



Wilhelm Krohn lived at Schusterbreite 5 in Lübeck-Schlutup

Abbreviated Biography

Born on 19 April 1875 in Schönberg, District of Neustrelitz/Mecklenburg

Married Anna Barteldt in 1902

Father of four children

Moved to Lübeck-Schlutup in 1914

Served in the military in WW I

Became a citizen of Lübeck in 1919

Worked for decades in the fish industry

Was widowed in May 1938

Was a pensioner (most likely starting in the spring of 1940)

Arrested on 21 June 1940 and incarcerated in the interrogation centre of the Marstall (Royal Stable) Prison

Transferred on 21 August 1940 to the Lübeck-Lauerhof Prison

Transferred on 27 September 1940 to the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp north of Berlin

Incarcerated under the Schutzhaft Law (Protective Custody Law*)

Died on 29 November 1940 at Sachsenhausen reportedly from cell inflammation and acute heart failure.

Biography

Wilhelm Krohn was born in Schönberg, Mecklenburg-Strelitz on 19 April 1875 into humble circumstances. He was a member the Evangelical Lutheran Church. He married Anna Barteldt, who also was born in Schönberg and was very close in age to Wilhelm, being born on 19 November 1875.



Wedding Picture of Wihelm and Anna Krohn, Sommer 1902 [1]

Inscription at the installation:

HIER WOHNTE
WILHELM KROHN
JG. 1875
VERHAFTET 1940
ERMORDET 29.11.1940
SACHSENHAUSEN

installation
21 April 2010

When he was 39 years old Wilhelm and his family moved to Lübeck on 15 April 1914 and he found a job in the Schlutup fishing industry. It is possible that he had been employed in Schlutup as a migrant worker beginning at the turn of the century.

The married couple had four children. One son died on 13 December 1920 at the age of 14. Their youngest son, Herbert, was born in Schlutup on 2 November 1914.



Wilhelm Krohn in military uniform [2]

Like many men of his generation Wilhelm Krohn fought in WW I.

On 18 May 1919 he acquired his Lübecker citizenship.

During the first two years of residing in Schlutup the Krohn family moved three times within Schlutup before moving to a building at Hintern Höfen 13a, which was owned by the Babe fishing family. They then lived here for over 20 years. On 16 March 1932 their youngest son, Herbert, moved out of his parental home to a flat in another building owned by the Bade family. His flat was still in the neighbourhood of his parent's, namely at Hafenstraße 29, which was renamed Haler Ort in 1938. Wilhelm and Anna Krohn moved for the last time on 24 October 1935 to Feldstraße 5, which was renamed Schusterbreite also in 1938.



The employees of the Peter Bade Company, 1910 [3]

There, in yet another residential building for employees owned by the Peter Bade smoked fish and cannery concern, they lived in one of the five flats on the second floor. The factory manager lived next door and was a member of the local branch of the Nazi party.

Not long after this last move Anna Krohn died on 27 May 1938 at the age of 63 years.

It was soon after Wilhelm's retirement that the widower was arrested by the Gestapo when he was denounced by someone, most likely someone living close by in his neighbourhood. Nothing is known about whether or not he was politically active or participated in union affairs. According to his grandson he was accused of having repeatedly smuggled food to some so-called "foreign workers" from Poland who had to work as forced labourers at his former employer's company. It can be presumed that they were living in a small camp adjacent to the building in which he lived.

The exact reasons for his arrest have never been established since the Lübeck Gestapo destroyed all their files before the end of the war. What is certain he was placed into "Protective Custody"

(Schutzhaft*) by decree the Office of the State Secret Police without any judicial process and was sent to a concentration camp, where he died a few weeks later. No other information about his incarceration is known.

As ordered by the Criminal Division Senior Assistant Liebetanz of the Lübeck Gestapo Wilhelm Krohn was arrested by Police Sergeant Major Hansen and taken to the Lübeck City Marstall Prison and Interrogation Centre. All his personal belongings on his person, such as wallet, keys, glasses, pocket watch and chewing tobacco, were taken from him.



Transfer Papers for the Marstall Prison [4]



Lübeck-Lauerhof Prisoner Record Card [5]

What was entered on the police department registration records vaguely describes Wilhelm's appearance: Height 1.62 m (6 feet 1¾ inches); weight 62 kg (137 lbs.), slight of build, blue green eyes, gray hair, has moustache.

On 21 August he was transferred to the Lübeck-Lauerhof Prison. On 22 August a public health doctor declared him fit to perform outside work, and therefore he was required to work in the prison garden from 23 August until 24 September.

