

# The Search for Anni Ferszt and the Ferszt Family of Konstanz, Germany: A Family Lost and Found

By Allen Kurtz, 2001-2016



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Circa 1974, when I first asked Mom (Sylvia Wonchotsky Kurtz, 1919-2011) about the ancestry of my maternal grandparents and great grandparents, she passed on to me a large envelope that included old photographs, postcards, letters, and documents. Grandma, Frieda Pick Wonchotsky, had died in 1967 and Grandpa, Riven Fersht/Leon Wonchotsky, died two years later. Included in the packet was a picture postcard dated 10 August 1938 and sent from Konstanz, Germany showing Anni Furst and containing a brief message from her that included her address at Rheingasse 15. Without an American address, Anni's postcard surely came enclosed in a larger envelope, now unfortunately lost, that may have been initially mailed to Grandpa's brother Max Fersht in Brooklyn, New York. Mom said that Anni was Grandpa's sister. As there did not appear to have been any communication between Grandpa and Anni after the end of World War Two in 1945, we sadly concluded that Anni must have died in the Holocaust, a victim of the Nazis.

Thus began a vexing three-decade long quest to determine Anni's fate. Along with endeavoring to understand the reason why Grandpa lived his life using two names, Riven/Reuben Fersht and Leon Wonchotsky, discovering what happened to Anni became one of the "drivers" of my research. Searching for facts to document her life became something of an obsession that sporadically haunted my days and kept me up nights. It was only in August 2013 and immediately after my wife Linda (Dr. Linda Rosenbaum Kurtz) and I returned from a vacation to Austria and Switzerland that included a side trip to Konstanz that I discovered that Anni was not Grandpa's sister but likely his first cousin once removed. In the more common nomenclature that families use

in “real” life, and in particular when addressing people of a previous generation, Anni addressed Grandpa’s brother Max Fersht as “Uncle” and certainly thought of Grandpa in a similar way. Both Grandpa and Max likely thought of Anni as their niece.

Even as my doubts about Anni’s sibling relationship to Grandpa gradually intensified over the course of thirty years of research, Mom continued to insist that Anni was her father’s sister and said that both Grandpa and Uncle Max talked of her often. Mom must have somehow misheard or misunderstood what her father had said. As Grandpa talked little to her of his youth in Poland and was generally close-mouthed and secretive about his family, subsequent migration to America, and life in America before her birth in 1919, such a misinterpretation is perfectly understandable. It may also be that the conversations between her father and uncle were conducted in Yiddish, a language Mom had only a rudimentary understanding of.

Anni/Anne Ferszt did not die in the Holocaust but was able to escape to England in 1938. Her parents, Morritz/Morris/Moses/Max Ferszt and Sara/Salomea Schmuelevitz Ferszt, along with her grandmother Bertha Alexander Schmuelevitz, were not so fortunate and were killed either in transport to, or at Auschwitz in September 1942 (Morritz and Sara) and February 1943 (Bertha). Although a closer sibling relationship cannot be categorically ruled out, Moses may have been a first cousin to Grandpa and Max. In fact, Mom always thought that Grandpa had one additional brother although his existence had always been a matter of conjecture and his name unknown. Note: that brother, Berek, has now been identified. As there was communication between the Ferszt family in Konstanz and the Fersht family in New York in 1938, certainly not the first letters exchanged between the families, there can be little doubt that a familial relationship did exist. It is also interesting to ponder the thought that family photographs, perhaps of Max Fersht’s three daughters Rosie, Gussie, and Frances as well as that of Mom and her sister Helen, were sent to Germany.

In England, Anne married Ronald Nairn in 1946 and had two children. She died in 1988. In August of 2013 I was able to establish contact with Anne Ferszt Nairn’s son, Kevin Maurice Nairn and discovered the amazing details of his mother’s life.

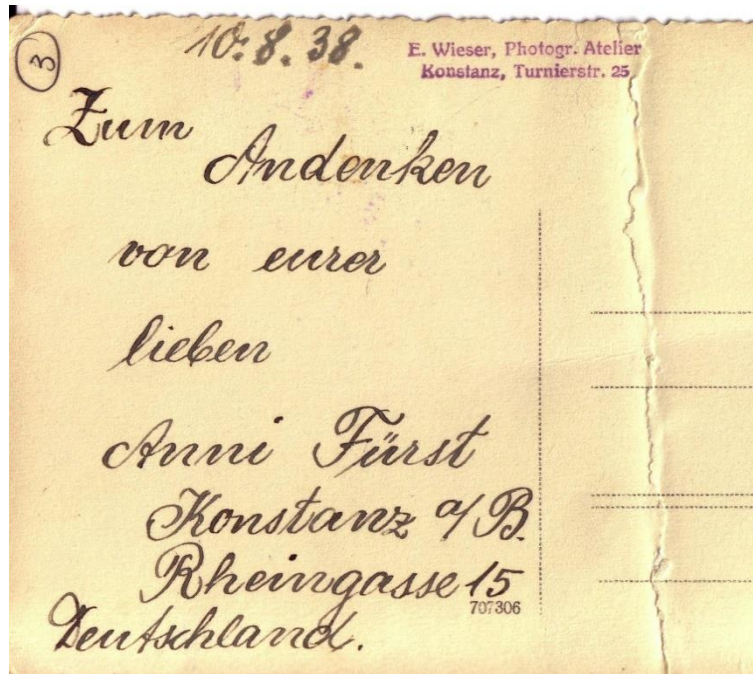
The process of how I came to learn that truth is a cautionary tale for genealogists and family historians and the lesson learned is to always be receptive to new information and to be continually ready to reassess what was long thought to be true. It is a clear demonstration of why perhaps the most important and useful words in the arsenal of genealogists are the terms conjectural, speculative, and theoretical. Twice during my research I thought I had fulfilled four of the standards set forth as the Genealogical Proof Standard (reasonably exhaustive search, complete and accurate citation of sources, analysis and correlation of the collected information, soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion) but was not able to fulfill the fourth (resolution of conflicting evidence) to my satisfaction and fell back onto those useful words “conjectural, speculative, theoretical.” Twice I felt I had, from the available evidence, reached a conclusion that appeared to fit the facts available but was troubled by the likelihood that I didn’t possess all the

facts and that there was something else out there that I was missing. Perhaps, in the final analysis, the only truisms are that no conclusion is ever final, to never completely trust your research as errors inevitably creep in, and that the work of a family historian is never, truly done.



**Anni Ferszt in 1938. The photographer was Edwin Wieser, 25 Turniestrasse, Konstanz.**

**From the collection of Allen and Linda Kurtz and originally in the possession of Leon Wonchotsky**



**The words of writing of Anni Furst: “For Remembrance, from your adoring Anni Furst.”**

**From the collection of Allen and Linda Kurtz and originally in the possession of Leon Wonchotsky**

In our 1974 conversation, Mom related that her grandparents were Mayer (Meir) and Chaya (Chaje) Fersht. Meir Tzvi Ferszt (son of Berek Dov Ferszt and Fajga) was born in Gabin, Poland in 1859 and died there 3 September 1901. He is buried in Okopowa Cemetery in Warsaw. Chaya outlived her husband by almost forty years, dying 28 July 1940 in Warsaw and was buried in Brodno Cemetery in Warsaw. She also had been born in Gabin in 1859, the daughter of Mordka/Mordecai Lewek Hersz and Ryfka Kac.

Neither of these dates were known to Mom as I discovered them after her death in 2011. Mom’s sister, Helen Wonchotsky Nadler, who died in 2014, did recall that her father received a letter while they were living on Elliot Place in the Bronx that told of his mother’s death. The family had moved to Elliot Place in July of 1937. Furthermore, Sylvia Specht, Max’s Granddaughter, recalls hearing that Chaya died from a urinary tract infection that had spread to her kidneys. She died in a hospital in an era before penicillin was widely available.

Aside from her uncle, Max Fersht, Mom thought that Grandpa had three sisters, one of whom was Anni, and one brother. In actuality, he had two sisters, Chana Toiba and Rachel, and two brothers, Max and Berek. Chana, Rachel and their respective families, they had married the brothers Zvi and Moshe Melcer, disappeared in Warsaw during World War Two although descendants of Rachel live in Israel. The fate of Berek is not known.

Max Fersht was born in Gabin on 22 February 1884 and Grandpa in Warsaw on 8 March 1895 although, and as is the case with many immigrants who grew up using the Jewish calendar but lived in America using the civil Gregorian calendar, there is some uncertainty regarding dates. Chana Toiba was born 20 March 1886, Rachel on 24 July 1887 (both in Gabin), and Berek in Warsaw on 12 April 1893.



**Chaya Ferszt (right) and her daughter Rachel Ferszt Melcer**

**Collection of Allen and Linda Kurtz**





**The tombstone of Chaja Ferszt in Warsaw's Brodno Cemetery, showing her husband's name as Meir Tzvi and her date of death as 28 July 1940**

[Cemetery.jewish.org.pl](http://Cemetery.jewish.org.pl)



**The tombstone of “the late Tsvi Meir, son of Dov.” In Okopowa Cemetery in Warsaw**

**Photograph taken by Przemyslaw Szpilman, July 30, 2015**

Staring at Anni’s postcard in 1974 my curiosity was piqued. If she were Grandpa’s sister and the family was always thought to have lived in Warsaw, why was she in Konstanz, a city located on the German border with Switzerland? Why was the postcard written in German and why did Anni spell her name in the Germanic fashion as Furst? Was she a student in the university in Konstanz? I was later to learn that the university in Konstanz did not open until 1966. Who was she staying with? Why, in an age when most women married young was she still unmarried? Was her presence in Germany and writing in German an attempt at assimilation? Influenced by the escape of the von Trapp family to Switzerland in the movie *The Sound of Music*, I wondered if she was somehow hoping to escape to a neutral country. As nothing was heard from her after the end of World War Two, I considered that possibility unlikely.





**A current photograph of the main street in Konstanz, Germany**

[jpg - media-cdn.tripadvisor.com/media/photo-s/00/11](http://jpg-media-cdn.tripadvisor.com/media/photo-s/00/11)



**Konstanz, Germany in a Google Earth photograph dating to 2006**



**“Konstanz.” 47° 39’ 53.84” N 9° 10’ 36.95” E. Google Earth 2006**



**Close up of Konstanz showing Rheingasse 15 in 2006**

**“Konstanz.” 47° 39’ 53.84” N 9° 10’ 36.95” E. Google Earth 2006**

Between 1974 and 2001 my research proceeded in fits and starts, hampered largely by the mystery of my Grandfather’s dual identity and the lack of easily assessable information. Periodically I would pull out Anni’s photograph and wonder about her fate. I had little doubt that she had perished in the Holocaust. When the Ellis Island Arrival Manifest Database came online in 2001 my interest in genealogy was rekindled, a fire that still burns brightly twelve years later.

Circa 2005, my inability to discover exactly what happened to Anni compelled me to think a little deeper and delve a little further into the events that transpired in Konstanz in the second half of 1938. Anni’s postcard was dated 10 August 1938. At this time, the condition and treatment of the city’s Jewish population were deteriorating and its persecution intensifying. In November 1936, the Konstanz synagogue was partially burned and in 1938, the Jewish community opened its own elementary school after Jewish children were forced out of the city’s other schools. In response, 130 Jews moved across the border and into the Swiss town of Kreuzlingen. I came to

see her message on the postcard (“For remembrance, from your adoring Anni Furst”) to be a chilling foreshadowing of the events soon to follow and symbolic of the Holocaust in general. I could not look at her picture without sadness.

On Kristallnacht (the “night of broken glass,” 9-10 November, 1938) when the Nazi’s unleashed a wave of destructive pogroms directed at Jews, the Konstanz synagogue was blown up by the SS (Schutzstaffel) and Jews were taken to Gestapo headquarters and beaten. Many were temporarily sent to Dachau: Morritz/Moses Ferszt was one of them (see below). On 22 October 1940, 108 (some sources cite the number 110) of Konstanz’s Jews were forcibly arrested and sent to Gurs, a concentration camp in South West France at the foot of the Pyrenees Mountains. 52 others were able to find refuge in the United States, France or Switzerland. Many others were sent to Auschwitz (*The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life Before and During the Holocaust*/New York University Press 2001 and cited at [alemannia.judacia.de/Konstanz\\_synagoge\\_a.htm](http://alemannia.judacia.de/Konstanz_synagoge_a.htm)). In a talk to middle school students in Pennsylvania in 2002, Fritz Ottenheimer, who was born circa 1925, related how his father Otto, owner of a menswear store and in cooperation with a police inspector who charged 10 marks per person, helped 200 to 300 people escape from Konstanz to Switzerland by taxi before the border was closed (*The Herald*, Sharon, Pennsylvania, “Students hear Holocaust eyewitnesses,” May 18, 2002

<http://www2.sharonherald.com/localnews/recentnews/0205/ln051802b.html>).



**The Synagogue in Konstanz: erected in 1882-1883 and destroyed in 1938**

Left: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>, author unknown, permission from the Jüdische Gemeinde in Mannheim (JEWISH COMMUNITY MANNHEIM), Frau Orna Marhöfer, President.(dated: July 10, 2007)

Right: <http://able2know.org>



My first thought was that Anni had been sent to a concentration camp. There is a notation for the death of a woman named Anna Furst in Auschwitz, most likely in 1942. The Anna documented in this record had a birth date of 25 March 1908, a year that matched my completely conjectural guess for Anni's birth. It records her (in *The Memorial to the Jews Deported From France 1942-1944* by Serge Klarsfeld, Paris, 1978) as having been transported (in Transport 27) from the camp at Drancy, France (located near Paris) on 9 February 1942 to Auschwitz. As cited above, Jewish residents of Konstanz were sent to the camp at Gurs, France in 1940, but it is not hard to see a further transport to the transit camp at Drancy, a distance of 97 miles. In fact, in an e-communication with Michael Simonson, an archivist at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York City, Mr. Simonson said that "It was very common for Jews to be deported to Auschwitz after a first transfer from Gurs to Drancy. That, indeed, was I think the common journey." Records of those killed at Auschwitz are incomplete. In 1989 the Soviet Union released a list of 68,864 names compiled from official records found there when they liberated the camp in January of 1945. The names are by and large from 1942 and 1943. Anni is not on the list. Ironically Transport 27 was sent to Auschwitz only days before the train that carried Moses and Sara Ferszt arrived there, a coincidence that at the time of its discovery seemed proof of my hypothesis.



