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## REUTLINGEN BRANCH

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The members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints living in Reutlingen were few in number in 1939. Although they lived only twenty miles from Stuttgart, they were not supported by American missionaries at the time and might well have felt a bit isolated from the Church.

Sacrament meeting took place at 10:30 a.m. in a room at Hohenzollernstrasse 1.<sup>1</sup> The branch directory also indicated that cottage meetings were being held at 8:00 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays. With such a small branch population, it is likely that a single room could accommodate those who attended the meetings.

Reutlingen Branch <sup>2</sup>	1939
Elders	2
Priests	0
Teachers	0
Deacons	2
Other Adult Males	8
Adult Females	16
Male Children	1
Female Children	0
<i>Total</i>	29

Little is known about the general membership of the Reutlingen Branch, but documents found among the reports filed by president Erwin Ruf of the Stuttgart District show that several citizens of Reutlingen were required to officially withdraw (or be released) from the local Evangelical [Lutheran] Church in order “to join the Mormons” as of April 4, 1938:<sup>3</sup>

- Jud Friedrich [N.], born 1886, a master furniture maker
- Jud Amalie nee Reisch, born 1885

- Jud Anneliese [N.], born 1915, a seamstress
- Jud Helene [N.], born 1917, a franchise manager
- Jud Friedrich [N.], born 1923, attends school

The branch directory submitted to the mission office in June 1939 shows only one name: Friedrich Jud as branch president. Other than the names of two more members who died, the only other information available about this small branch during the years 1939 to 1945 is that the membership grew by two persons by November 1941—one elder and one male child.<sup>4</sup>

The general minutes of the Stuttgart District were kept conscientiously by president Erwin Ruf from November 1939 to June 1942 and include frequent notes of his visits among the Saints in Reutlingen.<sup>5</sup> On each occasion, he indicated which meeting he attended and provided the topic of the talk he gave. He also indicated that on a regular basis, he inspected the records of the branch. No other comments were recorded.

It is possible that the Reutlingen Branch discontinued meetings in early 1943. As of February of that year, Friedrich Jud began regular visits to and participation in meetings of the Göppingen Branch.<sup>6</sup> The distance from Reutlingen to Göppingen is only about thirty miles as the crow flies, but the trip by rail would have been indirect and likely took close to two hours in those days.

### IN MEMORIAM

The following members of the Reutlingen Branch did not survive World War II:

**Friedrich Hans Jud** b. Reutlingen, Schwarzwaldkreis, Württemberg, 27 Oct 1923; son of Friedrich Johannes Jud and Amalie Reisch; bp. 29 May 1932; conf. 29 May 1932; ord. deacon 2 Apr 1939; rifleman; d. in field hospital 3/619 at Taganrog, Russia, 25 Jan 1943 or 1945 (FHL microfilm 68807, book 2, no. 547; FHL microfilm 271374; 1930 and 1935 censuses; IGI; AF; www.volksbund.de)

**Eva Maria Ulmer** b. Willmandingen, Reutlingen, Schwarzwaldkreis, Württemberg, 16 May 1861; dau. of

Johannes Ulmer and Catharine Barbara Moek; bp. 17 May 1941; conf. 17 May 1941; m. 9 Feb 1892, Ludwig Eissler; d. old age 6 Jun 1943 (FHL microfilm 68807, book 2, no. 719; IGI; AF)

**Albrecht Weichinger** b. Boll, Schwarzwaldkreis, Württemberg, 11 Sep 1911; son of Joseph Weichinger and Wilhelmine Frank; bp. 9 Jun 1924; conf. 9 Jun 1924; d. murder 16 Oct 1941 (FHL microfilm 68807, book 2, no. 16; FHL microfilm 245296; 1930 and 1935 censuses; IGI)

## NOTES

1. West German Mission, branch directory, 1939, CHL 10045 11.
2. Presiding Bishopric, "Financial, Statistical, and Historical Reports of Wards, Stakes, and Missions, 1884–1955," 257, CR 4 12.
3. CHL MS 13360, 165.
4. Erwin Ruf, Stuttgart District statistics, CHL CR 16982 11.
5. Stuttgart District general minutes, CHL CR 16982 11.
6. Göppingen Branch general minutes, CHL LR 3235 11, vol. 15.

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## STUTTGART BRANCH

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For centuries, the city of Stuttgart was the capital of Württemberg, the largest state in southwest Germany. In 1806, Napoleon raised Württemberg to the status of kingdom, and Stuttgart became home to royalty. Although relegated to secondary political status when the German Empire was founded in 1871, Württemberg remained a proud component of the new Germany, and Stuttgart was its principal jewel. In 1939, the city had more than 490,000 inhabitants.<sup>1</sup>

The Stuttgart Branch consisted of 197 registered members that year and was therefore the largest unit of the Church for miles around. One in six of those members held the priesthood, and with eighteen elders, the branch was in a position to render support to weaker units of the Stuttgart District.

The president of the Stuttgart Branch as World War II approached was Erwin Ruf. His counselors at the time were Karl Lutz and Wilhelm Ballweg. All leadership positions in the branch were filled: Karl Mössner (Sunday School), Friedrich Widmar

(YMMIA), Erika Greiner (YWMIA), Julie Heitele (Primary), and Frida Rieger (Relief Society). Several other members were serving at the time in district leadership positions.<sup>2</sup>

Stuttgart Branch <sup>3</sup>	1939
Elders	18
Priests	0
Teachers	5
Deacons	10
Other Adult Males	21
Adult Females	110
Male Children	18
Female Children	14
<i>Total</i>	197

Branch meetings were held in rented rooms in a building at Hauptstätterstrasse 96. Sunday School began at 10:00 and sacrament meeting at 7:00 p.m. The Primary organization met on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. and the Mutual at 8:00. The Relief Society met on Thursdays at 8:00. The fast and testimony service was held once each month immediately following Sunday School, and a genealogical study group met at 8:00 p.m. on the first and second Tuesdays of the month.

The building at Hauptstätterstrasse 96 was less than one mile from the center of Stuttgart, and the branch had moved into the rooms there on February 14, 1926.<sup>4</sup> Walter Speidel (born 1922) recalled that the church rooms were upstairs above a factory and that the missionaries had lived in back rooms before their evacuation. "I was the Sunday School secretary when the war started, and I remember writing attendance numbers in the 120s often. There might have been seventy to eighty persons in the sacrament meetings."<sup>5</sup>

The Stuttgart Branch was one of only three in all of Germany that had a baptismal font in the meeting rooms.<sup>6</sup> This one was described by several