

EINSTEIN, Rosa and Julius

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Mother:

Rosa Einstein, née Regensteiner, born July 21, 1861 in Laupheim, died on December 26, 1942 in the concentration camp Theresienstadt, widow of Sigmund B. Einstein, wine merchant, died December 21, 1913 in Laupheim.

Son:

Julius Einstein, born July 5, 1887 in Laupheim, single, travel agent, deported to Riga on November 28, 1941 and murdered there.

Unfortunately, there is only little evidence of this family, which is all the more unfortunate as it was not only Rosa Einstein (née Regensteiner) and her youngest son Julius who fell victim to the genocide, but also her daughter Bertha Neumayer who was married in Munich. Nor do we have 100% clarity about the origins and history of the prestigious three-story building at 40 Kapellenstrasse with its neo-baroque pitched roof and the identical neighboring house (see chapter about the Bach family) where the family lived until 1939. It was probably built by Rosa's father, Maier Regensteiner (1824–1887), who was a sales man and municipal commissioner. Rosa was born here in 1861.



Today, the building, left, at 40 Kapellenstrasse is a Chinese restaurant.

Rosa and Sigmund Einstein had four children, who were born between 1882 (Edmund) and 1887 (Julius). The oldest, Edmund, emigrated to the United States very early, their daughter Recha died in early infancy, Bertha got married and moved to Munich, and the youngest, nicknamed "Juliusle" (Swabian diminutive for little Julius) remained single and lived with his mother who was widowed since 1913. Julius was a sales man, who obviously had no intention to uphold the wine trading business, which used to be his father Sigmund's until his untimely death in 1913.

Julius Einstein was travelling a lot and his mother lead a withdrawn life. Obviously this is the reason why there is no evidence of contemporaries remembering these two fellow citizens. Written sources are scarce as well.



Julius Einstein (front row, in the middle) as a first grader with his class in 1894/95. (Photo: Leo Baeck Institute, NY)

In 1925 Rosa Einstein still owned the building at 40 Kapellenstrasse. At the beginning of 1938, the mechanic Karl Landthaler is listed as owner and resident, but Rosa and Julius Einstein still lived in the house. The building was probably legally sold beforehand, because there is nothing known about a post-war restitution law suit.

Already in early 1939 the Nazi regime started to remove Jews from their homes and neighborhood forcibly relocating them in shared accommodation facilities. The rationale behind it was to facilitate subsequent deportation. As early as Jan. 1, 1939, Julius Einstein was forced out of his parents' house and moved into collective housing in the former rabbinate. In September of the same year his mother also moved to the so-called retirement home at 2 Judenberg (today 1 Synagogenweg). Being out of town during "Crystal Night" in November 1938 Julius was fortunate not to be subject to detention and subsequent imprisonment in the Dachau concentration camp, unlike 17 Jewish citizens from Laupheim, but one year later, on November 9, 1939, again 13 Jewish males were arrested for no reason and put into jail in Laupheim. Julius Einstein was among these "prisoners in protective custody", being released only with the second wave on November 25.

Jewish Retirement Home: Collective housing in the former rabbinate

A look at the faces in the pictures below may give our readers a feeling of the prevailing conditions in the Jewish retirement home: there was a permanent fear of ongoing harassment, insecurity, desolation, and material deprivation while being reduced to idleness. The pictures taken in 1940 by an unknown photographer and handed over to Gretel Gideon and Ernst Schäll clearly illustrate how people were crammed into a small space. Rosa and Julius Einstein are one several pictures, and Rosa in particular, looks very depressed and distracted. Although having almost reached the age of 80, she was not fortunate to face the end in her home town Laupheim. In old age she was forcibly relocated from her spacious birth house at 40 Kapellenstraße to share a room with three or four roommates. Her son Julius, aged 53, was among the younger occupants of the collective housing. He was assigned to the first deportation wave which started on November 28, 1941, with destination Riga. He did not come back. "There are no signs of our loved ones who went away", is what Selma Wertheimer wrote in the retirement home in 1942 to Emma and Gretel Gideon about the unknown fate of the deportees. On August 1942 Rosa Einstein was deported to Theresienstadt together with the remaining residents of the retirement home. There she succumbed to the inhumane conditions and died at the end of 1942.



Mina Einstein, Rosa Einstein, Maier Wertheimer, Julius Einstein (standing), Max Rieser.



Forced into collective housing: Max Rieser, Karl Guggenheimer and Julius Einstein.



Babette Rieser and Rosa Einstein. Rosa Einstein and Pauline Nördlinger.

(Alle Fotos Archiv Ernst Schäll)