

Nördlinger, Benno

Inn „Zum Ochsen“

Kapellenstraße 23, Radstraße 4

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Benno Nördlinger, born November 14, 1895 in Laupheim, died 1979 in New York,

Sophie Nördlinger, née Sängner, born April 3, 1898 in Laupheim, died 1993 in Chicago. Sophie Nördlinger's mother:

Klara Sängner, née Einstein, born April 8, 1865 in Laupheim, died October 15, 1942 in New York.



July 1938, Nördlinger-Sänger family on the stairs of the "Ochsen" with guests. From left to right: unknown couple, Klara Sängner, Sophie Nördlinger, Sam Simon, Benno Nördlinger. Boy in front: Nephew Fritz Bernheim. (Archives of Ernst Schäll)

As you would expect of a well-established, innkeeper family, there are many pleasant photos of the Sängers and Nördlingers, mostly thanks to Ernst Schäll's Archives. Registered records are however, in shorter supply. The texts about this family are rather short and leave many questions unanswered.

Zum Ochsen Inn

Sophie Sängner was the only child of Albert and Klara Sängner. The Sängers took over the traditional German inn *Zum Ochsen* from Albert's father, Benjamin Sängner, who had purchased the inn in 1860. The house had already been built around the turn of the 18th century. The word *Rot* (red) was probably added to the original name in the 1980s, after the building had fallen into disrepair and was under threat of demolition. Following restoration in accordance with the guidelines for the protection of historical monuments, it was reopened under the name *Zum roten Ochsen*.

In the advertisement of the *Purim* magazine of 1914 it is only called *Ochsen* Hotel. The advertisement makes ironic jokes about the small size and the old-fashioned and somewhat backward style of the inn at the time, as there were already many bigger and better inns in town. Furthermore, we learn that tripe is a specialty and a true kosher staple.

Playful advertisement from the musical society "Frohsinn" in the "Purim" magazine of 1914. At Purim Fair every year anonymous authors would poke fun at what was going on in town.

(Source: property of John Bergmann, city archives Laupheim)

The innkeepers of *Zum Ochsen*: Klara and Albert Snger with their daughter Sophie (middle) and two unknown children in 1914/15. Albert Snger died in 1929.

(Archives of Ernst Schll)

Odysen- Hotel

Laupheim (Germany).

== **Haus I. Ranges.** ==

Elektrisch Licht. — Luft.

— Centralkohlengasheizung. —

In bester Lage der Stadt.

3 Minuten vom Centralbahnhof.

☛ Friseur vis-à-vis. ☛

Ganz nahe der stdtischen Badeanstalt.

Zwei mit allem Comfort eingerichtete Fremdenzimmer.

Table d' hte zu jeder Tageszeit.

S . . . mssige Preise.

Feinste kochere Kche.

(Spezialitt: Saure Kutteln, — 60 Mk. die Portion, im Abonnement billiger.)

Grosse Auswahl vorzglichlicher, in Laupheim fabrizierter **Weine.**

Rauchsalons.	Musikzimmer.
Lesezimmer.	Billardrume.
Bibliothek.	Spielzimmer.
Damensalons.	Grossartige Gartenanlagen

On parle franais. — English spoken.

Das Hotel ist beinahe das ganze Jahr hindurch besetzt.



In John Bergmann's recollections the beloved meeting place *Zum Ochsen* never lost its popularity despite increasing competition. He describes the situation during the 1920s as follows:

People spent a lot of time in the Ochsen, one of the two Jewish-German inns. The Ochsen was a place for open discussion where Jewish people could meet, play cards and talk. Men usually met there after lunch on their way back to work for a cup of coffee (without sugar and milk, since the Ochsen strictly adhered to Kashrut, the Jewish dietary laws). During this time they also played card games such as Poker and Gaigel or read Tarot cards, but there was also room for insightful discussion on local and international issues.

(Bergmann chronicles, Page 59, 63)

Benno Nördlinger

The last Jewish innkeeper of the *Ochsen* was Benno, whose parent's home was located nine houses up *Kapellenstraße* on the same side of the road as the inn. Benno was the oldest son of the farmer Ludwig Nördlinger and his wife Pauline (Page 394 ff.). From 1905 to 1911 he attended Laupheim *Realschule* (the German equivalent of High School) and graduated with *Mittlere Reife* (a high school diploma), known as *Einjähriges* at that time. On finishing his *Einjähriges*, he began his commercial apprenticeship, shortly before the outbreak of World War I. At the age of nineteen, even Benno was swept up in the patriotic enthusiasm for war. In the autumn of 1914 he volunteered to fight in the war, as did 13 younger members of the Jewish community of Laupheim. During the war he fought as an artilleryman on the frontline, was promoted to corporal and was awarded the Iron Cross 2nd class.

Benno Nördlinger as a schoolboy in 1911.

