

Anton Francis Von Zamloch

Anton Francis Von Zamloch was born January 1849 in Ratschach, Krain, Austria.¹ On a later census, he was listed as Slovenian.² At age fourteen, he ran away from home and joined a traveling show, where he learned the art of legerdemain.³ He immigrated to America about 1865.⁴ He was a shoemaker in Soquel, Santa Cruz, California, in the 1870s and early 1880s,⁵ but started his forty-year magic career in 1869. He toured with his act, which grew to include three assistants and over a ton of baggage, through 1912.⁶ He variously offered spiritualism, sleight of hand tricks, prestidigitation, illusions, card tricks, conjuring, vanishing tricks, burlesque, and humor.⁷ Tickets to his shows cost 25 cents.

Anton offered shows in Oregon in 1874 and in Nevada in 1876.⁸ He sued D. E. McCarty, the publisher of the *Virginia Chronicle*, for libel, when the newspaper printed inappropriate comments about him and his sister. The suit for \$20,000 in damages was entertained in the US Circuit Court because he was a citizen of Austria.⁹ Anton married Elizabeth “Lizzie” Marx on 8 May 1877 in San Francisco.¹⁰ They had five children, four of whom they raised to adulthood. Her father owned a bakery in Napa County.¹¹

Lizzie toured with Anton in the early years and participated as the beautiful woman he would float through the air.¹² Anton began offering presents to attendees, including furniture, lamps, glass sets, pigs, flour, washtubs, sewing machine, chinaware, gold watch, etc. The presents valued at exactly one-third of the evening’s gross receipts.¹³ In 1880, Anton made the first of four tours to Hawaii. In Honolulu, he met King David Kalakaua at the Iolani Palace and kept an autographed letter from the king and an autographed invitation card for a luau from Queen Kapiolani.¹⁴

On the 1880 census, Anton was listed as a “huckster”, living with his wife, daughter, and three of his wife’s siblings in San Francisco, San Francisco, California.¹⁵ He visited Silver Reef, Washington, Utah Territory during the week between Christmas and New Years of 1881. He went to the office of the local newspaper, *The Silver Reef Miner*, to secure publicity for his shows. He entertained them by making three unopened quarts of whiskey and a large box of cigars vanish. The editorial staff were not amused, accused him of banditry, and nearly shot him. The incident ended with the return of the whiskey and cigars, and the paper ran an account of Anton's hoax. He kept the clipping in his scrapbook.¹⁶

¹ The United States Census 1900 states his birth as January 1850; the California Death Index states his birth as 1850.

² United States Census, 1930.

³ *San Francisco Examiner*, 31 October 1932, p. 15.

⁴ His son’s passport application states his father immigrated in 1862; the United States Census 1920 states he immigrated in 1865.

⁵ *Napa Daily Journal*, 1899.

⁶ *Oakland Tribune*, 3 April 1927; *Modesto Daily Evening News*, 28 November 1897.

⁷ *Wikipedia*: Anton Zamloch.

⁸ *The Morning Oregonian*, 11 November 1874; *Wood River Times*, 29 August 1884, p. 3.

⁹ *Daily Appeal*, 24 May 1876, p. 3.

¹⁰ *San Francisco Examiner*, 10 May 1877, p. 3.

¹¹ *Wordpress.napahistory.org*

¹² *Oakland Tribune*, 3 April 1927.

¹³ *Ogden Standard*, 27 September 1884, p. 3; *Petaluma Courier*, 7 December 1876, p. 3; *Wood River Times*, 29 August 1884, p. 3; *San Francisco Examiner*, 26 February 1886, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Oakland Tribune*, 6 April 1927.

¹⁵ United States Census, 1880.

¹⁶ *Oakland Tribune*, 3 April 1927.

