

HÖCHSTETTER, Albert and Hugo,

Clothing Store, 12 Kapellenstrasse (today: 1
Bronner Strasse)

Transtated by: Peter Ritz

HANS - GEORG EDELMANN – KARL NEIDLINGER

Albert Höchstetter, born December 18, 1856 in Buttenhausen, master tailor, textile and antiques dealer, died March 11, 1935 in Laupheim (widower to Amalie Höchstetter, born Einstein, born March 31, 1862 Laupheim, died July 29, 1921 Laupheim)

- **Hugo Höchstetter**, born July 9, 1887 in Laupheim, merchant, since 1922 married to Kathi Kaufmann, née March 31, 1901 in Luzern.

- **Herbert Höchstetter**, born March 31, 1923 in Ulm About 1925 removal of the family to Ulm, later periodically back to Laupheim. In 1937 emigration of Hugo Höchstetter to Rhodesia (today Zimbabwe)

"Höchstetter is the best, he goes to every rifle club's fest. Flirting does the Schankel a lot, therefore he rarely hits the spot."

(from: W.Preßmar, Laupheim Rifle Club's March, 1910)



Albert Höfstetter as a member of the Laupheim rifle club's team 1907
(Bilderkammer Museum)



Hugo Höchstetter (center) al second grade pupil of the Jewish Elementary School, 1895
Leo Baeck Institute, NY)

Father and son Höchstetter in two dseparate group photos: the resemblance of the two is obvious and shows that the names given seem to be correct which is not guaranteed in all cases. The characterisation of Albert Höchstetter in the text of the Laupheim rifle club's march, his photo and some other sources match and give a vivid image of his person, they show a lively Laupheim original, full of humor. The shop on the corner of Kapellenstrasse and Bronner Strasse must have been, like its owner, something special in Laupheim.

In the Purim magazine issued by the Laupheim choir "Frohsinn (cheerfulness)" in 1912 it is portrayed with an ironic superlative as "a special business, unique in its branch, on the continent". Two programme leaflets, issued on the occasion of Purim, the Jewish carnival, which comment on the goings-on in the community, have been preserved in the John H. Bergmann estate. The following advertisement entitled "Laupheim Trouser Shop and Antique Shop" was taken from one of these two original leaflets.

As a "singular special business in its own way on the continent" it is portrayed in the Purim magazine of the Laupheim Choir "Frohsinn (cheerful nature)" of 1912 with an ironic superlative. Dealing with Purim, the Jewish Carnival, two programme leaflets commenting satirically on the goings on in the community have been preserved in the John-H.-Bergmann Estate.

Laupheim Trouser Shop ... and Antique Shop

a special business, unique in its branch, on the continent

telegram address: angel of peace

telephone switchboard for import No. 1600 high-speed tannery

for export No. 2400 tartar

enormous store of clothing

from all parts of Germany

Large amount of finest cloth

from Irland (Crazy Country) and England

Modern and old designs

for all tastes

Carved antique cupboards and chests

to the design of joiner Früh

Typewriters of all brands with illegible characters

Easily-transportable motorbikes , without a smell of petrol

Almost new nickelodeons only slightly in need of repair

Representatives of the most renowned companies of tower clocks, wall clocks, pendulum clocks and pocket watches .

You may ask for any guarantee you wish

Asking for your kind attention

Buttenhauser

**Laupheimer Hosenladen
und Antiquariat**

In seiner Art einzig bestehendes **Spezialgeschäft**
auf dem **Continent**.

Telegramm-Adresse: **Friedensengel**.
Telefon-Umschaltestelle für **Import: Nr. 1600 Schnellgerberel.**
Export: Nr. 2400 Weinstein.

Enormes **Kleiderlager**
aus allen **Partien Deutschlands**.
Großer Vorrat **feinsten Tuches**
aus **Irr- und England**.
Moderne und ältere Dessins
für jeden Geschmack.

Kunstgeschnitzte antike Schränke & Truhen
nach den Entwürfen des Kunstschreiners **Früh**.
Schreibmaschinen mit unleserlicher Schrift
jeglichen Systems.

Leicht transportable Motorräder,
ohne Benzingeruch.
Fast neue Musikautomaten, ganz wenig
reparaturbedürftig.

