

Frieda Gossmann née Hofmann



If you follow me on Instagram, you know that I've been sharing photos of a couple, Helga and Gerhard, from Plauen. This photo of **Frieda Hofmann** from 1918 in Hamburg seemed a little lost in Helga's photo lot from Plauen. Hamburg is over 500 km away from Plauen. How did Frieda's photo end up in this family photo album, I wondered. By mistake?

I have a theory.

This photo of Frieda was taken at a photo studio located at 8 Steindamm in Hamburg. I find one **Frieda Anna Dorothea Gossmann née Hofmann** living in 26 Steindamm in 1945, just 1 minute walking distance from the photo studio's address.

That Frieda Hofmann had been born on August 2nd in 1897 in Siek (Ahrensburg) to parents Theodor Johann Hofmann and Ida Anna Dorothea née Möller. That would make Frieda 21 years old in the photo. In November 1932, she married **Ludwig Gossmann** in Hamburg. Frieda was 35 years old at the time, and her groom Ludwig was 45. Before WWII, Ludwig was a wagon (company) owner (*Fuhrwerksbesitzer*), he had been born on April 12th 1887 in Kassel.

I might have some juicy gossip for you as well. Ludwig married Olga Ida Wilhelmine née Wolper in 1919. And life so happens that he then met Frieda, as a result of which he filed for divorce from his wife. The moment the divorce was through in June 1932, he proposed to Frieda and married her in November the same year.

Now to the tragic part of the story. Frieda died on April 18th, 1945, as a result of a tram accident in which her skull was fatally damaged. Ludwig passed away just 3 months later in July 1945. His death certificate says simply "died of an illness". I can only speculate if it was an illness from wounds he suffered in the last days of WWII or perhaps he was a POW in Bad Bramstedt, or perhaps he died of a broken heart.

So how was Frieda connected to Plauen? I found a clue in her father's death certificate from 1902 that Frieda's father Theodor Johann Hofmann had been born in Plauen! Frieda's paternal grandparents were Johann Daniel Hermann Hofmann and Johanne Therese née Klare. At some point, Frieda's parents had moved to Siek (Ahrensburg), but the Hofmanns probably had family back in Plauen. Perhaps Frieda spent her summers there with her grandparents and that's how she met Helga's family. Or perhaps she was even related to them?

Photos Without Families, originally shared on www.photoswithoutfamilies.blog