## **A barely insulated barrack at Gurs Concentration Camp**

**Sudkurrier (Konstanz newspaper), October 22, 2015**

**Bild: Jüdisches Bürgerhaus Gailingen**

The identical Anna Furst is also listed at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Her listing describes her nationality as “Apatride,” essentially a person without a nationality. She is additionally listed at the Memorial de la Shoah in Paris, France with the identical information found in Klarsfeld.

As a consequence of what I had uncovered, I thought it a good possibility that the woman killed at Auschwitz was Grandpa’s sister.

On 6 December 2004, I went as far as filling out a Page of Testimony for Anni and submitting it to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority. Yad Vashem was established in 1953 by an act of the Israeli Knesset. “Since its inception, it has been entrusted with documenting the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust period, preserving the memory and story of each of the six million victims, and imparting the legacy of the Holocaust for generations to come through its archives, library, school, museums and recognition of the Righteous Among the Nations” (quote from its web page). Located on Har Hazikaron, the Mount of Remembrance, in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem is a vast, sprawling complex of tree-studded walkways leading to museums, exhibits, archives, monuments, sculptures, and memorials. The database currently lists over 3,000,000 names, approximately 50% of those lost in the Holocaust. In late November of 2006, Yad Vashem’s massive Holocaust database became available on-line and to the general public.



12

IONS NON OCCUPES	- 7 -	
SOH PING Moses	1.11.93	Lettonienne
<del>WOLFFSTE Marie</del>	28.3.07	<del>ex-étranger</del>
FERNAL Paul	1.10.18	"
HEISLER Moses	7.5.97	Polonaise
SEBA Nicole	1.9.11	Netholienne
FURST Isaac	11.11.01	patride
KISER Werner	1.9.18	Alemande
SCHIFFER Maurice	27.12.90	Polonaise
REJDING Joseph	12.3.96	"
SEPOUR Isaac	28.12.19	"
BOJKE Robert	19.4.91	tchécoslovaque
GOLDENBERG Simon	20.5.18	polonaise
LEVITIN Levin	3.9.05	lettonien
ROSENBERG Chana	10.9.14	polonaise
FABRYKANT David	18.8.94	"
CHERT Jacques	1.8.17	"
BIRNFIELD Chaim	6.7.01	"
SIMON Albert	27.6.03	serboise
MAIER Frédéric	1.8.03	ex-allemande
MAIER Stephen	19.10.01	ex-allemande
MAIER Hans	23.3.06	"
RYGOS Joseph	18.9.18	polonaise
BIRNFIELD Chaja	21.10.09	
GOLDENBERG Irma	9.9.17	
FURST Anna	23.3.08	patride
EBERT Gerda	26.3.10	allemande

**Mémorial  
de la SHOAH**  
 Toute reproduction interdite.

Anna Furst is second to last on the page

<http://bdi.memorialdelashoah.org/internet/jsp/media/MmsMediaDetailPopup.jsp?mediaid=3998>

## Anna Furst

**DATES****Birthdate:** 03/25/1908**NUMBERS****Convoy Number:** 27**Page Number:** 12**OTHER INFORMATION****Nationality:** Apatride**SOURCE INFORMATION****French Convoys 2 - 35: Preliminary List**

Preliminary copy of the deportation convoys 2 through 35 from France based initially off of the original deportation lists held by the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine in Paris. Information also includes supplementary names from other sources. Name, birth place and date, nationality, and convoy number are included in the database.

**Credit:**

USHMM Registry of Survivors.

**Contact Information:**USHMM Registry of Survivors  
[Registry@ushmm.org](mailto:Registry@ushmm.org)

### The listing for Anna Furst at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

<http://www.ushmm.org>

In April of 2013, I contacted the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, Germany seeking information on Anni. The ITS is an internationally governed center for documentation, information and research on Nazi persecution, forced labor and the Holocaust and currently maintains an archive of over 30 million documents. It was only in 2008 that documents became available to researchers. ITS has no information on Anni.

ITS Internationaler Suchdienst · Postfach 1410 · 34444 Bad Arolsen

Große Allee 5-9 · 34454 Bad Arolsen · Deutschland  
Tel. +49 5691 629-0 · Fax +49 5691 629-501  
email@its-arolsen.org · www.its-arolsen.org

Mr Allen Kurtz  
99 MacGregor Drive  
MAHOPAC, NY 10541-2746  
USA

Bad Arolsen, 4th June 2013  
ks

Our Reference  
(please quote)  
T/D – 2 278 088

**Your inquiry regarding  
your great-aunt, Ms Anni FURST/FERSZT/FERSHT, born in Warsaw ca 1900-1910**

Dear Mr Kurtz,

We refer to your inquiry per email dated 1st April 2013 and inform you that a check was made of the documentary material preserved here for any mention of your great-aunt on the basis of the information you provided.

Unfortunately, the check of our records revealed a negative result. It was not possible for us to ascertain any information on your relative in our archives.

In this connection, may we mention that the remaining documentary material on hand at the International Tracing Service is very comprehensive but incomplete. A large part of the records was lost by effects of war or was destroyed towards the end of the war.

For further questions, we recommend you to contact the following office:

Yad Vashem  
P O B 3477  
91034 JERUSALEM  
ISRAEL

holocaust.resources@yadvashem.org.il  
www.yad-vashem.org.il

./.



Furthermore, may we advise you that there exist institutions in the USA which may be of help in the search for information about your family member. We think in particular of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC and the American Red Cross, National Headquarters in Washington, DC.

When making further investigations, please mention that you have already received a reply from us.

We are very sorry that we cannot assist you directly in your matter and remain  
with kind regards,

*Monika Kloss*

Monika Kloss  
Registry and Processing of Requests

**Documentation received from the International Tracing Service (ITS) in June 2013**



# YAD VASHEM

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority  
Hall of Names - P.O.B. 3477, Jerusalem 91034



יד ושם

רשות הזיכרון לשואה ולגבורה  
היכל השמות - ת.ד. 3477, ירושלים 91034

## Page of Testimony דף עד

5143

Page of Testimony for commemoration of the Jews who perished during the Holocaust;  
please fill in a separate form for each victim, in block capitals

Victim's photo	The Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Law 5713-1953 determines in section 2 that: "The task of Yad Vashem is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their names and those of the communities, organizations and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish."				
	Victim's family name: Furst			Maiden name:	
	Victim's first name (also nickname): Anni			Previous/other family name:	
Title:		Gender: FEMALE	Date of birth:	Approx. age at death: 30-35	
Town of birth: Warsaw		Region:	Country:	Citizenship:	
Victim's father:	First name: Mayer		Family name: Ferszt		
Victim's mother:	First name: Chaya		Maiden name:		
Victim's wife/husband:	First name:	Maiden name:	Victim's family status:	Number of children:	
Town of permanent residence: Konstanz		Region:	Country: GERMANY	Street: Rheingasse 16	
Profession:		Place of work:		Member of organization/movement:	
Place of residence during the war:		Region:	Country:	Street:	
Places, events and activities during the war (prison/deportation/ghetto/camp/ death march/hiding/escape/resistance/combat):					
Place of death:		Region:	Country:	Date of death:	
Circumstances of death: Unknown: last heard from in 1938 in Konstanz					
I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that this Page of Testimony and all the information on it will be publicly accessible.					
First name: Allen		Family name: Kurtz		Previous/maiden name:	
Street: MacGregor Drive 99		City: Mahopac		State/Zip code: NY 10541	
Country: UNITED STATES	Shoah survivor: No		Relationship to victim (family/other): GREAT-NEPHEW		

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Allen Kurtz

"ונתתי להם בביתי ובביתי יד ושם... אשר לא יכרת" ישעיהו נ"ח ה'  
"...And I shall give them in My house and within My walls a memorial and a name... that shall not be cut off" Isaiah 58:5

Page of Testimony submitted to Yad Vashem by the author

Yadvashem.org

It was while exploring the Yad Vashem database and searching for the surname Ferszt in 2006 that I made an additional discovery that would ultimately compel me to reconsider Anni's relationship with her American family.

The Jewish population in Konstanz was not particularly large, only 443 in 1933, 1.3% out of a population of 32,961. Yet, there was another Ferszt family residing in Konstanz, a family with Polish/Warsaw roots: Morritz/Morris/Moses Ferszt, his wife Sara/Sarah/Salomea Ferszt, and Sara's mother Bertha Alexander Schmuelevitz. Morritz was born in Warsaw on 1 April 1886 to Chajim and Chana. Chajim was likely a variation on the given name of Chaim. Sara was born to Bertha and Aaron Schmuelevitz in Sosnovice (likely Sosnowiec), a town 156 miles to the SSW of Warsaw in Kielce Province on either 17 or 20 September 1888, and Bertha Alexander Schmuelevitz was born in 1856 in Sosnovice. From the onset, their presence in Konstanz seemed to me more than sheer happenstance. As a result of my discovery of this family, it seemed certain to me that Anni must have been visiting or living with family in Konstanz although the exact relationship between Moses and Anni remained undetermined. I felt as if mystery of why she was in Konstanz had been solved.

It did not seem likely that Moses could have been the brother of Riven and Max Fersht as their parents were Mayer and Chaya and Moses's were Chajm/Chaim and Chana. Although there is a superficially similarity between the names and it is generally accepted in the genealogical community that with the passage of time and the dimming of memories, the names of deceased ancestors occasionally morph into somewhat dissimilar names, a match did not seem likely. Mayer/Meyer/Maier/Meir is derived from the Hebrew word for illuminate and Chajm/Chaim from the word for life. The origin of the name Chana is more uncertain and it may that Anni was named for her grandmother: Anni is a secular version of the name. Chaya is a given name derived from the Hebrew word for life.

The Memorial de la Shoah in Paris listed Max Ferszt as living at the identical Rheingasse 15 address (although it mistakenly recorded his home as in Kronstad and not Konstanz and the street as Rheingane) that Anni recorded in her postcard to America in 1938. Rheingasse is located in the Niederburg (Old Town) section of Konstanz, not far from where Lake Constance (Bodensee) empties into the Rhine River.

24 -	PERSZT Moros	1.4.86 Varsovie	15 Rheingasse Kronstad
		Indéterminée	Comm. Allemande
25 -	PERSZT Saloméa	17.9.88 Sosnowice	"
	née SCHMUELEVITZ	Indéterminée	S.P.

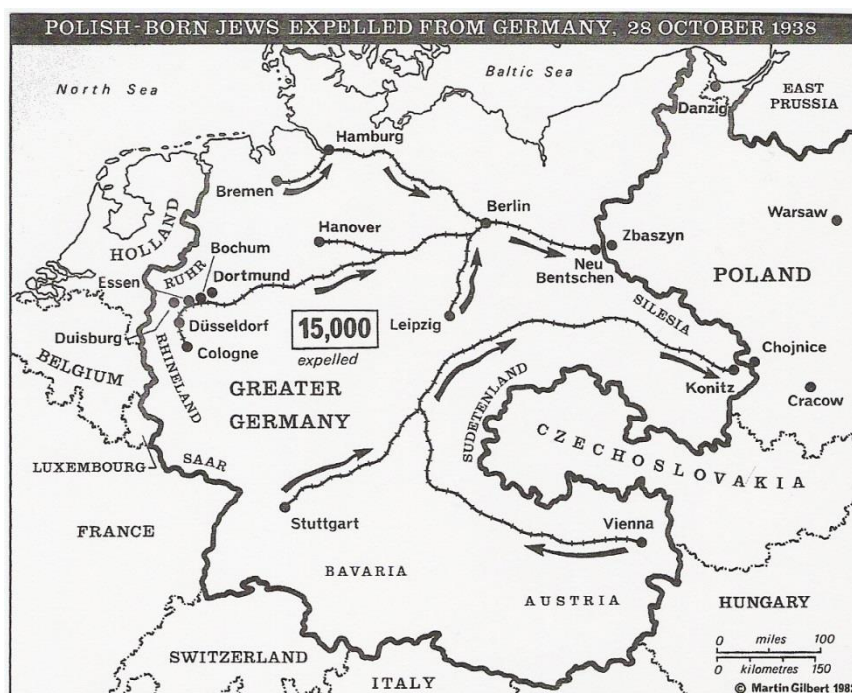
**Moses, listed as Mores, born in Varsovie (Warsaw) and Sara, listed as Salomea, Ferszt as recorded at the Memorial de la Shoah in Paris. They were transported on Convoy 29 from Drancy to Auschwitz on September 7, 1942. Their address was incorrectly listed as in Kronstadt, Germany and his occupation was recorded as that of a trader. The source of the information seems to be Klarsfeld.**

**<http://bdi.memorialdelashoah.org/internet/jsp/media/MmsMediaDetailPopup.jsp?mediaid=4113>**

Working under the assumption that Anni was a Polish Jew visiting or living with family in Germany in 1938, I seriously considered and for a time came to believe that Anni did not die in a concentration camp but met a different fate. On 28 October 1938, Jews of Polish origin were deported to Poland. On 6 October, the Polish Minister of the Interior had issued a decree requiring all passports of Poles living abroad to be revalidated and the German government used the decree as a convenient excuse to forcibly evict all those of Jewish ancestry. Many were arrested and deported in the middle of the night, beaten by German soldiers and robbed of their belongings. The government of Poland had not been informed of the expulsions and at first would not accept their own citizens back into the country. A diplomatic standoff kept the refugees in limbo, often under horrible conditions, for months. It has been estimated that as many as 18,000 were deported, the largest number to the Polish border town of Zbaszyn where the number of Jewish refugees many have been as high as 12,000. Another border town, Konitz, seems to have been the destination of many Jews expelled from southern Germany. If, in my scenario, Anni was deported it may have been to Konitz. It wasn't until the end of January 1939 that an agreement was reached between the governments of Poland and Germany that allowed those detained to briefly return to Germany to settle their affairs or to reenter Poland. In the interim, some had managed to escape.

It cannot be determined whether deportations took place from Konstanz or, if they did, whether my theoretical Anni had been deported. In point of fact, a lack of documentation for the entire expulsion process is a great hindrance to research. If appears certain, however, that such deportations occurred there. As Moses and Sara were still resident in Konstanz in 1940, it seems certain that they were German citizens, perhaps in possession of German passports, and not deported to Poland. An incident in Paris, where the son of a family deported to Poland shot and killed a German embassy official was used as one of the justifications for Kristallnacht.

