

The life and survival of the family
of the master confectioner
Aloys Schulte in Hamm,
North Rhine-Westphalia,
during World War 2.



Günter, Toni, Aloys & Werner Schulte; 1942,

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Aloys Schulte, born in 1902 and passed away in 1959, was the youngest of 11 siblings. In 1918, at the age of 16, he began his apprenticeship as a confectioner at the Levedag confectionery in Münster, North Rhine-Westphalia and passed his master confectioner's examination in 1921.



In 1929, he founded his first café and confectionery business at Nordstraße 11 together with his wife,

Toni Schulte, who was a trained bakery saleswoman. In 1930, his son Werner Schulte was born, and in 1932, his son Günter Schulte was born. Günter, a master confectioner, took over the family business in 1959 after his father's death. At that time, it was located at the Oststraße 5.

When the war was already well advanced, Aloys Schulte was first appointed as an auxiliary policeman in 1944 and was drafted into the



war six months later. During this time, Toni Schulte took over the management of the café and, for a special reason, hired a master baker. All food was only available through ration cards. As soon as rusks were produced, larger amounts of flour could be obtained because rusks were needed for infant nutrition. Since there was enough flour available, confectionery products could also be produced. This ensured the survival of the confectionery. The air raids at that time were so extreme that everyone went to bed wearing street clothes and had their packed bags ready beside the bed. My great-uncle Günter Schulte told me in a con-

versation that there was an air raid during which a mass panic broke out on the way to the bunker. A soldier tried to calm the people down by firing a shot into the air, but it was of no use. It later turned out that eight people did not make it into the bunker, including Günter and Werner's (favorite) aunt. Günter told me how terrible it was for him when he came out of the bunker the next day and saw the bodies barely covered with a blanket. He said that even 80 years later, what he saw back then still affects him deeply. Despite everything, people tried to bring small moments of joy into everyday life, for example, by taking family trips. The confectionery, which was by then located at Oststraße 63, was bombed out in November 1944.

For this reason, Aloys Schulte was allowed to return to his family for a short leave. Günter also told me that he and the rest of the family dug through the remains of the bombed-out house and actually found a jar of jam. He said they were very happy about it because it meant they could eat jam on their bread. After this bombing, Günter and Werner Schulte were sent to relatives in the countryside. I also asked Günter to what extent the Nazi regime tried to force children

and teenagers into their organizations. He told me that he and his brother Werner had to belong to the "Jugendvolk" (Young Folk), where they had to go twice a week.



The organization's goal was to indoctrinate children and teenagers with the ideology of National Socialism and raise them to be loyal to Hitler. They were also to receive pre-military training. Günter told me that every few months, they had to go to Silberberg in Lower Saxony, where they played games like

cops and robbers and other games that would simulate a war situation at night.

How did I experience my great-uncle's account of his childhood during World War II?

In my opinion, childhood in those times hardly existed, because children had to grow up early and could not afford much childishness. Although, as previously mentioned, there were moments when they could be children—for example, by taking trips and trying to bring some lightness into life. I also think that the traumas were never really processed, even with time and adulthood, because these experiences still affect people deeply even 80 years later. While talking to Günter and listening to his childhood stories, I couldn't help but think of the children and teenagers today who flee to Germany and carry a similar burden. Even my mother, who is from Tanzania, told me about her childhood, when at the age of eight, she experienced the war between Tanzania and Uganda during the time of Idi Amin in a similar way. No matter when and where in the world: children are always the long-term victims of wars.

