

## ***A further school expansion***

Because the number of boarders had constantly increased, another house had to be rented. It enabled the girls to have their own home. It was located at Berkaer Straße 31, a few minutes walk from the other two buildings.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1936, the *Schulrat*, (Inspector of Schools) Herr Pott, came to visit the school and on the 21st of October, he sent his report to the *Staatskommissar* (State Commissioner of Prussia) of Berlin.<sup>77</sup> He described the school as a High School located in two rented properties at Kronbergerstraße 24 and Hohenzollerndam 110 and stated that alterations to the original buildings had been done in accordance with the plans as ordered by the *Staatskommissar* (State Commissioner of Prussia). He described the teaching materials as adequate and the gym and playing fields of the school as exceptional. He was impressed by the highly qualified staff who, because of the rapid expansion of the school, were coping with great difficulties. Completing the syllabus presented problems as students with very different backgrounds - some had learnt Latin and Greek first, some had started with English rather than French - had joined the school. To overcome these, 5 teachers were employed by the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule to give the required bridging courses. Attached to the report were two lists registering the number of students that were in every class on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1936 and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1936. They showed that the junior school had 78 pupils in October up by 6 pupils from May and the senior school had 249 pupils up by 33 pupils. Schulrat Pott's report was favourable and must have helped Lore's applications for the Abitur and the English Examination Centre.

But on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1936,<sup>78</sup> Hassenstein on behalf of the *Staatskommissar* (State Commissioner of Prussia) of Berlin wrote an internal memo to the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (German State Minister for Science) which contained a most disturbing sentence, quote: "So far nothing untoward about the political attitude of the teaching staff has become known to me". Further he stated that after a conversation with *Regierungs und Schulrat* (Counsellor to the Government and Inspector of Schools) Fielitz and with *Regierungsrat* (Counsellor to the Minister) Dr. Klamroth, he would not forward the application for the Abitur from the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1936. On the same day, however, in a second internal memo to the *Reichsminister* (German Government Minister), he forwarded Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt's application to have her school included in the list of schools which could be used as an English Examination Centre. He added that he had earlier asked the *Deutsche Pädagogische Auslandsstelle* (German Education Foreign Service Registry) for their opinion and had received a favourable reply from them. He assured the *Reichsminister* that the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt school had adequate facilities to prepare students for the English examinations but then questioned, whether in fact a Jewish school should be considered at all. On the other hand, if permission were granted, Jews might leave Germany more quickly. Leonore Goldschmidt, who was not aware of these internal

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<sup>77</sup> Submission by Inspector Pott to the *Staatskommissar*, Berlin, 21/10/1936, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>78</sup> Memo from Hassenstein to *Reichsminister*, 22/10/1936, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

memos and the delays caused by Hassenstein, received a letter from him stating that, as he had not received any directive from the *Minister für Wissenschaft* (Minister for Science) about an English Examination Centre at her school, he could not give permission to employ Mr. Woolley, the English teacher as requested by her on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1936.<sup>79</sup> On the 4<sup>th</sup> of December, Ernst Goldschmidt<sup>80</sup> acting as *Rechtsanwalt* (legal advisor) to the school, submitted a second set of applications directly to the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (State Minister of Science).

## ***Second visit to England***

Because the German authorities were moving so slowly, Lore again went to England to gain support. The assistant secretary of the University of Cambridge, J.O. Roach, M.A.<sup>81</sup> confirmed their conversation of the previous day in a letter dated the 16<sup>th</sup> of December, 1936. Cambridge University would be willing to make arrangements to enter pupils from her school for the examination, provided it met with the approval of the German Ministry of Education. They would be willing to take advice from the Ministry of Education or the University of Berlin regarding the safe keeping of the examination papers and the supervision during the tests. Once German recognition had been received, the University of Cambridge would recognize her school as an approved school. A copy of this letter was sent to Dr. G. Wilmsen of the Anglo-German Academic Bureau at 45 Russel Square, London. Further, Leonore Goldschmidt forwarded this correspondence to the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (State Minister for Science) on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December 1936<sup>82</sup> with a request that the matter receive urgent attention. Further she pointed out that, as it would take one year to prepare students for the examination on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1937, permission to employ three English teachers was urgently required especially as a separate submission for the teacher, Mr. Philip Woolley, had been lodged earlier but had not been granted.