(Archives of Ernst Schäll)

The list of Laupheim's 45 Jewish frontline soldiers, which is shown below, was found on the property of John Bergmann, but unfortunately no sources are provided. This list is surely a product of the so-called "Jewish census" that was conducted by the Imperial Army in 1917 exclusively for statistical purposes. This later served as part of the anti-Semitic campaign after the war, the purpose of which was to downplay the patriotic



contributions of the German Jews. Looking closely, the number of Laupheim frontline soldiers is striking. Most of the soldiers behind the frontline were older and are not even listed here. This shows that Benno Nördlinger was not an isolated case. Half of the soldiers, namely 23, were awarded an Iron Cross. Moreover, 14, almost a third, were promoted: 10 to the rank of corporal and 4 to the rank of officer. As promotion was usually only possible with a certain level of education, i.e. *Einjähriges*, this further demonstrates that the Jewish community had a better than average level of education.

It is estimated that Benno Nördlinger and Sophie Sängler married in early 1926. Benno became the new innkeeper of the *Ochsen*. The couple, which would remain childless, rented a house on Radstraße several houses up from the "Ochsen". This was due in part to the spatial constraints of the *Ochsen* that are still obvious today. Another reason for this may be the fact that Paula Seligmann, the widowed sister of Klara Sängler, lived there temporarily. Paula Seligmann died in 1939 in Stuttgart, but she was buried in Laupheim in the cemetery.



The "Ochsen" before World War I
(Archives of Ernst Schäll)

In the 1920s Benno Nördlinger ran a paper wholesale business together with Hugo Höchstetter, however, the information available is limited. At the time Benno's in-laws probably still ran the inn, therefore the paper wholesale business was likely to have been the main source of income for the Nördlinger family.

Jewish frontline soldiers

Name, field unit, last rank, decorations, honorable mention

Adler, Julius	Arto. Batl. 52 L. Mun. Kol. 1090	Artillerist		
Bach, Ernst	Inf. R. 120 Gr. Funk. Abt. 509	Funker		verschlütet
Bach, Hugo	Landw. Inf. R. 122	Unteroffizier		
Bergmann, Edwin	Feld-A. R. 116 Feld-A. R. 281	Gefreiter		
Bergmann, Karl	Feld-A. R. 49 Feld-A. R. 29 Feld-A. R. 13	Leutnant	✠ ⑤	kriegsfreiwillig verwundet
Bergmann, Max	Feld-A. Batt. 888	Landsturm.		
Bergmann, Willy	Inf. R. 120	Unteroffizier	✠ ⑤ bulg. M. V. O.	verwundet
Bernheim, Leopold	Res. Inf. R. 248	Musketier		kriegsfreiwillig
Bernheimer, Manfred	Gren. R. 119	Grenadier		verwundet
Dworzan, Hermann	Res. Inf. R. 248	Feldhilfsarzt	✠ ⑤	gefallen am 24. 7. 15
Dworzan, Max	Landw. Inf. R. 121 Landw. Inf. R. 126 Landw. Feld-A. R. 1 Feldlaz. 33 u. 253	Feldhilfsarzt	✠ ⑤	kriegsfreiwillig
Einstein, Edmund	Feld-A. R. 111	Gefreiter	✠	kriegsfreiwillig
Einstein, Hugo	Feld-A. R. 49	San. Uoff.		kriegsfreiwillig
Einstein, Leopold	Feld-A. R. 13 Inf. Gesch. Batt. 22	Unteroffizier	⑤	kriegsfreiwillig
Einstein, Lothar	Landw. Feld-A. R. 2 Fuß-A. R. 13	Unteroffizier	✠ ⑤	kriegsfreiwillig verwundet
Einstein, Max D.	Gren. R. 123	Unteroffizier	✠	
Einstein, Max L.	M. G. Scharfsch. Abt. 77	Schütze	✠	vermißt seit 23. 8. 18
Erlebacher, Alfred	Landst. Inf. R. 39	Landsturm.		
Guggenheimer, Max	Landw. Inf. R. 122	Gefreiter		
Heilbronner, Selmar	Gren. R. 123	Landsturm.		
Heilbronner, Willy	Feld-A. R. 13	Gefreiter	✠	verwundet
Heumann, Hugo	Bayr. 1. Inf. R.	Infanterist		verschlütet
Heumann, Julius	Res. Inf. R. 247 Inf. R. 124	Landsturm.	✠ ⑤	
Heumann, Richard	Landw. Inf. R. 122 Fus. R. 122	Vizefeldw.	✠ ⑤	verwundet
Laupheimer, Jacob	Feldluftsch. Abt. 7	Luftschiffer	✠	kriegsfreiwillig
Laupheimer, Siegfried	Inf. R. 478	Wehrmann	✠	
Levigard, Julius	Landw. Inf. R. 123 Feld-M. Gew. Zug 288 M. G. Scharfsch. Abt. 77	Unteroffizier	✠ ⑤	kriegsfreiwillig
Lewin, Leo	Res. Inf. R. 248	Ers. Res.		gefallen am 9. 10. 15
Löwenthal, Selmar	Res. A. Mun. Kol. 1/XIII Res. Feld-A. R. 26	Wachtm.	✠ ⑤	
Neuhaus, Hugo	Bayr. 20. Feld-A. R.	Stabsarzt	✠ ⑤ bayr. M. V. O. IV	verwundet
Nördlinger, Benno	Feld-A. R. 116 Res. Feld-A. R. 26 Feld-A. R. 13	Unteroffizier	✠	kriegsfreiwillig
Obernauer, Hugo	Bayr. Res. Inf. R. 19	Ers. Res.		gefallen im Juni 15
Obernauer, Josef	San. Komp. 522	Fahrer	✠ ⑤	
Obernauer, Max	Bayr. San. Komp. 3	Krankenträg.	✠	
Obernauer, Wilhelm	Ers. Inf. R. 5 Bayr. Pion. Batt. 2	Gefreiter	bayr. M. V. K. III	kriegsfreiwillig verwundet
Schmal, Simon	Arm. Batt. 192	Musketier	✠ ⑤	
Steiner, Heinrich	Feld-A. R. 238	Leutnant	✠	kriegsfreiwillig gefallen am 25. 4. 18
Steiner, Julius	Garde-Feld-A. R. 1	Gefreiter	✠	kriegsfreiwillig verwundet
Sternschein, Hermann	Landw. Inf. R. 124 Res. Inf. R. 120	Gefreiter	⑤	
Treitel, Emil	Inf. R. 125 Inf. R. 121 San. Komp. 26. Inf. D.	Oberarzt	✠ ⑤ F. O. II	
Treitel, Erich	Bayr. Fernspr. Abt.	Telegraphist		
Vogel, Simon	Res. Feld-A. R. 26	Unteroffizier		kriegsfreiwillig
Weil, Julius	Inf. R. 120	Schütze		verwundet
Weiler, Jakob	Inf. R. 109	Gefreiter		gefallen am 17. 11. 16
Wertheimer, Ernst	Feld-A. R. 65	Artillerist		

