

Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule (1935-1941)

BY GERTRUD THOMPSON

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Introduction

In 1934, while on a visit to a small town in southern Germany, Leonore and Ernst Goldschmidt became aware of the suffering endured by local Jewish school children, who were at the mercy of a few outspoken Nazis. This was especially hurtful, when those families had known each other for some years and had been living as neighbours. The Nazi hate propaganda included baptised children of Jewish parents. By contrast, in Berlin, where Leonore and Ernst resided, the situation was better as a certain amount of anonymity was possible. This awareness led Leonore Goldschmidt to contemplate opening a boarding school which would offer a good education in peaceful surroundings. As she was a teacher with a doctorate in history, Leonore Goldschmidt had the necessary qualifications to undertake such a project. But equally important was her strong and determined personality displayed since her youth.

Before the First World War

The young Leonore, 1897-1914

Leonore or Lore, as she was called, was born on the 16th of November 1897 in Gosda by Klinge². (Photo 1). Her sister, Martha, was 13 years her senior. Her mother, Jenny Zweig neé Marcuse came from well established families in Schwerin and Crossen. Shortly before her death in March 1934, Jenny wrote a letter to her niece, Lotte Just, containing much information about her ancestors³ including the fact that her paternal grandfather had been the Mohel in Schwerin and considered a learned man. Lore's father, Wilhelm Zweig, was born in Lublinitz then part of Germany, now Lubliniec, Silesia, Poland. He had two older brothers Karl and Joseph. Joseph and Wilhelm left Lublinitz to settle in Forst/Lausitz. When their father, Lore's grandfather, Adolf Zweig, died in 1893, Joseph signed his death certificate. It stated that Adolf had been married to Lorel Richter, that, at the time of his death, he was a house owner in

¹ Gertrud Thompson is the daughter of Leonore and Ernst Goldschmidt, birth certificate

² Birth certificate No 27, Klinge, 23/11/1897

³ This letter survived the emigration but was lost and only photocopies exist

Lublinitz⁴ but had come from a farm in Molna, located a few kilometres outside Lublinitz. Molna is of interest as the family of Arnold Zweig, the writer, also farmed there⁵ but, due to the immense destruction of records by the German Army in 1939, the exact relationship between the two Zweig families could so far not be established.

After Wilhelm Zweig's arrival in the Lausitz, he discovered a clay pit near Gosda by Klinge and started to make bricks. A financial partner in the undertaking, Wilhelm Just, introduced him to his sister-in-law, Jenny Marcuse whom Wilhelm Zweig promptly married.⁶ By the time Lore was born, her father had a well established business, called a *Dampfziegelei*, (Steam driven brick works) in Gosda by Klinge. Today it has disappeared, a huge lignite coal hole is all that remains. But the original little railway station at Klinge still exists. When the Gosda clay deposit became exhausted, Wilhelm Zweig opened a new brick factory at Lieberose and, remembering his childhood in Molna, bought one farm in Zimmersdorf and one in Pförten.

Lore had an idyllic childhood. She loved living in the country. She often talked to her children about the pony trap, which took her to school. In June 1908, when Lore was eleven years old, she wrote a letter to her mother, who was taking a cure in Wiesbaden⁷. It showed that Lore's handwriting was outstanding. To enable her to continue her education and attend a secondary school, the family moved to Forst where she joined the *Luise Schule*. There she learnt English, French, History, Mathematics and Science. She learnt Jewish History and Religion from Herr Pulverman, the Cantor, who looked after the small Forst congregation. Wilhelm Zweig contributed to his upkeep although the Zweig family was an emancipated family.

Lore's adult education, 1914-1923

In 1914, the year war broke out, Lore was 17 years old. She wanted to continue her education but, as only the boys' section of the *Luise Schule* continued to the *Abitur* (Final High school leaving examination), she decided to attend the private school of Dr. Krause in Halle for a further two years. A war time card from her father, to Halle has survived.⁸ It was written from Forst as he was, fortunately, too old to serve in the army. Because Dr. Krause's school had no facilities to actually take the *Abitur*, Lore had to go to the Grunewald Gymnasium for Boys in Berlin to sit the examination.⁹ Her *Zeugnis der Reife*, (Certificate of maturity) showed that she passed her favourite subject, History, with a very good mark, Latin, French and Geography with a good pass, English, German, Mathematics and Chemistry with a pass but failed Physics. It

⁴ Death Certificate, No 54, issued in Lublinitz of 23/4/1893.

⁵ Marriage Certificate, No 110, of Carl Zweig to Regina Abraham, 6/9/1886

⁶ Zweig Family Tree, constructed by the author

⁷ Lore's letter to Jenny Zweig at Hotel Englischer Hof, Wiesbaden, with envelop and photo

⁸ Card in possession of the author

⁹ *Zeugnis der Reife*, *Real Gymnasium*, Berlin Grunewald, 31/3/1916

was issued on her father's birthday. Her parents were immensely proud of her as it was a great achievement for a girl from a small town to obtain the *Abitur* especially under the depressing circumstances of the war.

Lore was determined to continue her education and obtain a doctorate in History, a further six year undertaking. Fortunately, her father, a wealthy man, was able to fund the educational demands of his beloved daughter. She decided to start her academic life in Jena, the romantic town where the great German poet and playwright, Friedrich Schiller, had taught in the previous century. She selected European History, German Language with Literature, and English. She attended an introduction to Philosophy and learnt some Greek. As was customary at the time, she changed after two semesters to another university. Heidelberg was her choice, where many famous professors were lecturing. She was able to attend lectures by Hermann Oncken, Heinrich Hampe, Friedrich Gundolf and the doyen of Heidelberg, Johannes Hoops. Joseph Goebbels was a contemporary student. She started work on her thesis: "*Das Argument deutscher Orientpolitik in der deutschen öffentlichen Meinung*" (The discussion of German Orient Policies within the framework of German public opinion). After three semesters in Heidelberg, she moved to Berlin for six semesters. The lectures that she attended were listed in her Final Certificate¹⁰. Most noticeable was her interest in English Literature, taught by Prof. Walter Hübner, who would later play a most important and controversial part in her life. She returned to Heidelberg to finish her thesis and was awarded her doctorate, magna cum laude, in July 1921.¹¹

All these academic successes were remarkable especially taking the political and destructive social situation into account. During the last two years of the war, two cousins on her mothers side had been killed in action. Her brother-in-law had to join the army causing great anxiety to her sister. Thankfully he survived. With the destruction of the Turkish empire, her father had lost his investments in the Orient Express Railway. Further financial losses followed due to the inflation. Nevertheless Lore remained determined to finish her education and become a qualified teacher.

