

Familie Höchster

HIER WOHNTE
HERMANN HÖCHSTER
JG. 1881
DEPORTIERT 1941
RIGA
ERMORDET NOV. 1943
AUSCHWITZ

HIER WOHNTE
BERTHA HÖCHSTER
GEB. WERTHEIM
JG. 1889
DEPORTIERT 1941
RIGA
ERMORDET NOV. 1943
AUSCHWITZ

HIER WOHNTE
ERWIN HÖCHSTER
JG. 1910
FLUCHT 1938
SÜDAFRIKA
ÜBERLEBT

HIER WOHNTE
TRUDE HÖCHSTER
VERH. WETMORE
JG. 1920
FLUCHT 1939
ENGLAND
ÜBERLEBT

HIER WOHNTE
ILSE HÖCHSTER
JG. 1922
ZWANGSARBEIT
1941 BERLIN
DEPORTIERT 1943
ERMORDET IN
AUSCHWITZ

MARION HÖCHSTER
VERH. SOLOVEI
JG. 1936
FLUCHT 1937
SÜDAFRIKA
ÜBERLEBT

HIER WOHNTE
HELMUT HÖCHSTER
JG. 1927
DEPORTIERT 1941
RIGA
ERMORDET NOV. 1943
AUSCHWITZ

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The Hoechster family

known as the "Bluems"

Address: 22 Lahntal Street / formerly: House #8

The two oldest children of this family of six were able to emigrate and survived. Hermann Hoechster, his wife, and the two younger children were deported and murdered.

Herz "Hermann" Hoechster

September 3, 1881 in Roth – probably November 1943 in Auschwitz

was the son of Isaac and Settchen Hoechster. His son Irwin Isaak "Erwin" was born to his first wife, Mathilde Hoexter from Roth, daughter of Herz Hoexter and Thekla Baer. Mathilde died in 1916. In 1919 Hermann Hoechster married Bertha Wertheim from Hatzbach.

Hermann earned his living selling fabric and notions in a sales room in his house and as a peddler. He traveled to the surrounding villages with a wagon pulled by a Great Bernard, making him well-known in the area.


Fond of singing, he took part in the men's choral club Liederkranz founded in 1891. Later he was even made an honorary member.

As the community elder, he was responsible for the affairs of the Jewish Community in Roth from 1926 until his deportation in 1941. Hermann Hoechster is described as having been a friendly, generous, and helpful man, if also as having been particularly strict in religious matters.



Hermann Hoechster





As the community elder he had to witness the destruction of the synagogue and to organize the details of the forced sale of the property in February 1939. He was able to save a small Torah scroll, however, and Sabbath services were consequently held in his living room. He was arrested following the Night of Broken Glass and held for a time at the concentration camp in Buchenwald. After returning he never spoke with his family about this traumatic experience.

Bertha Hoechster, neé Wertheim

November 7, 1889 in Hatzbach – probably November 1943 in Auschwitz

was the daughter of Aron and Rosalie Wertheim. She and Hermann had three children, Thea Trude, Betti Ilse, and Manfred Helmut. Together with her husband and son she was deported to Riga on December 8th, 1941. They were transported from there to Auschwitz on November 2nd, 1943, and murdered that same month.



The Hoechster Family ca. 1937



Bertha Hoechster

Manfred Helmut Hoechster

December 15, 1927 in Roth – probably November 1943 in Auschwitz

was the youngest child of Hermann and Bertha. When the school in Roth closed its doors to Jewish children in 1937, he had only finished half of his schooling.

He moved to the Jewish Orphanage (Israelitische Waisenanstalt) Roederbergweg 87, Frankfurt am Main, in May 1939. What school he attended there is unknown.

He spent his vacations with his parents in Roth, and his parents traveled to Frankfurt for his bar mitzvah in December 1940. A year later, on December 8th, 1941, he and his parents were deported to the ghetto in Riga, then to Auschwitz on November 2nd, 1943. He was murdered that same month.

Betti Ilse Hoechster

October 15, 1922 in Roth – last recorded March 1, 1943 in Auschwitz

was the second daughter of Bertha and Hermann Hoechster. She also attended the school in Roth. In September 1940 she moved to Roederbergweg 87, Frankfurt, the address of the Jewish Orphanage, probably to work. In February 1941 she and 120 others were taken to Berlin and forced to work in munitions production at Siemens.

She went back to Roth for a few days in September 1941, which was probably the last time she saw her parents.

A final correspondence between her and her brother Erwin has been preserved from the beginning of 1943.



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Manfred Helmut Höchster



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Betti Ilse Höchster

The Red Cross letter was sent to the Siemens Camp, Kommandanten Street 58-59. Her brother wishes her a happy twentieth birthday and asks about their parents. She answers that she is doing well and that their father has work. It is very unlikely, however, that she still had any contact with her parents, who were deported in 1941. Ilse Hoechster was herself deported to Auschwitz on March 1st, 1943, when we lose all trace of her.