In spite of these official delays, Philip Woolley arrived!<sup>83</sup> Having completed his undergraduate education in classics at Oxford University, he decided on adventure before settling down as a classics master at an English Public School. He made several inquiries abroad. As a result, the British Consul in Berlin informed him of a possible position at the Jewish school of Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt. He decided to explore this. With only a few words of German, he caught the boat train from Victoria Station in late November 1936. But on arrival in Ostend, he accidentally got on the wrong train to Munich. He sent a telegram to Leonore Goldschmidt saying that he would be arriving later than expected at the *Anhalter Straße Bahnhof* (Station) and not the *Zoologischer Garten Station* as arranged. On arrival, he found Leonore and Ernst Goldschmidt eagerly awaiting him. With Ernst's classic sense of humour, he

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<sup>79</sup> Letter from Hassenstein to Leonore Goldschmidt, 3/12/1936

<sup>80</sup> Letter by Ernst Goldschmidt to the *Reichsminister*, 4/12/1936, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>81</sup> Letter from J.O. Roach to Leonore Goldschmidt, 16/12/1936, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>82</sup> Letters from LG to the *Reichsminister*, in possession of the author, 29/12/1936

<sup>83</sup> Biographical sketch by Philip Woolley, Passages from Berlin, private publication, 1987

informed Woolley, that this was the very first time that someone coming from England had arrived at the *Anhalter Bahnhof*! The joy of Philip Woolley's arrival was enormous. Looking like the quintessential English gentleman, with tweed jacket and grey slacks, he charmed all members of the staff and students of the Goldschmidt Schule. He had a beautiful Oxford accent. He became very popular in spite of his lack of German. In fact, it may have been an asset, as it forced students to speak English. The fact that a non-Jewish person had come to join the school gave hope and encouragement to all. The author helped to look after him, took him to the Christmas market and other entertainments in Berlin which, as a Jewish person, she might not have dared alone. He earned a nickname "Mister", a sign of affection. He started work immediately, selecting the first set of students to take the "Proficiency in English" examination of Cambridge University, which would take place the following July.

## 1937

But on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 1937, *Regierungsrat* (Counsellor to the Government) Klamroth nearly managed to derail the whole process. In a very nasty internal memo, he asked the fundamental question whether a Jewish school should be given the privileges of becoming an English Examination Centre. He suggested that the German High school, the Dorotheen State Gymnasium, should be nominated as the centre and that pupils prepared by the Goldschmidt Schule could sit the examination there. In this way, problems with the British government could be avoided. He also pointed out that if this Jewish private school were granted permission to hold the Cambridge examinations, it would automatically be moved from the Department of Junior and Middle schools to the Department of High Schools.<sup>84</sup>

### **Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule, a Cambridge University Examination Centre**

Then, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 1937, came a breakthrough.<sup>85</sup> In an internal memo, the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (Minister of Science) writing to the *Oberpräsident* (The Prussian Lord Lieutenant) for High Schools in Berlin ordered that, following a request by the English University of Cambridge, the Dorotheen Realgymnasium and the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule would both become examination centres for the University of Cambridge in Berlin, and outside Berlin, both Dr. I. Müller's private school in Marburg-an-der-Lahn and the Jewish Philantropin in Frankfurt-am-Main would become examination centres. This permission could be revoked at any time and was granted until the 31st of March, 1938. <sup>86</sup> On the 19<sup>th</sup> of February, 1937 *Oberschulrat* (Chief Inspector of Schools) Hübner <sup>87</sup> replied to the *Stadtpräsident* (President of

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<sup>84</sup> Klamroth memo, 15/1/1937, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>85</sup> *Reichsminister höheres Schulwesen*, 12/2/1937, Copy in possession of the author

<sup>86</sup> Copy, Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Copy in possession of the author

<sup>87</sup> Hübner reply to the *Reichsminister* 19/2/1937, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

Berlin) that while he was firmly convinced that the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule would be able to meet the standards required by the University of Cambridge, he doubted that the Director of the Dorotheen Realgymnasium would welcome the arrangement, as that school had many other commitments, namely an exchange service with the USA plus many foreign visitors giving interesting lectures. Should the *Stadtpräsident* (President of Berlin) feel it necessary to have a second high school as an examination centrum, he would like to be informed of his reasoning. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, *Oberschulrat* (Chief Inspector of schools) Hübner<sup>88</sup> informed Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt that her school had been recognized as the Examination Centre for the University of Cambridge. This permission was granted until the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1938 and applied to non-Aryan pupils only.

Nevertheless, a handwritten internal memo, probably from the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (Minister for Science) himself<sup>89</sup> circulated on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March<sup>90</sup> 1937, stated that the right to hold final examinations should not be granted to the Jewish school of Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt. A reply on 2<sup>nd</sup> of May from the *Stadtpräsident* of Berlin<sup>91</sup>, as authorized by *Oberschulrat* Hübner, informed the *Reichsminister für Wissenschaft* (Minister for Science) that the Goldschmidt school had been nominated as an English Examination Centre and asked for the matter to be left there!