Anton was naturalized as an American citizen on 24 February 1885 in Alameda, California.¹⁷ He was listed on the voter registration lists as a "conjurer" in 1886 and 1888.¹⁸ He continued traveling over the next few years, with repeating shows in California¹⁹, Kansas²⁰, Arizona²¹, New Mexico²², Texas,²³ Nevada,²⁴ and Hawaii.²⁵ On the 1900 census, he was a magician, living with his wife and four children in Oakland, Alameda, California.²⁶ He was also listed in the business directory as a magician with a residence at 1080 62nd Street in Oakland.²⁷ In 1909, he spent several months entertaining in the imperial court of Vienna, Austria.²⁸

Anton toured Mexico in 1905-1906. He was robbed by customs agents before being allowed to take his magical contraptions into Mexico. He was surprised to find that most Mexican theaters did not have seats. Instead, it was customary for spectators to bring chairs from home or rent them from furniture stores. He found that the most effective form of advertising was to hold a street parade. He hired musicians and local boys to pass out programs along the parade route. Once, he stopped the parade in front of the governor of Sinaloa, bowed, and pulled from his top hat a green, white and red bird – the colors of the Mexican flag. The governor bowed back, and Anton waved a program which turned into a silk Mexican flag. The governor saluted, and Anton pulled from his hat cigarettes, combs, and five or six pounds of green, white and red candy, which he gave to the locals. Finally, he pulled a pint of champagne from the top-hat, which he shared with the governor.²⁹

On the 1910 census, Anton is listed as a traveling manager for a fish company (magician has been crossed out). He was living with his wife and four children in Oakland.³⁰ In 1915, Anton retired, believing that the movies were going to kill magic.³¹ He took up beekeeping with 50 hives.³² On the 1920 census, he is living with his wife, two children and a brother-in-law in Oakland. His son Carl was listed as a professional baseball player.³³ The family moved to a home at 5726 Keith Avenue in Oakland.³⁴ Their single daughter Antoinette always lived with her parents.³⁵

In August 1932, The Oakland Magic Circle of Oakland, California, held a "Zamloch Night." Anton was stricken with a heart attack a few months later, despite his seemingly excellent health for a man of his age. Before he died, he made notes on his magical experiences, from which a series of articles were

¹⁷ California Great Registers, 1866-1910; United States Census, 1900; California County Naturalizations, 1831-1985.

¹⁸ California Great Registers, 1866-1898; California Great Registers, 1866-1910.

¹⁹ *Folsom Telegraph*, 19 October 1889, p. 3; *Daily Courier*, 29-30 July & 2 August 1891; *Visalia Times-Delta*, 27-29 November 1893; *Daily Delta*, 29 November 1893, p. 1; 1 May 1898, p. 1; *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 17-22 September 1897; *Evening Sentinel*, 18 September 1897, p. 3.

²⁰ *Daily Kansas State Journal*; *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 13 July 1888, p. 3; *Kansas State Journal*; *Nevada State Journal*, 26 June 1896, p. 3.

²¹ *Weekly Journal-Miner*, 14 March 1888, p. 2; 22 November 1894, p. 7; *Coconino Sun*, 22 August 1891, p. 3; 22 November 1894, p. 7; *Arizona Daily Star*, 22-29 November 1891; *Tombstone Weekly Epitaph*, 22 November 1891, p. 1; *Arizona Republic*, 25-28 November 1891; *Arizona Republic*, 13 February 1895, p. 4. 16 February 1898, p. 1.

²² *Albuquerque Journal*, 10 September 1891, p. 4.

²³ *Austin American-Statesman*, 7-9 October 1891.

²⁴ *Yerington Rustler*, 11 May 1900, p. 3.

²⁵ *Evening Bulletin*, 10 November 1904, p. 8.

²⁶ United States Census, 1900.

²⁷ US City Directories, 1822-1995.

²⁸ *Reno Gazette-Journal*, 23 April 1909, p. 5.

²⁹ *Oakland Tribune*, 12 April 1927.

³⁰ United States Census, 1910.