By 1921 costs had increased enormously. Finding a place to live in Berlin had become difficult. Luckily, a fellow student and friend suggested that her godparents, an elderly couple, wanted to rent some rooms as they had lost their adopted nephew in the war and were very lonely. It proved to be a home from home. Despite coming from a different background, Prof. Franz Noël, who came from a Protestant Huguenot family, and his wife, Gertrud, a teacher (Photo 4), accepted Lore as a daughter. They had many interests in common as Prof. Noël was Professor of Theology and History. Having found this wonderful place to live, Lore was able to register for the final examination. She had to submit another thesis: "*Die Politischen Ideen in Goethes Faust*" (Political ideas in Goethe's Faust). The oral examinations were held on the 6th and 7th of March, 1922. The certificate stated that she had passed History with a satisfactory pass, German with a good pass and English subsidiary with a pass. It

¹⁰ *Abgangszeugnis, Friedrich-Wilhelm Universität, Berlin, 1921*

¹¹ *Doctoris Philosophiae, Universitate Ruperto-Carola, 20/9/1921*

was issued on the 9th of May and signed by Prof. Walter Hübner.¹² She had completed her academic qualifications as a teacher in the German High School system and was sent for practical training to the Cecilien Schule in Wilmersdorf. Two months later, on the 7th of July, her father, aware of his beloved daughter's success, died of cancer.

Meeting Ernst Goldschmidt 1922

In August of that year, another Gertrud, Gertrud Arnheim, celebrated her seventeenth birthday in Berlin. Her aunt, her father's sister, threw a birthday party and invited Lore Zweig because Lore had been Gertrud's babysitter in Forst, where both families, the Arnheims and the Zweigs, had lived in different apartments in the same block. Another considerably older person, a lawyer, who had returned to Berlin after four years of war service, was also invited. He was a cousin of Gertrud's mother, Adele Arnheim, neé Levinger. Gertrud decided that the two "older" persons should sit together. This fateful decision brought Ernst Goldschmidt into Lore's life. Within months they were engaged and they married the following May, in 1923.¹³ With the inflation raging and accommodation still very difficult to find, Ernst moved in with Lore and the ever-supportive Noëls. Thus the Noëls became friends for life with Lore and Ernst.

Ernst Goldschmidt 1885-1914

Ernst Goldschmidt was born on the 20th of January, 1885 in Coblenz.¹⁴ His childhood was sadly marred by the death of his father, Ruben Goldschmidt, which occurred 6 days after his second birthday, leaving his mother, Helene Goldschmidt neé Englaender, a professional pianist, to raise him. They were not alone as Helene's mother and sister lived in Mainz, then a three hour journey from Coblenz. The sister had six children, 2 boys and 4 very beautiful girls who were slightly older than Ernst.¹⁵ He loved them and they remained his friends throughout his life. One of these "girls" was Adele Levinger, later Arnheim, whose daughter, Gertrud, would introduce him to Lore Zweig. Many other cousins lived in Coblenz, because his father, Ruben, had been the oldest of 5 children. Second cousins lived in Ehrenbreistein on the east bank of the Rhine, the Prussian side¹⁶, which was not as accommodating to Jewish people as the west side, the French side. It was one of the reasons why Ruben's father, Elias Goldschmidt, a jeweller, had left Ehrenbreitstein in 1850 and moved to Coblenz where he opened a business at Rheinstraße 34, a four story

¹² *Prüfungs Zeugnis, Wissenschaftliches Prüfungsamt, Nr 356, Berlin Lichterfelde, 9/5/1922*

¹³ *Marriage Certificate, Charlottenburg, 17/5/1923*

¹⁴ *Announcement in Coblenzer Zeitung, 21/1/1885*

¹⁵ *Englaender Family Tree*

¹⁶ *Archives, Ehrenbreitstein reports on page 312*

building.¹⁷ On the ground floor was the store which sold silver and porcelain tableware, on the first floor was the jewellery department with the family occupying the upper floors.

Some time later, Elias' nephew, Wilhelm Goldschmidt, a banker, followed him across the Rhine and opened a bank on the opposite side of the rose garden which faced Rheinstraße 34. One of his children and therefore Ernst's second cousin, Robert Goldschmidt, became Ernst's closest friend. In fact, throughout Ernst Goldschmidt's life, all these family friendships were of paramount importance.

Elias' business was most successful and he was appointed Crown Jeweller: "*Elias Goldschmidt, Hof-Juwelier Sr. Kaiserlichen und Königlichen Hoheit des Kronprinzen des Deutschen Reiches und von Preussen*" (Elias Goldschmidt, Crown Jeweller to the Imperial and Royal Highness, the Crown Prince of Germany and Prussia).¹⁸ This was a tremendous honour. He opened two other branches, one in Bad Elms and one in Cologne. When Elias died in 1864, his widow, Amalie Goldschmidt, neé Leroy, was left to run the business and bring up Ruben, aged 15 and the four younger children. Fortunately she was another very able and very beautiful person.¹⁹ A small booklet, in which she recorded, in her very fine handwriting²⁰, all family member's birthdays, weddings and other dates has survived. By 1879, Ruben and his brother Joseph were listed as partners in the business "Elias Goldschmidt und Söhne".²¹ That same year Ruben, who had been the honorary choir master of the Coblenz Synagogue, was made an "Ehrenmitglied" (Honorary Member) of the congregation²². In 1884, Amalie died. Three years later Ruben died.

