbestimmten war, weil jeder, der zu mir kam, Neugierde zu zeigen hatte. Die jüdische Gemeinde bot keinen Rückhalt mehr, sie zeigte das typische Bild der Kleinstadt gesunden: ^{das} 12 Jahre war kein Kind vorhanden, von 12-15 4 Kinder,

oder Charlottenburg zu werden in selben Menschheits im selben Gedankenkreis, u. in denselben Räumen u. Vorurteilen.

Meine Wohnung liegt im Zentrum der Stadt, an der Grenze von Ort u. Vorjudentum, benachbart den Kliniken, mittelständisch wohlhabenden Kreisen wie ammen jüdischen, polnischen, spanischen Sprengeln mit jüdisch, spanisches u. arabische Sprache.

Die wohlhabende Praxis läuft mit reichlich Zeit u. Mühe weil anderweitig zu beschäftigen, so habe ich seit einer Woche in einem der Anwesenstiel eine 2. Sprachstunde aufbewahrt, sowohl um in Arbeit zu können, wie um die Menschen, die um mich sind, können zu lernen. Voraussetzung dafür ist aber die Beherrschung ihrer Sprache. Ich lerne täglich 4-6 Stunden hebräisch u. auch einige Zeit Verde ich mit hebräisch anfangen. Für meinen grauen Kopf ist das zu nicht so leicht u. ich quäle mich ordentlich ab.

Ein Bild für mich bietet das religiöse Leben. Jerusalem hat 700 Synagogen u. das Sekularismus ist im Judentum nicht geringer als in Christentum. Die jüdische wird überall dieselben. Die Art der Beten ist sehr verschieden. Es gibt Synagogen, so haben mit gut gepflegten Säulen den jüdischen ausstrahlen u. in tiefpfeilförmigen über ragen, es gibt andere, so keine unmissverständlich aber mit grobten Säulen die Aufsicht haben in übertriebener Bewegung, weil eine Verschiebung der Talmud lautet, nicht um und den Lippen

die Altkategorie von 18-35 war schon vollständig ausgewandert nach Frankreich, Kanada, Südafrika, Amerika, Norland. Die ältere Generation wartet bis die Kinder in der Fremde verhaft geworden sind um zusammen zu sein, die alte Generation sieht unter dem realistischen u. materialistischen Druck nach ab. Man lebt in Gegenwart u. Zukunft präsent: Gegenwart, was man penis erlebt; Zukunft: was die fremen Kinder schreiben u. spielen. Beim Abchiednehmen erleben wir in unangenehm reichhaltigen Weise, dass wir die realistische Druck haben, was um auf uns jedoch benachteiligt, verzögert es bei uns sich generell am Charakter anwirkt.

Neugeborene ist das Leben in Palästina natürlich ein feierliches Leben. Es ist auch ein schönes, feierliches, buntes Leben. Da wir Menschen aber von Jugend an im Nach u. Offenheit reingeboren u. reingewogen sind, so beschlageneht uns natürlich die rein materielle Sorge im ausgedehnten Maße, den im allgemeinen können wir jetzt mit ganz beschränktem Mittel zu tun, was frucht an rein Kapital anpassen u. rechnet aus, wie lange man sich das leisten kann. Eine Praxis handelt sich aber ohne ausgedehnten Bekanntheit, anstandslos langsam an. So läuft man Gefahr seinen egozentrischen Gedankenkreis zu umbauen, nicht mehr sich als das reiche Leben rings um.

Ich bemühe mich um Verstand zu bleiben, in welcher Stadt ich lebe. Es wäre aber ganz gut möglich aus Jerusalem ein Frankfurt

werden mit dem jungen Körper soll man fort bleiben. Es finden sich in den am besten Vierten Kreisen, die nicht tun ab, ich lebe lang in Bibel u. Talmud Studien, die tiefen unterhalten werden u. ein - in beiden dem jungen geistlichen Leben führen, es gibt auf der einen Seite wieder einen Wald, der leicht vorübergeht eine Bank u. ist am Sabbat ein fortwährend u. guten Prediger mit stark spirituellen Einsicht.

Man muss dieses Leben ohne Abnutzung eines Naturschicks, an sich heranziehen lassen, dann gibt es keine Stagnation in Jerusalem, die nicht im Stande sind, einen zu machen.

