

Kurt Mosler – A Successful Banker

Kurt Mosler was born on October 16, 1890, in Berlin. His parents were Max Mosler (born November 26, 1856) and Lydia Merseburger (born May 6, 1858). Kurt had an older brother, Hans, born on April 23, 1889. The Jewish Mosler family lived at 16 Am Botanischen Garten in Berlin-Lichterfelde.

Kurt completed a commercial apprenticeship at Dresdner Bank and spent some time in England before World War I. During the war, he served in the German Navy. He married Frida Goldstein, who was born on September 15, 1891, in Berlin. The couple had two children: Traud, born on September 8, 1919, and Werner, born on November 23, 1922, in Berlin. From 1919 to 1924, the Mosler family lived at 4 Lortzingstraße in Lichterfelde.

Kurt Mosler had a successful career in banking and insurance. In 1923, he was able to purchase a plot of land at 24 Rothenburgstraße in Steglitz, which extended to Waetzoldstraße. He built a villa-like semi-detached house, which the family moved into in 1925.

In 1929, according to the Berlin Commercial Register, Kurt Mosler founded a bank and insurance company at 25/26 Königstraße in Berlin-Mitte, but the business was liquidated starting January 1, 1934. In 1930, he was listed in the Berlin address book under “bank commission business” at Klosterstraße 29.

Loss of Wealth and Status

Kurt Mosler also worked as a freelance broker. He became a partner at Max Scheftel, a belt factory located at 39 Alexanderstraße, but left the partnership in 1935. In the same year, Kurt Mosler went to the Netherlands to establish a new life, but this venture was unsuccessful.

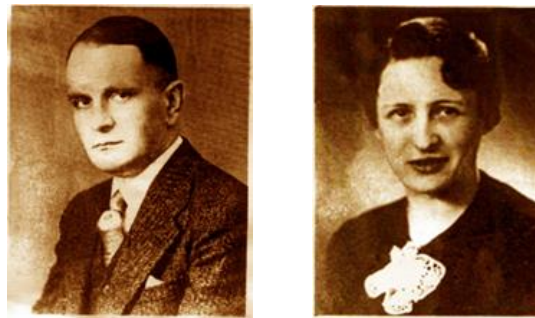
Upon his return to Germany in 1936, he took out a mortgage on the property at 24 Rothenburgstraße. The loan was partly used for renovating the house to create more rental opportunities and partly as start-up capital for a printing business called “Norm-Kleindruck-Vertrieb,”

which was listed in the Berlin address book at 33 Wilhelmstraße in 1937 and 1938.

In 1938, he was pressured under threat of concentration camp imprisonment to sell the printing business—Kurt Mosler never received the purchase price.

In 1938, two additional mortgages were placed on the Rothenburgstraße property. These served as security for the “Reich Flight Tax” owed to the German Reich for Kurt Mosler’s mother, Lydia, and Frida’s widowed aunt, Gertrud Goldstein.

In 1939, Kurt Mosler was forced to part with his property on Rothenburgstraße. The estate was sold significantly below value in April 1939 to Max Notz (a butter, cheese, and milk products importer and wholesaler) and master baker Georg Oberbach. On October 1, 1939, Kurt and Frida Mosler had to vacate the house permanently. Along with Kurt’s mother Lydia, they moved into a three-room apartment at 4 Prinzregentenstraße in Wilmersdorf. Valuable household items—furniture, carpets, paintings, and dishes—were stored at the Kopania company at 91 Bergstraße in Steglitz.



Kurt und Frida Mosler © Familienbesitz

Frida Mosler, née Goldstein

Frida Goldstein was born on September 15, 1891, in Berlin to a Jewish family. Her parents were Siegfried Goldstein (born February 25, 1856, in Berlin) and Rosalia Abel (born July 7, 1856, in Berlin). Frida had a brother, Hans Goldstein (born May 15, 1895).

After marrying banker Kurt Mosler, her children Traud and Werner were born. When the family moved from their rented apartment in Lichterfelde at 4 Lortzingstraße to the newly built villa at 24 Rothenburgstraße in Steglitz in 1925, Frida’s mother-in-law Lydia moved in after her husband’s death. Three generations of the Mosler family now lived under one roof.

Soon, however, Frida and her family began to feel the growing antisemitism under Nazi rule. From 1933 onward, the financial situation in her husband’s banking business deteriorated significantly. Their children, Traud and Werner, particularly suffered from exclusion at school. As a result, Frida and her husband Kurt began contemplating emigration from Germany early on. After the failed attempt to establish themselves in the Netherlands, their focus shifted primarily to saving their children.

Escape of Traud and Werner to England

Traud attended the Auguste Victoria Lyceum in Steglitz from 1930. Instead of being able to graduate and study mathematics and sports education, she was forced to leave school in 1936 because she was Jewish. A regular vocational training was also no longer possible for Jewish youth. As a result, Traud could not complete an apprenticeship as a seamstress, which she wanted to pursue instead, and attended a half-day sewing class in a Jewish atelier, which was also dissolved in 1938. Eventually, she helped in her father Kurt’s printing office, until December 1938, when the business was forcibly handed over to the new owner.

On March 14, 1939, Traud left Germany with her fiancé Gerhard Chaim and moved to Leeds, England.

Werner switched to the Paulsen Gymnasium in Steglitz in 1933. In 1935, his father Kurt took him to Amsterdam, where Werner lived with a cousin of his mother. He attended a Dutch language course and passed the entrance exam for school attendance but was not admitted to a high school. As the father’s financial situation worsened, father and son returned to Berlin in the summer of 1936.

Continuing regular schooling was no longer possible for Werner. He therefore attended the Jewish Kaliski-

Waldschule in Dahlem until Easter 1938. Afterward, he financed the fees for intensive English courses at the Kaliski School with small jobs, such as repair work and delivering water fleas to pet stores.

On July 27, 1939, Werner left Germany with the help of English Quakers. In England, the refugee committee initially placed him on a YMCA training farm near Henley-on-Thames.

Starting a new life in England was not easy for Traud and Werner, and they were constantly worried about their parents in Germany.

Deportation Deportation and Murder of the Parents

After their children's successful escape, Kurt and Frida Mosler remained in Berlin. They could not provide the required sponsorship or the 100 dollars needed for a visa to leave Germany. Perhaps they did not want to leave Kurt's elderly mother Lydia behind in Berlin. Lydia died in July 1941.

On March 2, 1943, Kurt Mosler was deported to Auschwitz.

On March 4, 1943, Frida Mosler was deported to Auschwitz.

Both were murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Surviving in England

Traud initially survived by working part-time as a domestic worker for various employers, which was poorly paid. She then took on sewing jobs in Leeds, which paid slightly better. In 1943, Traud moved to London, where she worked as a seamstress in a clothing factory.

In 1944, she married her second husband, Leopold Heller. They had two children together. Later, she became involved with the Leo Baeck Lodge and a Jewish retirement home.

Traud died on January 5, 2006, in London.

Werner was placed on various farms and eventually in a home in Leeds within months of his arrival. From May 1940 to October 1941, he was interned on the Isle of Man as an "enemy alien."

After his release, Werner went to London, where he took on various jobs to make ends meet. From 1944, he worked as a representative in the book publishing business, earning a good income. In 1946, Werner started his own printing business.

Two marriages failed, but in 1959, he married Anne Marie Gross, and they had two children together. In 1998, Werner gave an interview as a witness for Steven Spielberg's Shoah project.

Werner died on April 27, 2000, in London.

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Kurt und Frida,
Traud und Werner