His younger brothers, Joseph and Bernhard, decided to put their major effort into the Cologne branch of *Elias Goldschmidt und Söhne*, leaving Helene Goldschmidt to look after the business in Coblenz. In 1900, Helene Goldschmidt sold her interest in the business and bought a large modern apartment outside the old city boundary. Ernst, now 15 years old, attended the Gymnasium where he learnt Latin and classical Greek, but his joy was playing the piano. He had inherited much talent from both his parents. With High School completed, he decided to study Law. His first University was Munich. From a surviving "*Concert und Theater Merkbüchlein*" (Concert and Theatre Diary) with starting date, the 5th of November 1903,²³ it appeared that much of his spare time was spent at the opera, concerts and theatre. His other hobby was walking in the Alps. On the 5th of August he climbed Mont Blanc.²⁴ In October 1904 he changed his university studies to Berlin. In 1905, entries in the *Theater Merkbüchlein* suddenly ceased indicating that he must have started his compulsory

¹⁷ Notes made by author from Coblenz Town Records

¹⁸ Photocopy of Announcement in Coblenzer Zeitung

¹⁹ Paintings of Elias and Amalie Goldschmidt in possession of the author

²⁰ Handwritten Booklet, which survived both wars and emigration, in possession of the author

²¹ Coblenz Archives

²² Documents in possession of the author, Coblenz Synagogue 1879

²³ Booklet in possession of the author

²⁴ Certificat d'Ascension au Mont-Blanc, Chamonix, in possession of the author

German Army training service. Eventually in May 1911 he finished his studies and passed the "*Staatsprüfung zum Gerichtsassessor*" (State Examination for Assistant Judge) ²⁵. A second document in 1912 referred him to the "*Oberlandesgerichtspräsident*" (President of the Supreme Court) in Cologne, instructing him to work as a *Referendar* (Junior Barrister) in the Cologne district. Together with his cousin, Ernst Mayer he joined the Coblenz riding club. ²⁶ But he did not enjoy life in a provincial town and after finishing his training decided to return to Berlin where he opened a practice as "*Rechtsanwalt und Notar*" (Solicitor, Barrister and Notary).

1914-1918 World War 1 and after

The political situation was becoming ominous and early in 1914, his mother decided to sell her apartment, store the furniture and move to Berlin. In July 1914 she went to the "*Kurhaus und Grand Hotel des Bains*" (Spa and Hotel) in St.Moritz-Bad, Switzerland. She hoped that her son would follow her. The first of 81 letters to Ernst, ²⁷ written from the 27th of July 1914 onwards, expressed that hope. But by Saturday, the 1st of August 1914, war had become inevitable ²⁸ and Ernst, the loyal German, joined his regiment, the *Thorner Feldartillerie Regiment No.81*. (Field Artillery Regiment) ²⁹ His sad mother returned to Berlin and took up residence in the Hotel-Pension van Heuckelum for the duration of the war. Worse, on the 10th of October, she received a telegram informing her that the furniture storage in Coblenz had gone up in flames and all her furniture had been burnt. ³⁰ Her Bechstein grand piano, which she had left with a friend, was all that survived.

Ernst Goldschmidt served as *Wizewachtmeister* (Vize Sergeant-Major of the Cavalry) on both the eastern and western fronts ³¹. He was awarded the Iron Cross, second class, in 1916. ³² After demobilisation, despite being distressed from the dreadful experiences of the war, he remained determined to succeed with the practice as *Rechtsanwalt und Notar* (Solicitor, Barrister and Notary) in Berlin. His mother was overjoyed that he had survived.

²⁵ *Anlage Patent, Justizminister, Berlin, 2 documents 9/5/1912*

²⁶ *Mitglieder-Verzeichnis, Coblenzer Reitclub, 1912*

²⁷ These letters end on 27/10/1914, in possession of the author

²⁸ *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, special edition*

²⁹ *Bestallung als Vice Wachtmeister, Thorn, 24/12/1914*

³⁰ Telegram no:177, 10/10/1914

³¹ *Das Thorner Feldartillerie Regiment, book by Albert Benary, published 1938, Verlag Graefe.*

³² *Besitzzeugnis 11/10/1916*

1922 Ernst and Lore Goldschmidt, a team

(photo 2 and 3)

Four years later, he met Lore Zweig. By sharing Prof. Franz and Mrs Gertrud Noël's apartment both families were able to survive the German post war inflation and maintain an atmosphere of great love and affection. The resultant exuberance of joy produced a daughter on the 16th of February 1924. At that time, Lore was in her second year of teacher's training, teaching at the *Augusteschule* (Auguste school) in Berlin where a sympathetic Headmaster granted her leave of absence for the birth of the baby. 4 months later, she passed the final teaching qualification with a good pass.³³ When she found herself expecting a second child the following year, even she decided to take some temporary leave of absence. Their son, Rudolf, was born on March 7, 1925. With the inflation halted, they were able to afford and acquire an apartment in Berlin-Grunewald, *Egerstraße* 12. Grandmother, Helene Goldschmidt, joined them to help look after the children. The Noëls also moved. They took a smaller apartment in Wilmersdorf to stay closer to their adopted family. With loyal domestic help available, Lore was able to return to teaching on 1/10/1925.³⁴ For four years she taught at the *Bismarck Lyceum* (Bismarck High School for Girls) in Grunewald. She expected to receive her permanency there but the appointment was terminated in 1929, maybe for antisemitic reasons.³⁵ Hildegard Wegscheider, a senior school inspector and friend of Lore Goldschmidt, had her transferred to a more senior position in the *Sophie Charlotten Schule* in Charlottenburg. She was happy there as the Head, Dr. M. Rosenow, and a colleague, Dr.Christmann, proved to be supportive, both holding strong democratic views.

