Max Uhlfelder

1865-1943

Max Uhlfelder was a member of the well-known and wide-spread business and banker family, the Uhlfelders, who originally came from the Franconian village of Wilhelmsdorf and settled in Regensburg in the 19th century. Dr. Julius Uhlfelder had even become the Chairman of the City Jewish Community. Max was born in Regensburg on 18th May 1865, the son of the merchant Seligmann Uhlfelder and his wife Pauline, née Weil. He never married and consequently fathered no children. His only brother was born in 1872 but died when only a few months old.

Max Uhlfelder worked as a manager and accountant in a shop which belonged to one of his family members selling fashion articles and drapery in the Untere Bachgasse/ Hinter der Grieb, where today a modern light shop is located called *Blochberger and Weiß Lichtkreationen*. The flourishing business expanded and eventually moved to the attractive rooms in a new setting, the former residence of Prince v. Dalberg, Domplatz 6. Max Uhlfelder, however, remained a lodger in the Hinter der Grieb, which belonged to a relative of his, called Sigmund Uhlfelder, whose initials can still be found engraved on the front door of the house. Sigmund died in 1912 and a few years later, in 1920, the pharmacist and physician Dr. Michael Bayer bought the estate from his heirs, with Max Uhlfelder acting as a mediator of the purchase.

On October 2nd 1911 Max Uhlfeder acquired Regensburg citizenship having to pay 60 Goldmarks for the privilege. In 1926 he was one of only 108 Jewish citizens out of 514 who had the right to vote. As a German patriot he had taken part in World War One and had been awarded the "Iron Cross Second Class" for bravery. But when Adolf Hitler came to power, life became more and more difficult for him. Together with his housekeeper he still lived on the third floor of the Hinter der Grieb, where some other lodgers either took no notice of them or ostracized and insulted them. On January 20th the authorities forced him to adopt the additional name "Israel" on top of wearing the yellow Star of David.

On December 23rd 1942 the Nazis deported 117 men and women, mostly elderly people, to Theresienstadt. The person in charge of the transport had a list of names, one of them being Max Uhlfelder. At that time he was 77 years old and had to pay 56 Reichsmarks for his journey to death. Theresienstadt was like a fortress, surrounded by walls and hermetically sealed off from the outside world. Where once seven thousand inhabitants had lived, in 1942 more than fifty thousand Jewish people were cooped up and imprisoned. Many of them died within a month. Max Uhlfelder was murdered by the SS on 18th January 1943.