

Kirchheimer-Löwenthal

Here at, Wilhelminasingel 88-90, in the former Jewish hotel Wilhelmina, on the third floor at the streetside, lived the German - Jewish Kirchheimer-Löwenthal family during the German occupation, At that time they consisted of 4 persons, Father **Simon Kirchheimer** was born on November 23, 1882 In Hollenbach the German state Bavaria, Mother **Jeanette (Jenny) Löwenthal** was born on April 21, 1882 in Mühringen. Both were murdered on November 5, 1942 in Auschwitz. They had 6 children; 4 sons and two daughters;

Arthur Kirchheimer, no data are known

Bruno Kirchheimer is born on June 8, 1914, he dies in 1993. He emigrated on 20 June 1937 to New York (USA).¹

Rita Kirchheimer, no data are known.

Ruth Kirchheimer born on February 27, 1918 in Niederstetten, murdered on November 5, 1942 in Auschwitz.

Julius Kirchheimer born on November 22, 1921 in Niederstetten, he dies on July 16, 2011 in New Haven, Meriden, Connecticut (USA). Julius is married with Margot Strauss, they have two daughters Janet en Deborah, and son Larry.

Julius worked for the aircraft factory Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, the engine supplier for the Joint Strike Fighter.²

Josef Jozef Kirchheimer born on February 18, in Würzburg, murdered on November 5, 1942 in Auschwitz.³

The sons Arthur, Bruno, Julius and daughter Rita Kirchheimer fled/emigrated to the United States of America before the German occupation.

(In Niederstetten in the district Main-Tauber in the German state Baden-Württemberg, there is a small active Jewish community . There is a synagogue , a Jewish primary school and a Jewish cemetery. Many Jews work in the fur- and textile-shops, butcher shops and there is a diamond polishing shop.

The family Kirchheimer-Löwenthal lives before their flight. In Niederstetten Jewish men were driven together in 1933 and beaten up by SA members, whilst the municipal police was watching. A protestant priest protested and was prosecuted, but was not supported en protected by his church. In 1933 there were still living 102 Jews in Niederstetten, 45 emigrate/flee, 44 are murdered in concentration camps, only a few survive.⁴)

During or just after the “Kristallnacht” on November 9, 1938, 16 year old Julius Kirchheimer was arrested by the Sturmabteilung (SA), he was imprisoned in the concentration camp Dachau.⁵ He is released and leaves Germany, he boards on a ship to The North of America, where he arrives August 30, 1939. He was supposed to leave September 1, 1939, luckily he managed to leave two weeks early. In America he meets his wife Margot Strauss.⁶

The family Kirchheimer-Löwenthal , now with 4 persons, father, mother en the two youngest children, decide to flee before the Nazis occupy the Netherlands , like many other Jewish, German families. The family chooses for the route to North America. They book for the “SS Veendam”, the ship from the Holland America line is to leave on May 11. Unfortunately the Germans invade the Netherlands May 10, 1940, The

ship is damaged in the war violence en never sails. The Kirchheimer family is “caught”.

September 1940 when Germany wants to attack Great Britain, Rotterdam is declared warzone . The family is taken to Maastricht. All “Veendampassengers” (Veendammers) are taken to Maastricht and are first accommodated in the Synagogue, where they sleep on straw beds. The Dutch Authorities intend to send the group to Westerbork. The Maastricht Jewish Help Committee, founded in 1933, especially the chair; Isidore de Vries, arranged that the group stayed in Limburg, independent from the authorities. De Vries stands surety for the group. De group is eventually accommodated in Roermond, Heerlen, Sittard en Maastricht.⁷

On September 9, 1940, the family is signed up in the strangers register of the municipal police Maastricht. As one of the Jewish families who registered on September 9, 1940, Simon Kirchheimer and his wife Jenny are placed by the Spielmann family who lived at the Notgerusweg 16, daughter Ruth and son Joseph are placed with the family Schleijen who lived at the Aylvalaan 20.

From January 1, 1941, the family Kirchenheimer- Löwenthal went to live together at the former Jewish hotel at the Wilhelminasingel 88 te Maastricht.

The Wilhelminasingel was renamed Wijckersingel⁸ by the Germans.

From September 1, 1941, Jewish children could only go to Jewish schools. The youngest son, Joseph, fast made acquaintance with friends in the neighborhood of the Jewish school in the Capucijnencorridor. One of them is Paul Lardinois, who lived in the Capucijnenstraat. The night before deportation Jozef said goodbye to Paul. Jozef's parent gave Paul Jozef's leather school bag, out of gratefulness.

Because of the obligatory registration, (de Verordening 6/1941) Simon en Jenny Kirchheimer-Löwenthal had to report at the Civil Position of Maastricht, on January 1 . Apparently they understand the reason why, because they had experienced this already in Germany, they decided not to report. But an officer of the Civil Position realized this around November 1, 1941 and sets this right. So yet they end up on the list of 159 - “full Jews”

Camp Westerbork

Monday August 24, 1942 Simon Kirchheimer receives and signs at 08.54 uur his call in person, he had to report the next day at the school in the Professor Pieter Willemsstraat in Maastricht. His wife and his youngest son received the same call. Daughter Ruth Kirchheimer did not receive a call, but joined het parents and brother to go to Westerbork. Behind her name on the list is typed (voluntary).⁹

Wednesday, August, 26, 1942 the family arrived in camp Westerbork with other deported Jews, they are accommodated in Barak 43K.

Jozef sent some postcards to his friend Paul Lardinois. Paul wrote back and his parents sent packages to camp Westerbork. The camps inhabitants are allowed to write once in a fortnight to friends and/or family. Jozef went to the camps school, as it turned out from the postcard exchange, he liked it. You can find this postcard exchange on the site from the Struikelsteente committee

Deportation

On Friday October 2, 1942, The railway from Hooghalen to Camp Westerbork is pulled through, the deportees don't have to walk to Hooghalen any more; a 5 kilometer distance.

The day before their departure from camp Westerbork, Sunday November 1, 1942 the list with the Jews who are going on a transport the next day to Auschwitz was ready. The hall leaders woke the people between 2- 3 am, to prepare themselves for the transport. The Kirchheimer Family is one of them.

Monday November 2, 1942 the 33th transport takes place from Westerbork to Auschwitz; 954 Jews, among them 185 children, on their way to their death

The place where the train departed from the camp is now called; "Boulevard des Misères". Three days later, November 5, 1942 the train arrived in Auschwitz, the Kirchheimer family is murdered directly after arrival.

Frase in a poem 'How to spot one of us' from Janet R. Kirchheimer:

Oma, Opa, Ruth, Jozef, hoor je mijn krijzen,
In elke regel, de adem van elke strofe, het gesis,
En gekreun van elk gedicht.¹⁰

1 https://www.ushmm.org/online/hsv/person_view.php?PersonId=3772830

2 <https://www.geni.com/people/Julius-Kirchheimer/6000000002867915973>

3 <https://www.geni.com/people/Simon-Kirchheimer/6000000006583559572>

4 http://www.alemannia-judaica.de/niederstetten_synagoge.htm

5 Email Janet Kirchheimer 23 februari 2022 om 16.17 uur

6 Email Janet Kirchheimer 4 april 2022 om 03.32 PM

7 <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn507503>

8 RHCLGAM Gemeentepolitie 20108D127VD register

9 RHCLGAM Gemeentepolitie 20108A1739

10 <https://www.amazon.com/How-Spot-One-Janet-Kirchheimer/dp/0963332988>