

The Story of Gustav Hermann Osang (1832 – 1889) and his descendants.

Gustav Hermann (1) Osang was born on February 21st, 1832 in Zauswitz near Strehla. He was the ninth child of the farmer **Johann Gottfried (4) Osang** and his wife **Johanna Rigina** (nee **Riesche**).

Nothing is known about his childhood. However, it should be noted that he would not have had any claim on the family farm, as he was the ninth child and the youngest son, according to the custom that the eldest son inherited the family business and younger brothers and sisters had to earn their living elsewhere.

As a result, he found a place as an apprentice to a Master Gürtler in one of the surrounding towns. At that time, Gürtlers were skilled craftsmen who specialised in producing everything needed to fasten weapons and cloaks, from metal and other materials. These would include buckles, chains, buttons, cords, as well as medals and decorations.

Later, he went travelling, which was quite usual for the time. This required registration with the local police, and he had to serve a three day prison sentence in January 1853 for faking his registration book. He was already by this time quite a clever little boy.

By 1850 he had been working in Dresden for a number of different Masters.

About this time, there were already a number of Osang family members living and working in Dresden:

Carl Heinrich (1) Osang, who was born in 1814 in Zauswitz and who was the son of **Carl Friedrich (2) Osang**, was working in Dresden as a Joiner in 1850.

Karl Julius Osang, was working in 1855 as an Inn-Keeper in Dresden.

Friedrich Hermann (1) Osang, who was born in Zauswitz and who was the son of **Friedrich August Osang** and the grandson of **Carl Gottlieb (1) Osang**, was working as a baker in Dresden in 1863.

There are a number of descendants of **Carl Heinrich** and **Friedrich Hermann** who still live in Dresden to this day.

Carl Heinrich and **Friedrich Hermann** were probably cousins of **Gustav Hermann (1)**.

Gustav Hermann (1) purchased the rank of Master craftsman on May 22nd, 1862. At the same time he informed the trade office that he intended to work as an independent Master Gürtler in Dresden.

As a man without means at that time he looked around for an established business that he could join. He found the solution at the Sauer Gürtler business in Breiten Straße in Dresden. The business was owned by the widow Sauer, so he managed to solve his lack of capital and the need to work as a Master Gürtler by marrying the widow **Caroline Concordia Juliane Sauer** in 1862. The widow Sauer was born in 1802 and was already 60 years old at the time of the marriage. **Gustav Hermann (1)** was 30 years old at the time, so **Caroline** was more of a mother to him, and it was very unlikely that there would be any children from the marriage.

Caroline died in 1865, so he then looked for a second wife and married **Louise Bertha Rädlein**, who was born in 1843. They had four daughters, two of whom died in the first and second year of life. The eldest daughter, **Louise Bertha Emma** was born in 1866, and the youngest **Louise Ida** was born in 1871 in Dresden. More will be said about **Louise Bertha Emma** later.

On 25th February 1871 **Louise Bertha** died tragically at the age of 27 years of tuberculosis of the lungs leaving two young children to be cared for by her husband. **Gustav Hermann (1)** was quite successful by now. He had to find a new mother for his two children as quickly as possible. He remembered a butcher who lived in Strehla and who had a daughter **Wilhelmine Berta Berger** who was born in 1841. **Gustav Hermann (1)** and **Wilhelmine Berta** were married in November 1871.

Gustav Hermann (1) now moved to a new home at 29 Neue Gasse in anticipation of starting a new family with Wilhelmine. A professional change for **Gustav Hermann (1)** had also preceded this move.

Master Gürtler **Gottlieb Friedrich Dämm** from Erfurt was carrying on his business at 29 Neue Gasse at that time. In 1871 he wanted to cut back a little and he therefore merged his enterprise with that of the young and dynamic **Gustav Hermann (1)**. The entrepreneurial fusion was good for both businesses, the factory ran very well and the business had been appointed as "supplier to the Royal Court" by about 1880. And at that time, that was quite an achievement.