1931, the first contact with England

In 1931, the very ambitious Lore Goldschmidt was bothered by the fact that 7 years earlier, in her final examination of 1924, she had achieved only an ordinary pass in English. She decided that the English section of the examination had to be repeated. This led to one of the most important decisions in her life. In order to become more fluent in the language she decided to go to an English private school, St.Christopher School, located in the Garden City of Letchworth, Herts. The Headmaster, Mr Lyn Harris, and his wife, Eleanor Harris were both Quakers who held fervent views about education. The school was completely co-educational. Lore greatly admired Harris' attitude towards his pupils, as his aim was to create independent adults by including senior pupils in the decision making process and give great freedom to all.³⁶ They became good friends, which would later stand her in such good stead. Lore also made friends with Mr. Ernest and Mrs. Gertrude Fernyhough, the deputy Headmaster, and Dudley Cheke, a past senior pupil, whom she invited to Berlin. He later proved a very loyal friend.

³³ Certificate, *Staatliches Pädagogisches Prüfungsamt*, Berlin, 23/6/1924

³⁴ Letter, 29/11/1924, granting leave of absence until 1/10/1925

³⁵ Dismissal Notice, 27/3/1929, Provincial Schulkollegium, Berlin, gez. Reinhard

³⁶ St Christopher School 1915-1975 by Reginald Snell and photo

Family commitments obliged her to leave earlier than she had expected. Lore returned to Berlin, much refreshed and with an improved understanding of English (also bringing her memorable discoveries, packets of Corn Flakes and Quaker Oats plus a book of Illustrated English Nursery Rhymes). She passed her additional English examination with a good pass.³⁷ One of the examiners and signatory of this "Zeugnis" (Certificate) was Dr. Lewent, later himself a teacher at the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule.

Seven months later, on the 26 of January 1932, Helene Goldschmidt, who had been ailing for a considerable period of time, died.³⁸ Ernst, Lore, the children and servants moved to a larger apartment *Auguste Viktoria Straße 62*, (Auguste Viktoria street 62), Schmargendorf. Gertrud Noël, by now herself a widow, visited every day to supervise the homework of the children.

Warning signs about the impending political situation began to gather:- A Jewish friend, who had been born in Poland, decided to emigrate together with his family to the Argentine. When he told Ernst Goldschmidt that a possible ascent of the Nazis looked ominous Ernst replied: " Don't be silly, this is Germany not Poland".³⁹ But the friend from Poland was right. Within a few months Hitler achieved the unthinkable.

1933 Hitler gains power

In January 1933, Adolf Hitler gained power. Nobody was prepared for the brutal lawless behaviour which immediately followed. Franz Hermann, Ernst's best friend, who enjoyed a ministerial appointment, was taken to a concentration camp and so severely beaten that he never recovered. Signs went up in Berlin to boycott Jewish shops. Ernst Goldschmidt was so enraged that he tore them down. He was arrested and taken to the *Alexander Platz* (Alexander Place) Police Station. Being a man of courage, who had been awarded the Iron Cross during the war, he told these young Nazi policemen that while he was fighting for them in the trenches, they were lying in their cradles in nappies. It worked and they let him go.⁴⁰

On the 8th of August 1933, Lore Goldschmidt received her first dismissal notice asking her to reply within three days to confirm that she was a non-Aryan person.⁴¹ The notice stated that "all relevant laws" had been passed on the 7th of April. On the 29th of August came the dismissal notice ⁴² followed by a final notice on the 26th of September ⁴³. It was signed by the Prussian Minister for Science, the Arts and

³⁷ *Zeugnis über eine Erweiterungsprüfung für das Lehramt*, 23/6/1931, signed by Lewent

³⁸ Gravestone, Liberal Jewish Cemetery, Willesden, London

³⁹ Conversation remembered by author

⁴⁰ Father's return clearly remembered by author

⁴¹ 10/8/1933, from the *Oberpräsident der Provinz Brandenburg und Berlin, Schulabteilung*

⁴² 29/8/1933 dismissal notice, *Preußische Minister für Wissenschaft etc, Signed in Vertretung, Dr. Stuckart*

⁴³ 26/9/1933 financial settlement to 30/11/1933, *Oberpräsident Provinz Brandenburg und Berlin*

Education. It stated that her employment would be terminated on the 30th of November and that she would be on leave until then. She would not be entitled to any pension. The only reason cited for her dismissal was her *nichtarische Abstammung* (non-Aryan descent). Although aware that this would happen, the dismissal came as a dreadful shock. Not only had she worked very hard to obtain the maximum qualifications for teaching in the public service, she had enjoyed being part of that service. She had spent many hours of her own time producing plays and *Singspiele* (musicals) to instill a love of learning in her pupils. Only her Headmistress, M. Rosenov, had the courage to send her a card with thanks for all her endeavours⁴⁴. Lore and Ernst discussed emigration but the fact that Ernst was forty eight years old, spoke no English and had a profession that could not be practised in any English speaking country made them reluctant to take that path. Ernst also hoped that the German people would come to their senses.

On the 10th of October 1933⁴⁵, Lore Goldschmidt received permission to teach individual groups of maximum 5 persons provided that they were also of *nichtarischer Abstammung* (non-aryan descent). Leonore Goldschmidt had to pay 3 Marks for this permission and this permission had to be renewed yearly! It enabled her to offer her services to Frau Tony Lessler, who had been running a small private school at 18 Kronbergerstrasse, Berlin- Grunewald, for some years. Originally, the school was a *Waldschule* (woodland school) designed for children whose health was not strong enough to attend the public school system. The Montessori program, which the author attended from 1930 to 1932, was used in the lower school. But when Nazi regulations demanded that all Aryan children and teachers leave the school, because Tony Lessler, the headmistress, was Jewish, it became a private Jewish school.⁴⁶ Lore taught at this school from October 1933 until the 1st of January 1935.⁴⁷

1934 The murder of Alexander Zweig, Lore's cousin

On the 7th of March 1934, Lore's mother, Jenny Zweig, died from a stroke.⁴⁸ Lore inherited one half of Roßstrasse 18, a house in Forst/ Lausitz, which had been in the family since 1913.⁴⁹ The other half went to her older sister, Martha.⁵⁰ Her mother's natural death was followed by a most dreadful murder. During the night between the 30th of June and the 1st of July 1934, the "Night of the Long Knives" Lore's cousin, Dr.med.Alexander Zweig and his wife were arrested and subsequently murdered. Alexander was the son of Karl Zweig. At the time of the murder, he had been a practising physician who owned a sanatorium in *Hirschberg, Riesengebirge* now

⁴⁴ 9/11/1933, a card from M.Rosenov

⁴⁵ *Unterrichtserlaubnisschein*, signed *Schulrat, Dr Spanier*, Berlin Wilmersdorf

⁴⁶ Wilmersdorf Museum, 1992, *Hier ist kein Bleiben länger*.

