

Biography Frieda Holländer

Frieda Holländer is born in Eilendorf (Aachen), Germany, on 7 August 1898 to Benjamin Holländer and Wilhelmine Lichtenstein. She has four siblings: Sophie (1882 - ?), Leo (1893 – 1968), Friedrich ('Fritz' 1895 – ?) and Max (25 June 1896 – 13 February 1897).¹

Frieda loses her mother when she (Frieda) is 26 years of age. She is unmarried and looks after her widower father Benjamin.² She also works for *B. Holländer & Söhne*, a company owned by her father and her brothers.³ Located in Stolberg Atsch (in the vicinity of Aachen), the company is a prominent player in the iron, steel and machinery market in the German Rhineland.

The family business is doing very well. However, with the rise of Hitler in the early 1930s, life for Jews is becoming increasingly difficult. The measures taken against Jews by the regime essentially expel them from society and include the compulsory handing in of savings, passports and other possessions, dismissal from jobs, stripping of citizenship and banning from schools and shops. These discriminatory measures affect Frieda and her family as well; in the wake of the 'Kristallnacht' of 9-10 November 1938, her brothers Leo and Fritz are arrested.⁴ Leo is soon released to wrap up the forced sale of *B. Holländer & Söhne* ordered by the Nazi regime. The company is sold at a bargain price on 22 December 1938. Fritz is sent to concentration camp Buchenwald where he is imprisoned for four weeks. His detention causes permanent health issues which probably are grounds for denying him a visa for Mexico which he tried to obtain after his release. Leo, his wife and their children Walter, Wilma⁵ and Doris obtain visas for Southern Rhodesia (currently Zimbabwe) and leave Germany on 27 July 1939 - one month before the outbreak of WWII.



Frieda (l) – August 1926. Photo from Wilma's Story

¹ Max dies when he is only seven months old. E-mail Stadtarchiv Aachen dated 30 January 2020.

² Wilma Neumann (born Holländer), *Wilma's Story – Growing up in Nazi Germany and Colonial Rhodesia* (2016), at 22.

³ E-mail Friedhelm Ebbecke-Bückendorf dated 26 November 2019.

⁴ See Neumann 2016, *supra* note 2, at 32-33.

⁵ Wilma is Benjamin's grandchild. Her memoirs are contained in the book *Wilma's Story – Growing up in Nazi Germany and Colonial Rhodesia* which proved a valuable source for this biography.

In an attempt to flee the persecution of Jews in Germany, Frieda - who meanwhile has become stateless - seeks refuge in Maastricht, together with her father Benjamin. In April 1939, they move into an apartment at the Koning Clovisstraat 84. Their home is nicely furnished and decorated with their personal belongings brought from Germany. They even manage to bring some withheld valuables, including Benjamin's car.

Some of Frieda's and Benjamin's relatives are living in - the vicinity of - Maastricht as well. Benjamin's cousin Sali Blech⁶ has moved to Maastricht in 1938 and will even move in with them for a short while in the spring of 1940. Benjamin's niece Mathilde Beesman⁷ lives in Maastricht as well and there is a cousin Erich who lives in Heerlen. It is very likely that these relatives have visited each other during their stay in Maastricht, at least until their arrest, hiding or deportation. Early morning 24 August 1942, Frieda receives a deportation order for camp Westerbork, a transit camp for Jews. But for unknown reasons, she does not leave. Perhaps she is permitted to stay and take care of her old father who is not listed for deportation. Initially, the elderly and sick Jewish residents of the Dutch province of Limburg of which Maastricht is the provincial capital, are exempted from deportation. However, this group, including Frieda, is ultimately deported to camp Vught on 8 April 1943.⁸

POLITIE-MAASTRICHT.

TOELICHTING OP BIJGAANDE OPROEPING.

I. U dient in plaats van op 25 Augustus 1942 om 20 uur reeds om 16 uur op 25 Augustus 1942 aanwezig te zijn op de verzamelplaats School Prof. Pieter Willemstraat te Maastricht.

II. In geval van ziekte, d.w.z. u i t s l u i t e n d in geval van opname in een ziekenhuis, dient U zich u i t e r l i j k op Maandag den 24 Augustus 1942 te vervoegen op de Afdeeling Recherche, Gemeente-Politie Maastricht, (Kamer no. 1.) onder overlegging van een bewijs van opname in het ziekenhuis.

Maastricht, den 24 Augustus 1942.
De Commissaris van Politie.

Bijgaande enveloppe en nadere toelichting ontvangen op den 24 Augustus 1942, des voormiddags om 7.20 uur.

