

Ludwig Ebert

Ludwig Ebert was born in Fürth in Bavaria on 22 June 1867. In 1885 he moved to Osthofen, where he married Philippine Hirsch in 1891, whose parents ran a shoe shop in Osthofen. It is likely, that in the early years of their marriage the two lived in the adjoining house at Osthofener Hauptstraße 34 before they later moved into their stately home at Schwerdtstraße 13. They had four children.



The family Ebert during the First World War.
Picture: Henry Ebert

Since 1886 Ludwig Ebert worked as a company officer with statutory authority in the “paper and cardboard lid factory” built by Gustav Rumpel in 1872 at Ziegelhüttenweg 50 (today 38) in Osthofen. In addition to his work there as an authorised officer, Ludwig Ebert and his son Arthur owned the “Ludwig Ebert & Son Paper Mill” at Jahnstraße 32 in Osthofen.

Ludwig Ebert was a dedicated Osthofen citizen. For some time, he was the first chairman of a regional health insurance company (the AOK). He had also been a member of the managing board of the synagogue in Osthofen since 1925 and was a local businessman. Additionally, he was politically active as a member of the DVP (Deutsche Volkspartei) and a member of a lodge. The old-established Jewish family was a thorn in the new National Socialist rulers’ side. Thus, a report from 1937 said: *“When he was still living in Osthofen, the Jew Ebert knew how to gain sympathy from poor people through financial support. But as a political member of the German People’s Party, he also supported the left-wing parties and was temporarily imprisoned in Osthofen in 1933.”*

Nothing is known about the circumstances of his imprisonment in the Osthofen Concentration Camp, which was located exactly in the paper mill where Ludwig Ebert had worked for over 40 years. Shortly after his release, he left Osthofen in March 1934 and moved to Kriemhildenstraße 20 in Worms, to a house where other Jewish families lived. His wife Philippine had died in 1933.



Ludwig Ebert with his son Arthur, 1937.
Picture: Henry Ebert

A few weeks before the November pogrom, Ludwig Ebert tried to flee to Switzerland. On 10 October 1938 he was picked up by the Swiss immigration authorities in the Basel Baden railway station and sent back. *“Allegedly a stay at a health resort in Switzerland”*, was noted in the border post’s protocol. Ludwig Ebert had to return to Germany. On 13 December 1938 he gave notice of his departure from Worms and moved to Frankfurt. Before 1938, he had already sold his paper mill in Osthofen well below its value.

He left Germany on 5 May 1939 and moved to Amsterdam. But he was not safe there either: After the Dutch government surrendered in May 1940, the German occupiers took strict measures against Jews, and two years later the mass deportation of the Jewish population to the extermination camps in the east began. In 1941, Ludwig Ebert was stripped of his German citizenship. The difficult circumstances under which he must have lived in the Netherlands can only be guessed. In the beginning of 1944, he was arrested and interned in the Westerbork transit camp, from where he was deported to Auschwitz on 23 March 1944. There he was murdered three days later, on 26 March 1944.

His daughter Martha and her family were murdered in Auschwitz as well. Three of his children survived the Holocaust abroad.

Today, a memorial stone in the Jewish cemetery in Osthofen commemorates Ludwig Ebert.