Promptly, two further English teachers arrived; Miss Ella Glover to prepare students in Mathematics, a compulsory subject of the Cambridge School Certificate or "O" level examination and Miss Marjorie van Hollick to give instructions in Geography. Ella Glover was a very elegant aloof person. Miss van Hollick, who was older, was a very firm person and steadfastly refused to speak a word of German, forcing students and staff to speak English with her. Lyn Harris,<sup>92</sup> the Headmaster of St. Christopher School, paid a visit to help with the details of the syllabus. He was of great assistance as he was a very experienced headmaster whose school had been taking the Cambridge University examinations for some years. Another teacher, Elliot Pinhey, arrived in June 1937 to teach science in English. He was also a keen entomologist. Philip Wooley, besides taking School Certificate classes, embarked on teaching English history throughout the senior school. Using the text book "Our Island Story" he taught it so effectively that no pupil would ever forget the history of the Saxon kings, Ethelred the Unready, King Alfred burning the pancakes and the burial of some of them in Winchester. Later, when requested, he taught some New Testament courses for the "O" level examination as well. While the first students for Proficiency in English examination hoped to be ready by the summer of 1937, the students for the "O"-level examination would enter it in December 1937.

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<sup>88</sup> Hübner to Leonore Goldschmidt, 3/3/1937, Copy in possession of the author

<sup>89</sup> The *Reichsminister* was Bernhard Rust, who entered the Nazi Party in 1922

<sup>90</sup> Handwritten memo to the *Staatspräsident*, Berlin, 25/3/1937, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>91</sup> Reply By Schulrat Prof. Dr. Hübner to the *Reichsminister*, 2/5/1937, Bundesarchiv. Potsdam

<sup>92</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication 1987, report by Philip Wolley

## The fourth building

In the meantime, the total number of boarders had risen to 42 children. Another house had to be rented for the older boys. It was Hohenzollendamm 102<sup>93</sup>. Horst Frank<sup>94</sup> wrote that he found a round-letter "*An die Eltern*" (to all parents), dated March 15<sup>th</sup> 1937, among his father's papers. In it, Lore Goldschmidt explained that due to the increased costs, a one-time contribution of RM50 for each child was needed, a sum to be returned when the child left the school. To guide the implementation of this revolving fund an advisory committee of three parents was elected.

Dr. Walter Bernstein and his wife Eva, who were the original house parents in Kronbergerstrasse 24, moved to Hohenzollerndamm 102; Mrs. Marie Dörnberger, another of Ernst Goldschmidt's cousins, together with Dr. Gertrud Schlesinger, a mathematics teacher, looked after the girls in Berkaer Straße, and Dr. Eduard Meisinger and Miss Gerda Levin stayed with the junior boarders in the Kronberger Straße. The fees for boarding were RM150 per month per child.

## The questionnaire 1937

At the end of May 1937, the *Fragebogen für höhere Schulen*<sup>95</sup> (questionnaire of school statistics for high schools) was submitted, reference date the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1937. This document comprised 4 pages. The Jüdische Privatschule Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt was listed as a Reformrealgymnasium with six grades plus a Primary School. 76 pupils, about 50% of them boys, were enrolled in the Primary School. 423 pupils were enrolled in the upper school which made a total of 499 pupils. Considering that the school was only two years old, this number of pupils represented an amazing achievement. As the questionnaire had a distinct racial bias, it demanded both details about religion and race. 11 pupils were listed as Protestant, 1 pupil was Catholic and 7 pupils had no religious affiliation. 440 students were listed as Jewish. 56 pupils were listed as stateless and 3 were listed as part Jewish! Basic fees ranged from RM360 per year increasing to RM420 in the year OIII, RM480 in the class OIIb, RM660 in the class OIIa and RM770 in Class I. An interesting comment about these fees came from Peter Prager, who wrote<sup>96</sup>: "that his father contacted the Goldschmidt Schule after his mother had refused to send him back to the Grunewald Gymnasium and told Dr. Goldschmidt that he could not afford the extra fees, to which

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<sup>93</sup> Prospectus of Goldschmidt Schule issued 9/37, in possession of the author

<sup>94</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication 1987

<sup>95</sup> Fragebogen issued by Nazi government for details schools, 25/5/1937, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>96</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

Dr.Goldschmidt replied just pay whatever you can". The number of teachers had risen to 31, and they are listed in alphabetical order:

- 1) Fritz Amtmann, born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1909, had just qualified as a sports teacher in Stuttgart and was teaching Gymnastics and Sport to the boys, religion Jewish.
- 2) Isidor Aschheim, born on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1891, taught Fine Arts, religion Jewish.
- 3) Erich Bandmann, *Studienrat*, born on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 1894, had obtained his teaching qualifications in 1921 and 1923 in Berlin. He had taught in the public system since 1927 and was teaching Mathematics, Music, Physics and Religion, religion Jewish.
- 4) Walter Bernstein, *Studienassessor*, born on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 1905, completed his teaching qualifications in 1932 in Breslau, looked after the boy's boarding house and taught Mathematics, Physics and Gym, religion Jewish.
- 5) Ernst Cohn, Middle School Teacher, born 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1893, completed his qualifications in 1936 in Berlin, taught German, French, Latin and Religion, religion Jewish.
- 6) Ella P. Glover, born on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1912, prepared students for the Cambridge University examination in Mathematics, religion Anglican.
- 7) Julius Goldstein, born on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 1901, Musician, taught Music, religion Jewish.
- 8) Eva Graetz, born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1916, qualified in March 1936 in Berlin, taught Crafts, religion Jewish.
- 9) Dr.Margot Gutmann, *Studienrat*, born on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 1903, qualified in 1928 in Munich, taught Greek, Latin, German and History, religion Jewish
- 10) Marie Haendler, born on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1902, qualified in Breslau and taught in the primary school, religion Jewish.
- 11) Arthur Heckscher, *Studienrat*, born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1885, qualified in 1909 in Berlin, employed in the public service since 1911, taught Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, religion Jewish.
- 12) Hildegard Heilbronn, born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1909, qualified in 1934 in Berlin, taught French, English and Spanish in the middle school, religion Jewish.
- 13) Dr.Julian Hirsch, *Studienrat*, born on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1883, qualified in March 1906, he worked in the public service since 1910, taught English, French and German, religion Jewish.
- 14) Marjorie van Hollick, born on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1881, taught Geography and other subjects for the Cambridge University Examination, religion Anglican.
- 15) Alice Kirchner, born on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 1896, qualified as elementary school teacher in 1917 in Saarbrücken and worked in the public service from 1924, taught in the elementary school, no religion.
- 16) Dr.Gertrud Klausner, *Studienrat*, born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 1877, qualified in November 1908 in Berlin and in the public service since 1917, taught German, French and English, religion Jewish.
- 17) Ruth Kristella, born on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1910, qualified in February 1931 in Potsdam, taught needlework and domestic science, religion Protestant,
- 18) Erna Kuhn, born on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 1897, qualified in 1920 in Spandau, taught Gymnastics and Sport to the girls, religion Jewish

- 19) Hildegard Kuttner, born on the 31st of May 1901, qualified in 1932 in Berlin, taught in the elementary school and worked with problem children, religion Protestant.
- 20) Wolfgang Lennert, born on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1907, qualified in 1935 in Berlin, taught English, Economy and Geography, religion Protestant.
- 21) Dr.Kurt Levinstein, *Oberstudienrat*, born on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 1877, qualified in 1900 in Berlin and had been in the public service since 1903, taught German, French and English, religion Jewish.
- 22) Dr.Kurt Lewent, *Studienrat*, born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 1880, qualified in 1906 in Berlin and in the public service since 1908, taught French, English, German and Geography, religion Jewish.
- 23) Dr.Kurt Lewin, *Studienrat*, born on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August 1892, qualified in 1916 in Berlin and in the public service since 1921, taught Biology, Zoology, Mathematics, Chemistry, religion Jewish.
- 24) Erich Loewenthal, *Studienassessor*, born on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 1893, qualified in 1925, taught French, English and Hebrew, religion Jewish
- 25) Dr.Ernst Meissinger, *Studienassessor*, born on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1910, qualified in 1934 in Frankfurt a.M., in charge of junior boarders, taught Geography, Economy and Sport, no religion.
- 26) Dr.Margot Melchior, *Studienassessor*, born on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 1891, qualified in 1920 in Berlin, taught French, English and German, religion Jewish.
- 27) Agnes Riegner, born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February 1883, qualified in 1901, taught in the elementary school, religion Jewish.
- 28) Erich Rubensohn, *Studienassessor*, born on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 1896, qualified in 1920 in Berlin, taught German, French and Spanish, religion Jewish.
- 29) Lilly Silbermann, born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1900, qualified in 1921, in the public service since 1927, taught sport, gymnastics, rowing, and taught in the elementary school, religion Protestant.
- 30) Dr.Irma Wertheimer, *Studienrätin*, born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1887, qualified in 1911 in Straßburg, in the public service since 1916, taught Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, French and Metalwork, religion Jewish.
- 31) Philip Woolley, born on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1912, qualified in Oxford, taught English, History and Christian religion for the Cambridge University Examination, religion Anglican.

Not included in this list was Rabbi Dr.Hamburger who gave instructions in the upper school, teaching Jewish History and Religion and Hebrew for one term<sup>97</sup>. This teaching assignment was later taken over by Rabbi Van der Zyl.

