

BERNHEIM, Leopold,

49 Kapellenstrasse, 2 Bronner Strasse,
21 Radstrasse

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Leopold Bernheim, born September 27, 1897 in Laupheim, merchant, died in 1971 in the USA, OO **Julie Bernheim, née Nördlinger**, born July 12, 1898 in Laupheim, died in 1977 in the USA, wedding on June 26, 1927 – domicile: 49 Kapellen Street.

- **Fritz**, born August 5, 1929 in Laupheim,
- **Luise**, born December 20, 1932 in Laupheim.

Grandfather: **Joseph „Jossele“ Bernheim**, Bronner Street 21, born September 22, 1861 in Laupheim, cattle trader, died August 31, 1942 in Theresienstadt concentration camp.

Unmarried cousin of Leopold: **Theodor Bernheim**, born March 23, 1884 in Laupheim, Kaufmann, domicile Rad Street 2; moved to Stuttgart on June 14, 1940; declared dead in 1951.

Family emigrated to Chicago, Illinois, USA, on October 25, 1939.

In the mid-18th century, a man named Abraham Bernheim moved to Laupheim from the nearby town of Buchau. He was the founder of the widespread Bernheim family. The registry of the Jewish cemetery in

Laupheim counts 24 people named Bernheim. In 1933, the three family members listed above still lived in Laupheim, yet in different places.

Joseph Bernheim, nicknamed „Jossele“, and listed above as the grandfather, married Fanny Herbst from Schopfloch in 1891 in Nördlingen. He built or bought the property at 14 Bronner Street (today known as “House Theresia, 21 Bronner Street) which then was the last house near the town exit towards Bronnen.

From there he ran a prosperous business as a livestock trader and it was also the place he lived with his family. In 1927, his son Leopold married Julie Nördlinger from 49 Kapellen Street, where the couple then moved.

LEOPOLD BERNHEIM

JULIE BERNHEIM
geb. Nördlinger

VERMÄHLTE

LAUPHEIM, 26. JUNI 1927.

Announcement in the „Laupheimer Verkündiger“



Selma Bernheim (in the middle, photo showing her school class), among the first girls who were allowed to attend the Laupheim Latin and Junior High School.

Photo dated 1909 (source: Braun, Alt-Laupheimer Bilderbogen, page 191)

His daughter Selma had married even before and moved to Offenburg. Presumably, Leopold continued his father's business at Bronner Street. Jossele Bernstein instead moved to Stuttgart after his wife's death in 1928 and returned to Laupheim only in 1940, presumably not on a voluntary basis. It is unclear whether he was domiciled in the Rabbinate, which had meanwhile been turned into a Jewish retirement home, in the Wendelinsgrube, or elsewhere.

Although very little is known about them, both Leopold and his cousin Theodor were soldiers in the First World War for which they were decorated for their service. Theodor served from 1916 to 1918 on the Balkan Front, among other things as a Bulgarian interpreter and was awarded the Silver Medal of Honor. Leopold was awarded the Frontkämpferkreuz (Combatant Cross) in 1935 for his service on the Western Front from 1916 to 1918. His descendants donated this grotesque Nazi award to the Laupheim Museum where it is part of the exhibition. Four years later, the awardee managed to escape at the last minute from the state that once gave him the honor, thus avoiding being killed by that same state.



*Fritz Bernheim and Paul
Oberbauer, 1937.*

(source: Photograph collection
of the museum)

In 1988, Fred (Fritz) Bernheim put down in words his experiences as a nine year old kid during the Pogrom Night in 1938 for a team project with students from the Carl Lämmle High School:

"It is impossible to describe the feeling I had when I witnessed my father being driven out of his house, forced to walk to the synagogue and watch it being burned down to the ground. Nor can I express with words what I felt when my father, my uncle Benno Nördlinger and two other fellows had to walk to the train station, where they were loaded onto cattle trucks that took them to the concentration camp in Dachau... I can also remember the lack of support from the non-Jewish townspeople. Can you imagine looking out from a house window and watching how another human being is being slapped in the face, thrown to the floor, hit in the ribs, and spat upon, and how you simply close the window shutters and later say: I have never seen this!

I have no desire to remember. The only task for you is to influence and educate those people, their children and grandchildren with this horror and to make sure that such things never happen again. Laupheim has no significance to me in the sense of being my home. I still have some friends there, I have emotional links to the house where I was born, which is still there, and of course to the cemetery. . . . Everthing that was good in my life happened in Chicago, everything bad happened in Laupheim . . ."