Gustav Hermann (1) was not only successful in his business life. He and **Wilhelmine Bertha** had six children: - **Gustav Hermann (2)** in 1872, **Antonie Gertrud** ('Gertrud') in 1875, **Isidore Katharina** ('Dora') in 1877, **Antonie Louise** ('Toni') in 1880, **Bertha Clara** ('Cläre') in 1881 and **Georg Rudolf** ('Rudi') in 1882.

With an ever growing family, he moved from 29 Neue Gasse to 11 Neue Gasse, and then to 30 Neue Gasse. That they always stayed within the same church district has greatly simplified subsequent family research in the church registers.

Gustav Hermann (1) was particularly proud on his son and heir, **Gustav Hermann (2)** who, after a good school education, also learnt the profession of Master Gürtler.

Gustav Hermann (1) died on the 4th January 1889, but his son and heir **Gustav Hermann (2)** was still too young and inexperienced to manage the company and look after the family at this time. His mother, **Wilhelmine Bertha**, was quite a purposeful and self-confident woman and she took over the running of the company, with obvious success. Despite the children being still in need of care and attention, the factory continued to run well. The creation of the German Empire after the Franco German war caused a surge in economic and military activity, and the products of the factory were in great demand. At that time, every soldier still wore coloured uniforms with buttons shining like gold, buckles and cords.

The later retro-fitting of the German army into "field-grey" brought further continued good sales volumes to the G.H. Osang Company. The widow **Wilhelmine Bertha** continued to run the company successfully, not an easy task for a single woman and mother at that time.

By 1885, the son and heir **Gustav Hermann (2)** aged 23, became fully involved in the business. However, **Gustav Hermann (2)** was recorded as a business signing clerk and **Wilhelmine Bertha** was still published in address books as the owner of the company. Because it was more convenient for the business **Gustav Hermann (2)** remained living with his mother at 30 Neue Gasse.

Wilhelmine Bertha died in 1889 and then the complete responsibility for the factory ownership and management changed to **Gustav Hermann (2)**. As a consequence of his responsibility for the company and family, **Gustav Hermann (2)** began the search of a suitable wife.

He had an older half-sister, **Louise Bertha Emma** who had married the prosperous shoe dealer **Carl Friedrich Julius Thümmler** in about 1891. **Carl Thümmler** was a widower when he married **Louise Bertha Emma**, and he already had a daughter **Elsa** ('Else') born in 1877. **Elsa** was a good-looking girl and because his half-sister's family regularly frequented the family home, **Gustav Hermann (2)** met **Elsa** frequently. **Gustav Hermann (2)** and **Elsa** were married in 1902.

This connection between the Osang and Thümmler families created a number of unusual relationships which were often discussed and laughed about in the family. E.g. **Gustav Hermann (2)** was the brother of his mother-in-law **Louise Bertha Emma**. He was "uncle" to his wife **Elsa**. At the same time, his father-in-law was his brother-in-law.

Louise Bertha Emma and the **Carl Friedrich Julius** had a son, **Hans Georg**, (who died as an airman in the 1st World War.) His half-sister **Elsa** and **Gustav Hermann (2)** were later buried in his grave.

With their new social standing and prosperity the family decided to move from New Lane where the factory was located, with all the consequent noise, dirt and traffic. So in 1903 the family moved to 27 Wintergartenstraße in east Dresden. By now children had begun to appear. To the joy of everyone the first son, **Georg Herbert**, was born in 1903 when dynastic continuance was secured for the company and the family.

In the early years of the 20th Century, **Gustav Hermann (2)** continued to build his family, his social position and his personal prosperity. Further children soon appeared.

The flat in Wintergartenstraße thus became too small. Therefore the family moved to Klotzsche in north Dresden. A daughter **Bertha Margarethe Else** (1905) and later a second son **Hermann Heinz** (1908) were born and baptised in Klotzsche.

The family continued to live in Klotzsche during the 1st World War up to the end of 1919. In 1920, 16 Jägerstraße appears as the place of residence for the family in the Dresden Address Book. During the 1930's, **Gustav Hermann (2)** purchased land and built a property at 15 Jägerstraße opposite to 16 Jägerstraße. In 1940 he changed his place of residence to 15 Jägerstraße.

