

Bild Zeitung

New Theories on Stolen Düe Jewellery

Was the jewellery already hidden before the robbery?

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By Axel Sturm

How did the haul from the Düe robbery get into his father's shop?

Police and public prosecutors are now attempting to throw light on mystery.

BILD reported the sensational find exclusively on Saturday. The 10.8 kilos of jewellery handed over to police by the Hildesheim lawyer Martin Fett were hidden in a cavity behind wood panelling in the former business premises of Düe's father Friedrich. The jewellery was found during renovation work. Since then police have interviewed the workers, the new proprietor and the former owner of the goldsmith's business.

The main question is: Who had access to the business at the time? Police suspect someone close to the Düe family or their employees. According to one investigator, it is not very likely that a robber would choose to hide the goods close to the victim's father.

In the wake of the robbery in 1981, Düe himself came under suspicion, was first convicted and then later acquitted. Could his father even have been involved in the robbery? "Not possible", say investigators who were involved at the time. Father Friedrich was on the island of Sylt at the time looking after his son's jewellery studio in Westerland.

Nevertheless the property was searched after the robbery – along with all the other family properties. A police spokesperson commented: the technology was not around at that time to allow hollow cavities to be discovered – that's why we didn't find anything. There was no reason to take the place apart. One of those involved in the investigation suspects that the jewellery "was already in its hiding place before the robbery!" If that's the case, there will no new trial. According to Thomas Klinge (44), public prosecutor's office spokesman: "A simulated robbery and possible fraud would already fall under the statute of limitations." Lawyer Elmar Brehm (57) succeeded in gaining Düe's acquittal in 1989. Today he comments: "If the jewellery had turned up 18 years ago an acquittal would have been very difficult."

Chief detective inspector, Joachim Mäuser (61), who investigated the case at the time, says: Errors of justice don't only affect the innocent.

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