Thea Trude Hoechster

February 15, 1920 in Roth – September 7, 1999 in St. Louis

was Hermann and Bertha's oldest daughter. She attended the school in Roth. In 1937 she wanted to accompany her sister-in-law Henni to South Africa, but she was not permitted to enter the country. That same year she moved to Frankfurt, where she began her apprenticeship as a seamstress. She lived at Bockenheimer Anlage 2.

On June 12th, 1939, she emigrated to London. She was the last of the Jews from Roth who was able to escape. The Hoechster family had a relative in the British capital who organized a place for her as a nanny in the Jewish Goldschmidt family.



Herbert Roth and Ilse Hoechster
on Erwin Hoechster's motorcycle



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Thea Trude Höchster

Trude was very homesick and greatly concerned for her family. In her despair she wrote to the British monarch about their troubles in Nazi Germany.

Fully unexpectedly, the family received entry clearance, which would have allowed them to immigrate to England, but this shimmer of hope arrived too late. England declared war on Germany, destroying all possibility of bringing the family together.

Trude met Erwin Wuerzburger from Hoechst near Frankfurt in her relatives' boarding house. They married in 1940, and their first son Stephen was born in 1945 in London. They emigrated to the US in 1946, and settled in Gary, Indiana. Their second son Michael was born there.

The family took on the name Wetmore. Trude took care of the household and raising their children, while also working outside the home to add to the family's income. Living out the Jewish faith meant a lot to her. She ran a kosher household, attended Sabbath and Holiday services, and was active in the Jewish community. Throughout her life she observed the Jewish-Hessian traditions that she had grown up with in the village. She continued to speak German, maintained her love for nature, and kept a vegetable garden.

Born in 1920, she told her descendents, including four grandchildren, about the happy experiences of her youth in Roth before the Nazis came to power. She died on September 7th, 1999, in St. Louis.



Erwin Hoechster, standing back row third from the right

Irwin Isaak “Erwin” Hoechster

September 6, 1910 in Roth – June 31, 1985 in Johannesburg

was Hermann's first son and the only child that he had with his first wife, Mathilde Hoexter. Mathilde became ill with tuberculosis, and Erwin remembered not being allowed to go near his mother's sick bed. He was six when his mother died. He attended the school in Roth and then completed a three-year apprenticeship as a draper with Aumann and Rapp in Frankfurt. He then took up his trade in Roth.

Erwin was well-integrated with his peers in the village, acting and directing in the local theater group. He not only played soccer in the Sport Klub Roth, he also supported the club financially. He was very fond of his motorcycle, which impressed everyone generally. The older Jewish children in the village got their pictures taken on it. Since the motorcycle helped him get around faster, he was able to reach customers who lived further away. He was politically active, supporting the social democrats and publicly speaking out against the Nazis.

He fell in love with Henriette (Henni) Walldorf (October 8, 1912), daughter of Moses Moritz Walldorf and Dina Thekla from Ebsdorf. They married in 1936. Soon after, he had to flee the country because his political activities and Jewish heritage made life in Germany too dangerous for him. He followed his brother-in-law, Max Walldorf, to Johannesburg in South Africa on September 9, 1936. He was the first Jew from Roth who managed to flee. Shortly thereafter, his wife bore their child, Marion, in the house where she and her parents were being held, Haspel Street 17 in Marburg.

Henni and Marion were able to join Erwin in April 1937. Erwin and his brother-in-law ran a repair shop for sewing machines and Erwin also served in the army for a short time. Later he became a successful sales representative. He was very critical of the South African apartheid regime, clinging to his political ideals and democratic and moral principles. He even encouraged his only daughter, Marion, to emigrate to the US with her family. Erwin Hoechster died shortly before his 75th birthday on June 31st, 1985, in Johannesburg.

Marion Solovei, neé Hoechster

December 20, 1936 in Marburg

was the last child born to a Jew from Roth in Germany. When she was only a few months old, in April 1937, she and her mother fled the Nazi regime, emigrating to South Africa. As her parents' only child, she grew up loved and sheltered, but at the same time in the shadow of the Holocaust and the deaths of nearly all of her relatives.

She married the diamond trader Norman Solovei in 1959. He had been born in Riga in 1926 and moved with his family to South Africa in 1934. While living in South Africa, Marion gave birth to her son Howard in 1962 and her daughter Robyn in 1963.

Marion and Norman emigrated to the US in 1964. Her father Erwin had encouraged them to emigrate because it was important to him that his grandchildren have the chance to grow up in a free democracy.

In the US, Marion Solovei studied psychology and became licensed as a marriage, family, and child therapist in 1976. The part-time program of the United States International University enabled her to get her doctorate in psychology in 1987, and she received her license in 1989. She worked as the clinical director of a non-profit organization for over 35 years before opening her own practice. She was married to Norman for over 50 years when he died suddenly in 2011. She has three grandchildren.

