

ADLER, Edmund,

44 Kapellenstrasse

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Edmund Adler: born on July 10th, 1876 in Laupheim, (second son from the second marriage of Isidor Adler), murdered in 1942 in Treblinka; married to Mathilde Adler (Netter), born on September 22nd, 1877 in Goeppingen, died on September 17th, 1935 in Laupheim.

- **Charlotte Adler:** born on March 3rd, 1911 in Laupheim, kindergarten teacher, emigrated to Manchester, England on April 19th, 1939, died in 1942.

- **Elisabetha Adler:** born on October 30th, 1913 in Laupheim, women's dressmaker, emigrated to Keston, England on January 27th, 1939, died on May 28th, 2014 in London.

- **Irene Adler:** born on March 26th, 1916 in Laupheim, housemaid, in 1935 moved to Goeppingen, emigrated to England in May of 1939



Mathilde and Edmund Adler in 1909
(*archive of Ernst Schaell*)

Thanks to Liesel Adler's regular visits to her hometown much of the sources about her as a person and her family were kept in decent condition. In the recent years, however, her age and health prevent her from further travel. As a result, only two of her interviews from the 1990s could be evaluated alongside her photographs, which she passed on to Ernst Schaell.

The first photograph was taken in 1909 and shows the Adler parents Edmund and Mathilde at their wedding. Mathilde Netter descended from a wealthy Jewish family from Goeppingen. The early development of Edmund's career is unknown. After the death of his father in 1916, Edmund and his older brother Jakob became the owners of their parents' business. During the First World War he was drafted as a soldier. At the time, Edmund was 40 years old and did not have to depart for the front. Rather, he served in the procurement division in Muensingen.

Edmund Adler's family lived on the second floor of the house on Kapellen Street (Kapellenstrasse) 44. The youngest of the three children, Irene, was born in 1916. She was "not so healthy" and suffered from epilepsy. In order to relieve the strain on their mother, one of the two older daughters attended school in Goeppingen from the 1920s and onward. Their parents' house in Goeppingen had more room. Mathilde's sister, who was still single, was also living with her parents.

So from 1920-1927, Liesel Adler went to school in Goeppingen. Over the summer break, Liesel would come home where other people constantly made fun of her because she spoke "Goeppingen-Protestant and not Laupheim-Catholic"! After 1927, the oldest sister Charlotte successfully completed her professional training in Goeppingen and later in Berlin. The death of their mother in 1935 was the cause for the youngest sister Irene to move to Goeppingen permanently.

In the 20s of the previous century, the Adler family had already given up the traditional Jewish life style and had no longer practiced the various Jewish customs. They were almost fully assimilated and had more contact to Christian families in their societal class, than to the poorer Jewish families. The family of Edmund Adler made no exceptions either. The only photograph from Liesel Adler's childhood (on next page) shows her standing next to the kids of the Buehler family, a Christian family with whom the Adlers had friendly ties ,from house 47 on Mittel Street (Mittelstrasse).

In the family, the Jewish meals were disregarded and the weekly day of rest became Sunday, not Saturday. Back then, Liesel Adler found the ironic self-depicting description "Three-Day-Jews" to be quite accurate because they would go to the synagogue a maximum of three times a year: Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and maybe sometimes Pesach (Passover). They had stopped learning Hebrew and, therefore, found the synagogue extremely boring. Liesel Adler felt that the Catholic holidays were much nicer and more celebratory. Flowers and frankincense accommodated festivals like St. Peter and St. Paul Feast Day. One of their Christian housemaids would occasionally take Liesel with her. "My entire family saw themselves as Germans and free-Jews.



Liesel Adler (on the right with a bow in her hair) with the kids from the Buehler family, 1922. From the left: Trude, Walter, Fritz Buehler, Liesel Adler, Ulrich Buehler (*archive of Ernst Schaell*)

After Liesel Adler's return to Laupheim, she attended the Latin and secondary school for two additional years. She graduated in 1929.. The school potential in Laupheim was exhausted and Liesel continued her studies at the higher secondary school in Ulm, where she eventually received her Diploma in 1932. Liesel Adler had, amongst many friends, two closest friends, who were all around the same age. The first was Klaerle Einstein from the store owner D. M. Einstein, and the second was Gretel Bergmann, with whom Liesel rode to school in Ulm for two years.