(Handtekening)

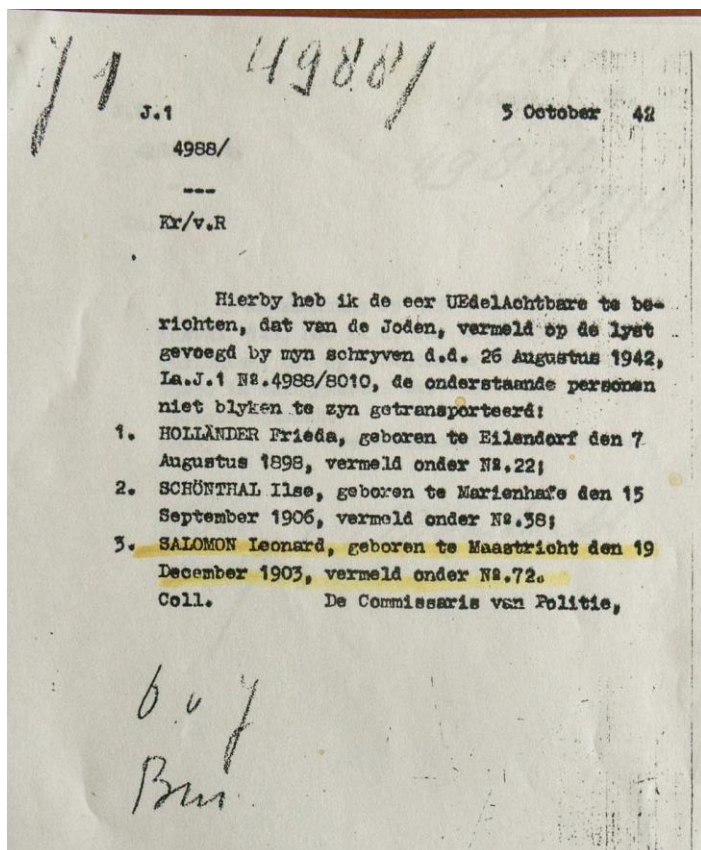
Naam en voornamen; Frieda Hollanda Frederic Holländer
Adres: Kon. Clovisstraat 84

Deportation order Frieda dated 24 August 1942

⁶ Sali's mother Sibilla Hartog and Benjamin's mother Hubertine Hartog were sisters.

⁷ Mathilde's mother Henriette Lichtenstein is a sister of Benjamin's wife Wilhelmine Lichtenstein. Together with her husband and children, Henriette lived in Maastricht. She died in 1930. Mathilde died in Auschwitz on 31 August 1942.

⁸ van Rens, H. A. J. (2013). De vervolging van joden en Sinti tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog in de Nederlandse provincie Limburg, at 158-159. See also www.historischnieuwsblad.nl/nl/agenda/5605/deportatie-van-limburgse-joden-tijdens-de-tweede-wereldoorlog.html. The official name of the camp was Konzentrationslager Herzogenbusch. It was the sole camp under SS auspices outside the Third Reich.



Frieda (under 1.) has not been deported to Camp Westerbork on 25 August 1942

After three months imprisonment in camp Vught, Frieda is sent to camp Westerbork on 3 July 1943. From here she is sent on 6 July to Sobibor⁹ where she is murdered upon arrival on 9 July 1943. Frieda dies at the age of 44.

By exception, her father Benjamin is officially permitted to move to a retirement home in the neighbouring village Meerssen.¹⁰ During a raid on 31 March 1944 he is arrested and sent to camp Westerbork where he arrives on 1 April 1944. He is then almost 85 years of age. After four days, on 5 April 1944, Benjamin is deported to Auschwitz¹¹ and probably murdered upon arrival.

Frieda's brother Fritz is deported on 22 March 1942 to Izbica, a transit ghetto in eastern Poland from where he is deported to an extermination camp.¹² Her sister Sophie also becomes a victim of the Shoah. Her brother Leo is the only one to survive the war. In Southern Rhodesia, he successfully founds *L. Hollander Iron and Machinery Company*. Leo passes away on 14 June 1968.

Our heartfelt thanks go Frieda's niece (and Benjamin's grandchild) Doris Holländer and her husband Martin Page who have been so kind and generous to send us their late sister(-in-law)'s memoirs which

⁹ E-mail camp Westerbork dated 20 December 2019.

¹⁰ As documented by the Jewish Council according to Herman van Rens in his e-mail of 31 January 2020. Indeed, Benjamin's name is not registered in camp Vught's prisoner registration system, set up by the Nazis. E-mail Dutch Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NIOD) dated 3 February 2020.

¹¹ E-mail camp Westerbork, dated 20 December 2019.

¹² It is unknown to what camp he was sent to. See Neumann 2016, *supra* note 2, at 51.

are bundled up in their book *Wilma's Story – Growing up in Nazi Germany and Colonial Rhodesia* (2016) ISBN 978-1-945175-69-5. We are grateful for your contribution to this biography.