I came to believe that Anni might have been sent to one of these camps where she either died or, if she had somehow survived, made it back to Warsaw where she likely died in the Warsaw Ghetto before 1945.



**Expulsion routes of Jews expelled from Germany in 1938**

<http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/classes/233ab/zbaszynmanila/HarrisCysnerZbaszynManila.htm>

But what was most astonishing about the Pages of Testimony submitted for Morritz/Moses and Sara/Salomea Ferszt was that they had been completed by their daughter *Anne Ferszt Nairn*. The coincidence of uncovering another person who had, before her marriage, been known as Anne Ferszt, was a shattering surprise, one of those moments in genealogical research that becomes unforgettable and forces you to reconsider all that you once assumed to be true. As Mom was still alive when the discovery was made, I once more questioned her about Anni and she once again said that she had always heard that Anni was Grandpa's sister. Although the doubts I was beginning to harbor regarding the original postcard was beginning to fester, I saw no reason to doubt what Mom had said. In 1979 when Anne submitted her information to Yad Vashem, she was living in London, England.

Regardless, I began to ponder the once unthinkable. Could Anne Ferszt Nairn have been, in actuality, the young woman assumed to be Grandpa's sister? If the truth be known, I had always been somewhat unsettled by Anni's 1938 postcard. Even at the onset of my research, there were two elements to Anni's postcard that were unsettling and difficult to reconcile with what I knew of the family. The first of these aspects concerned Anni's age: on the postcard she appeared to be quite young; certainly no older than thirty years of age and perhaps younger. At that point Chaya's

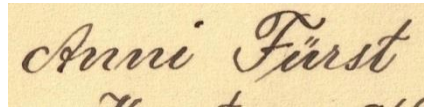


year of birth was not known with certainty, but I thought that she had been born sometime in the decade of the 1860s. As indicated above, she was born in 1859. As referenced, Max Fersht had been born in Gabin in 1884 and Grandpa in Warsaw in 1895. Chana's was born in 1886 and Rachel in 1887.

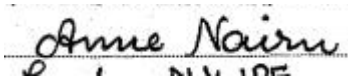
If Anni was thirty years of age in 1938 and thus born circa 1908, and positing an 1865 birth year for Chaya; she would have been forty-three years of age when Anni was born. Although giving birth to a child at that age was certainly a possibility, given the medical knowledge and general health status of women in general at the time, I thought it somewhat unlikely. The second dissonant aspect of the postcard was that it was written not in Yiddish, but in a formal and somewhat elegant German and that Anni had spelt her last name not as Ferszt but as the more Germanic looking "Furst." As I was later to learn, Anni was twenty-five years of age when the photograph was taken.

If Anni was the daughter of Moses and Sara, where was she living during the period from 1938 to 1940 when one calamity after another was inflicted on the Jews of Konstanz? Why was she not listed among those deported in 1940? At some point, she obviously was able to relocate to England. When and how did that occur? Was she herself a Holocaust survivor? Could the "two" women have been cousins? Could we read anything from the fact that Anne Ferszt Nairn did not fill out a Page of Testimony for "our" Anni? Could it be that she didn't know what had happened to her (for instance, if she had deported to Germany with other Jews of Polish origin on 28 October 1938), that she herself was not a resident of Konstanz in late 1938, or could it be that they weren't, after all, related? Could there, in reality, have been only one woman named Anni Ferszt? How did Anne know that her parents were "shot on transport?" The more I thought on the enigma, the more seemingly unanswerable questions I thought of.

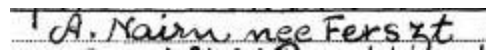
Over the next few years I spent considerable time attempting to prove to myself that Anne Ferszt Nairn was not Anni Ferszt. I examined the handwriting on the 1938 postcard and compared it to the handwriting of Anne Nairn in 1979 and found them to be totally different. Even though I now know that the two women to have been one and the same person, I still cannot explain or reconcile the differences in handwriting except to posit the idea that perhaps Anni did not fill in the information on the postcard but that it was filled out for her. More likely she was practicing a more proper style of German handwriting learned in school and employed that handwriting on the postcard. I obtained a copy of Anne Ferszt marriage certificate to Ronald Nairn in England in 1946 (unfortunately it does have her signature) and found her to have been born circa 1914, certainly much too late a date to have been a child of Chaya Ferszt. As per her death record listing on Ancestry.com, Anne Ferszt Nairn was born on 12 July 1913. When Grandpa arrived in America in 1913, ironically on that very same day, he gave his closest relative in Warsaw as Chaya; certainly an indication that his father Mayer had died at some point previously. Anne Nairn could not possibly be "my" Anni Furst.



Anni Fürst

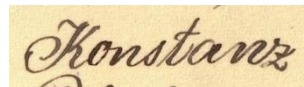


Anne Nairn

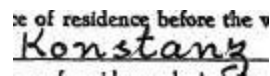


A. Nairn nee Fürst

**Top: Anni's signature on the 1938 postcard. Middle and bottom: Anne's signature in 1979**



Konstanz



x of residence before the v  
Konstanz

**Top: the name Konstanz as written in 1938. Bottom: as written in 1979**

**YAD VASHEM**Martyrs' and Heroes'  
Remembrance  
Authority**DAF-ED****דף-עד****A Page of Testimony****יד ושם**P.O.B. 3477  
Jerusalem, Israel

<p>חוק זכרון השואה והגבורה — תשי"ג 1953 קובע בסעיף מס' 2: תפקידו של יד ושם הוא לאסוף אל המולדת את זכרונם של כל אלה מבני העם היידי, שנעל באויב הנאצי והקוואקר, ולהעביר שם וזכר להם, לסקרנות, לארגונים ולמוסדות שנתנו מלל השתייכותם לעם היידי. (סעי' החוקים מס' 132, י"ו אלול תשי"ג 28.8.53)</p>		<p>THE MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE LAW, 5713—1953 determines in Article No. 2 that</p> <p>The task of YAD VASHEM is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their memory and that of the communities, organizations, and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish.</p>	
<p>תמונה Photo</p>	<p>1. שם המשפחה * Family name * <b>Ferszt</b></p>		
	<p>2. השם הפרטי (שם לפני הנישואין) First Name (maiden name) <b>מוריץ Morritz</b></p>		
	<p>3. תאריך הלידה Date of birth <b>1.4.1886</b></p>	<p>4. מקום הלידה (עיר, ארץ) Place of birth (town, country) <b>Warsaw Poland</b></p>	
	<p>5. שם האב Name of father <b>Chajim</b></p>	<p>6. שם האם Name of mother <b>Chana</b></p>	
	<p>7. שם בן או בת חוג (אם בת חוג נא להוסיף שם משפחה לפני הנישואין) Name of spouse <b>Sara nee Schmulewicz</b> (if a wife, add maiden name)</p>		
<p>8. מקום מגורים לפני המלחמה Place of residence before the war <b>Konstanz Germany</b></p>		<p>9. מקומות המגורים במלחמה Places of residence during the war <b>Camp de Gurs Pyrenées</b></p>	
<p>10. נסיבות המוות (זמן, מקום, וכו') Circumstances of death (place, date, etc.) <b>shot on transport to Nomansland</b></p>			
<p>I, the undersigned <b>A. Nairn nee Ferszt</b> residing at (full address) <b>10 Beechfield Road London N4</b> relationship to deceased <b>daughter</b> hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge. מצהירה/ה בזה כי עדות זו נכונה לפי מיטב ידיעותי. Signature <b>Anne Nairn</b> חתימה Place and date <b>London N4 1PF 8.1.1979</b> מקום ותאריך</p>			
<p>..ונתתי להם בביתי ובחומותי יד ושם... אשר לא יכרות." ישיהו, נ"ה "..even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name...that shall not be cut off." Isaiah, LV, 5</p>			

\* נא לרשום את שמם של כל נספה על דף נפרד.

\* Please inscribe the name of each victim of the Holocaust on a separate form.

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Yad Vashem Page of Testimony for Morritz of Konstanz, Germany

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**YAD VASHEM**Martyrs' and Heroes'  
Remembrance  
Authority**DAF-ED****דף-עד****A Page of Testimony**P.O.B. 3477  
Jerusalem, Israel

<p>חוק זכרון השואה והגבורה – תשי"ג 1953 קובע בסעיף מס' 2: תפקידו של יד ושם הוא לאסוף אל המולדת את זכרם של כל אלה שבני העם היהודי, שנעלמו ומצור את נפשם, נלחמו ומצור באויב הנאצי ומשורריו, ולהעבירם שם וזכר לחם, לקהילה, לארגונים ולמוסדות שנושם בגלל השתייכותם לעם היהודי. (ספר החוקים מס' 132, י"ז אלול תשי"ג 28.8.53)</p>		<p>THE MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE LAW, 5713–1953 determines in Article No. 2 that</p> <p>The task of YAD VASHEM is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their memory and that of the communities, organizations, and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish.</p>	
<p>תמונה Photo</p>		<p>1. שם המשפחה * Family name * <b>Ferszt</b></p>	
		<p>2. השם הפרטי (שם לפני הנישואין) First Name (maiden name) <b>Sara nee Schmulewicz</b></p>	
		<p>3. תאריך הלידה Date of birth <b>20.9.1888</b></p>	<p>4. מקום הלידה (עיר, מדינה) Place of birth (town, country) <b>Sosnowice Poland</b></p>
		<p>5. שם האב Name of father <b>Aron Schmulewicz</b></p>	<p>6. שם האם Name of mother <b>Bertha Schmulewicz</b></p>
<p>Name of spouse (if a wife, add maiden name) <b>Morritz</b></p>		<p>7. שם בן או בת הזוג (אם בת זוג נא להעתיק שם משפחתה לפני הנישואין) <b>Morritz</b></p>	
<p>Place of residence before the war <b>Konstanty Germany</b></p>		<p>8. מקום המגורים לפני המלחמה</p>	
<p>Places of residence during the war <b>Camp de Gurs Pyrenees</b></p>		<p>9. מקומות המגורים במלחמה</p>	
<p>Circumstances of death (place, date, etc.) <b>shot on transport to Nomansland</b></p>		<p>10. נסיבות המוות (ומן, מקום, וכו') <b>shot on transport to Nomansland</b></p>	
<p>I, the undersigned <b>A. Nairn</b></p>		<p>אני, החתום "מ" <b>A. Nairn</b></p>	
<p>residing at (full address) <b>10 Beechfield Road London N4</b></p>		<p>הגרה ב (כתובת מלאה) <b>10 Beechfield Road London N4</b></p>	
<p>relationship to deceased <b>daughter</b></p>		<p>קירבה (משפחתית או אחרת) <b>daughter</b></p>	
<p>hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge. מצהירה בזה כי עדות זו נכונה לפי מיטב ידיעותי.</p>			
<p>Signature <b>A. Nairn</b></p>		<p>חתימה <b>A. Nairn</b></p>	
<p>Place and date <b>10 Beechfield Road London N4</b></p>		<p>מקום ותאריך <b>10 Beechfield Road London N4</b></p>	
<p>..ונתתי להם בביתי ובחומותי יד ושם... אשר לא יכרת" ישיבה נ"ה "..even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name...that shall not be cut off." Isaiah, LVI, 5</p>			

\* נא לרשום את שמם של כל נספה על דף נפרד.

\* Please inscribe the name of each victim of the Holocaust on a separate form.

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Page of Testimony for Sara Ferszt

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<p>חוק זכרון השואה והנבחרה — תשי"ג 1953 קובע בסעיף מס' 2: תפקידו של יד ושם הוא לאסוף אל המולדת את זכרם של כל אלה שבני העם היהודי, שנפלו ובספר את נפשם, לנחם וספרו באורם ונאציו ובשורריהם, ולהעביר שם וזכרם להם, לקהילות, לארגונים ולמוסדות שתורכבו כאלו השתייכותם לעם היהודי. (ספר החוקים מס' 132, דף אלול תשי"ג 28.8.53)</p>		<p>THE MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE LAW, 5713—1953 determines in Article No. 2 that</p> <p>The task of YAD VASHEM is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their memory and that of the communities, organizations, and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish.</p>	
<p>תמונה Photo</p>	<p>1. שם המשפחה * Family name * <i>Schmulewicz</i></p>		<p>2. שם הפרטי (שם לפני הנישואין) First Name (maiden name) <i>Bertha nee Alexander</i></p>
	<p>3. תאריך הלידה Date of birth <i>4. 4. 1856 (approx.)</i></p>	<p>4. מקום הלידה (עיר, מדינה) Place of birth (town, country) <i>Sosnowice Poland</i></p>	
	<p>5. שם האב Name of father <i>not known</i></p>	<p>6. שם האם Name of mother <i>not known</i></p>	
	<p>7. שם בן או בת הזוג (אם בת זוג נא לרשום שם משפחה לפני הנישואין) Name of spouse (if a wife, add maiden name) <i>Aron Schmulewicz</i></p>		
<p>8. מקום מגורים לפני המלחמה Place of residence before the war <i>Konstanz Germany</i></p>		<p>9. מקומות המגורים במלחמה Places of residence during the war <i>Camp de Gurs Pyrenées</i></p>	
<p>10. נסיבות המוות (זמן, מקום, וכו') Circumstances of death (place, date, etc.) <i>shot on transport to Namansland</i></p>		<p>I, the undersigned <i>A. Naim</i> אני, הח"מ</p>	
<p>residing at (full address) <i>10 Beethfield Road London NY IPE</i> הגר/ה ב (כתובת מלאה)</p>		<p>relationship to deceased <i>grand-daughter</i> קרובה (משפחתית או אחרת)</p>	
<p>hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge. מצהירה בזה כי עדות זו נכונה לפי מיטב ידיעותי.</p>			
<p>Signature <i>A. Naim</i> חתימה</p>		<p>Place and date <i>London NY IPE 8.1.1979</i> מקום ותאריך</p>	
<p>...ונתתי להם בביתי ובחומותי יד ושם... אשר לא יכרת." "...even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name...that shall not be cut off." ישעיהו נ"ה</p>			

\* נא לרשום את שמו של כל נספה על דף נפרד.

\* Please inscribe the name of each victim of the Holocaust on a separate form.

BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS

Page of Testimony for Bertha Alexander Schmulevitz

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Application Number 47890421-1

19 <sup>46</sup> . Marriage solemnised at <u>Stoke Newington Synagogue</u> in the District of <u>Hackney</u> in the <u>Metrodoltan Borough of Hackney</u>							
Column - 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname
156	18 <sup>th</sup> September	Ronald Naim	33 Years	Bachelor	Cabinet Maker Journeyman	153, Nyan House Hackney	Israel Naimsky (Deceased)
	19 <sup>46</sup>	Anna Froyt	32 Years	Spinster	Fur Line	3 Rectory Road Hackney	Morris Froyt (Deceased)
Married in the <u>Stoke Newington Synagogue</u> according to the <u>usage</u> of the <u>Jews</u> by <u>Certificate</u> This Marriage was solemnised between us, { <u>Ronald Naim</u> } in the Presence of us, { <u>L. Sharkey</u> <u>Anna Froyt</u> } { <u>F. Norris</u> } <u>A. Melnick Bellhouse</u> <u>Minister</u> <u>Deputy to Ministers</u>							

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2013

MXF 953184

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE © CROWN COPYRIGHT

WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.



**Anna Ferszt's Marriage record, obtained from the English General Register Office in May 2013**

But it was a conversation with Sylvia Specht, granddaughter of Max Fersht, at the annual Abrams/Allen/Specht family reunion in September of 2010 that progressively began to erode and undermine my belief that Anni was not the sister of Grandpa and Max but ultimately their “niece.” Max Fersht had three daughters: Gussie Fersht Abrams, Anne Rosie Fersht Allen, and Frances Fersht Specht. Sylvia recalled seeing a postcard from Anni to her Grandfather that began with the salutation “Dear Uncle Mordecai.” Why would Anni begin a conversation to her brother in such a fashion? The postcard appears to have been lost and without having seen it and verified it for myself, I resolved, even with my many doubts, to hold firm to my belief that Anni was my Grandfather’s sister. In conversation with Sylvia in August 2013, she was less sure about who the postcard was from but certain that it did have the salutation “Dear Uncle Mordecai” and that the message on the card almost identical (“for remembrance”) to the postcard in my possession. It seems more likely than not that this second postcard was virtually identical to the one in my possession.

During the summer of 2013, Linda and I traveled to Austria and Switzerland and while in Zurich traveled by train, a distance of only forty miles and taking one hour and fifteen minutes, to

Konstanz. At that point and with all my doubts and concerns held somewhat in abeyance, I still thought of Anni as Grandpa's sister. We went there to see *Anni's* residence at Rheingasse 15 and to see the residence at Turnierstrasse 25 where *Anni* had been photographed in 1938. Although we did visit the obelisk on Sigismundstrasse that commemorated the 108 Jews deported from Konstanz in 1940 and are inscribed with the name of Moses and Salomea Ferszt, it was *Anni* who dominated my thoughts. Although I was certain that Moses was somehow a relative to Grandpa and Max Ferszt, my focus was almost entirely on *Anni*.

One of the pillars of my initial belief that Anni Ferszt was Grandpa and Max's sister, and that Anne Ferszt Nairn was a completely different person, was the seemingly irrefutable fact that there did not appear to have been communication between Anne Ferszt Nairn and her American relations after the war. If Anni Ferszt had survived, it seemed logical to believe that she would have contacted her American siblings. Although theoretically she may have lost their addresses, organizations certainly existed to facilitate communication. The fact that there was no communication reinforced my belief that Anni had perished in the Holocaust, either in a concentration camp, the refugee camps on the Poland/Germany border established in 1938, or in the Warsaw Ghetto. As a child growing up in the 1950s, I was an avid stamp collector, a hobby quite popular in that era. Grandpa always gave me the stamps from the envelopes he received from the family of his sister Rachel Ferszt Melcer who were living in Netanya, Israel at least through the early 1960s. He never gave me stamps from England.

But if Anni Ferszt was not his sister but a niece descended from a common grandparent and was in actuality Anne Ferszt Nairn living in England, newly married, and focused on raising a family, the lack of communication perhaps becomes understandable. Ironically and as noted above, Anne Nairn was born on 12 July 1913, the exact date that Grandpa arrived in the New York after having sailed from Hamburg, Germany. Max had been in America since 1906. Anne Nairn had never met either of her far off American cousins and although she may have known of them, her focus was likely on the events of her own life. As a result she may not have made the effort to locate them. Positing the idea that Anne was a niece and not a sister, while Grandpa and Max may have known that Anne had somehow made it to England (communication was maintained between Grandpa, Max and his sister, name unknown, and mother Chaya in Warsaw until the early 1940s when Chaya died), and although they may have often thought of her and discussed her (perhaps the source of Mom's memories), they too may not have made the effort to locate her. Living, as we do, in the age of social media and the internet, it is easy to forget how difficult such a search would have been in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

It was only after we had returned to the United States that I began to seriously reconsider my belief that Anni was Grandpa's sister. I cannot say that it was any one factor, rather a constellation of all my qualms and reservations that served to permanently extinguish what I had held true for years. It was if all my concerns, doubts, and questions, as well as the limited information I had been able to accumulate suddenly coalesced and a tipping point in my analysis

reached. As usual, a conversation with Linda helped me to clarify my thinking and to give me another, more impartial perspective.

I came to realize that the answers to my question could only be answered by the descendants, if any, of Anne Ferszt Nairn and Ronald Nairn perhaps still living in England and I began a serious effort to locate them, scouring a wide variety of websites; genealogical, social, and otherwise. As per an online listing of her death certificate, Anne had been born on 12 July 1913 and had died in Hackney, London in November of 1988. Ronald Nairn was born on 14 September 1912 and died in Hackney in February 1993. The original family surname may have been Narinsky and his parents Israel Narinsky, a furniture maker (1872-1934), and Betsy (1875-1940). I discovered that there had been two children: Beryl Nairn, born on 11 September 1947 in Stoke Newington, London and Maurice K. Nairn, born in July, August, or September 1953 in Stoke Newington.

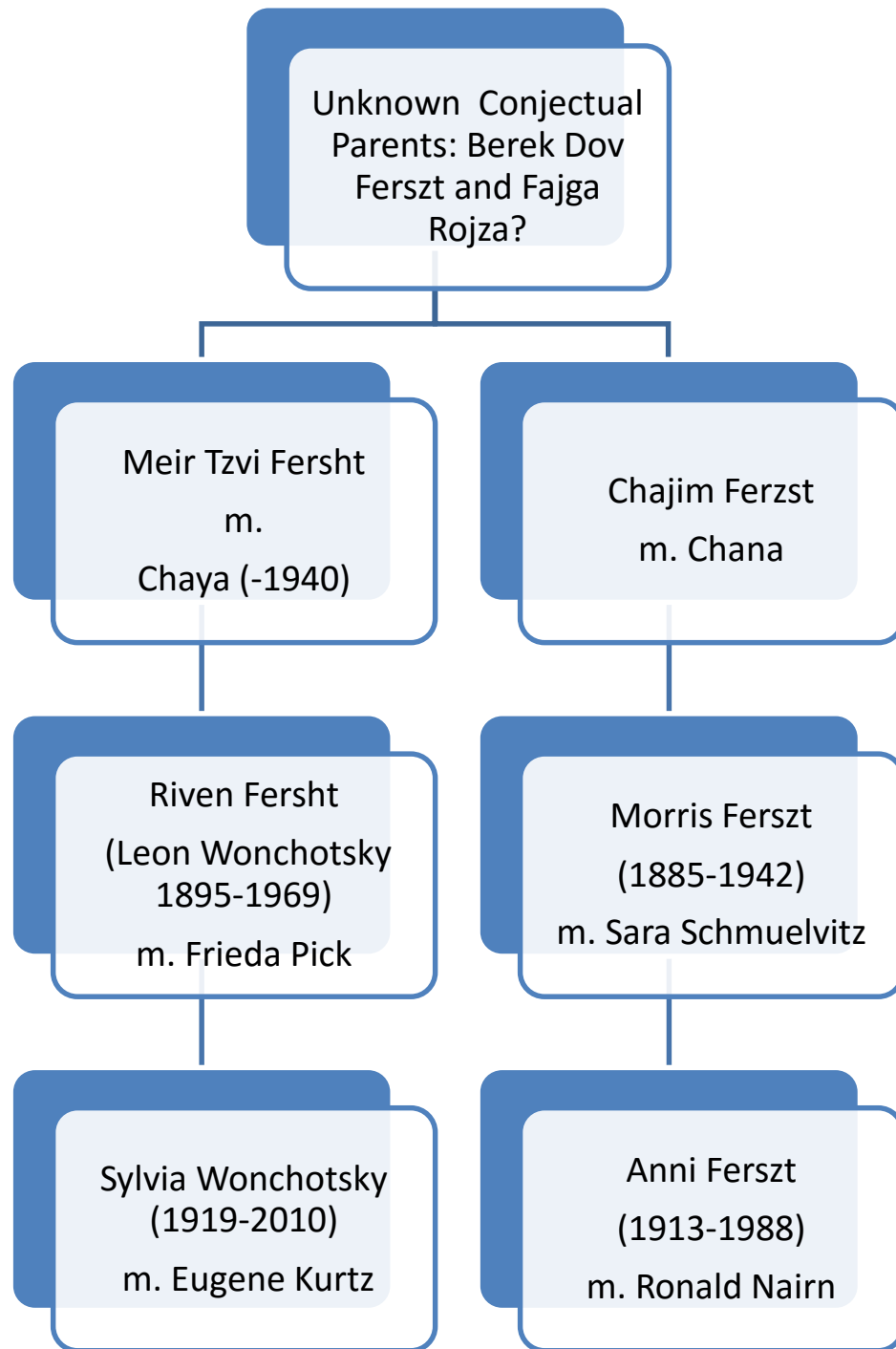
Unfortunately, Beryl, who had married Michael D. A. Wohl in 1971 died in June 1996 in Southwark, London. Maurice Nairn at first did not appear to have a presence on the internet and could not be located. Continuing my research, I discovered that Beryl had a daughter, Aliza Sarah Wohl, born in 1981 and that Aliza had a Facebook account. Contacting her successfully through Facebook, she put me into contact with her uncle, Kevin Nairn, who is, in reality, Maurice K. Nairn. In a remarkable series of e-mail conversations conducted during the week of 12 August 2013, the facts of Anne Ferszt Nairn's life were finally revealed.

Anni Ferszt was not the sister of Riven or Max Ferszt. She was the only child of Morritz/Morris/Moses Ferszt and Sara/Salomea Schmuelewitz Ferszt and born in Konstanz on 12 July 1913, although records in Konstanz seem to show that she was born on 7 July. When I forwarded a scanned copy of Anni's picture postcard of 1938 to Kevin, he immediately recognized his mother and said that he had the identical photograph.

The exact relationship between Anni and Grandpa has not been resolved. It very well may be that Grandpa's father, Mayer Fersht and Morritz/Morris/Moses Ferszt's father, Chajim Ferszt, were brothers. If so, Grandpa and Morritz/Morris/Moses would have been first cousins. Max Fersht had been born on 22 April 1884 and Morritz on 1 April 1886 and perhaps, as close contemporaries in age, they grew up in close proximity. Although Anni and Grandpa were technically first cousins once removed, she may have simply called Grandpa and Max "uncle" and they perhaps thought of her as their niece. If the relationship is as I have posited, Anni Ferszt would not have been Mom's aunt, but her second cousin and Kevin Nairn and I would be third cousins. My own children would be fourth cousins to Aliza Sarah Wohl. All of these relationships must be thought of as speculative until proof of the relationship between Mayer and Chajim Ferszt can be demonstrated. No such documentary proof exists. All that can be said is that Mayer and Chajim were both from Warsaw, their descendants all bore variants of the family surname (Ferszt, Fersht, Furst), that there was communication between the families through at least 1938, and that Sylvia



Specht recalls a postcard from Anni addressed to her grandfather with the salutation “Dear Uncle.” Taken cumulatively it seems certain that a familial relationship did in fact exist. The only way in which Max would have been her “real” uncle is if Max and Moses were brothers. That does not appear to have been the case. It also may be, however, that the relationship was not as I have hypothesized, but in some way more distant.



**Conjectural family tree showing Riven Fersht and Morris Ferszt to have been 1<sup>st</sup> cousins descending from a common set of unknown grandparents**



**Anni Ferszt with her parents Morris and Sara, date unknown but likely circa 1930. After having only the one iconic photograph of Anni, to see another picture of her was a revelation.**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn and sent to me on 24 February 2014**



**Anni Ferszt (left) with an unidentified friend, circa 1930**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn**

The reason for Anni writing in German can now be explained: she was brought up in Konstanz. As Kevin wrote to me later (see below), she even had German friends. The fact that there was no communication between Anni in London and Grandpa and Max in New York can perhaps be understood: she was not their sister but a cousin. She never knew either Riven or Max Fersht. Max had left for New York in 1906, seven years before her birth and Riven arrived in New York on the very day that she was born. Growing up in Konstanz, she certainly knew of her

American relatives but the mail communication of 1938 that included her postcard was likely a communication between her father Morritz/Morris/Moses and his cousins Riven and Max. The inclusion of the postcard may have been a heartfelt gesture or simply enclosed at her father's behest. There is simply no way to determine the truth.

Although the wording is somewhat confusing, research done in the Konstanz city archives by Dr. Uwe Brugmann (see below) seems to indicate that prior to Jews being deprived of Jewish citizenship on 1 December 1933 after the ascension to power of Adolph Hitler, the family spelled their surname in the German manner as Furst. Only after that was it written as Ferszt.

When Moses relocated from Warsaw to Konstanz is not unknown but the move certainly occurred before Anni's birth in 1913. What is somewhat confusing is that records in the Konstanz city archives seem to show that the family moved to Konstanz in 1927 "from the East, trousseau shop at Rheingasse" yet Anna was born in Konstanz in 1913 (information found in the archives by Anne-Marie Sana at the request of Dr. Brugmann). The note was found in the typewritten estate of Semi Moos). The reason for his relocation cannot be ascertained but it was not uncommon for Jews to move within the Pale of Settlement and elsewhere for reasons that ranged from the economic to the personal. It is interesting to note that Max Fersht may have relocated from Warsaw to Minsk in Belarus before sailing to New York in 1906. Sylvia Specht also believes that he also spent time in Germany. Perhaps Max too briefly lived in Konstanz.