No fear of touch between Christians and Jews:
March 1929: the middle section of the school year 1929 in Schlosspark.
From the left: Hyneck, Sally Wallach/ Walser, Liesel Adler, Stetter, Steinle, S. Schmid



After receiving her high school diploma in 1931, Liesel Adler was unsure of her career path. The *(archive of Ernst Schaeff)* for an interpreter and translator school was unsuccessful, which eventually led her to go to Berlin for a half year, where she enrolled in to a household management course for female students with a high-school diploma. Liesel Adler got used to the capital quite fast and actually enjoyed the rich culture the metropolis had to offer. Before she could make any decisions, however, the 30th of January 1933 changed everything.



Family Edmund Adler in 1933. This was the last photo, where the entire family was together. From the left: Bertha Netter, Lotte, Mathilde, Liesel, Edmund, Irene Adler.
(*archive of Ernst Schaeff*)

In the summer of 1933, she came back to Laupheim because it was no longer possible for Jews to enroll in universities. In October of the same year her mother suffered from the first stroke. She was in need of temporary care, and was looked after in Goeppingen by her sister, similar

to the situation with her daughters earlier. Liesel Adler began her professional schooling to be a tailor, first in Laupheim with a catholic nun community and later in Ulm with a Jewish company "Bernheimer". "I was never happy as a tailor, but when thinking about emigrating, I was told once, then you need to know a craft..." However, not until the year 1938 did emigration become a topic for all of the three sisters.

The year 1935 was, for the Adler family, especially catastrophic. Mother Mathilde suffered a second, deathly stroke back in Laupheim. The news about the enactment of the Nuremberg Laws in September led to this devastation. She came back from a funeral and stated glumly, "I wished, I was also down there already", and later that night she passed away. In December, uncle Jakob Adler committed suicide out of despair. The paragraph after next will explain more about this tragedy. "He was my favorite uncle - a man of such brightness and humor. I didn't want to say it... but sometimes I thought to myself: I wished you were my father." How everything affected the company and who supported father Edmund with the management is unknown.

Liesel Adler's career also did not take off. In 1937 she passed the final exam for woman's tailoring, yet she worked in this profession for a short period of time. "I hated the tailoring. I was always too slow." In 1938 she went to a Jewish Orthodox home economics school in Frankfurt, where yet again everything went wrong. The reason was Liesel's lack knowledge in Jewish cuisine.

One time, she confused a milky dish for one with meat. The confusion would have had costly consequences. Luckily, she found a Rabbi who knew how to cure the main dish. With prayers and special treatments he reversed the kitchen to being kosher again. On the day before the night of the "Pogrom" the SS closed the Frankfurt school. The students and teachers were simply seated on the street. So, Liesel rode back to Goeppingen that night, only to find out in the morning from her sister Irene that father Edmund was picked up by the SA in Laupheim and was dragged to the concentration camp in Dachau. A few days later they both went to Laupheim.



