



Installation at the location

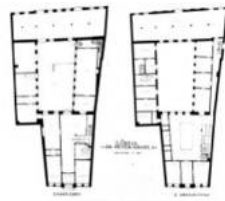


Große Petersgrube - The Strawczynski family

The Strawczynski family lived at Große Petersgrube 21 in one of the first-floor flats looking to the back.



Große Petersgrube 21



Floor plans of ground and first floor

David Strawczynski was born in Olcowka/Poland on 13 May 1895. His wife Jüris Elsa, née Baer, came from Lübeck. Her birth date was 11 June 1892. Their two sons Fred and Leo were born in Lübeck on 5 September 1923 and 16 October 1924.

A former neighbour's daughter remembers Herr Strawczynski as a smallish stocky man, who worked as a brush maker in a factory, but also made brooms and brushes from home. Possibly he worked for Norddeutsche Bürsten Industrie Albert Asch & Co, Moislinger Allee 39/41. Frau Strawczynski was short and stout. It was believed that she was a "Half-Jew". Those who knew both of their sons remember them as tall boys, who had been a few years older than the neighbours' little daughter and had nothing to do with her.

Fred and Leo can be seen in the class photograph of the Jewish religious school. Leo is also in the second photograph of pupils of the religious school, which his friend, the present Abraham Domb-Dotan, had taken.



Pupils of the Jewish Religious School Lübeck, 1935



Inscriptions of the installations:

HIER WOHNTE
DAVID STRAWCZYNSKI
JG. 1895
FLUCHT 1939 BELGIEN
DEPORTIERT 1942
AUSCHWITZ
ERMORDET 19.8.1942

HIER WOHNTE
JÜRIS ELSA
STRAWCZYNSKI
GEB. BAER
JG. 1892
FLUCHT 1939 BELGIEN
DEPORTIERT 1942
ERMORDET IN
AUSCHWITZ

HIER WOHNTE
FRED STRAWCZYNSKI
JG. 1923
FLUCHT 1939 BELGIEN
DEPORTIERT 1942
AUSCHWITZ
ERMORDET 4.9.1942

HIER WOHNTE
LEO STRAWCZYNSKI
JG. 1924
FLUCHT 1939 BELGIEN
DEPORTIERT 1942
AUSCHWITZ
ERMORDET 4.9.1942

installation
2 August 2007



A group of pupils of the Jewish Religious School in front of the Lübeck Synagogue, 1938

As Polish citizens the Strawczynski family was to be deported to Poland like other families in October 1938, the so-called "Polenaktion" (Polish Campaign). After their unexpected return (The train was stopped by the authorities in Berlin and sent back) they were put under massive pressure by the Gestapo in the following months always being told to leave Germany. They were always being threatened with deportation or being sent to a concentration camp if they did otherwise. That convinced David Strawczynski and his wife to flee to Holland and leave their two sons behind.

There is a small passport photograph of Leo from that time, which he had given to his friend before his departure to Palestine. On the back Leo wrote this dedication:

"Lübeck, January 1939 / Something to remember your friend by. Leo Strawczynski"



Passport photograph of Leo

In August 1939 his friend learned from the letters of both his aunts Bertha and Dora Lexandrowitz, "that the Strawczynskis are in Amsterdam and that the children hope to go to England very soon. Then the parents will follow. They have really crossed the border without a visa and are living with friends." (p.57) This sentence in the letter is hinting at the possibility of a Kindertransport (children's evacuation), which however, never materialized for Fred and Leo. It says in another letter from January 1941: "Today I went to a belated Chanucka celebration. Siegfried Fisch and Fred Strawczynski played along nicely. Fred and Leo have received good news from their parents." (p.116)

At that time the two boys took part in vocational training at the Hamburg training centre for Jewish youth and lived with an aunt in Hamburg.

In March 1941 Leo and his elder brother Fred could at last travel to their parents who now lived in Brussels, which had in the mean time been occupied by the Germans. On 11 August 1942 the family was deported from Mechelen/Belgium to Auschwitz. The names of all four family members are on transport list II of 11 August 1942 under the numbers 205, 209, 229 and 230.



Transport list for the deportation from Mechelen to Auschwitz on 11 August 1942



Transport list for the deportation from Mechelen to Auschwitz on 11 August 1942

Elsa Strawczynski was killed in Auschwitz probably immediately after their arrival.



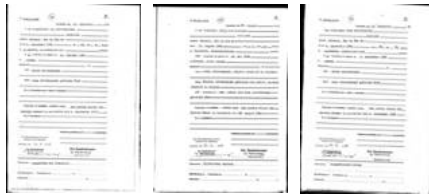
Auschwitz-Birkenau

In the death register of the so-called Stammlager (main camp) Auschwitz one finds the death certificates of David Strawczynski and both his sons.



Gate to Stammlager (stalag)
Auschwitz

With bureaucratic exactness their vital statistics data were typed into the forms. David Strawczynski's cause of death was supposed to be "sudden cardiac arrest". His sons, 18-year-old Leo and 19-year-old Fred were supposed to have died of "pulmonary oedema with pneumonia" and "pleurisy" on the same day, exactly at the same hour, on 4 September 1942 at 22:35 hours. The doctor's name Kremer, notorious for his so-called "experiments," leads one to some horrible assumptions, as to what could have been done to the two boys.



Death certificate of
Leo Strawczynski

Death certificate of
David Strawczynski

Death certificate of
Fred Strawczynski

References in Addition to Standard Reference Materials:

- Adressbücher und Meldekartei der Hansestadt Luebeck (Address and Registration Records of the Hanseatic City of Luebeck)
- Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck, Staatliche Polizeiverwaltung 8, 25, 109, 110
- Buch der Erinnerung, Die ins Baltikum deportierten deutschen, österreichischen und tschechoslowakischen Juden, bearbeitet von Wolfgang Scheffler und Diana Schulle, München 2003
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- Joods Museum van Deportatie en Verzet, Mechelen: Transport lists
- Kugler-Weimann, Heidemarie / Peperkorn, Hella (Hrsg.): "Hoffentlich klappt alles zum Guten ", Die Briefe der jüdischen Schwestern Bertha und Dora Lexandrowitz (1939 - 1941), Neumünster 2000
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- Museen für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte der Hansestadt Lübeck (Fotoarchiv)
- Panstwowe Museum Oswiecim, Death Records Auschwitz
- Albrecht Schreiber, Zwischen Davidstern und Doppeladler, Illustrierte Chronik der Juden in Moising und Lübeck, Lübeck 1992
- Staatsarchiv Hamburg 362-6/10 Talmud Tora 46, Sa 1252 und 1253

- Yad Vashem, The Central Database of Shoah Victims Names
- Conversations with contemporaries of the Strawczynski family

Heidemarie Kugler-Weimann, 2008

Translation: Martin Harnisch and Glenn Sellick, 2010

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