⁴⁷ To whom it may concern, 10/11/1949 by Tony Lessler, in possession of the author

⁴⁸ Death Certificate, Nr.22, Berlin-Nikolassee, 8/3/1934

⁴⁹ *Grundbuch*, Forst Lausitz, 1913, page 77

⁵⁰ Will of Jenny Zweig, *Amtsgericht Forst*, 27/6/1935

Jelenia Gora, (Poland), Sudeten Mountains. In Schlesien alone, over 80 people were murdered on that night. Nazi ring leader, Udo von Woysch, the SS *Gruppenführer* ⁵¹, gave the orders. In 1956, he was sentenced to 10 years in jail but served only 2 years.⁵² The actual murderers were the *Obertruppfürer* Erich Böttger and SS *Unterscharführer* Otto Gasse who received 8 and 4 year sentences, respectively in 1951.⁵³ The reason for these murders was not given in the court procedures.

Because the Zweigs had no children, Lore, Alexander's favourite cousin, inherited a considerable sum of money and a Cremona violin. It seemed appropriate to devote the money to the opening of the Jewish boarding school, which had been in her thoughts since her dismissal from the public service and her subsequent visit to the small town in southern Germany. She began serious planning while still teaching at the Lessler Schule.

1935 Opening of the first LGS

Throughout these trying times, with their depressing circumstances, Lore always considered it of great importance to preserve an atmosphere of normality. She decided to give a large dinner party on the 20th of January 1935 for Ernst's 50th birthday. It proved to be the last time that the "Goldschmidt" cousins and second cousins living in Berlin came together, in fact, that such a gathering was possible for within months, Hitler made one of his most aggressive anti-Jewish speeches in Nürnberg imposing many restrictions on Jewish people. These rules became known as the Nürnberg laws ⁵⁴. One restriction demanded that all German female servants below 45 years of age were to be dismissed and only older women were to be employed in Jewish households, a racial slur. It meant that the cook "Annie" and the housemaid "Lischen", who had been with the family for 10 years and were much loved and trusted, would have to leave. But Lore was able to circumvent their dismissal by employing both Annie and Lischen in the new boarding school which had opened a few months earlier on the 1st of May 1935.

The opening of the school occurred in spite of receiving a letter from the *Staatskommissar der Hauptstadt*, (Prussian Commissioner of the Capital) Berlin, signed: *Im Auftrage* (as instructed) *Hassenstein*, dated the 8th of April 1935, stating clearly a) that her application to open a Jewish boarding school could not be granted and b) that she had permission to teach groups of 5 non-aryan children only, as had been stated in Dr.Spanier's *Unterrichtserlaubnisschein* of October 1933 ⁵⁵. But Lore, cleverly, circumvented these teaching restrictions. By forming a group with other teachers, quite a daring undertaking, she increased the total number of students to be admitted to the boarding school, the *Dr.Leonore Goldschmidt Schülerheim*, (Home for

⁵¹ Letter to author 10/3/1997 from the *Staatsanwaltschaft*, Osnabrück

⁵² Leo Beck Yearbook, 1970, page 151, Resistance of German Jews

⁵³ Report, B Kehne, *Staatsarchiv-os*. Niedersachsen

⁵⁴ 15/9/1935, Nürnberg anti Jewish legislation

⁵⁵ Letter dated 8/4/1935 signed *Im Auftrag* (on instruction) Hassenstein, copy with author

Students). It was housed at Kronberger Straße 24, Berlin-Dahlem,⁵⁶ close to the Grunewald. Kronberger Straße 24 was a four story house, with basement and a garden of 1650sqm. Surrounded by similar houses, the large gardens created a park-like atmosphere. As the prospectus showed, much thought was given to the physical and mental wellbeing of the boarders. They had five meals a day:- breakfast with 2 rolls, butter and marmalade, 2nd breakfast with sandwich and fresh fruit, lunch with soup followed by meat with vegetables or salad, and desert. In the afternoon, there was coffee with rolls or cake. Supper consisted of a warm meal, sandwiches and fruit. Ernst Goldschmidt, a gourmet who liked to eat at Kempinski's, made sure that all the food was of excellent quality. His cousin,⁵⁷ Helene Schwabacher, supervised the cooking. The food was not kosher but vegetarian meals were available on request. Non-boarders, from the inner city of Berlin, could also attend the school as it was easy to reach, 6 tram lines and two bus lines passed within walking distance. The age of pupils ranged from 6 to 18 years.

Heinz Happ joined the boarding school when it opened. He recorded his experiences in German in a collection of Goldschmidt Schule Memoranda published as "Passages from Berlin" in 1985. "He had come from Bad Freienwalde where he had experienced unbearable discrimination. As there were only very few boarders when he arrived at the *Schülerheim*, the atmosphere was that of a large family. But the school began to grow rapidly and some of the intimacy vanished". Werner Baum wrote that, when his father moved him to the Jewish Boarding School, Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt, there were altogether between 20 and 25 children, with 7 children in his class. They sat with their teacher at a round table. There was no blackboard. They did not have to raise their arm to speak. It was a very friendly atmosphere and teachers stayed even during intermission. Sonia Schweid, who joined in October 1935, wrote: "The greatest joy were those classes which were held out of doors under trees on pleasant days. It must have been during that period that we had botany and were encouraged to go out and gather, identify, and mount all kinds of plant material. I'm still reaping the benefits of that activity."⁵⁸

The complete architectural drawings of Kronberger Strasse 24 have survived.⁵⁹ On the top floor were dormitories where 2 or 3 children had to share a room. These were equipped with cupboards and washbasins. On the second floor slept the two boarding school supervisors and when necessary a nurse. Medical support came from Dr. Philip Cahn, a paediatrician and one of Ernst's cousins by marriage.⁶⁰ This was vital as more and more public medical help was denied to Jewish people. On the ground floor were most of the classrooms, the basement contained the kitchen and other support facilities. The house had one outside terrace and several balconies which were used for teaching or recreation when the weather was suitable. The syllabus had to be based on that of the German elementary school with additional

⁵⁶ Prospectus for boarding school, Kronberger Straße, illustrated with 8 photographs.