Leopold Bernheim and his family managed to emigrate to New York still in 1939. As Fred Bernheim recalls, it was because his father and Laupheim's Nazi mayor Marxer were comrades in the First World War, that the family could even take some of their belongings with them and that formal formalities were completed rather quickly. In the USA, they originally

planned to move on to San Francisco from New York, but money only lasted until Chicago. So they decided to settle down there. Fred Bernheim's architectural firm still exists in Chicago.

Joseph and Theodor Bernheim, however, did not manage to emigrate. Theodor, who lived on Rad Street 3, most likely worked for the livestock trader Bernhard Ullmann. Theodor moved to Stuttgart in 1940, probably not voluntarily, after which his whereabouts were unknown. He was declared dead by the district court in Hechingen on September 11, 1951. The determined date of death was December 31, 1945. The 80 year old Joseph Bernheim was deported to Theresienstadt on August 19, 1942 and died there soon after his arrival.

Fred Bernheim's professional work in the United States as an architect also brought about a symbolic and emblematic monument that allegorizes the history of the Jewish community in Laupheim. Analogous to the fact that most of the members of the community who survived the Shoah found a new home in the United States, the Laupheim synagogue that was destroyed lives on today in a modern form. The two towers had been a specific characteristic of the Jewish house of worship in Laupheim, stemming from the close relationship with the Christian environment with its baroque churches. The synagogue of Northbrook near Chicago, designed by Fred Bernheim, also has two modern-shaped towers, a clear reminiscence of the synagogue from his childhood days. On the occasion of his visit in Laupheim on October 2000, the Laupheim edition of the *Südwestpresse* printed an article about this. The following passage shows a copy of the original article, including the picture of the synagogue.

GESCHICHTE / Architektonisches Vorbild für Neubau im US-Bundesstaat Illinois

Laupheimer Synagoge lebt weiter

Der Architekt Fred Bernheim hat als Kind die „Kristallnacht“ in Laupheim miterlebt

In der „Kristallnacht“ am 9. November 1938 ist die Laupheimer Synagoge zerstört worden. Dennoch lebt sie fort: In der Erinnerung und als architektonisches Vorbild für eine neue Synagoge im US-Bundesstaat Illinois, die Fred Bernheim geplant hat.

UDO BAYER

LAUPHEIM ■ Ende Oktober besuchte der Architekt Fred Bernheim aus Chicago Laupheim. Er ist der Neffe der letzten jüdischen Inhaberin des „Rothen Ochsen“, Sophie Noerdlinger, die 1993 verstarb. Aus ihrem Nachlass hatten Bernheims dem christlich-jüdischen Museum wertvolle Dokumente mitgebracht (wir berichteten). Darunter befin-

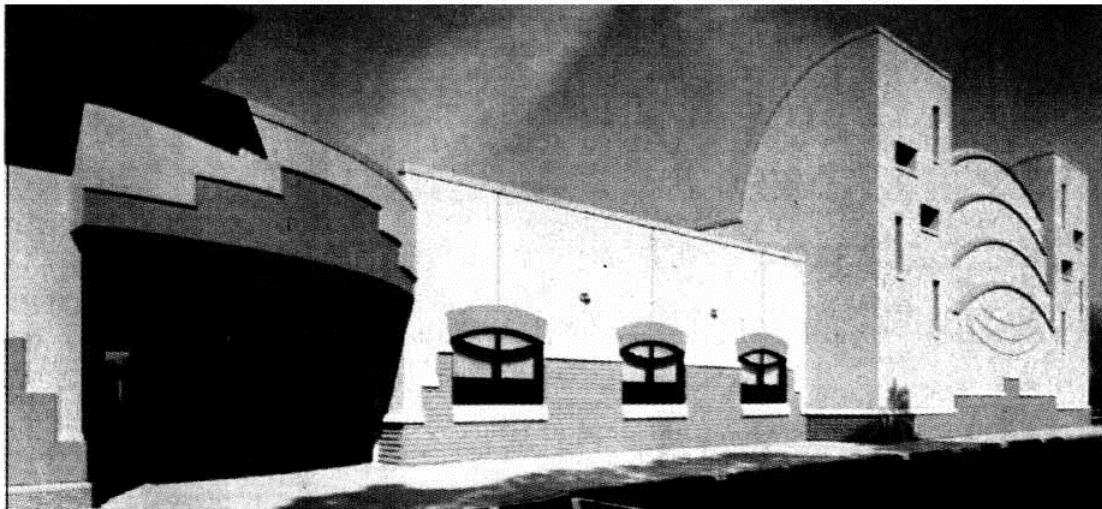
det sich eine Porträtzeichnung von Ferdinand Reitze, ein Poesiealbum der Mutter von Sophie Noerdlinger, in das sich in Chicago auch der damals zwanzigjährige Carl Laemmle verewigt hatte, und schließlich ein Brief Laemmles, geschrieben zwei Wochen vor seinem Tod und damit das letzte schriftliche Zeugnis von ihm. Sophie Noerdlingers Neffe ist übrigens auf einem Foto als kleiner Junge gemeinsam mit der Familie vor dem „Rothen Ochsen“ zu sehen; es hängt im letzten Raum des Museums.