Und das geschieht gleich unserem um der jüdischen, wie der Christlichen, wie der unheimlich dancischen Welt, so findet ein Punkt gewonnen diese 3 Welten nebeneinander herlaufen.

Ich würde mich sehr freuen auch von Ihnen leben zu hören. Seien Sie mit Ihrer Frau, Schwester Maria u. Frau Kees herzlich von uns gegrußt.

Ihr
Fritz Frank

In addition to this, there were health problems caused by the stress of their flight.

Fritz Frank became a member of the Society of German-speaking Jews in Israel. Later he was a doctor for a health insurance company in Nathanya.

He died a widower in 1978 – his wife Raissa had already died in 1974. Fritz Frank never set foot in Germany again.



Raissa and Fritz in Israel



Obituary Fritz Frank, Südbessische Post 1st Feb. 1978

9. Restitution Lawsuits

Fritz Frank pursued various lawsuits concerning reparations for over 20 years. These included

- claims on the local cigar manufacturer Gustav Pfattheicher who bought the Franks' house under price. He was required to repay the difference to the actual value to Fritz Frank
- from 1954 onwards, claims on the state of Hesse for the reparation of financial losses in property and capital as well as damage to health
 - monthly pension claims were awarded to him from 1957 until the end of his life
 - other claims concerned life insurance, the contributions for which he was unable to pay because of his displacement. This claim was rejected in 1961
 - also rejected was his claim for compensation due to ill health caused by displacement. This suit was rejected in 1969.

10. Publications

Fritz Frank was also a writer. In 1925 he published his World War I diaries in the book “Stahlbad – Aufzeichnungen eines Arztes aus dem Ersten Weltkrieg 1914–1918” (Steel bath – notes by a doctor from World War I 1914–1918).

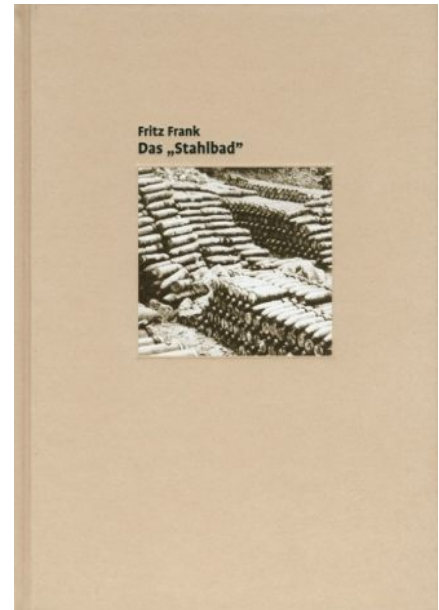
Stahlbad

War diary, written in 1924 in Heppenheim

Edited by: Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V., Barbara Staudacher Verlag, Horb-Rexingen 2016

ISBN: 978-3-928213-21-9

<https://www.chemalige-synagoge-rexingen.de/forschen/veroeffentlichungen/fritz-frank-das-stahlbad>



After emigration to Palestine/Israel, Fritz Frank wrote six texts in Natanya in 1945/6

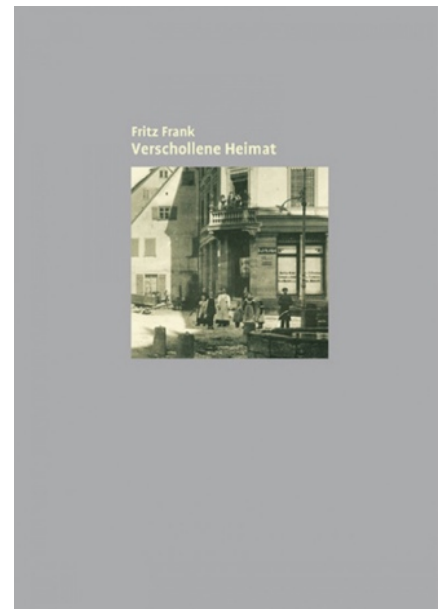
Verschollene Heimat

The central text of this edition is the “Verschollene Heimat” (lost homeland), the only written description of the co-existence of Jews and Christians in Horb am Neckar in the 19th and early 20th Centuries known to the Editors.

Edited by: Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V., Barbara Staudacher Verlag, Horb-Rexingen 2017

ISBN: 978-3-928213-22-6

<https://www.chemalige-synagoge-rexingen.de/forschen/veroeffentlichungen/fritz-frank-verschollene-heimat>



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