⁵⁷ Goldschmidt Family Tree

⁵⁸ Passages from Berlin, Private publication

⁵⁹ Architectural drawings, Kronbergerstraße, in possession of the author

⁶⁰ Goldschmidt Family Tree

courses on request. In the upper classes mathematics was augmented with accounting practice. Religious education played a large part with Hebrew lessons twice weekly. Close by lay several local synagogues, where pupils could attend services on Sabbath and Jewish Holidays. Music was taught in every class and instrumental music lessons were available. Domestic science, handicraft and horticulture were also included in the syllabus. In summer, games and athletics took place in the grounds of the Jewish Community located in the Grunewald and in winter, exercises were conducted in the gym of the Bar-Kochba Association in Halensee.

1936 Opening of the second LGS

It took until the 9th of January 1936, 8 months after the school had opened, for the *Erlaubnisurkunde*, (document granting permission to open a school) to arrive!⁶¹ The 4 page document stated that the teaching of foreign languages other than Hebrew was forbidden, that only girls were permitted in the upper school and that girls and boys had to be taught separately in the lower school. The total number of children per classroom was entered on the plan, bringing the total number of pupils allowed in the school to 173. Dr. Goldschmidt was required to submit lists of pupils to the local mayor of Schmargendorf, and submit the school timetable to the *Schulrat* (Inspector of schools) on every 1st of May. On no account should the school give the impression that it was a government school. The document was signed for the *Staatskommissar der Hauptstadt* (Prussian Commissioner of the Capital) on instruction by Dr.Klinger, school division, Berlin. By the time this document arrived, a new application was about to be lodged because more space was urgently required. The reputation of the school had spread so rapidly that more and more children had joined both as boarders and as day students causing crowded conditions.

In the meantime, on the 22nd of October 1935, Lore's sister, Martha, had died after a long illness.⁶² Bertha Mine and Wilhelm, her children, aged 12 and 10 years old, came to Berlin to join the Goldschmidt family. Mine, sometime later, preferred to live in the boarding section of the school. Although both children were now co-owners ⁶³ of the property, Roßstrasse 18, Lore was able to use it as collateral. She entered a lien ⁶⁴ in favour of brothers Jacob and Dr. Fritz Grötzinger, Jewish bankers, who owned a most magnificent building at Hohenzollerndamm 105/110, corner of Hundekehlstraße 23/26 and corner of Marienbadstraße ⁶⁵. They wished to leave Germany and the lean was used as a lease for this property, which occupied a whole city block.

In order to use it as a school some minor alterations had to be undertaken. While the building was being decorated, a visitor from Scotland, Margaret Cook, who was

⁶¹ *Erlaubnisurkunde* for Dr.L.Goldschmidt Schule, 9/1/1936, in possession of the author

⁶² Death Certificate in the archives of Amtsgericht, Cottbus

⁶³ *Gemeinschaftlicher Erbschein* 3. VI 144.35 in the archives of Amtsgericht, Cottbus

⁶⁴ *Grundbuch Forst Stadtbezirk*, Band 19, No 532

⁶⁵ Prospectus issued September 1937, in possession of the author

studying German at Edinburgh University, lived temporarily in one of the attic rooms on the third floor. She had come to improve her German and help with the Goldschmidt children. She was the second visitor from England. Dudley Cheke, whom Leonore Goldschmidt had met at St Christopher School, visited while studying oriental languages in Cambridge. These two admirable people formed our "introduction" to England. Both became important friends and later rendered much needed assistance to the Goldschmidt family.

By Easter 1936, Hohenzollerndamm 110 was ready and the senior school numbering 219 pupils moved into that magnificent building! (Photo 5). Part of the huge garden, 10000sqm, became the playing fields for outdoor sports and athletics. One part of the basement, which was covered with a parquet floor, became the gym. Also located in the basement were a large music room together with a grand piano, a workshop for wood and metal work, a laboratory for scientific experiments and washrooms with lockers. Another section of the basement became the living quarters of the caretaker, Herr Voss. On the first floor was a huge entrance hall, surrounded by 9 large classrooms plus a room for the art class. On the next floor was the office, the staff room and various other rooms that could be used for teaching of smaller specialist classes. Washing facilities were also available on that floor.⁶⁶ Gertrud Arnheim, the matchmaking cousin, became the school secretary. By employing close relatives, family friends and other trusted persons, the danger of incriminating information reaching Nazi ears would hopefully be avoided.

Official permission to operate the school at Hohenzollerndamm 110 arrived on 20th of May 1936. It was signed for the *Staatskommissar der Hauptstadt* (Prussian Commissioner of the Capital) by Hassenstein.⁶⁷ It consisted of a one page document cancelling all the dreadful restrictions of the previous *Erlaubnißurkunde* of the 9th of January. The school was to be called "*Jüdische Privatschule Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt. Volksschule und weiterführende Lehranstalt für Knaben und Mädchen*" (Jewish Private School, Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt, elementary school with further education for boys and girls). What had changed the *Staatskommissar's* attitude? Was his sudden conversion, part of Nazi strategy to impress foreign visitors for the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin? Certainly a concerted effort was being made by the Nazi propaganda machine to remove anti-Jewish hate publications from the streets of Berlin during that period.