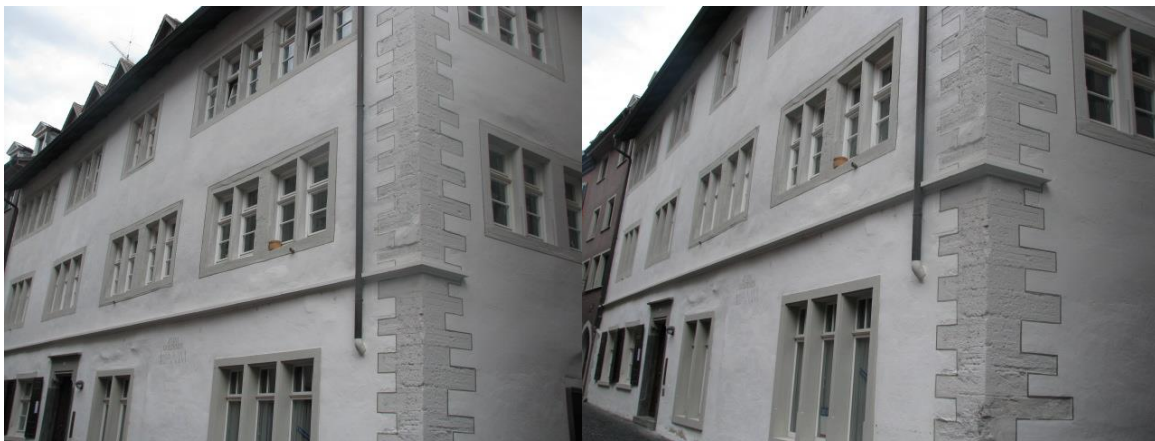
According to his listing at the Memorial de la Shoah in Paris, and likely derived from the work of Serge Klarsfeld, Morritz/Morris/Moses was a trader. Although the handwriting on Anne Ferszt and Ronald Nairn's 1946 marriage certificate is difficult to read, it seems to say the Morritz's profession was "general (unclear)." According to Kevin Nairn "my grandfather owned a massive house (with the upstairs rooms rented) and had a business on the ground floor." This is certainly the building at Rheingasse 15 that Anni noted as her address in 1938 and that I visited during the summer of 2013. It certainly would qualify as a "massive house" particularly in the context of German homes in the old quarter of Konstanz.

As per information obtained in the State Archives at Freiberg by Dr. Brugmann (e-mail communication on February 21, 2014) and included in the file documenting Anna Ferszt Nairn's attempt to obtain compensation for the loss of the property on Rheingasse (see below), the property included at least two buildings; a three story residential home with arched cellar and outhouse (likely the building facing Rheingasse) and a four story residential building (likely facing the side street of Niederbergasse). The file is somewhat difficult to interpret but also refers to a three story rear building with an arched cellar, a three story property with a staircase, and a three story "abortanbau," perhaps a building with an outhouse or privy. An adequate translation of "abortanbau" has not been found. It may be that all the references denote the same two buildings. The property may have totaled at least 6028 square feet.





Two photographs from the Datebank Bauforschung/Restaurierung (bauforschung-bw.de) showing the building complex at Rheingasse 15. At left is the building fronting on Rheingasse and at right is the side of that building on Niedergasse and the second building on Niedergasse.



Rheingasse 15 during the summer of 2013. The building is approximately 700 years old.

Photographs by Linda Kurtz



**Photograph of Rheingasse showing number 15 on the right and looking westward to Inselgasse**

**Photograph by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)**

As per the Datenbank Bauforschung/Restaurierung (Database for Construction and Restoration/Baden-Württemberg National Historic Preservation), which appears to have undertaken a survey of the building, Rheingasse 15 is constructed of stone and the “oldest core component of the building represents a tower, which is in the rear corner of the building complex and is surrounded by the younger parts. This area is also the only basement.” (note: all translations from the German language website [bauforschung-bw.de](http://bauforschung-bw.de) by Google Translate).

The description of the building under the subheading Inventory/Equipment states that “Gothic paintings are preserved in the upper rooms. Meaningful medieval building structure also has the component for Lower Castle Street (note: Niederbergasse), in the heart of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century comes and dated its roof from the period around 1400. The component for Rheingasse fails because of its unusually high quality interior design of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, decorated with rich Renaissance window pillars and restored color design of the interior.”

The site denotes four construction phases for the building stating “Archival occupied the building since 1354, wherein the component for Lower Castle Street (note: Niederbergasse) in the core of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century dates (1328) and the assorted roof dated 1400, confirmed by dendrochronological analysis of the respective roof timbers. The oldest core component, the basement tower represents the dendrochronological dating showed the precipitation of the component to the Rhine alley (note: Rheingasse) dated due to its interior design in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.”

Construction phase 1 (1200-1299): Interkellerter Tower/13<sup>th</sup> Century. Affected part of the buildings: basement (s).

Construction phase 2 (1380-1420): roof from the period around 1400. Affected part of the buildings: top floor (s).

Construction phase 3 (1600-1699): Interior design of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century/ Affected parts of the buildings: Ground floor, Upper floor (s), Top floor (s), Equipment.

Construction phase 4 (1985-1986): Remediation. Affected parts of buildings: no

The website information dates to 15 May 2008.



**Rheingasse 15 on the left. The street shown directly ahead is Niederberggasse**

**Photograph by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)**



**The author in front of Rheingasse 15 and on Niederburggasse looking up at Rheingasse 15**

**Photographs by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)**





Advertisement for the business of M. Furst ("Volksmagazin") found in the state archives at Freiberg by Dr. Uwe Brugmann and perhaps included in the application for compensation contributed by Anne Ferszt Nairn. He sold Mens and Women's Clothes (Herren und Damed Kleider). "Wasche aller Art o Textilwaren" may refer to clothes of all materials or a laundry service. He also sold schuhe (shoes), arbeitshosen (work pants), herren und damenmantel (men's and women's coats), faden (thread), hosentrager (perhaps support hose), and taschentucher (scarves).



**Postcard reverse showing the firm founded by Moses Ferszt. The words under the company name (ausstattung and kreditgeschäft) would seem to indicate that the business offered all types of outfits as well as credit).**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn**

The business Moses built, named “Volksmagazin” (perhaps translated as People’s Storeroom) and Max Furst & Co. seems to have been initially a success, allowing him to purchase the property on Rheingasse. In America, his type of business was known as “dry goods.”

How Moses fared after the defeat of Germany in World War One and in the severe economic turndown and depression of the 1920 and early 1930s cannot be determined. What transpired when the Nazis came to power cannot be ascertained but from that point onward, it seems almost certain that his business suffered. It does appear that non-Jewish tenants of Rheingasse 15 tried, perhaps unsuccessfully, to have him removed as owner of the house.

In Konstanz zeigte es sich, daß die Durchführung eines jüdenfeindlichen Gesetzes vom zuständigen Ressortleiter abhing und man muß zugeben, daß Inspektor Braun und Rechtsrat Knapp in jeder Weise versuchten, die Rechte der Juden, soweit es ging, wahrzunehmen. So glaubten die Bewohner des Hauses Rheingasse 15, welches einem Mitglied der Israelitischen Gemeinde, Moses Ferszt (Türst) gehörte, ihn als Eigentümer des Hauses aus seiner Wohnung entfernen zu können und bezahlten auch keine Miete mehr in dem Glauben, einem Juden brauche man keine Miete zu bezahlen. Das Mietgericht lehnte das Ansuchen der Mieter – es waren hauptsächlich Frauen – grundsätzlich ab mit der Begründung, daß alles, was sie gegen den Hauseigentümer Ferszt vorbrachten, nur Klatsch und Gehässigkeiten sei und daß ein Jude seine Wohnung in seinem Haus behalten dürfe und die Miete ihm bezahlt werden müsse. Gegen diesen Rechtspruch der Stadt legten die »arischen« Kläger Berufung beim Verbandskreisleiter Schnitzler ein und dieser lehnte die Berufung der Klägerinnen ab.

**Forwarded to me by Dr. Brugmann, the paragraph above is from the book *Geshichte der Juden von Konstanz* by Erich Bloch ( Rosgarten Verlag, 1989, p. 157). It seems to indicate (see very rough translation below), that at some point during the 1930s, some of the non-Jewish residents of Rheingasse 15 attempted to have Moses removed as owner of the house. Although I am not particularly clear as to the exact meaning of the paragraph, it does appear that their claim was rejected.**

*In Constance, it was found that the enforcement of an anti-Jewish law by the responsible department head depended and one must admit that inspector Bran and legal advice Knapp tried in every way to the rights of the Jews, as far as it went, to perceive. Thus, the inhabitants of the house Rheingasse 15, which belonged to a member of the Israeli community, Moses Furst, to remove him as the owner of the house out of his apartment and did not pay rent anymore believed in the message the request of the tenant refused were mainly women basically from on the grounds that anything they put forward against the homeowner Moses Furst, was only gossip and spitefulness, and that a Jew should keep his apartment in his house and the rent must paid to him. Against this verdict of the city laid the German plaintiff appealed to the Association Kreisleiter Schnitzler and these rejected an appeal by the applicants.*





**Turnierstrasse 25, the building where Anni had her photograph taken. She was twenty-five years of age when the picture was taken.**

**Photographs by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)**

As per Kevin, Anne “came to England in 1938 as things were getting bad for Jews in Germany. She tried to get her parents (Morris and Sarah) and her grandmother.....who were all living in the same house at the same time to come with (her).....but....he was extremely reluctant to leave.” Kevin feels their reluctance was because of Morris’s business and his ownership of the building on Rheingasse. Kevin writes “I often think about my mother waiting at Konstanz railway station going to England, saying goodbye to her family wondering if she would ever see them again.” It must have been with a sense of nervous relief, however, that Morris and Sarah saw her train depart the station heading, hopefully, to a safe haven. It is not clear, however, whether Anne left before or after Kristallnacht. All we have is an incomplete timeline: Anni’s postcard of 10 August 1938, Kristallnacht on 9-10 November 1938, the arrest of Moses (see below) on 12 November 1938, his imprisonment at Dachau, and his release on 4 January 1939. Anni’s migration to England might have occurred at any time between 10 August 1938 and 27 June 1939 (see below for more specifics).





**Two remarkable photographs of Anni (top: far right; bottom: bottom right) at the train station in Konstanz ready to depart. Others who were escaping Konstanz as well as family members are also on the platform.**

**The caption for the top photograph (loosely translated from German) reads: The blurred image show Anne Furst (right) and other young Konstanz Jews in July 1939 saying goodbye to their parents forever.**

**The caption for the bottom photograph: All have made efforts to laugh and admit no tears, Anne Furst recalled many years later.**

**On p. 239-240 Anne says "At the time at the railway station I was not crying and neither were my parents, but I knew with certainty that if I did not get them out of Konstanz, I would not see them again."**

**Das Jüdische Konstanz: Blutezeit Und Vernichtung by Tobias Engelsing, p. 239-240 and credited to the Archiv Engelsing**

With the help of Dr. Maik Schluroff (see below) and Dr. Uwe Brugmann, who inquired at the Konstanz city archives, Anni's movements during the years from 1936 to 1939 can be partially traced. It reveals a young woman seemingly in almost constant motion. Although it is tempting to attribute her movements as a frantic attempt to somehow leave Germany or find safety elsewhere, there is simply no realistic way to assign her movements a truthful explanation. Germans were required to register with the "Einwohnermeldeamt" (residential registration office): "Citizens and residents have to register there whenever they move into or out of town or change their address. It is the law in Germany and Switzerland, so that the authorities are kept informed of your whereabouts at all times" (e-mail conversation with Dr. Schluroff, 3 September 2013, quotation marks are present as shown in his e-mail). On 16 January 1936, she was in Sonderhausen, a German town 265 miles from Konstanz. Anni returned to Rheingasse 15 on 21 April 1936. Less than two months later, she appears to have been in Kolberg (although Dr. Schluroff says the writing after the word Kolberg is unclear), which may be the present town of Kolobrzeg, Poland, located on the Baltic coast and 125 miles west of Gdansk. Kolberg is 530 miles from Konstanz. The Jewish population in both Sonderhausen and Kolberg appears to have been quite small, numbering only a few hundred people. On 16 November 1936 she was back at Rheingasse 15 where she appears to have stayed until she left permanently for England. In 2013 it would be simple to say that the 23-year-old Anni was traveling as a representative of her father's business or perhaps working to establish a career of her own. In 1936, a young Jewish woman would not have had such an opportunity. As per the information at the archives, the final notation for Anni was on 27 June 1939 when she gave London as her destination. That day was perhaps the day that she left Konstanz. Records at the archives confirm her birth date as 12 July 1913, document her under the name Anna Ferszt but cryptically say that she moved to Rheingasse 15 in 1929 but also state that Moses and Salomea Ferszt lived on Rheingasse from the time that they moved to Germany. Note: in one of the files below regarding Anne Ferszt Nairn's attempt to obtain compensation for the loss of the house on Rheingasse, she states that she was in England in April of 1939.

In America, Max Fersht had frequently urged his family to migrate to America and on at least two occasions forwarded either money or actual steamship tickets for the steamship passage. Only Grandpa used the money to migrate. Some of the money may have been used to finance the wedding of Chana Toiba Ferszt and Zvi Melcer in 1909. I am left to wonder whether, even as late as 1938, Max was urging Moses to somehow leave and perhaps come to America.

The specifics of Anne's trip to England are not known. It should be noted that the railroad in Konstanz seems to run in two directions: northward to Germany and southward to Zurich, Switzerland: the identical route I would travel in 2013. It seems logical that Anne traveled southward to Zurich and then perhaps westward to Geneva, Paris, and Calais before sailing to England although it is entirely feasible that she traveled north to Frankfurt and westward to Antwerp, Belgium before embarking. In any case, she likely would have needed a German passport that would have been clearly marked with the letter "J" signifying her religion. The fact that she seems to have registered her travel with authorities in Konstanz certainly seems to indicate that she traveled legally (see photographs above).

Kevin continues "To go to another country, you had to have a sponsor and guarantor and Anne's father or mother's sister (I'm not sure which) Rose Samuels who lived in London sponsored Anne's escape to England." Multiple Rose Samuels' lived in England circa 1938/1939 and details about the family there have not been discovered. Samuels may have been an anglicization of the surname Schmuelvitz, Anne's mother's maiden name. The last English census released to the public is the Census of 1911. For privacy reasons, censuses in the United States are not released for seventy-two years: in England, the waiting period is one hundred years. It also should be noted that although the government of Germany conducted censuses in 1910, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1925, 1933, and 1939, I have not been able to access their contents and do not know whether the Ferszt family was enumerated. Anne Ferszt Nairn's death certificate is not yet available for viewing online.