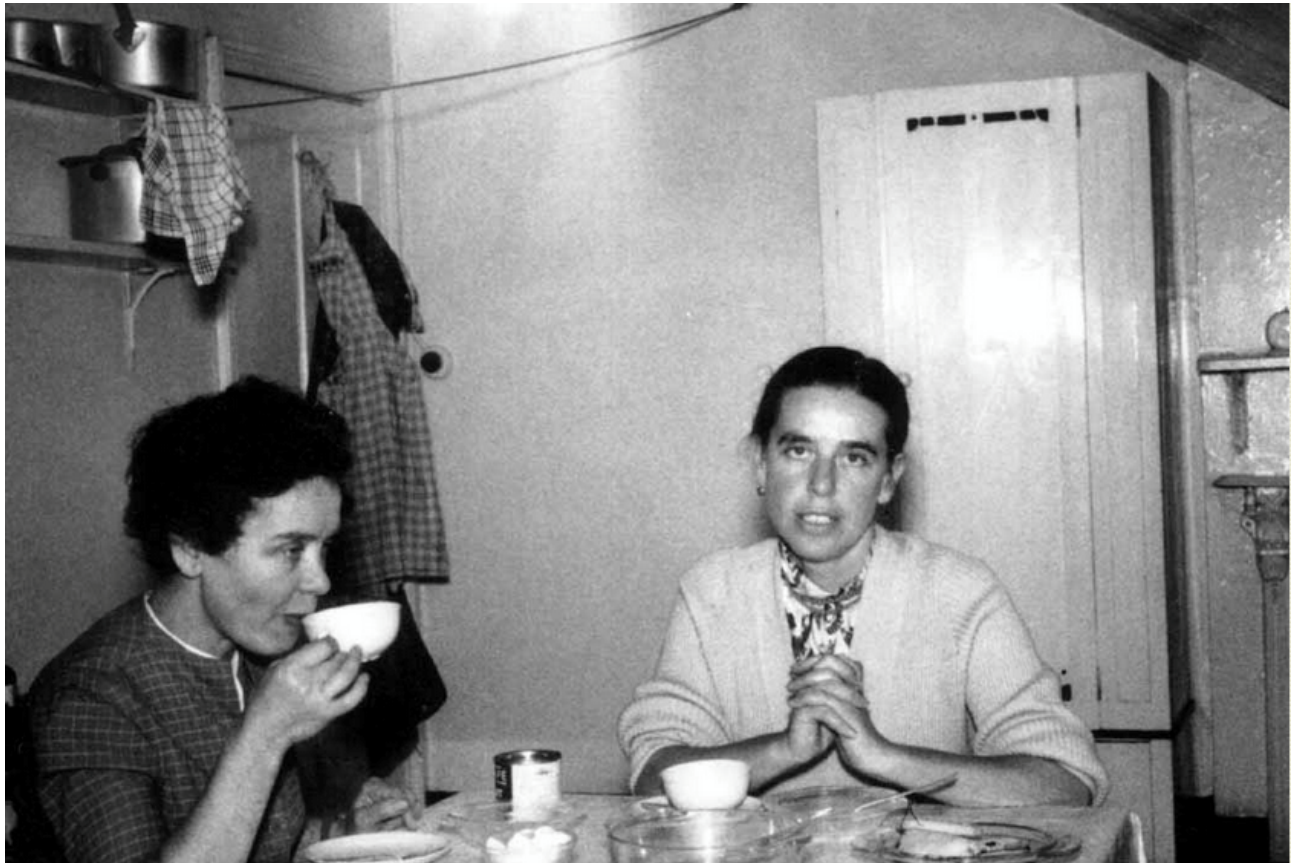
Jakob Adler with his nieces Irene (left) and Liesel, year 1932.
In the background are the garages and the the company storage warehouse.
(archive of Ernst Schaell)

Their sister Lotte was the only one in the house next to Edmund Adler the night of the "Pogrom". She tried to hold back the SA people from pulling father Edmund out of bed and taking him with them. They broke in, nevertheless. "If you don't keep your mouth shut we'll take you too!", they threatened, but Lotte stood by her father and voluntarily went along. In front of the burning synagogue they had to watch how the arrested men were humiliated by the SA soldiers: "They had to knee in front of the burned down synagogue and say: 'We are scum'."

Up until then, no one in the family had ever thought about emigration. After the incident, there was only one thing that could be done: flee as fast as you can from Germany! Emigration proved to be a difficult task because the neighboring countries along with the U.S.A. did not want to lax their restrictive immigration policies. Though one day, a past classmate from Frankfurt suggested to Liesel to go to Britain. There, people were looking for cheap housemaids and nannies. Liesel also received a London address, where she immediately applied. She received, however, an acceptance letter from a different family, who was ready to hire her as a housemaid. Thus, she became the first out of the three sisters, who could emigrate from Germany.

Edmund Adler did not make it as far as to emigrate from Germany. In 1940 he had to leave his house and was quartered with many others in the former rabbinate. After the war began it became impossible to contact his daughters in England directly. Messages could only be passed along via relatives living in the neutral Basel. On August 19th, 1942, Edmund Adler, together with many other older women and men from Laupheim, was deported to Theresienstadt. For a while, he told his previous

neighbor, Katharine Helder, that he had gotten poison in case they started deporting people, "because I'm not going to let them kill me." On the day before the abduction he sent a post card to his daughters: "Thank God the Red Cross is taking us to Sweden tomorrow." He arrived in Theresienstadt instead and lived there until September 26th, 1942 in an overfilled concentration camp. He was then put on a further train to Treblinka and would be murdered in a gas chamber there.



Lotte and Irene Adler in 1939 in England
(archive of Ernst Schaell)

Liesel Adler stayed in Great Britain after the war and lives close to London to this day. (Postscript: she passed away in June of 2014) She restored her contact to Laupheim early on and came to visit almost every year on a regular basis. Unfortunately, her old age prevents her from continuing visits. The photo from 1966 captures her standing on Kapellen Street (Kapellenstraße) next to Katharina Halder, her neighbor back in the day. The Halder bakery was one of the first shelters in Laupheim for many incoming Jewish visitors after the war. The Adlers were not the only ones who received help and support from the Halder family all the way till the end.



1966: Liesel Adler visits Katharina Halder



1996: Liesel Adler and Ernst Schaell next to the tombstone of Hanriette, the first wife of Isidor Adler