Emigration and new beginnings during the Third Reich

Due to a lack of authentic reports this chapter is rather short and limited to key figures. John Bergmann describes how the *Ochsen* became the target of SA terror early on. After the failure of the coup d'état in Austria in July 1934 numerous members of the SA and the SS were taken in by Germany, among others by the *Steiger-Werke*, a car factory, in Burgrieden. From there they often came to Laupheim:

"What our local Nazi-units were lacking in brutality and malice, they learned quickly from their Austrian comrades. The officers were welcome guests at the homes of the 'better families'. In 1934 these gangsters were already raging against Jews. They temporarily occupied the Ochsen inn and damaged many Jewish houses and shops." (Bergmann-Chronicles p.85)

In 1938 during the Night of Broken Glass Benno Nördlinger was also dragged out of his home, humiliated and subsequently deported to the concentration camp Dachau. In a letter dated November 23, 1938 his lawyer, Ernst Moos from Ulm, tried to negotiate with the Gestapo for a swift release.

He argued that the already initiated sale of the *Ochsen* to the castle brewery could not be finalized as long as Nördlinger was arrested. The emigration of the family had already been prepared and the visas for the U.S.A. were about to be issued. He also enumerated the prisoner's decorations and honorable mentions: almost four years of military service at the frontline, Iron Cross 2nd class, the Honor Cross of the First World War for front-line veterans and many years of service in the medical orderly convoy.

Ein Mann von seltener Herzensgüte Gatte, Bruder, Schwager, Onkel, Vetter und Freund

BENNO L. NOERDLINGER

(früher Laupheim)

hat am 20. Juni 1979 seine Augen für immer geschlossen.

SOPHIE NOERDLINGER

geb. Saenger

HERMANN NOERDLINGER

und Frau GARDI

Für alle Anteilnahme aufrichtigen Dank.

(Source: property of John Bergmann, Reel 1, Box 2)

On December 14, 1938 Nördlinger was finally released. In the end, the sale of the inn to the castle brewery was not officially authorized; instead it was sold privately in February 1939. Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, on August 14, 1939, the family was finally allowed to immigrate to New York. Even Klara Sängler who was 74 years old at the time accompanied them. This was probably a wise decision that saved her from humiliation and deportation. Others at her age commonly did not have the fortitude to undertake such a long journey. She died in New York in October 1942.

Even though they had lost everything, Sophie and Benno Nördlinger were able to build a new life for themselves in New York. In June 1979 Benno died at the age of 84, as documented in his obituary notice that was published in the newspaper *Aufbau* (Reconstruction). His wife Sophie outlived him by many years. In November 1993 she died at the age of 96 in Chicago, in a home for the elderly. She had lived in Chicago since 1990 to be closer to her nephew, the architect, Fred Bernheim.



(A photo from 1950: back row: Julius and Helmut Steiner,
In front: Benno Nördlinger - The "Grandseigneurs" (sophisticated
gentlemen)
of the destroyed Jewish community of Laupheim)

Sources:

Property of John Bergmann, City archives Laupheim,

Köhlerschmidt/Hecht: Die Deportation der Juden aus Laupheim ("The deportation of the Laupheim Jews")

John H. Bergmann: Die Bergmanns aus Laupheim ("The Bergmann family from Laupheim")