In an email conversation of March 26, 2015 Kevin Nairn related that "She came to England with an enormous trunk (the size of a small car) full of furniture, antiques, clothes and bed linen. I still have the linen. The antiques aren't worth much.

They all lived in Brooke Road (I think it's Brooke Road) in Hackney, north London. I think her husband was a baker.

As was the case with many other nations, including the United States, the United Kingdom appears to have been unwilling to take large numbers of refugees attempting to relocate from Germany despite accepting over 9300 young unaccompanied children (the Kindertransport) in 1938 and 1939. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of Jewish refugees managed to get to England.

It cannot be determined whether Anne was one of many thousands of German and Austrian refugees and citizens who were interred in camps by the British government from May 1940 to September 1945 although it seems unlikely. The largest of the camps, established when Great Britain felt most vulnerable to invasion, was located on the Isle of Man. Refugees were classified into three categories: known Nazi sympathizers who interred immediately (high risk), doubtful ones who had restrictions put on them such as not being able to travel, and a category that included all other including almost of Jewish refugees (no risk). Interment was controversial and conditions initially poor. By 1941, restrictions had been somewhat eased. A list of those interred is maintained

at the National Archives in Kew, England and Anne does not appear in databases listing German Internees Released in the United Kingdom 1939-1942, Internees at Liberty in the United Kingdom 1939-1942 or Germans Interred in the United Kingdom 1939. Nothing further can be inferred about Anne's life in England during World War Two except that she must have been consumed with worry about her parents and grandmother.

According to the German Federal Archives ([bundesarchiv.de](http://bundesarchiv.de)), Moses Schachum Ferszt, born 4 January 1886 in Warsaw, was one of the over ten thousand Jewish men arrested immediately after Kristallnacht, as on 12 November 1938, he was sent to the prisoner camp at Dachau. 16 of ten thousand men were from Konstanz. In an article without citation on Wikipedia, it states that "Most of the men in this group were released after incarceration of a few weeks to a few months" and, as per the German Archive, Moses was released on 6 January 1939. He appears to have returned to Konstanz. Note: the derivation of the name Schachum is undetermined but may perhaps be traced to the given names Shalom or Shakhna.

Conditions for the Jewish residents of Konstanz continued to worsen. On 22 October 1940, 108 Jewish residents of Konstanz were arrested and deported to France. Kevin writes "From what I have heard, my grandparents and great grandmother in Konstanz, were taken from their house at gunpoint, put on a train and sent to France at a place called Camp De Gurs. Apparently they were all eventually shot. My mother was reluctant to talk about these events and I don't know a lot about lost relatives in Europe." For Moses, it was his second arrest in less than two years.

As per an article entitled *Nach der Verschleppung began die Schnappchenjagd* written by Von Tobias Engelsing and published in *Sodkurrue* on October 2015 (roughly translated as The Kidnapping of Jews and their Deportation from Southern Germany 75 Years ago Provided the Master Plan for the Holocaust) "As Salomea and Moritz Furst were dragged on the morning of October 22, 1940 from her home in Konstanz Rheingasse and pushed onto a truck, some neighbors looked on in silence. No sooner had the trucks and police officers disappeared then some of the neighbors plundered their house, textile store and apartment." (translation by Google Translate).

On 23 October 2015 I contacted Dr. Engelsing asking him about the source his narrative of the family's eviction. In his reply on 27 October 2015, he told me that the source was Anni herself: "I met Anne Furst the first time in 1983, when she visited together with other survivors Konstanz. I was a young journalist and took interviews with the guests for my newspaper. She told me also about her meeting with a neighbors girl and friend of hers, who lived 1940 next door in the Rheingasse. This girl saw what happened at 22 Oktober 1940 and told it to Anne." He also wrote that "She visited ex-neighbors of her parents who wanted to give her letters from the parents, written in Gurs! But she refused to see the letters." In his book Dr. Engelsing quotes Anni (p. 240) telling her ex-neighbors to burn the letters.





**The 1983 reunion of Holocaust survivors and the families in Konstanz. Anni Ferszt. She is at the right, front row, second from the right, between a woman with a white dress and a woman with an open black sweater over a white blouse (archiv engelsing)**

The website [zei.de](http://zei.de), referring to Dr. Engelsing and the Furst family adds to the story: “When she visited a former neighbor, she discovered a bent Chanukah candelabra belonging to her parents in their living room. When she asked how the piece had come to be there, the neighbor replied, ‘Anne, we’ve kept it for you!’ (22 October 2015).



**In a photograph from the article above taken in the nearby town of Gailingen, a Jewish family is led away**

**Bild: Judisches Burgerhaus Gailingen**



**From the same article: 300 Jewish townspeople, “most residents for generations in Gailingen” are led through the village on October 22, 1940**

**Bild: Judisches Burgerhaus Gailingen**

Note: the German article and an English translation can be found in Appendix 3.

Dr. Engelsing additionally is the author of the catalogue for an exhibit “Das Jüdische Konstanz-Blütezeit und Vernichtung” (The Jews of Konstanz-Heyday and Destruction) at that city’s Rosgartenmuseum (July 16<sup>th</sup>-December 30<sup>th</sup> 2015). As per Dr. Maik Schlurhoff “In his speech for the “Grand Opening” of the exhibition Dr. Engelsing briefly mentioned the Fürst family: they had a store at Rheingasse 15 and tried in vain to flee to England. But they did manage to send their

daughter Anna to England. In 1942, according to Dr. Engelsing, Moritz and Salomea Fürst were murdered at Auschwitz.”



**Sara and Moses Ferszt, date unknown**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn**





**Bertha Schmuelevitz, date unknown**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn**

Exactly what happened to Morritz/Morris/Moses, Sara/Sarah/Salomea, and Bertha Alexander Schmuelevitz is not clear except to say that they likely died at Aushchwitz. As per the Pages of Testimony filled out by Anne, they were “shot in transport to Nomansland.” How she knew this is not known. As per the Yad Vashem Database of Shoah Victim’s Names citing information received from archives in Germany (Gedenkbuch - Opfer der Verfolgung der Juden unter der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft in Deutschland 1933-1945, Bundesarchiv (German National Archives), Koblenz 1986.”), their place of death was Auschwitz. Serge Klarsfeld listed Moses and Sara as being transported from Drancy to Auschwitz on Transport 29 on 7 September 1942 arriving on 9 September, Transport 29 carried approximately 1000 people. A number seem to have been selected for work camps (111 at Auschwitz and 200 at the nearby camp at Cosel) and I have seen a listing that 689 were gassed, likely soon after their arrival (Deportations to Auschwitz 1942-1944 at <http://holocaustcontroversies.yuku.com/topic/1806#Ug1iotJBVpY>). As Moses and Sara were “older,” it doesn’t seem that they would have been prime candidates to work in a labor camp. The

International Tracing Service appears to have additional documentation on Transport 29 that may include a listing of those aboard.

In 2014, Dr. Brugmann, researching at the state archive in Freiberg, located an International Tracing Service file dating to 1966 regarding Moses. It confirms that he was arrested and sent to Dachau on 12 November 1938, released on 6 January 1939, rearrested on 22 October 1940, sent to Gurs, and transferred to Auschwitz on 7 September 1942. It also seems to say that papers relating to his health and proof of death are not available, and that a death certificate cannot be issued.



# COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE

SERVICE INTERNATIONAL DE RECHERCHES  
3548 Arolsen - République Fédérale d'Allemagne

INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE  
3548 Arolsen - Federal Republic of Germany

INTERNATIONALER SUCHDIENST  
3548 Arolsen - Bundesrepublik Deutschland

Certificate of Incarceration

Inhaftierungsbescheinigung

Certificat d'Incarcération

Ihr Akt.-Z.: LA 2. Ws. Karlsruhe  
Votre Réf.: EF-Nr. 4322

Unser Akt.-Z.: ED 162 819  
Notre Réf.: No. 460657

Name Nom Nom	<u>FERSZT</u>	Vorname Prénoms First names	<u>Moses-gén. Moritz</u>	Staatsangehörigkeit Nationalité Nationality	<u>nicht angegeben</u>
Geburtsdatum Date de naissance Date of birth	<u>1.4.1886</u>	Geburtsort Lieu de naissance Place of birth	<u>Warschau</u>	Häftlingsnummer No. de prisonnier Prisoner's No.	<u>nicht angegeben</u>
Namen der Eltern Noms des parents Parents' names	<u>nicht angegeben</u>				

It is hereby certified that the following information is available in documentary evidence held by the International Tracing Service.

Es wird hiermit bestätigt, daß folgende Angaben in den Unterlagen des internationalen Suchdienstes aufgeführt sind.

Il est certifié par la présente que les informations suivantes se trouvent dans la documentation détenue par le Service International de Recherches.

Name Nom Nom	<u>FERSZT</u>	Vorname Prénoms First names	<u>Moses</u>	Staatsangehörigkeit Nationalité Nationality	<u>deutsch</u>
Geburtsdatum Date de naissance Date of birth	<u>1.4.1886</u>	Geburtsort Lieu de naissance Place of birth	<u>Warschau</u>	Beruf Profession Profession	<u>Kaufmann</u>
Namen der Eltern Noms des parents Parents' names	<u>nicht angeführt</u>				

Zuletzt bekannter ständiger Wohnort  
Dernière adresse connue  
Last permanent residence

Konstanz, Rheingasse 15

wurde eingekerkert in das Konz.-Lager  
a été enclavé au camp de concentration  
has entered concentration camp

Dachau

Häftlingsnummer  
No. de prisonnier  
Prisoner's No.

23080

am  
le  
en

12. November 1938

von  
venant de  
coming from

nicht angeführt

Kategorie, oder Grund für die Inhaftierung  
Catégorie, ou raison donnée pour l'incarcération  
Category, or reason given for incarceration

"Sch." (\* Schutzhaft) "Jude"

Überstellt  
Transféré  
Transferred

nicht angeführt. Entlassen am 6. Januar 1939 im KL. Dachau.  
Am 22. Oktober 1940 wurde er aus Baden nach Gurs evakuiert. Am 7. September 1942 vom Sammellager Drancy zum KL. Auschwitz überstellt.

Befehl/Entlassen am  
Libéré/Relâché le  
Released on

nicht angeführt

in  
à  
in

nicht angeführt

Bemerkungen  
Remarques  
Remarks

Ein Todesnachweis liegt nicht vor. Wir sind daher nicht in der Lage, die Ausstellung einer Sterbeurkunde zu veranlassen.  
Krankenscheine sind ebenfalls nicht vorhanden.

Geprüfte Unterlagen  
Documents consultés  
Records consulted

Zugangsbuch und Veränderungsmeldung des KL. Dachau. Verzeichnis der aus Baden ausgewiesenen Juden. Karteikarte und Transportliste des Sammellagers Drancy. Transportliste (Abschub-Nr. 29) des B.d.S. Frankreich.

Arolsen, den 10. Januar 1966

A. de COCATRIX

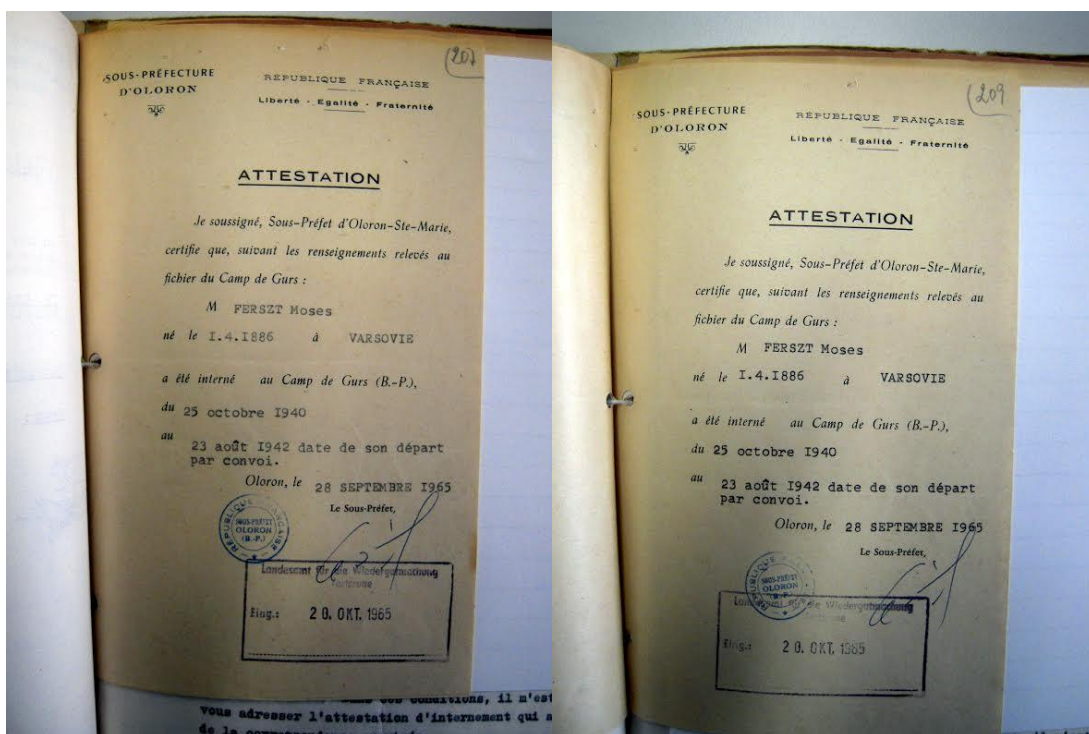
Directeur adjoint  
Service International de Recherches

G. PECHAR  
Secrétaire des Archives

Der ITS übernimmt für die Richtigkeit und Vollständigkeit des Inhalts der Dokumente, die zur Ausstellung dieser Bescheinigung verwendet wurden, keine Gewähr.

bitte wenden

\* Erfüllung des I.S.D., erscheint nicht in den Originalunterlagen.  
\* Exécution de l'I.S.D., n'apparaît pas sur les documents originaux.  
\* Added by the I.T.S., does not appear on the original documents.