While he was imprisoned his daughter, Ida, was allowed to visit him for 10 minutes on three separate occasions; 9 June during his time of being interrogated, then on 13 August and finally on 31 August. These short visits with his daughter took place with a prison official present. Punctually at 12 noon on 31 August they saw one another for the last time.



Written Official Permission for Wilhelm's daughter, Ida, to speak with him [6]

As ordered by the Kiel State Police Wilhelm Krohn was transferred on 27 September 1940 in "Protective Custody*" to the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp in Oranienburg, north of Berlin. He was given prisoner number 33,229.

Just two months later on 29 November 1940 at 2 p.m. Wilhelm Krohn died at Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp. Cell inflammation along with acute heart failure was given as the cause of death.

His body was cremated. Normally an urn with the remains of the deceased person would be sent to the deceased last known address, so that they would be taken to their last resting place. Until the 1950's there was a grave in the Schlutup Cemetery marking the graves of Anna and Wilhelm Krohn. But in fact the remains of Wilhelm Krohn, like those of many others who died at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, were buried in a common grave in Berlin-Altglienecke.

Almost 70 years later Wilhelm Krohn's grandson, Rainer, researched his grandfather's fate, which like no other plainly shows how quickly a completely innocent citizen could be utterly crushed by the persecution machinery of a totalitarian state during a reign of injustice. His graciousness earned him what turned out to be a death sentence. A 28 August 1946 registration card of the Lübeck registration office clearly declares that since his whereabouts was unknown he was deregistered. This declaration is remarkable in every aspect, in that the registration office must have known that Wilhelm Krohn was already declared dead on 30 November 1942. Also in 1942 his name had been removed from the appropriate address book. Indeed it was truly another example of a generally pursued practice, by which registration offices cleaned up their records without admitting to what happened to all those citizens who died at the hands of the Nazi government.

On 7 March 2011 by decision of the Hansestadt (free city) Lübeck engineering department Günther-Quandt-Platz in Schlutup was renamed Wilhelm-Krohn-Platz in honour and remembrance of a single ordinary individual, who demonstrated human compassion and courage in the face of state sanctioned violence and terror.

Photo Credits

[1] Krohn Family Private Collection The photo of Wilhelm Krohn in uniform can also be found in the Staatsangehörigkeitsakte (Stadt- und Landamt , No. 1828, Anhang 4)

[2] Krohn Family Private Collection

[3] From "Wie kommt der Fisch in die Dose?", Gemeinnütziger Verein Schlutup

[4] Prisoners' Files of the Lübeck-Lauerhof Prison LAS 357.2.No. 1687

[5] Certificate of Accommodation and Employment in Prisoner's File LAS 357.3 No. 1687

[6] Certificate of the Lübeck Secret State Police Border Guard Commission in Prisoner's File LAS 357.2 No. 1687

Index of Resource Material other than Standard References

- Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck (AHL), Meldedatei, Meldekarte: Wilhelm Krohn
- AHL, Lübecker Bürgerrecht-Kartei, Staatsangehörigkeitsverzeichnis (Citizenship Directory) Verzeichnis (Directory) 1903, Mai bis 1930, Seite 479, Nr. 1828, Stadt- und Landamt Nr. 1828: Aufnahmeurkunde, Strafenverzeichnis und Landesarchiv Schleswig, Gefangenpersonalakte der Justizvollzugsanstalt Lübeck, Abt. 357.3 Nr. 1687
- (Hansestadt Lübeck and Neighbouring Communities Address Book 1939)
- Interview mit dem Enkel Rainer Krohn, Lübeck am 11.03.2010 (Interview with Rainer Krohn, grandson of Wilhelm Krohn, in Lübeck on 11 March 2010)
- Correspondence of the Geheime Staatspolizie Grenzpolizeikommissariat Lübeck (State Secret Police Border Police Commission Lübeck) from 23 September 1940 LAS 357.3 Nr. 1687
- Excerpt from the lists of those transported to the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, page 393, in respect to the 30 September transport, specifically No. 9, Krohn, Wilhelm 19.04.75 33229 Sch.
- Excerpt from the 30 September 1940 Lists of those transported to the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp
- Oranienburg Records Office Death Registry 2 December 1940 Entry No. 4051/1940
- The Berlin Altglienicke Cemetery Registry of Cremains in Common Grave
- (Correspondence of the Hansestadt Lübeck dated 28 February and 32 March 2008) Christian Rathmer, 2012 Translation. Glenn Sellick and Martin Harnisch, 2012