The fact that 9 teachers with different religious beliefs were working in the school was in marked contrast to the religious intolerance of the Nazi State. It was Lore Goldschmidt's aim to provide tolerant and loving surroundings for her students, only in this way could they grow into mentally healthy adults. Ursula Auermann wrote: <sup>98</sup> "My parents then found this beautiful school, the Goldschmidt Schule, surrounded by

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<sup>97</sup> Correspondence between LG and Rabbi Hamburger

<sup>98</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

a large garden with fruit trees, to the delight of the students when the trees bore apples and pears. As I think back I can recall a few teachers with fond memories. However, the only one I can recall by name is Dr. Lewent, a strict disciplinarian. At first the kids did not like him well, but he was a fair teacher and they got used to him." Eva Graetz, a junior teacher, wrote: <sup>99</sup> "I also vividly remember one teachers' meeting re: *Zensurenkonferenz* (conference for school reports). We spent at least one hour over one boy who, in all fairness, had not reached the requirements to advance into the next grade. His family was on the verge of leaving the country. That alone could have been the reason for his poor marks. If advanced he would at least have reached the minimum of *abgeschlossene Schulbildung* (Completed Education): *Obersecunda Reife* (O-levels). Without that, he would be the equivalent to a dropout when starting a new life! So why not just pass him? His school years were over, anyway. But if he passed, three others were also eligible, who were better off repeating. So, every teacher who had him split rated, i.e. written work, oral work, total marks, was asked to sum it up in his favour. Dr. Lewent, the much feared Lewent, phoned home and asked his son to bring the whole pile of *Hefte* (exercise books) of that class. He sat in the corner for half an hour, comparing that boys grading, gradually squeezing his grade into a pass without being unfair to his classmates. Dr. Lewent was very strict and very fair. And between us we sent the young man into the unknown with the first degree step of a completed education." Lewent, who had lost a finger and limped from war injuries, often seemed in pain. Eva Isaac-Krieger recalled:<sup>100</sup> "When I was riding in the New York subway on my way to Hunter College several years later, I offered my seat to a gentleman with a cane. As I got up and he prepared to sit down, he glanced gratefully at me and all of a sudden I said: Dr. Lewent? and he replied: Eva Isaac- Krieger? It was a reunion which only lasted two subway stops but which completely changed my memory of a disciplinarian to one of a gentle, caring individual whose English pronunciation was so foreign that I could not believe that he had been my English teacher correcting my diction only a few years earlier." Herr Bandmann, who among other subjects taught music, had many fans. Marion Sauerbrunn wrote: <sup>101</sup> "If I have to name one outstanding gift that the school had given me, it was Herr Bandmann's ability to instil in us a love for music, which has been a source of great joy throughout my entire life." During the first two years of the school, Herr Bandmann was the choirmaster and he introduced members of the school choir to wonderful works. Beethoven's "*Die Himmel rühmen des Ewigen Ehre*", sung in unison, echoing through the school basement, was an event never to be forgotten. Another milestone was the great chorus from Haendel's Judas Maccabeus. Later, Julius Goldstein, a professional musician, took over most of the music teaching. Helga Bujaskowski wrote: <sup>102</sup> "Bushy haired and enthusiastic, Mr. Julius Goldstein was the sight singing and music dictation teacher. Not sanctioned by him, but certainly influenced by his wonderful musicianship, we formed little singing groups and irreverently used Hebrew class time for skipping through the woods, singing canons and assorted folk songs". Among the many canons that he

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<sup>99</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

<sup>100</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

<sup>101</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987

<sup>102</sup> Passages from Berlin, Private publication, 1987



taught was an edited version of Mozart's '*Bona Nox, bist a rechta Ox*' and '*Donna Nobis Pacem*'. When the English Examination Centre took on such significance, he introduced the early English canon 'Sumer is icumin in' and songs from Shakespeare's plays 'Oh mistress mine, where are you roaming?' and 'What is love?, tis not hereafter'. In class, he analysed the structure of the symphony with illustrations from Beethoven's first two symphonies, teaching that would never be forgotten. Arthur Heckscher became the senior mathematics teacher. Hannelore Israelzick wrote in *Passages from Berlin*: "My form master was Dr.Heckscher, a man of whom I have very fond memories. Ernst Braude was one of my fellow students and during math test we followed the old age practice of copying from the best pupil in the class, who was Ernst Braude. A few days later Dr.Heckscher returned the test to us informing us with a completely dead-pan face that it was most unfortunate, but the whole class had failed the test. Seeing our unbelieving faces, he quietly continued "The reason for the failure of the whole class is due to the fact that Braude made one mistake" Dr.Heckscher also taught physics and chemistry with the same whimsical smile. The author admired his teaching methods and was very fond of him. The other science teacher was Dr.Irma Wertheimer. Hilda Anker wrote <sup>103</sup>: "A teacher I remember fondly is *Fraülein* Wertheimer. She taught me a love of nature. Her subjects were Biology and Botany. I still remember the long *Ausflüge* (excursions) where we studied trees and flowers first hand. Botany was also a love of my father. We did many of my assignments together. He bought me tulips to show me the structure of flowers. Much of what I treasure now was built on the foundation given me at the Goldschmidt Schule." In the afternoon, Dr.Wertheimer taught metal workshop. Fritz Salinger, then 15 years old, designed and made an outstanding modern brass Chanukah Menora which she photographed (Photo 10), and for her botany class she produced beautiful pictures of flowers.<sup>104</sup>