³¹ *Magicpedia*: Zamloch.

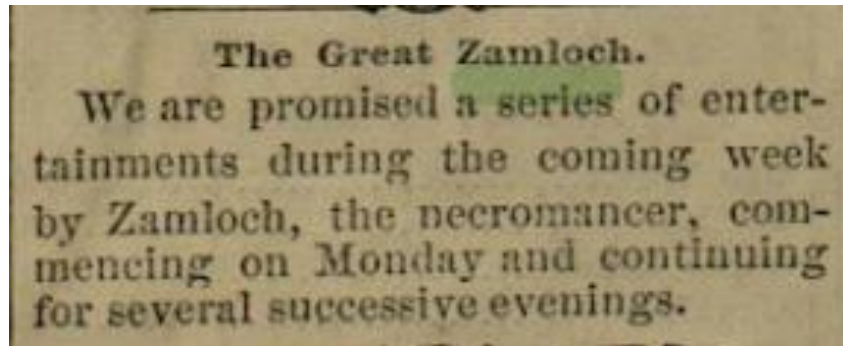
³² *Oakland Tribune*, 3 April 1927.

³³ United States Census, 1920.

³⁴ California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968.

³⁵ United States Census, 1940.

written by E. G. Fitzhamon in the *Oakland Tribune*.³⁶ Anton died at his home in Oakland on 29 October 1932³⁷ and was buried in the Mountain View Cemetery.³⁸ Lizzie continued living with their daughter in Alameda until she died in 1940 and was buried next to Anton.³⁹ It is not known what happened to their daughter Antoinette until she died in 1970.⁴⁰



Silver Reef Miner, 24 December 1881



Bill for the Great Zamloch on the side of building, exposed when a nearby building was demolished in Napa County, California. It shows a performance hosted by an unknown branch of the Congress of Women (wordpress.napahistory.org)

³⁶ *Sphinx*, December 1932; Zamloch, The Great, by R. S. Glover, Tops, February 1941.

³⁷ California Death Index, 1905-1939; *San Francisco Examiner*, 31 October 1932, p. 15; 1 November 1932, p. 15; *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 1 November 1932, p. 7.

³⁸ California Death Index, 1905-1939; *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 1 November 1932, p. 7.

³⁹ California Death Index, 1940-1997.

⁴⁰ *Findagrave.com*



(Images from *Wikipedia*: Anton Zamloch and from *bidsquare.com*)

Anton Francis Zamloch

Signature from naturalization documents (image from the California County Naturalizations, 1831-1985)

In the Superior Court of the County of Alameda,

STATE OF

CALIFORNIA.



BEFORE HON.

E. M. Gibson

Judge

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF

Anton Francis Jambloch
Is an Alien and a Native of the United States

In open Court, this

21st

day of February, A. D. 1885

Does come Anton Francis Jambloch and makes application to be admitted a **Citizen of the United States**, under the Naturalization laws thereof; and applicant producing and filing with the Clerk of this Court his certificate of his Declaration of Intention to become a citizen of the United States, issued out of the Clerk's Office of the Superior Court of the County of Alameda, California, July, 1884.

And it further appearing to the Court from the testimony of

H. H. Mayall

and

J. P. Weidt

two competent and credible witnesses, sworn in open Court, that said applicant has, for five years last past, resided in the United States, that during that time he has behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same. And said applicant now declaring upon oath in open Court, that he will support the Constitution of the United States, and that he doth absolutely and entirely renounce all allegiance and fidelity to all and any foreign Prince, Potentate, State and Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to

Emperor of Austria
of whom he was late a subject.

Whereupon, it is ordered by the Court that said

Anton Francis Jambloch
be and he is hereby admitted a Citizen of the United States and to all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto.

E. M. Gibson

Judge

(Image from the California County Naturalizations, 1831-1985)



Anton Zamloch (image from *Wikipedia: Anton Zamloch*)



(Image from *Findagrave.com*)