Fred Bernheim, der als Teilhaber eines renommierten Architekturbüros in Northbrook bei Chicago – trotz seiner 72 Jahre – immer noch tätig ist, erwähnte bei seinem Besuch in Laupheim, dass er im vergangenen Jahr für eine Gemeinde in Northbrook eine Synagoge gebaut

hat. Sie nimmt Gestaltungsmotive der Laupheimer Synagoge auf und bewahrt so variierend die Erinnerung an diesen 1938 zerstörten Sakralbau und an die eigene Kindheit.

Zum Entwurf sagte Fred Bernheim bei der Übergabe der Synagoge zu den Hohen Feiertagen im September 1999: „Es kommt in der Tat selten vor, dass ein Erwachsener die Gelegenheit erhält, eine Kindheitserinnerung zu gestalten.“

Der Rabbiner der Gemeinde, Weissberg, erinnerte bei der Einweihung an diesen Grund für Bernheims Entwurf: Die gesamte Gemeinde von Northbrook habe sich über den Entwurf gefreut, und sie habe sich noch mehr gefreut, dass die Laupheimer „Shul“ dieser Gemeinde auf diese Weise heute noch diene.



In dieser Synagoge im US-Bundesstaat Illinois finden sich Gestaltungselemente der Laupheimer Synagoge.

FOTO: PRIVAT

HISTORY/Architectural model for new building in US state of Illinois

- LAUPHEIM SYNAGOGUE LIVES ON

Architect Fred Bernheim witnessed the “Night of Broken Glass” as a child in Laupheim

The synagogue in Laupheim was destroyed during the “Night of Broken Glass” on November 9, 1938. But it lives on despite this: in memory, and as an architectural model for a new synagogue in the US state of Illinois, planned by Fred Bernheim.

UDO BAYER

Laupheim – At the end of October, architect Fred Bernheim from Chicago visited Laupheim. He is the nephew of Sophie Nördlinger who was the last Jewish owner of the "Rothen Ochsen" restaurant. She passed away in 1993. Bernheim brought the Jewish-Christian museum valuable documents from her heritage (we reported about this). Among these documents is a portrait drawing of Ferdinand Reitze, an autograph book from Sophie Nördlinger's mother in which twenty-year-old Carl Lämmle left a note written in Chicago, and also a letter from Carl Lämmle that was written two weeks before his death and which marks his last written testimony. By the way, Sophie Nördlinger's nephew can also be seen as a little boy, together with the family in front of the "Rothen Ochsen" on a photograph that is exhibited in the last room of the museum. Fred Bernheim, 72 years old and still active as a joint partner in a renowned architectural office in Northbrook near Chicago, mentioned during his last visit in Laupheim that he had built a synagogue for a community in Northbrook in the past year. This building contains design elements from the Laupheim synagogue in varying forms, in memory of the sacred building which had been destroyed in 1938 and of his own childhood.

On the occasion of the hand-over of the synagogue during the High Holidays in September 1999, Bernheim stated: "It is a rare occasion indeed, that an adult is given the opportunity to physically shape a childhood memory."

The rabbi of the community, Mr. Weissberg, alluded to the motivation of Bernheim's conception during the inauguration, stating that the entire community of Northbrook was very happy about the concept and even more so, because in this way, the Laupheim "Shul" can continue to serve the Northbrook community even today.

(Picture: This synagogue in the US state of Illinois contains design elements from the Laupheim synagogue)



Taken from Ernst Schäll's photo album: Fred Bernheim visiting Laupheim in October 2000.



Fred and Nelida Bernheim in Ernst Schäll's restoration laboratory.