**Two additional documents concerning Moses Ferszt found by Dr. Brugmann confirming that Moses Ferszt was imprisoned in France prior to being transported to Auschwitz**

The information on Bertha is additionally somewhat contradictory. She was arrested on 22 October 1940 and according to the German Federal Archives was sent to Gurs, on to Drancy, and finally deported to Auschwitz on 11 February 1943 where she certainly was quickly killed. The record lists her name as Berta Broneslawa Schmuelewitz, born in Sosnowiec on 16 April 1858. Whether Bronslawa was thought to be her maiden name, Anne had recorded it as Alexander, is unknown. On Anne Nairn's Page of Testimony, Bertha/Berta was recorded as having been born on 4 April 1856 although with the note that the date was approximate and it seems likely that Anne did not know her grandmother's birthday. What is most confusing is that the Memorial De La Shoah in Paris, documented Bertha Schmulewitz, born 16 April 1858 in Sosnovitz as having been sent to Auschwitz on Transport 47 on 11 February 1943, but listed her prewar address as 76, rue de Picpus in the 12 Arrondissement in Paris. I can only assume that the Paris address was recorded in error. All that can be said with certainty is that at some point, likely after they were sent to Drancy, Bertha was separated from her daughter and son-in-law in what must have been yet another in a long series of heartbreaking scenes.

As per Kevin Nairn, Sarah Schmuelevitz also had at least one brother (first name unknown) who went from Konstanz to Italy and then perhaps on to Palestine. He had at least two sons including Solomon who was born in Konstanz and was very close to Anne. Both Solomon and his father were at Kevin's Bar Mtizvah and gave him a "special pen." According to Kevin "When



Solomon was a young man he was very intelligent and was training to be a lawyer. He was also very strong and aggressive and knew some ju jitsu. He told me a story of two young men he knew who just joined the Nazi party they were making rude comments to him so he karate chopped one in the throat. The man fell down holding his throat and gasping for air, the other said, "You killed him!" and Solomon got scared and ran away. Fortunately, the man didn't die but Solomon knew it was time to leave the country, and went to Palestine to become a Palestinian Policeman. This would have been from about 1935 I think" (e-mail conversation of October 15, 2013).

Hopital -Hospices Orphelinat -O-O-O-O-O-			- 5 -	63
65-	HEUMANN Caroline	9.1.61 Tessen-Loschel Allemande	venant de Gars S.F.	
66-	FEUTERS Maria	5.8.28 Bruxelles Belge	9, rue Guy Papin S.F. Paris	
67-	PEREL Maria née Goldseit	1885 Caladina Roumaine	8, rue des F. Calvaires S.F. Paris	
68-	POVTOREK Néhama	1901 Kremenets Soviétique	207, fbg St Antoine S.F. Paris	
69-	RACINEKE Jacques	31.7.27+ Varsovie Polonaise	16, rue Lamarek S.F. Paris	
70-	RADOSEWKA Bathéra	25.9.27 Minsk Polonaise	9, Rue Guy-Patin - Paris S.F.	
71-	ROCHMAN Fajga-Charka née Winterman	19.1.1911 Rostov Polonaise	20, Rue Basfroi - Paris S.F.	
72-	ROSENBERG Gitta	28.11.05 Rnnow Polonaise	12, Rue Pierre Bayle Couturière Paris	
73-	ROSENBERG Neeta-Issaca née Lintenberg	15.10.93 Sellschow Polonaise	18, Impasse Ronce S.F. Paris	
74-	SALTIER Betty	23.8.29 Salonique Hellène	9, Rue Guy-Patin - Paris S.F.	
75-	SASSON Israël	1883 Stroumitza Hellène	12, Rue du Gal. Roguet S.F. Clichy	
76-	SCHREINER Zips née KIRSCHNER	15.5.72 Odessa Réf. Rouss	8, Cité Rougemont S.F. Paris	
77-	SCHULEVITZ Berta née Alexander	16.4.08 Sonnévics Polonaise	76, Rue de Piepus S.F. Paris	
78-	SCHURER Lazare	1867 Lodz Polonaise	76, Rue de Piepus S.F.	
79-	SINGEL Léja née Tepper	1902 Ciesunow Polonaise	3, Av. de Bourvines Tailleur Paris	
80-	<del>SINGEL Léja</del>	18.6.08 Litbeck Réf. Russes	76, Rue de Piepus S.F.	

Memorial de la Shoah listing for Berta Schmulevitz (3<sup>rd</sup> from bottom)

<http://bdi.memorialdelashoah.org/internet/jsp/core/MmsRedirector.jsp?id=53594&type=VICTIM>

Additionally, another resident of Rheingasse 15, Robertine Rothchild Moses, born 16 October 1877 and the widow of David Moses, was also deported on 22 October and died in the camp at Gurs on 12 December 1940. Also living on Rheingasse at the time was Hugo Weill who, according to Dr. Maik Schluroff, member of the “Initiative Stolpersteine” who lives a half a block from Rheingasse, “At the Rheingasse (exact address unknown) lived Hugo Weill, a member of the Konstanz Jewish community” (e-mail conversation of 22 March 2013). Weill was born in Germany on 25 January 1885, was deported from Konstanz in 1940 and died at Auschwitz in September 1942. Stolpersteine (“stumbling stones”) are small plaques commemorating victims, including Jews and non-Jews, of the Nazis found all across Europe. Although many are to be found in Konstanz, including one for Hugo Weill at Bodenstrasse 33, the Ferszt family is not commemorated and Dr. Schluroff stated that he was unaware of Anni. In an e-mail conversation of 30 August 2013 when discussing the installation of additional stolpersteine, he wrote “After that, I will try and suggest that the FERSZT family gets "stolpersteine". Provided we can find someone who is willing to do the research, additional information may be revealed.”

<b>Sheet Name:</b>	5.55-9.74	<b>Document Type:</b>	Film/ Rückvergr.
<b>Inventory number:</b>	1426	<b>ITS file location:</b>	VCC 87 b Ordner 38 SL-Drancy
<b>Description:</b>	Deportation list Nr. 29: Transport from 7.9.1942 from Drancy to Auschwitz; Deportation list Nr. 30: Transport from 9.9.1942 from Drancy to Auschwitz	<b>Bezeichnung:</b>	Abschubliste Nr. 29: Transport v. 7.9.1942 v. Drancy n. Auschwitz; Abschubliste Nr. 30: Transport v. 9.9.1942 v. Drancy n. Auschwitz
<b>Source institution:</b>	State Museum in Auschwitz/Poland	<b>Herkunft:</b>	Staatl. Museum in Auschwitz/Polen
<b>Number of Names:</b>	ca. 1992	<b>Number of pages:</b>	128
<b>Accession Date:</b>	Mar-59	<b>Carded:</b>	ja

**International Tracing Service Inventory Search 5.55-9.74 on the website of the United States Holocaust Museum**

**Documentation received from the International Tracing Service (ITS) in June 2013**

[http://resources.ushmm.org/itsinventory/inventory1.php?Inventory\\_Id=4581](http://resources.ushmm.org/itsinventory/inventory1.php?Inventory_Id=4581)

An obelisk commemorating those Jews deported from Konstanz was erected in Sigismundstrasse near the sight of the synagogue destroyed in 1938 and also within sight of the railroad station from which they were transported to their deaths.



**Monument to those deported on October 22, 1940 located on Sigismundstrasse in Konstanz. As per the photograph, it reads "On 22nd October 1940, 108 Jewish citizens were deported from Constance to France, to the internment camp Gurs. From August 1942 onwards, those who were still alive were transported from there to the concentration camps in Auschwitz and Sobibor where they were murdered." It was unveiled on 15 April 2005**

Photographs by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)







Photograph by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)



Berta Schmulewitz (Berta Alexander Schmulevitz): top

[See-online.info](#)



**The Konstanz train station as seen from Sigismundstrasse**

**Photograph by Linda Kurtz (summer 2013)**

As referenced, Anne Ferszt married Ronald Nairn in Hackney, England in 1946. At the time of her marriage she was lived at 3 Rectory Road in Hackney and was involved in the “Fur Line.” Anne first appears on the London, England, Electoral Register (10 Green Acres, Tottenham) in 1959. At some point prior to 1959, Anne must have become a citizen.

After the war, Anne seems to have made multiple trips to Konstanz. Kevin writes “It must have been heartbreaking for my mother to go back to the house in Konstanz after the war knowing that her parents and grandmother were dead and the contents of her house had been cleared out. The tenants of the house that lived upstairs, had not been paying rent for 15-20 years!! I don’t know when my mother first returned to the house, but my sister and I went with her to Konstanz several times when we were young. The last time I went to Konstanz was in 1989 to see her friends and tell them that my mother had died.” I am also left to wonder when Anne finally accepted that her parents had been murdered. On her 1946 wedding certificate she described her father as “missing, presumed dead.” At that juncture, the war in Europe had been over for sixteen months and she had obviously not heard from them. She filled out her Pages of Testimony for Yad Vashem in 1979.

In a further e-mail Kevin stated that “When Anne took Beryl and I back to Konstanz, we met some of her school friends that she had kept in touch with. I remember Hildegard and Olga and Hildegard’s husband Herman. I remember sitting next to Herman as he was drinking a beer and wondering: ‘How many Jews/Polish/French/British/Americans did you kill during the war?’ It was a bizarre scenario! My mother always said that she had 2 lives: one in Germany and one in England.” The fact that she had German friends may also be an explanation for why she penned

the 1938 postcard in German. In yet another e-mail conversation (2 February 2014), Kevin told me that his Mom even attended a Catholic convent school and often went on “hikes/rambles with school friends.” As per Kevin, the source of the information was his uncle Solomon (see above).

As well as visiting Konstanz, Anne seems to immediately begun legal proceeding to obtain compensation for the loss of the family home on Rheingasse. The proceedings lasted until at least 1962 and appear to have been successful. In my email conversation with Dr. Tobias Engelsing mentioned above he talked of “Anne’s fight to get back her parents property. And: once she was after the war in Konstanz, to get back the house in Rheingasse. After that she sold it.” Below is a translation of a document forwarded to me by Dr. Brugmann.

**Compensation Act: Moses Ferszt in the State Archives Freiburg F 196/1 , 4322**

**Request is made for compensation by Anna Ferszt, married name Anna Nairn, District Court, Restitution Chamber, Constance from 08/17/1949**

**She asks for the return of the house at Rheingasse 15**

**She was represented by the company Friedrich Marquardt, Bahnhofstraße4, Konstanz. Under representative was a lawyer, Lothar Frank.**

**The registration in the Land Register, Volume 124, Part 10, after which the property of the Moritz Ferszt was transferred on 11.3.1942 to the German Reich, is annulled.**

**The assets of the Moritz Ferszt goes to his deportation on the basis of 11 Regulation to the Reich Citizenship Law of 25.11.1941 to the German Reich.**

**The property in the Rhinegasse 15 included a total of 5 a, 60 square meters, 560 square meters/6028 square feet) . On the surface were:**

- Three-story residential home with arched cellar and outhouse**
- Four-story residential building**
- Three-story rear building with arched cellar**
- Three-story property with staircase**
- Three-story (abortonbau: unclear meaning, perhaps privy, building with privy?)**

**Anna Nairn waived the rental income for the period 1946-1948 for the Fund for Compensation in Freiburg.**

On 9 Nov. 1949 is the inheritance of Anna Nairn, wife of Ronald Nairn, London, 14 West Bank , Stanford Hill, issued.

The following is the various applications for compensation to the wife of Moses Ferszt , Salomea Ferszt, also to loss of earnings during the arrest of Moses Ferszt in Dachau and Gurs .

The procedure for the redress for Moses and Salomea Ferszt lasted until 1962.

Original document from which the above is translated:

## **Entschädigungsakte Moses Ferszt**

### **im Staatsarchiv Freiburg F 196/1, 4322**

**Antrag auf Entschädigung gestellt von Anna Ferszt, verheiratete Anna Fairn beim Bad. Landgericht, Restitutionskammer Konstanz vom 17.8.1949**

**Sie klagt auf Rückgabe des Hauses Rheingasse 15.**

**Sie wurde durch die Firma Friedrich Marquardt, Bahnhofstraße4, Konstanz, vertreten. Unterbevollmächtigter war Rechtsanwalt Lothar Frank.**

**Die Eintragung im Grundbuch, Band 124, Blatt 10, wonach das Eigentum des Moritz Fürst am 3.11.1942 an das Deutsche Reich übertragen wurde, wird für nichtig erklärt.**

**Das Vermögen des Moritz Fürst geht nach seiner Deportation auf Grund der 11. Verordnung zum Reichsbürgergesetz vom 25.11.1941 an das Deutsche Reich über.**

**Das Eigentum in der Rheingasse 15 umfasste eine Gesamtfläche von 5 a, 60 qm (560 qm). Auf der Fläche standen:**

- dreistöckiges Wohnhaus mit gewölbtem Keller und Abtrittanbau**
- vierstöckiges Wohnhaus**
- dreistöckiges Hinterhaus mit gewölbtem Keller**
- dreistöckiger Anbau mit Stiegenhaus**
- dreistöckiger Abortanbau**

**Anna Fairn verzichtet auf die Mieteinnahmen für die Zeit von 1946 bis 1948 zugunsten des Fonds für die Wiedergutmachung in Freiburg.**



**Am 9. Nov. 1949 wird der Erbschein auf Anna Fairn, Ehefrau des Ronald Fairn, London, 14 West Bank, Stanford Hill, ausgestellt.**

**Es folgen noch verschiedene Anträge auf Entschädigung der Ehefrau von Moses Ferszt, Salomea Ferszt, ferner auf Verdienstausschlag während der Inhaftierung von Moses Ferszt in Dachau und Gurs.**

**Das Verfahren um die Wiedergutmachung für Moses und Salomea Ferszt zog sich bis 1962 hin.**

Below are some of the files from her case:

57  
Anlage zum Einzelantrag D) der Frau Anna Nairn  
a/Abl. der Eheleute Perszt.  
=====

Die Erblasser wurden wegen ihrer jüdischen Rassezugehörigkeit am 22.10.1940 deportiert. Nach ihrem Abtransport wurde das gesamte Vermögen zu Gunsten des Reiches eingezogen.

Da ich bereits im April 1939 nach England auswanderte, kann ich über den Vermögensstatus am Tage der Besitzentziehung & die Höhe der entrichteten Judenvermögensabgabe keinen Aufschluss geben. Anlässlich meiner Versprache beim Finanzamt Konstanz im Sommer v.Jhs. wurde mir eröffnet, dass die entsprechenden Steuerakten nicht mehr vorhanden sind. Auch die Städtische Sparkasse Konstanz verfügt nicht mehr über die einschlägigen Buchungsunterlagen aus der fraglichen Zeitspanne.