Vertreter der renommiertesten Turm-,
Wand-, Pendel- u. Taschenuhren-Fabriken.
Jede gewünschte Garantie kann verlangt
werden.

Um geneigten Zuspruch bittet
Buttenhauser.

Sie brauchen kein Geld.
Alles im Tauschweg.

The tailor`s shop Höchstetter: "The Laupheim Clothing-Store"

Albert Höchstetter married into Laupheim like many others of his village companions from Buttenhausen in the valley of the Lauter (On the Swabian Alb near Münsingen). His origin was perpetuated in his nickname: All his life he was "the Buttenhausen guy", which perhaps has something to do with his rustic habits and his somewhat archaic business style. He had started with a tailor's workshop in Kapellenstrasse 12, but gradually it changed into a "Clothing Store" as he named it, we would say Second Hand Shop today. He dealt in new as well as used clothes, but also with all sorts of other used objects: cupboards, chests, typewriters, nickelodeons, motorbikes, as the Purim advertisement humorously states. He lived according to the motto: "You need no money – everything by way of exchange". But he certainly did not have the large storeroom of which he boasted in the advert but it must have been very cramped in his shop. In short: Even for those times it must have been a quite an original business.



The house on the corner behind the car was "The Laupheim Clothing-Store" of Albert Höchstetter. Today the corner has been completely rebuilt (Photo from the 1980s, Archives Theo Miller)

When Ernst Schäll's father, Paul Schäll born 1887, had finished his apprenticeship as a tailor and was looking for a position as a journeyman tailor he found one with Albert Höchstetter. He took on Paul Schäll about 1905. So owing to him Paul Schäll stayed in Laupheim, started a family and his son Ernst was able to render his services to the heritage of for the Laupheim Jewish community!

The following invoice (see photo) that Albert Höchstetter issued on December 18, 1887 is a rare specimen. It was addressed to "Mr. Karl Lämmle, presently in America, from here" and was paid on December 29 by Mr Wolf Stern. According to this invoice Carl Lämmle, who had emigrated to America in 1884, must have been in Laupheim in the summer of 1886 for about two weeks, as Albert Höchstetter had provided him with a tailored suit for 46 Marks on August 29 of that year. In addition there was some mending ("two pairs of trousers to be altered for 1.40 Marks, new buttons on a greatcoat and mending it, 0.80 Marks), which were due at the end of the year only like all tradesmen's invoices and were paid by Carl Lämmle's representative. In this case, it must be said, the payment was settled only one year later.

Fol. *124* *14* *Laupheim, den 18. Dezember, 1887*
(Württemberg.)

RECHNUNG
von

Albert Höchstetter

für *Herrn Karl Lämmle z. Z. Amerika von hier*

Herrenkleider-Geschäft. Grosses Lager in den feinsten englischen, französischen und deutschen Stoffen.
Anfertigung nach Mass.

1886			fl.	sch.
August	20	an 2 paar Hosen mindern	1	40
"	22	" 1 Wolljackett mit 2 Knöpfen	-	80
"	29	" 1 Anzug	46	-
Nov.	23	" 1 Weste mindern mein Band	-	80
Wsk.			49	00

*Auf Herrn Wolf Stern hier's
Druck und Erfüllung
Laupheim am 29. Dezember 87*

The Laupheim Rifle Club 1864 e.V. (registered club)

In his leisure time Albert Höchstetter was active in the Laupheim Rifle Club from his early youth. He was loyal to this hobby all his life as can be verified in the shooting records of the club founded in 1864. At one time Albert Höchstetter, presumably when he was still young, even became "Württembergischer Meister" (the best in the kingdom of Württemberg) and even at the age of 75 he won the twelfth prize in 1931 shooting at the "target of honor". So it is no wonder that he posed on the 1907 photo in a central position among the active marksmen.

Men from all denominations came together in the rifle club in order to take part in shooting competitions and for social purposes. For these purposes the saloon of the restaurant "Schützen (Marksman)" in Lange Gasse, behind which the range was located, was ideal. Shooting sports and rifle clubs were highly estimated in the years before World War I and every person of esteem and high ranking was a member of the rifle club. Nine out of the 32 active marksmen that posed for a group photo in front of the shooting gallery in 1907 (which is more than a quarter) were Jewish. Thus the rifle club was certainly the place where Christian-Jewish cooperation was successful.