With previous restrictions removed, the school could operate as a senior school teaching foreign languages, which were French, English and Latin with Hebrew part of the religious instruction. Physics, Chemistry and Biology were taught alternately, so were History and Geography. Music Appreciation and Drawing were included in the morning syllabus. Girls and boys were taught in the same class. Peter Prager sent an enjoyable story: "Thus my days started at the *Jüdische Privatschule Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt*. My first day at school was a bit overwhelming. Every child feels diffident on his first day in a new school. But I had never been in a mixed school before, and

⁶⁶ Floor plan of Hohenzollerndamm 110, in possession of the author

⁶⁷ *Nachtrag*, 20/5/1936, in possession of the author

20 girls were staring at me as I was standing next to the desk of the teacher who took my particulars. However, I saw that all the boys were seated on the left and the girls on the right, so I would be sitting among the boys. This reassured me. The pupils were sitting at double desks and, as Herr Meissinger was surveying the scene, he could not find an unoccupied boy's desk. He said, 'Prager, you will have to sit next to Inge Jäger'. The seat next to her was the only empty one in the whole class. I was horrified, but what could I do? I walked in a daze towards Inge and sat down. She must have noticed my discomfort. She smiled at me and pushed a piece of paper towards me, inviting me to play noughts and crosses. I hesitated to join in, because I was a rather obedient pupil who never did what the teacher might object to. But Inge did try to be nice to me, and so I joined in the game." ⁶⁸

As was customary in Germany, school started at 8.15 am and continued to 9.50. After a second breakfast, classes started again at 10.15. They continued until about 2pm when most children went home. Pupils who wanted to stay for lunch could eat in Kronbergerstraße. In the afternoon, some returned for sports. Danish long ball, a cross between rounders and baseball without fielder, was a popular game, others played handball or football. Other afternoon activities were metal work and choir practise.

Moving the senior school to Hohenzollerndamm 110 ended the overcrowded conditions in Kronbergerstraße, which had arisen from the unexpected increase in the number of students that were joining the school. It gave both boarders and the junior school, then numbering 72 pupils, adequate space in Kronbergerstraße, which also remained the official address of the school.

Application for the Reifeprüfung or Abitur

On the 26th of May an application asking for permission to prepare for and hold the *Reifeprüfung or Abitur*, (final Examination) at the school was tendered to the *Staatskommissar* via the *Schulrat* (School inspector) named Pott.⁶⁹ Carefully drafted by Ernst Goldschmidt, the application had many attachments, including a list of over 400 library books and teaching materials for scientific or artistic subjects, plus a list of gym equipment. The details of 18 teachers were also enclosed.

The most senior teacher was Professor Dr. Kurt Levinstein, *Oberstudienrat* (Department Head), abruptly retired by the Nazis. He started his teaching career in 1903 as a master in the prodigious *Französische Gymnasium* (French High School for boys), one of the oldest schools in Germany founded by Huguenot immigrants. After a brilliant career in the teaching profession, he became a member of the examination centre for teachers. His examination subjects were German, modern languages and education.

⁶⁸ Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

⁶⁹ Application 26/5/1936 for the Abitur, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

Dr.Kurt Lewent, *Studienrat* (Senior Master), began his teaching career in 1906 at the Werner Siemens Oberrealschule. He was retired by the Nazis in 1935, while being responsible for the examination in old French and old Provencal in the University of Berlin. He had been an exchange teacher in 1906/07 at the Lycée in Reims. In 1931, he had also examined Leonore Goldschmidt as reported earlier.

Erich Bandman, *Studienrat*, was a mathematics and music teacher in the public school system from 1915 until March 1933 when dismissed by the Nazis. He continued teaching these subjects at the Leonore Goldschmidt Schule and taught religion as well.

Dr.Julian Hirsch, *Studienrat*, started his career in 1909 and was retired in October 1935 from the Mozart *Oberlyceum* by the Nazis. He had been an exchange teacher at the Lycée Carnot and had accompanied Mme.M Chenenthivet, the national inspector of primary schools, throughout France.

Dr.Irma Wertheimer, *Studienrätin*, (Senior Mistress) started teaching in 1911. Her final position as science teacher in the public service was at the *Lyzeum* of Guben. She was dismissed by the Nazis.

Georg Ledermann, *Studienrat*, had started teaching in 1920 and had just been dismissed by the Nazis on the 1st of January 1936.

Dr.Margot Melchior, *Studienassessorin*, had been teaching since January 1916 in various girl schools in Berlin and was dismissed by the Nazis in April 1933.

Erich Rubensohn, *Studienassessor*, (Master) who had lost one leg in the World War, started teaching in 1926 and was dismissed by the Nazis in September 1935. He had worked as exchange teacher in the Lycée Henri Wallon in Valenciennes during 1931/32.

Erich Loewenthal, *Studienassessor*, started teaching in 1927 and was dismissed in the fall of 1935. He had been an exchange teacher at a Lycée in Douai during 1931/32.

Walter Bernstein, *Studienassessor*, had been teaching since 1929 and was dismissed in 1933 by the Nazis. He had held administrative positions and at Dr.Leonore Goldschmidt Schule was in charge of the boarding section.

Four other teachers, who were teaching in the junior school, were also listed.

Lore was able to assemble this powerful and experienced staff not only because they had been dismissed by the Nazis but, although younger and less qualified, she had won their respect by her determination and courage.

In addition, this application for the *Reifeprüfung* contained the following financial information:

- a) that the Jewish Community Organisation had advanced RM 8000 using the house in Forst again as collateral,
- b) that the monthly income of the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule stood at RM 10500 from school fees.
- c) that 17 pupils were working towards that final examination. Lore Goldschmidt argued that it was vital for them to complete their education in order to proceed to higher education in Germany or abroad. The argument that it was a matter of pride that her Jewish school should have the same status as a State High School was not presented!