It has not been discovered how the family fared during the 1st World War, at the end of the war, the Treaty of Versailles, revolution and the restless 1920's. It is likely that things were not too bad. No-one from the immediate family circle had to go to war as a soldier and the need for medals and decorations continued.

Georg Herbert was designated as the successor to **Gustav Hermann (2)**. He learnt the work of a Gürtler, and then practised this profession for several years. He decided to enlarge his horizons and in the mid 1920's he decided to travel to the United States. **Georg Herbert** stayed for only approximately one to one and a half years in the USA. Where he was exactly and what he did there is not known. It is only from passenger lists and immigration documents for the city of New York that it is known that **Georg Herbert** entered the U.S. on January 25th, 1926 with the intention of travelling to Chicago.

On his return he undertook further training and devoted himself fully to working for the G.H. Osang Company.

Gustav Hermann (2) had an old friend, **Ludwig Eckardt** who he had met at the school of arts and crafts in Dresden. They formed a small cycling group together with 'Sturmvogel' **Horn**, the son of the owner of the Hotel Palmgarten. 'Sturmvogel' **Horn's** son, **Wolfgang**, later married **Bertha Margarethe Else**, the daughter of **Gustav Hermann (2)**.

Ludwig Eckardt married **Martha Leffler** in Hildburghausen in 1899. Their youngest daughter, **Marianne Lina**, learned the tailoring trade in Dresden in the 1920's. **Georg Herbert** and **Marianne Lina** got to know each other at this time, became engaged and later married. Between 1936 and 1944 they had four children, three sons and a daughter .

Georg Herbert worked in the G.H. Osang Company in the 1930's and 1940's. He became technical works manager in 1933 and was promoted further in 1937. However, his father, **Gustav Hermann (2)** remained in charge of the company.

In 1943 the job title "signing clerk" appears in the Address Books for **Georg Herbert** in connection with the company, with the addition of the word "merchant". The name of his brother **Hermann Heinz** (who had learned a business profession) also appears. **Gustav Hermann (2)** had probably retired by then, but is still named as owner.

After the devastating bombing raids of 13th and 14th February 1945 in which the complete old town of Dresden and thus the factory at Neue Gasse was completely destroyed, smaller bombing raids took place on Dresden on 14th February 1945. On 15th February, 1945 the home of his brother **Hermann Heinz** at 16 Jägerstraße was also hit. **Hermann Heinz** was a soldier in the armed forces at that time. It was fortunately not a direct hit, and there were no casualties. However the house was no longer habitable.

Since further bombing raids were expected, the families fled. Only a few personal belongings could be taken on a hand-cart as well as what could be carried by hand. The family were received kindly by a farmer in the village of Struppen for the next four weeks.

The war situation had changed in the meantime, further air raids not being expected. **George Herbert** collected what machines and equipment he could from the factory and saved clothes, household goods and valuables from the bombed-out flat. **Gustav Hermann (2)** and his wife were taken to the home of their daughter **Bertha Margarethe Else** in Wickerode.

After four weeks at Struppen, **Georg Herbert** was able to move his family to Dresden again. Since the house at 15 Jägerstraße was empty because his parents were in Wickerode, he moved his family into the upper floor of the house. First, the roof of the house had to be repaired. The air pressure of bombs falling on nearby houses had dislodged many roofing tiles, which had to be found and restored.

Georg Herbert walked regularly to work at 33 Industriestraße in Dresden-Trachau. There he was able to re-build the G.H. Osang Company from the remains of the old factory and with the help of some old employees.

His brother **Hermann Heinz** came back from captivity at the end of the 1940's and returned as a manager in the business.

The two brothers managed to revive the company's fortunes after the war throughout the difficult years of economic scarcity, by fulfilling orders for the Soviet army, the German National Railways and a number of other customers (Yes! Medals and decorations are always needed).

Gustav Hermann (2) died in Dresden in 1958. **Georg Herbert** died in Radebeul in 1969, and his brother **Hermann Heinz** died in Dresden in 1976.

The life's work of the ancestors and fathers, the metal works G.H. Osang, was expropriated by the communist state in 1972.