Friendly Christian-Jewish living and working together in the Rifle club in 1907:

Below right Max Bergmann is leaning trustfully on dentist Nast, below left in the corner is Richard Heumann. Top right Marco Bergmann and Julius Heumann are situated, top left with a cigar Jakob Adler. In center position seated Albert Höchstetter seated beside chairman Paul Gerhardt, behind them standing the "two Löwenthals", son Sellmar and father Luis and behind these the "little Rieserle" is cheering to an unknown marksman.

In the fall of 1927 the club organised a jubilee shooting event for the only purpose to honor the active marksman Albert Höchstetter, active for 42 years. At the festival banquet that followed he was presented with an "artistically executed plaque" and the chairman of the rifle club praised Höchstetter's merits. He said Höchstetter was "one of the best-known marksmen, far beyond Württemberg", who had gained general respect and who still was achieving excellent shooting results even at the age of 71."

Anyone who had might have predicted in 1927 that Höchstetter – and all the other Jewish members – would be expelled from the club six years later would certainly have been considered mad. But just such a bizarre turn happened in German history.

That Albert Höchstetter was a sociable person who enjoyed the joyful sides of life was even documented on his gravestone after he had died at 78 in 1935. Not really in the tradition of Hebrew eulogies it says:

He loved life and found joy in life.

May his soul be bound in the bundle of life

Hugo Höfstetter

About his son Hugo we have much less information than about his father. When the first Laupheim Secondary School was opened in 1896 Hugo was among the youngest of the 32 pupils of the first secondary school class. With 14 students – almost one half of the class – “isr.”(Jewish) was registered as their denomination. This shows that it was the Jewish community that used the new chances of further education the most readily. After his time in secondary school he must have embarked on an apprenticeship in commerce, but up to the First World War we have no more information about him.

His commercial job and his chronic gastroduodenal disorders were the reason why he was appointed all through the war to work in various offices: On August 6, 1914 he was drafted to the armouring battalion in Ulm (Wilhelmsburg) and from September 1914 he was stationed at the reserve battalion of the infantry regiment 120, where he was the company's orderly. In February 1916 he was sent to Stuttgart, the Ministry of War and the Deputy General Headquarters, from where he was sent back to Ulm to the reserve battalion in February 1918.

One of his tasks there was to work on the 8th and 9th War Loan and the Ludendorff Donation. Three weeks after the end of the war he was discharged as a “Gefreiter” (private).

Soon after the war in June 1922 Hugo Höfstetter married Kathi Kaufmann from Lucerne, who was 14 years younger than him. Their son Herbert was born on August 14, 1923 in Ulm, where the family then lived. Hugo did not continue his father's business. Nevertheless, his connections with Laupheim were not disrupted and later, after 1933, his family lived there, at least at times, where his father died in 1935. On this occasion Kathi Höfstetter must have got to know and love the then teacher at the Laupheim Jewish Elementary School Salli Silbermann. In April 1936 the two of them left Laupheim officially together with son Herbert and they emigrated together to Johannesburg in South Africa. South Africa was then one of the few countries German Jews could emigrate to without major problems. The deserted husband Hugo stayed on for one and a half years and finally emigrated to South Africa's neighboring country, Rhodesia, in November 1937. One can only guess that Kathi, who continued to be his wife, was helpful in choosing the unusual emigration destination. These are speculations, though, as there is no further news about the family and all traces are lost.

Sources:

Contemporary witness Ernest Bergmann, (neighbor of the Höchstetter family till 1935)

Archives of the Laupheim Rifle Club 1964 e.V.

John-Bergmann-Estate, on microfilm in the Stadtarchiv Laupheim (town archives Laupheim)

Jonas Weil: Memorial Book on the Great War, page 41

Natanja Hüttenmeister: The Jewish Cemetery in Laupheim, 1998.

Josef Braun, Old-Laupheim Pictorial Broadsheet, Volume 1, 1985

Karl Neidlinger, 100 Years Realschule (Secondary Modern School), 1996