Because the Grunewald lay so close it was possible to go for school outings. Dr.Hirsch (Photo 11) took the author's class there and Ruth Kristella with Eva Graetz took the class for a boat ride on the Havel .<sup>105</sup> Dr.Meissinger, who looked after some boarders and taught Geography, was a most popular teacher. Brigitte Frankfurter <sup>106</sup> reported that, first thing in the morning before breakfast and lessons, he took boarders for a cycle ride and swim in the Grunewaldsee as the use of public pools was forbidden to Jewish children. Gerd Ehrlich wrote: <sup>107</sup> "Ernst Meissinger became a role model for me and I hold him largely responsible for my choosing a teaching career." Among the language teachers Erich Rubinsohn, who had lost his leg in the World War, retained an acid sense of humour and often spoke in the Berlin dialect. He wrote the most memorable of all the many school poems in dialect:

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<sup>103</sup> *Passages from Berlin*, Private publication

<sup>104</sup> Photographs in possession of the author

<sup>105</sup> Photographs in possession of the author

<sup>106</sup> *Passages from Berlin*, Private publication

<sup>107</sup> *Passages from Berlin*, Private publication

Loblied auf die Doktorn <sup>108</sup>

Gewidmet von  
Erich Rubensohn.

Melodie: Vater, Mutter, Schwester, Brüder

Unsere Doktorn, die is richtig, immerzu treppauf, treppab,  
Wie zwee Männer is se tichtig, ihre Jangart is der Trap.  
Ueberall is se beschlagen, allen hat se wat ze sagen.  
Doch se bleibt trotz alledem in der Tonart anjenehm.

Ja, det will schon was bedeiten, sone Schule uffzebaun!  
Un der Aerjer mit den Leuten, manchmal is't um mangzehaun.  
Lieschen, Lottchen, Ursel, Gretchen, Rudi, Tutta, Minchen, Kätchen,  
Wo jehts in de Pause hin? Imma bei Frau Doktern rin.

Dabei hat det arme Wesen wahrlich doch genug zu tun:  
Korrejiern, arbeiten, lesen, so jehts ohne Rast un Ruhn,  
Konferenzen un Debatten, diese niemals ohne'n Jatten!  
Ja, se is, ick muss jestehn, schon ein richtig Phänomen.

Aba manchmal wird se hitzig, un det is ooch ze vastehn,  
Meistens heiter, oftmal witzig, morgens so von 8 bis 10;  
Aba jeht die Uhr uff zwelfen, dann kann ihr keen Jott mehr helfen,  
Auf dem Vorflur sammeln sich Mütter, Mütter schauerlich.

Alle ham se wat ze klagen, alle ham se wat ze schrein:  
Lea hat'n schwachen Magen: Mein Manfred ist kein Schwein!  
Meine Jüngste ist asthmatisch! Hans Georg ist mathematisch!  
Wird er? kann er? soll er? Wie? Matric or proficiency?!

Halten Sie mein Kind für arisch? Na, ich seh doch fast so aus!  
Zwar der Vater ist bulgarisch, und, wie ich, aus gutem Haus.  
Ich bin selbst aus Venezuela, darum heiss ich Manuela,  
Gott, wie ist das Kind begabt! Masern hat er schon gehabt.

So jehts zwee jeschlagne Stunden, zwischendurch schrillts Telefon:  
Habn Sie IIschens Heft gefunden? Sie verlör es bei Herrn Cohn.  
Günter ist noch nicht zu Hause! Wann ist morgen grosse Pause?  
Schulgeld woll'n Se och von mir? Frau, Sie sind wohl nich von hier.

Doch trots aller Mühn und Sorgen, die der Tag ihr reichlich bringt,  
Immer hofft sie auf ein Morgen, dem die Zukunft heiter winkt.  
Und das Leben steht ihr offen, darim lasst uns mit ihr hoffen,  
Mit ihr Wirken noch und noch!  
L e o n o r e dreimal hoch, hoch, hoch!!!

(Sorry, translation impossible!)

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<sup>108</sup> Original in possession of the author, also other poems etc.

In July 1937, just after the end of term, 8 students sat the "Proficiency in English" examination of Cambridge University for the first time; 7 students passed, 5 with a mark of good and 2 with credit.<sup>109</sup> This true success story ended the school's summer term on a very high note.

The 1937 summer holiday school 'camp'<sup>110</sup> had again been cunningly arranged by Lore Goldschmidt. It was supervised by Dr.Meissinger together with Ruth Kristella and Eva Graetz. The school managed to rent a big house in Oberstdorf, the last village in a valley of the Vorarlberg. Oberstdorf belonged to Austria but could be reached from Lake Constance in Germany without a passport making it possible for Jewish children to enjoy a peaceful holiday. It was a magnificent place with beautiful mountains. We went for many walks. One unforgettable moment occurred when a huge thunder storm with much lightening caught us, hikers, high on an alm. The only safe thing to do was to lie quickly on the ground, which for some turned out to be a "cow pat"!