Aufgrund des von der Dienststelle für Wiedergutmachung aus alten Kassenlisten & Abrechnungen entnommenen Zahlenmaterials errechnete ich daher den entstandenen Vermögensschaden wie folgt:

Guthaben der Eheleute Perszt (Steuer Nr. 70/52) am 31.8.1944 bei der Finanzkasse Konstanz NS. #9 RM. 21.644,38

In diesem Betrage sind Mietüberschüsse aus der Verwaltung des Anwesens Rheingasse 15 enthalten, die bereits im Zuge der Restitution erstattet sind. Per Ende 1944 betrugen die Überschüsse NS. #9 " 10.436,90  
RM. 11.207,48

Lt. Mitteilung der Städt. Sparkasse Konstanz wurden Hypothekenforderungen in Höhe von insgesamt vom Deutschen Reich am 3.1.42 & 4.5.43 beglichen. Es ist mit aller Wahrscheinlichkeit anzunehmen, dass diese Schuldentilgung zu Lasten der eingezogenen Vermögenswerte erfolgte, sodass die Höhe dieses Schadens ca. " 2.622.-  
RM. 13.829,48

betragen haben dürfte. Mangels jeglicher Unterlagen ist mir jedoch eine Spezifikation in Bankguthaben, Wertpapiere, Betriebsvermögen etc. nicht möglich.

Ferner verfügten meine Eltern über eine reichhaltige Wohnungseinrichtung, die nach ihrer Deportation versteigert worden sein soll. Die Erwerber sind mir nicht bekannt. Auch hierüber stehen mir keinerlei Beweismittel zur Verfügung. In Anbetracht des Umstandes, dass auch wertvolles Familiensilber vorhanden war, nehme ich den Verlust an beweglichem Vermögen (III/2 dieses Einzelantrages) mit RM. 20.000,- an, wobei ich bemerke, dass ich für die genaue Richtigkeit des Betrages keine Gewähr übernehmen kann.

Judenvermögensabgabe. Meine Eltern besaßen das Anwesen Rheingasse 15 in Konstanz mit einem Einheitswert von RM 41.500,-  
zusätzlich des weiteren oben errechneten Vermögens " 13.829,48  
mit = ca. RM. 55.329,48.

Die Judenvermögensabgabe dürfte demnach RM. 13.835,25 ( 25 % aus dem Gesamtvermögen) betragen haben.

./.

Immobilien - MARQUARDT KG Konstanz · Bahnhofplatz 4  
Inh. Friedr. Marquardt

An- und Verkauf von Grundbesitz aller Art · Finanzierungen · Vermietungen und Hausverwaltungen

Bankkonten: Deutsche Bank, Filiale Konstanz  
Säbische Sparkasse Konstanz

7700 KONSTANZ, den 15.2.1964  
Telefon 2311

An das  
Landesamt  
für die Wiedergutmachung  
K a r l s r u h e  
-----  
Bahnhofplatz 14



Akt.-Z.: EF 4322 - III 3/Ha,  
Betr.: Entschädigungssache nach Moritz Moses F e r s z t  
genannt Max Fürst.

Auf Ihr Schreiben vom 7. d.Mts. geben wir Ihnen folgende  
Auskunft:

Zu 1.:

Die Firma lief unter der Bezeichnung "M. FÜRST, Volksmagazin". Geschäftszweig: s. anliegende Geschäftskarte in Fotokopie.

Zu 2.:

Die Schließung der Firma dürfte wohl die ehem. NSDAP veranlasst haben.

Zu 3. und 4.:

Frau NAIRN (Tochter des M. Fürst) schrieb uns am 29.1.62. u.a.: "Das Inventar wurde von der ~~ff~~ Radolfzell mit 2 Lastwagen abgeholt. Die Einrichtung oder einen Teil davon wurde von einem Freistätter\* abgeholt soweit ich mich erinnern kann. Eine Entschädigung hat nicht stattgefunden."

Hochachtungsvoll  
IMMOBILIEN-MARQUARDT KG KONSTANZ

*Friedr. Marquardt*  
Friedr. Marquardt

\* soll FREISTETTER heißen.  
Dieser betrieb früher im Hause  
Hussenstraße 49 in Konstanz eine Altmöbel-Handlung.

D.O.

1 Anlage.





# M i e t e a b r e c h n u n g .

betr. Anwesen Rheingasse 15

1.7.1946	Übernahme des Saldos vom Finanzamt Konstanz					RM 3819.51
Juli	Einnahmen	RM	532.84	Ausgaben	RM	209.71
August	"	"	535.30	"	"	-.90
September	"	"	470.98	"	"	-.90
Oktober	"	"	441.48	"	"	998.80
November	"	"	648.78	"	"	3.-
Dezember	"	"	402.68	"	"	44.-
Januar 1947	"	"	629.18	"	"	41.65
Februar	"	"	693.48	"	"	335.80
März	"	"	524.16	"	"	44.-
April	"	"	411.80	"	"	286.70
Mai	"	"	550.48	"	"	
Juni	"	"	504.48	"	"	121.20
Juli	"	"	459.48	"	"	93.30
August	"	"	350.30	"	"	
September	"	"	283.40	"	"	46.80
Oktober	"	"	544.50	"	"	
November	"	"	262.80	"	"	
Dezember	"	"	553.60	"	"	700.-
Januar 1948	"	"	8794.72			
Februar	"	"	296.70			
März	"	"	420.-			
		RM	9516.42		RM	2926.76
					RM	6589.66
					RM	10409.17

Gesamtüberschuss

welcher am 18.5.1948 an Fr. Marquardt, Konstanz als Hausverwalter übertragen wurde.

Konstanz, den 29.4.1949

**Finanzamt Konstanz**  
Dienststelle für kontrolliertes Vermögen  
Bahnhofplatz 12 • Telefon 1390/91



Öffentliche Sitzung des Bad. Landgerichts V. Konst. Konstanz, den 17.8.49  
Restitutionskammer

13. Okt. 1949

In Sachen

Or 60/42

Gegenwärtig:

Landgerichtsdirektor Henneke  
als Vorsitzender,  
Landgerichtsrat Dr. Beising  
als richterlicher Beisitzer,  
Schriftleiter Rudi Goguel, Konstanz  
als nichtrichterlicher Beisitzer,  
Rechtspflegeanw. Depfenhart  
als Urkundsbeamter der Geschäftsstelle.

der Anna von Ronald Cairn geb.  
Fürst, 14 West Bank, Ashurst Park  
London Nr. 16 / England  
Alleinerbin des Moritz Fürst und  
dessen Ehefrau Salomea geb. Schmale  
witz

- Klägerin -

Prozessbevollm.: Firma Friedrich  
Marquardt, Konstanz

gegen

Bad. Ministerium der Finanzen-Abt.  
IV- Landesamt für kontroll. Vermö-  
gen in Freiburg/Br. Karthäuser-  
strasse 124

- Beklagte -

Prozessbevollm.: Finanzangestellte  
v. Bradtke in Freiburg

wegen Rückerstattung nach der  
VO. Nr. 120 vom 10.11.1947.

Bei Aufruf der Sache sind erschienen:

1. Für Kläger: Lothar Frank, Konstanz mit Untervollmacht.
2. Für Bekl. : Finanzangestellter v. Bradtke, Freiburg/Br.

Der kl. Vertreter erklärt, dass er seinen Klagantrag dahingehend  
abändere, die in Ziffer 1 beantragte Nichtigkeit nicht zu erklären,  
sondern festzustellen.

Die Parteien schliessen hierauf folgenden

#### V e r g l e i c h

##### § 1.

Die Parteien sind darüber einig, dass die Verfallserklärung zu  
Gunsten des Deutschen Reiches, die sich auf das Grundstück Lgb. Nr.  
36 der Gemarkung Konstanz - eingetragen in Band 124, Heft 10 be-  
zieht, nichtig ist und zwar gemäss Artikel 1 der VO. Nr. 120 des  
französischen Oberbefehlshabers.

##### § 2.

Der Beklagte bewilligt und die Klägerin beantragt die Löschung  
des Deutschen Reiches sowie die Berichtigung in Band 124, Heft 10  
des Grundbuchs von Konstanz durch Eintragung der Klägerin als Ei-  
gentümerin des Grundstücks Lgb. Nr. 36.

##### § 3.

Die Klägerin versichert auf Erstattung des bis zum 31. Juli 1949  
aus dem Grundstück gezogenen Gewinns und ist damit einverstanden,  
dass der jetzt vorhandene Gewinn an den Fond für die Wiedergutmä-  
chung beim Finanzministerium in Freiburg i.Br. abgeführt wird.

An die Kreistate  
f. kontr. Vermögen

Konstanz

Life was not easy for Anne in England. Ronald Nairn abandoned his wife and children in either 1962 or 1963 and apparently never contributed to the monetary well-being of the family. Kevin writes “life for her then onwards was a struggle. Having said that, she owned her own house, paid all her bills and made sure that Beryl and I were well fed and had clean clothes. We were never short of anything. She had the foresight to buy the house in her name so Ron wasn’t entitled to any of it.” From what Kevin has related to me, she also seems to have imparted a strong work ethic to her children. “When I was a young teenager, my mother couldn’t afford to give Beryl and I any pocket money. She said: ‘If you want money, then get a job.’ So I did.” Anne Ferzt Nairn died of cancer in 1988.

THE LONDON GAZETTE, 7TH APRIL 1989		
Name of Deceased (Surname first)	Address, description and date of death of Deceased	Names, addresses and descriptions of Persons to whom notices of claims are to be given and names, in parentheses, of Personal Representatives
CLOW, Vera Doris	20 Reservoir Road, Kidderminster, Worcestershire. 6th January 1989.	Morton Fisher, Carlton House, Worcester Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 1BA, Solicitors. (Ref. DS.) (Hilda Neal and Donald Archie Rees MacConnell.)
HORNE, Annie	51 Hayes Road, Wolverley, nr. Kidderminster, Worcestershire, Widow. 10th January 1989.	Morton Fisher, Carlton House, Worcester Street, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY10 1BA, Solicitors. (Ref. DS/13585.1.) (Donald Archie Rees MacConnell.)
WHITBY, Roland Kenneth	5 Doncel Court, Forest View, Chingford, London E.4, Bank Official (Retired). 2nd March 1989.	Barclays Bank Trust Co. Ltd., New Enterprise House, 149-151 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex RM6 6PJ.
NAIRN, Anne	10 Beechfield Road, London N.4, Clerk (Retired). 10th November 1988.	Rose and Birn, 195-199 Stoke Newington High Street, London N16 0LG, Solicitors. (Beryl Sabina Wohl and Maurice Kevin Nairn.)

**Listing in the *London Gazette* for April 7, 1989 showing that the death of Anne Nairn occurred on November 10, 1988, that she was a retired clerk and giving her children’s name as Beryl Sabina Wohl and Maurice Kevin Nairn**

<http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/51694/pages/4227/page.pdf>

Kevin lives in Haringey, a suburb of London and although he has never married, has an eight-year-old daughter Morgan Sarah Smithers by his ex-partner Nadia. He has worked in the building trades all of his life, has bought and sold various properties and spent considerable time remodeling and renovating houses. His sister, Beryl Nairn Wohl, Aliza’s mom, died of cancer.



**Beryl Nairn Wohl and Aliza Wohl**

**Courtesy of Aliza Wohl**

For decades I had stared at the photograph of Anni Ferszt and wondered at her fate. I believed that she had perished in the Holocaust and went so far as to submit information on her to Yad Vashem (note: a request for Yad Vashem to remove Anni Ferszt's file). I was saddened and moved by what I thought to be the senseless tragedy of her death. My trip to Konstanz in 2013 was something of a pilgrimage: to see the house where she lived, to walk the streets where she walked, to attempt to see through my eyes what she had seen.

It is strange but also joyously heartening to know that the young woman I stared at for years and thought murdered not only had survived World War Two, but married and raised two children who are contemporaries of mine. At the time that Mom passed on the photograph to me, Anne was very much alive. As reference, if my sense of the relationship is correct and that Grandpa's father Mayer and Kevin's grandfather Chajim were brothers, then Kevin and I would be 3<sup>rd</sup> cousins. My children, Morgan Nairn, and Aliza Sarah Wohl would be 4<sup>th</sup> cousins. In the strange way that relationships are calculated, Morritz Ferszt was my 1<sup>st</sup> cousin twice removed (my mother's father's father's brother's son).

Coming to the realization that Anni was likely not my Grandfather's sister does not diminish in any way my trip to Konstanz nor serve to diminish my fascination with her. She was still a relative and almost certainly my Grandfather's cousin whom she would have called "uncle." Morritz/Moses Ferszt; husband, father, and successful businessman, would have been my



Grandfather's 1<sup>st</sup> cousin. Along with his wife Sara and mother-in-law Bertha, they died at the hands of the Nazis. Their story is still compelling. Their tale is worth remembering.



**Kevin Nairn with his daughter Morgan Sarah Smithers on her 8<sup>th</sup> birthday on 5 February 2013. According to Kevin, Morgan inherited his mother's ginger hair and the name Sarah is in memory of his grandmother.**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn**







**Morgan Sarah Smithers, granddaughter of Anni Ferszt**

**Courtesy of Kevin Nairn**

Note: The Skowronek family were prominent bankers, industrialists, and rabbis in Warsaw and elsewhere in Poland. A list of the assets at their Warsaw branch contains two references to a Haim Ferszt, son of Berek. Although it cannot in any way be proven and may very well be coincidence, Haim could possibly be Chajim, grandfather of Anni Ferszt. If Haim and Chajim are the same person, the listing could serve as proof that Majer (son of Berek) and Chajim were indeed brothers.

205.1.100 Name Ferszt, Haim, City Warszawa, District Warsaw, Country Poland, Father's Name Berek, Full Name Haim Ferszt, Property Lodging, Date Property Documented 1907.

-- 205.1.101 Name Ferszt, Haim, City Warszawa, District Warsaw, Country Poland, Father's Name Berek, Date Of Birth Was born prior to 1883, Date Profession Documented 1907, Date Property Documented 1907, Property Lodging.

**Listing of Haim Ferszt, son of Berek among the assets of a bank controlled by the Skowronek brothers ([andinia.com/articles/culture\\_and\\_society/a06245-references-heart.shtml](http://andinia.com/articles/culture_and_society/a06245-references-heart.shtml))**