The harassment of Jewish students in the public school system continued. In different schools this took on different forms depending on the headmaster or teachers. As a result, many Jewish students left the public school system and joined a Jewish school. When the author was being excluded from school excursions and not allowed to take part in the Olympic Games festivities, she left the Goethe *Oberlyzeum* (High School for Girls) in Schmargendorf and joined her mother's school, where the beautiful building and the surroundings of Hohenzollerndamm 110 were a great improvement on the the old Victorian building of the local lyceum. While it had been hard to leave good school friends behind, it had become inevitable, as Arian parents were told not to allow their children to associate with their Jewish friends. Henry Eisner wrote: ⁷⁰ "In late 1936, I started an experience which, at least in retrospect, was fulfilling, exciting, enriching. Fulfilled because I could at last resume what should never have stopped. Exciting, because I was put together with a group of bright, challenging, stimulating people unlike any I had met in my home town's Realgymnasium, enriching because I was blessed with a faculty while demanding was understanding and compassionate". Eva Posen wrote: "There are not many things in my life that I remember so well as the feeling that I had, and still have, about the Goldschmidt Schule. It was our place of refuge, our own place where we could forget the rest of the world, and I look upon it as my very own 'Garden of the Finzi Continis'. The friendships formed during that particular period were strong and lasting to this very day, 45 years later, forged during a time of turmoil, danger, hastened awareness, and even terror. The school seemed precious and more real than anything outside. I loved it dearly and shall ever remember it as having contributed a special cared for feeling at a time of great vulnerability."

The importance of English qualifications

Lore had become aware that in some international schools, pupils were being prepared for different leaving examinations simultaneously. Realizing that the future of most of her pupils lay in emigration, she decided that besides the Abitur a leaving certificate from an English University would be of great value. She approached

⁷⁰ Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

Cambridge University, which in turn notified the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Deutsche Pädagogische Auslandsstelle* (Academic Exchange Program, German Pedagogic Foreign Service Registry) of these negotiations.⁷¹ This authority, in turn, sent a sympathetic memorandum about the issue of Cambridge University examinations in Germany to the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (German Minister for Science) in Berlin which suggested two possible public schools for the English examinations, the Dorotheen State Realgymnasium and the Pädagogium in Marburg and two Jewish schools, the Philantropin in Frankfurt-am-Main and the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule, because she had lodged the original application and pointed out that Jewish students would be able to emigrate more quickly. The document suggested that negotiations should be concluded in the autumn and requested the Minister to take the necessary steps.

Summer holidays and visit to England

The summer holidays of 1936 were approaching. The Nazis had forced hotel owners of Germany not to offer Jewish people any hospitality. This made it very hard for Jewish families to travel. But Lore discovered a loophole. It was possible to travel to a small sea side resort located on the border of East Prussia and Lithuania which was part of and administered by Lithuania. No passport or visa was required to go there. The place was called Schwarzort and lay close to Memel. As a result, a number of school children including her own together with two teachers, Alfons Kohn and Gerda Levin, spent a most enjoyable holiday by the Baltic Sea. Mornings were spent on the beach, while during most afternoons orienteering games were played in the woods inland. As these woods were covered with ripe blueberries, most participants emerged with blue mouths and blue tongues when the games were finished! Mine Presch wrote about this holiday:⁷² "By 1936, I was no longer allowed to attend the open air pool (in Forst), and the summer alone, while my father attended to our textile plant under great pressure, was very lonely. When my aunt (Dr. L. Goldschmidt) suggested to my father that my brother and I share in a trip to Lithuania together with my cousins, Rudi and Tutta, and about 20 other children from the then newly formed Goldschmidt Schule, I really looked forward to the trip. The leaders were two young teachers, Ali Kohn, a medical student and a young woman, whose name I cannot recall. I still have all kinds of photos of that trip and would love to hear from anyone else who went with us at that time. We stayed at a beach resort. I loved the Baltic Sea, collecting amber along the shoreline in the morning, the food, the little stores along the harbour, and the friendly people. Best of all being with so many other children, all of whom were just the same as me."

Knowing that her children were in good hands, Lore went to Cambridge to seek support for her application to become an Examination Centre. Lyn Harris, the Headmaster of St Christopher School, referred her to Mr. Richardson at the Board of

⁷¹ *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst to Reichsminister, 21/8/1936, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam*

⁷² *Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987*

Education who in turn referred her to Mr.Shurrock, Secretary to the Matriculation Board and Examination Council, University of London. Mr.Shurrock declared that he would be prepared to accept an application provided it was lodged via the German Authorities.

Walter Hübner

On return to Germany, she decided to visit the *Oberschulrat*⁷³ (Chief Inspector of Schools) Walter Hübner (Photo 6). She had first met him in the winter semester of 1919/1920 at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin when she had attended his lecture course on The History of Literature in the 14th and 15th century. In 1922, she met him again as Walter Hübner had been one of the examiners on the examination board that had admitted her to a teaching position in the secondary school system. Further, because Hübner was both interested and involved in teaching methods of English in German schools⁷⁴, he was a good person to contact. He suggested to her that she must lodge a formal application with the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (Minister for Science). He also suggested that she should contact Dr.J.Müller, the Director of a private college in Marburg-an-der-Lahn, as Müller had succeeded in getting permission for English Examinations to be held at his school.

On the 19th of August 1936, the application to hold examinations for Cambridge University at the Dr Leonore Goldschmidt Schule was lodged with the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft*. The information given was similar to that given in the application for the *Abitur* but added that a teaching library of over 2000 books had been acquired.

The new school year 1936/1937, opened with the Sports Festival of Jewish Schools (Photos 7, 8 and 9). It was a great occasion for all Jewish children in Berlin as they had been excluded from taking part in the Olympic Games. The Dr.Leonore Goldschmidt Schule, being a new school, sent a dozen active participants,⁷⁵ a relatively small number but, when they entered the playing field wearing their green shorts with a green LGS badge on their white shirt, Lore Goldschmidt was very proud. The author won the event of throwing the ball with the upper arm.⁷⁶ The festival concluded with the singing of the Hatikva.

⁷³ Application to the Reichsminister for English examinations, *Bundesarchiv*, Potsdam 19/8/1936

⁷⁴ *Festschrift* for Hübner's 80th birthday, published Erich Schmidt Verlag, Berlin 1964

⁷⁵ Photograph published in "*Hier ist kein Bleiben länger*", Berlin Wilmersdorf, 1992

⁷⁶ Photograph in possession of the author