The first big event of the new term, in September 1937, was again the Jewish Sports Carnival which again took place in the Jewish sports grounds in the Grunewald. Some 35 pupils, the top athletes of the Goldschmidt Schule, took part and many prizes were won (Photos 7, 8 and 9). Lore Goldschmidt was of course delighted as school spectators shouted their slogan "Ha, Ho, He, SLG". The importance of the yearly Jewish Sports festival cannot be overestimated, as it established great pride in the athletic ability of Jewish children and acted as counterpropaganda to constant Nazi vilification. Great praise was given to the Sports teachers, Fritz Altmann and Lilly Silbermann who had spent many extra hours preparing students for the event. After the school had joined the Jewish Helvetica Rowing Club, they taught rowing as well. Nothing ever seemed too much for these two teachers and they were much loved.

### **First sign of jealousy**

Once the Dr.Leonore Goldschmidt Schule had become the official examination centre for the University of Cambridge, other Jewish schools demanded similar privileges. <sup>111</sup> In April 1937, the Lessler Schule applied to Oxford University who sent her a positive reply which she <sup>112</sup> forwarded to the *Stadtpräsident* of Berlin. On instruction, Gräfe forwarded the Oxford reply internally to the *Reichsminister*.<sup>113</sup> On the 8th of September, two months after the first Proficiency in English examination at the Goldschmidt Schule, Prof. D. Hübner, <sup>114</sup> in a letter to the *Reichs-und Preussischen Minister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung* (State Minister

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<sup>109</sup> Report on 15/12/1937 from Hübner to *Reichsminister* stating these numbers.

<sup>110</sup> Photographs of camp and sports festival in possession of the author

<sup>111</sup> Letter from Jawne College, via *Oberschulrat Langenhorst*, Cologne to Minister, 15/4/1937

<sup>112</sup> Oxford Local Examination Board to Toni Lessler, 16/4/1937, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>113</sup> 20/5/1937 letter to Minister 30/4/1937, Bundesarchiv Potsdam

<sup>114</sup> Letter from Hübner, 8/9/1937 to the *Reichsminister*, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

of Education) stated that he had received applications from other Jewish schools, the Lessler Schule and the Kaliski Schule who wished to be considered an Oxford or Cambridge Examination Centre. He commented unfavourably on the rivalry. He turned both requests down with the statement that the Goldschmidt Schule had been granted permission to sit these examinations until Easter 1938, when the matter could be reviewed. In the letter of the 15th of December, see footnote 109) Hübner reported to the *Reichsminister* that no students had reported to the Dorotheen State School and, as he had expressed previously, no examination will ever take place there. In contrast, he cited the 7 students who had passed the Proficiency in English examination in June at the Dr.Leonore Goldschmidt Schule. He mentioned that all were Jews and continued to give some detail about their activities since then. He emphasised that they were all taking further education to facilitate their emigration. He added that 5 students were ready to sit the Cambridge University O-level examination, or school certificate, and a further 7 students would sit the Proficiency in English in December. The results would not be available until January or February 1938. As a result of Hübner's decision, Lore Goldschmidt received direct requests to let students from other schools enter the examination in her school. In a reply <sup>115</sup> written on the 22nd of January of 1938, to Dr.Heinrich Selver of the Kaliski Schule, Leonore Goldschmidt explained the conditions under which the Examination Centre operated, namely that examination papers were issued by Cambridge University to a specific school for a specific student. Relevant information about this student had to be submitted some time earlier. She would be happy to admit pupils from his school provided they were properly prepared. She added: "At the last examination *Oberschulrat* Prof.Dr.Hübner was the presiding examiner and took the oral examination." This remark must refer to the Cambridge University Examination of December 1937, <sup>116</sup> when three boys, K.Herzberg, H.Jaffe and C.M.Nomis and two girls, L.Bock and H. Schwab, <sup>117</sup> passed the O level examination; all passed English Composition, General English Literature, European History, French and German. 2 pupils passed Geography, 3 pupils passed Mathematics and 4 passed Additional Mathematics. 2 passed Chemistry, 1 passed Physics and 1 passed Physics with Chemistry, altogether a truly remarkable achievement. To Lore, this success justified the immense amount of work that she had undertaken for her school to become the Cambridge University Examination Centre. The Kaliski Schule accepted the invitation and began preparing some of their students.

