

Machine translation

Johannes Walter Hörniss was born on August 2, 1894 as the son of master watchmaker Nikolaus Hörniss and his wife Agnes, née Reuter, in Halle a.d.Saale. Nothing is known about his ancestors.

From April 1st, 1904 to September 30, 1909, Johannes attended secondary school for boys and received excellent grades in all subjects, including English and French. On October 1st, 1909 he began his apprenticeship as a businessman at the August Mann company in Halle a.d.Saale and attended vocational school. After completing his apprenticeship in 1912, he initially continued to work in this company, before moving 1914 to the company C. Faust jun. in Stralsund and finally to the Ferd. Flinsch GmbH.

Right at the beginning of the First World War in 1914, Johannes Hörniss volunteered at the age of 20 as a soldier and was deployed in the 203rd Infantry Regiment. In October 1915 he was wounded and transferred to a reserve regiment. In July 1917 he was reactivated and served on the so-called "Palestine Front" in the 7th Army under General Erich von Falkenhayn. He fell ill with malaria and was treated in Haidar Pasha's local hospital. There he worked even after the cease-fire in October 1918 and came to Berlin in March 1919. He was awarded the "Iron Cross" and another medal because he had served his fatherland throughout the war.

On May 12, 1923, the Catholic Johannes Hörniss, who at that time lived in Uhlandstr. 49 in Berlin-Wilmersdorf, married **Hedwig**, who was born in Berlin on February 7, 1895 as the daughter of the Jewish businessman Adolf Lewin and his wife Frea, née Bein.

The Hörniss couple lived at Xantener Strasse 4. Johannes worked for various telephone companies, including Philips Deutschland GmbH, which was founded in Berlin in 1926 as a subsidiary of the Dutch Philips group. From 1935 to 1939 he was employed by Kempinsky & Co.

On December 31, 1923 the first daughter Helga Frea was born and on October 22, 1926 the second daughter Lore. The parents had baptized their two daughters on July 6, 1934 in the Catholic parish church in Halle a.d. Saale. In addition, in view of the increasing repressions of the National Socialist regime against Jews, Johannes and Hedwig were married according to the Catholic rite on February 13, 1939 in the St. Ludwig Church in Wilmersdorf. However, these commitments to the Catholic faith did not protect the family from further persecution by the National Socialists and their racial fanaticism.

After elementary school, Helga attended the Königin-Mathilde-Schule, a high school for girls in Wilmersdorf, for a good four years. Her school-leaving certificate, dated October 11, 1938, states that she was leaving school "in order to prepare for a career." This was probably intended to disguise the fact that despite the Catholic baptism she was considered a Jewish student and was no longer allowed to attend a public school.

Lore also attended the Königin-Mathilde- Schule and also received a certificate in the 2nd class on October 11, 1938, which did not contain any corresponding remarks, but said that this certificate had to be presented "at the start of classes, on X. 20., signed by the legal guardian". However, she will also have been excluded from further school attendance, because after the pogrom night of November 9th/10th, the "Law against the Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities" already passed in April 1933 was amended to the effect that from November 15, 1938, Jewish schoolchildren were completely forbidden to

attend public schools, "...since no German teacher ...can be expected to give school lessons to Jewish children".

The parents were well aware of the threat posed by the National Socialist regime of violence, especially since the daughters - despite their Catholic baptism - were viewed by the Nazis as "first-degree half-breeds" in accordance with the Nuremberg Laws of 1935. So they separated from their daughters and both girls were sent to England with one of the last children's transports in 1939 and could be saved. They were trained as nurses. Johannes and Hedwig Hörniss tried to get visas to flee to Argentina and had already paid the so-called "Reichsfluchtsteuer" in April 1939 - in vain.

The house at Xantener Straße 4 was turned into a so-called "Judenhaus" by the National Socialists in 1938/1939, into which many Jewish people were forcibly admitted after they had been driven out of their traditional homes. The Hörniss family also had to accept "subtenants" in their apartment. At least 22 people were deported from this house. Before their deportation, the Hörniss couple themselves were driven out of their apartment at Xantener Strasse 4 and forcibly moved to a so-called "Jewish apartment" at Düsseldorfer Strasse 65.

Johannes and Hedwig Hörniss wrote a last message to their daughters on February 24, 1943. Presumably the next day they had to present themselves at the first Retirement Home of the Jewish community in Berlin at Große Hamburger Straße 26, which the National Socialists misused as a "collection camp". From there they were driven to the Moabit freight station on February 26, 1943 and deported to Auschwitz with the so-called "30. Osttransport" - together with 900 other Jewish Berliners and 200 people from other places.

Hedwig Hörniss was murdered on March 14, 1943. There is no exact date of death for Johannes Hörniss.

Research: Cindy and Tim Stammers (son of Helga), Carol (daughter of Lore) and Robert Froud
Biographical compilation: Gisela Morel-Tiemann according to their information.

Sources:

- Census of May 17, 1939
- Berlin commemorative book of the Free University
- Memorial Book of the Federal Archives
- Berlin address books
- Deportation list: [30. Osttransport \(Statistics-des-holocaust.de\)](https://www.statistics-des-holocaust.de/) No. 1009 and 1010
- Documents and photos owned by descendants
- [Palestinafront - Wikipedia](https://www.palestinafront.de/)