## **1938**

*Oberschulrat* Dr.Hübner paid a memorable visit, as inspector of High Schools, to the Dr.Leonore Goldschmidt school .<sup>118</sup> He visited the author's class room accompanied

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<sup>115</sup> Letter from L.G. to Dr Heinrich Selver 22/1/1938, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam

<sup>116</sup> Archives of Cambridge University, consulted by the author, see footnote 214

<sup>117</sup> Letter from Cambridge Uni to S.J.Heims, 2/10/1979, in possession of the author

<sup>118</sup> Memory of the author

by Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt, as headmistress. To test the grammatical knowledge of the class, he asked them to parse the following sentence for its 'subject': "*Freude dieser Stadt bedeute, Friede sei ihr erst Geläute.*" (Joy to this Town means, Peace be its first Peal.) These are the last lines in Schiller's poem "*Die Glocke*" (The bell). It was not easy and the class became very confused, someone said *Freude*, a very shy and quiet boy at the back said *Friede*, but neither the inspector nor Lore Goldschmidt heard him, and in the ensuing chaos someone said *Geläute*. Lore looked horrified, thinking the inspector will never grant the *Abitur* to her school, but he just smiled and explained that it was *Friede* (peace). Was it a prophetic choice? Shortly thereafter, on the 4th of February 1938, The *Stadtspräsident* of the Capital, Berlin, Department of Higher Education, wrote,<sup>119</sup> quote in translation: "In reply to your application of 18th August 1937, I certify that, in the meaning of article 147, para.1 of the Reich-Constitution, your Private School has been recognised as a substitute for a public school and in this respect has been granted authorisation by the State. As directed, signed by Dr. Büren." The school could begin to prepare students for the *Abitur*.

### **The invasion of Austria**

On the 16th of February 1938, I was 14 years old. I got permission to hold a fancy dress party in the school. The whole basement was turned into a "Ghost Train", the rider, sitting in a wicker basket chair on wheels, was pushed at maximum speed through various routes with spooks popping out from all sides. It was a great party and just like the 50th birthday party for my father, it turned out to be the last happy celebration in Germany. For 3 weeks later, Germany invaded Austria. The brutality that the Jews of Vienna had to endure left a deep, incomprehensible mark of horror and foreboding on all Jewish people, especially in Germany.

As a result, even Ernst Goldschmidt realised that emigration was the only option. Like many Rhineland Jews, whose ancestors had arrived in the Rhineland with the Romans, several hundred years before any of the present "Germanic" tribes had settled there, he considered himself a German and had a deep affection for his country. His father had fought in the Franco-Prussian War and he had fought for Germany in the World War. He loved German music and many other German cultural activities. But he, like many others, came to the conclusion that he did not want to be associated with a nation that was displaying such bestiality.

Lore, very aware of the many emotional problems associated with emigration, had a vision. Perhaps, moving the Dr. Leonore Goldschmidt Schule as an entity to another country would be less traumatic. England was the obvious choice as she had made so many successful contacts but visa restrictions were severe. The USA was a possibility because several months earlier she had met Dr. Theodore Huebener, Assistant Director of Foreign Languages for the Board of Education of the City of New York. While visiting a number of State High Schools in Berlin, including the

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<sup>119</sup> Short Letter, 4/2/1938, in possession of the author

*Französische Gymnasium*, Huebener learnt that his old acquaintance, Dr.Kurt Levinstein, was no longer teaching there. He traced him to the Goldschmidt Schule <sup>120</sup> and met Lore Goldschmidt. An immediate friendship was formed. Her other contact in the USA was Dr.Raymond Goldschmidt. <sup>121</sup> Though young, he was an internationally renowned economist working for the US Government in Washington and a very influential person. She decided to further investigate the idea of moving to the USA.

On the 30th of March, 1938, Lore received a letter from Prof.Dr. Hübner stating that the Minister had granted an extension for the Cambridge University Examination Centre to be located at her school until the 31st of March 1939, but added that, during the year, new regulations would be introduced. <sup>122</sup> Lore, aware that this sentence might imply that jealousy from other Jewish schools had not diminished, made further inquiries. She learnt that some Jewish schools were demanding the establishment of a neutral examination centre. She was especially upset to learn that the *Reichsvertretung der Juden in Deutschland* (the representative body of Jews in Germany) was implicated. Die *Reichsvertretung* had been founded in September 1933 <sup>123</sup> to be the representative body of the Jewish population of Germany. Leo Baeck was its spiritual leader and Dr.Otto Hirsch, a lawyer from Württemberg, was entrusted with its executive direction. Although he had no teaching qualifications, one of his aims had been the establishment of a Jewish school system, which in fact, had not eventuated.

Lore contacted Dr.Otto Hirsch and arranged a meeting, date unknown. Subsequently she received the following letter, published in full as the wording reveals much antagonism : <sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Passages from Berlin, page 96, Private Publication

<sup>121</sup> Goldschmidt Family Tree, page 3

<sup>122</sup> Hübner to LG, short letter, 30/3/1938, in possession of the author

<sup>123</sup> Paul Sauer: Otto Hirsch, Leo Baeck Year Book, 1987, page 354-358

<sup>124</sup> Copy of original letter, Otto Hirsch to LG, 16/5/1938, Bundesarchiv, Potsdam