

Menges, Franz: Alfred Neumeyer. Online: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz71592.html> (zuletzt 26.06.18)

Neumeyer, Alexander: Alfred Neumeyer (1867-1944), Richter und Vorsitzender des Verbandes Israelitischer Kultusgemeinden in Bayern bis 1941. In: Treml, Manfred / Weigand, Wolf (Hrsg.): Geschichte und Kultur der Juden in Bayern. Lebensläufe, München / New York / London / Paris 1988. S. 235–243.

Neumeyer, Alfred: Erinnerungen. In: Schopflocher, Robert / Traub, Rainer (Hrsg.): „Wir wollen den Fluch in Segen verwandeln“. Drei Generationen der jüdischen Familie Neumeyer – eine autobiografische Trilogie. Alfred Neumeyer; Alexander Karl Neumeyer; Imanuel Noy-Meir. Berlin 2007. S. 17–258.

#### BILDNACHWEIS

Alfred Neumeyer, undatiert. Das Foto befindet sich heute im Stadtarchiv München, BSB München/Bildarchiv. Es ist abgedruckt bei: Reister, Helmut: Auf den Schultern von Riesen. In: Jüdische Allgemeine vom 03.08.2015. Online: <https://www.juedische-allgemeine.de/article/view/id/22667> (zuletzt 26.06.18).

## ALFRED NEUMEYER

\* 1867 – MÜNCHEN, KEMPTEN, LANDSHUT, AUGSBURG



My name is Alfred Neumeyer and I was born on 17<sup>th</sup> February in Munich. My father was called Leopold Neumeyer and worked as a merchant for textiles. He was born in Oberdorf in Württemberg and originated from a moderate family. Nevertheless, he managed to evolve a simple shop for textiles into a noble business together with his two joint partners. Thanks to the life of my father my parents were able to raise me in a good house and cared for me a lot. I was also able to attend good schools. After I graduated from the Maximiliansgymnasium in Munich I studied law in Munich and Berlin from 1886 until 1889. Afterwards I worked as a trainee in several courts and in a district exchange. Finally, in October 1893, I started my first real job as a prosecutor in Kempten.

Shortly before that, I married Elise Lebrecht, who is originally from Ulm and the daughter of a highly respected leather manufacturer. I really enjoy her company because she is smart, understanding, polite in the acquaintance with other and socially committed. We complete and support each other in every possible way. She gave birth to four children of whom three died too early, unfortunately.

My first son Hermann was very sensitive and often felt restricted in his freedom. This is probably why he took his own life after reading, "Die Leiden des jungen Werther"<sup>1</sup>. My wife and I had a very hard time after that. Our daughter Judith died after giving birth to her second child. She was our only daughter and we couldn't get over it. The last painful loss was the death of our second son, Ernst, who died at the age of 12 after an accident. Subsequently, there is only my third son, Alexander left. I love him very dearly and try to protect him as good as I can. Despite all those strokes of fate, I try to remain strong. My job helped me a lot in these times since I am trying to earn justice for all people.

After some time, I was transferred from Kempten to Landshut, where I worked as the third prosecutor at the district court. I really enjoyed those first years of my job because I had a lot of contact to my clients and to other officials. In 1898 I returned to my hometown as a district judge and I was able to climb the ladder until I worked my way up to a councilor at the district court. **Landgerichtsrat**. I was appointed first prosecutor at the district court in Augsburg in 1910 and I probably had the best time of my professional life there. I carried out diverse tasks, which were accompanied by great responsibility, but I was able to perform them on my own. Only during the war, my profession was a bit harder to carry out. When the war ended in 1918 and a new government was formed in Munich, I was once again transferred back to my hometown to be a councilor at the higher district court. **Oberlandesgerichtsrat**.

I was very happy about my return because I was able to spend more time with my friends and with my father, who was already 90 years old. I wanted to say goodbye properly. In the following years, I was also eager to carry out my job straightforward. It happened a lot that I told my family about really complex cases and I stayed up nights to think about just solutions. In the year 1929, I reached the highest possible point of my professional career: I was now called councilor of the Bavarian Regional Court.

<sup>1</sup> Very important piece of work of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, which deals with the suicide of a young man

I like to spend my free time outside in the middle of the nature and of course especially together with my family. This is why on Sundays we often drive out into the surrounding area of Munich. Particularly when I am hiking, I can enjoy the silence and the beauty of the forests and the Bavarian region. When Alexander was still a child, I used to take him with me and tried to share some of my life experiences with him. Prior to the war I enjoyed travelling together with my family through Germany as well as other European countries. When the war broke out, we spent the summer holidays in a residence of my friend Wilhelm Merck at the lake Tegernsee. Willi made it possible that I was able to meet the Nobel prize winner of physics Max Planck, whom I have been friends with ever since. Although my circle of friends consists of many high-ranking personalities, I never forget the origin of my father and I try to treat every human being with courtesy and an open mind. During my free time I like to have people around me, and this is the reason why I enjoy being invited to reception, which happens a lot fortunately. Another dearly loved hobby of mine is reading. I try to educate myself further by reading Sophokles,<sup>2</sup> Kant<sup>3</sup> and Goethe, but I also enjoy reading short novellas or historical books. Additionally, I am able to play the piano and I am interested in arts, which is why I spent a lot of my Sundays in the Alte Pinakothek<sup>4</sup>.

My Jewish religion is as important to me as my family or my job. My uncle was already engaged and committed to the wellbeing of the Jews of Munich and he inspired me to do the same. I am proud to be Jewish and my views can be seen as liberal. My sense for justice longs for the improvement of the legal situation of the Jews in Bavaria. Since 1813 the laws have not been amended or changed and therefore, they are extremely outdated. I advocated for the change of the status quo in a passionate exposé in 1913. Because of the disturbances of the war the terms of my exposé were prevented but the attention of the public was raised. After the war I talked to representatives of the Jewish communities in Bavaria and we agreed on a reorientation. Only two years later we were able to celebrate the foundation of the association of Bavarian Israelite communities. **Kultusgemeinden** I observed with pride the further developments since Jewish associations were also founded in other German states according to our example.

We had started a revolution, which marked a turning point in the Jewish history. Since I am one of the founders, I have been the head of the associations ever since. Additionally, I am the leader of around 10.000 Jews in Munich, which isn't always easy. With my sense of understanding and my ability of assertiveness, I am able to solve almost all the problems of those involved. Justice always is my highest priority. I treat every Jew the same way, no matter if orthodox<sup>5</sup> or liberal, old-established or of Ashkenazic<sup>6</sup> origin. Luckily, my superiors at the court were very understanding for my tiring spare-time activity. If there are antisemitic offenses, which happens not as often in the city as in rural areas, I am able to help the affected Jews due to my good connections to the Bavarian authorities.

## LITERATUR

<sup>2</sup> Ancient poet (497-406 BC.)

<sup>3</sup> Person of the Enlightenment and philosopher (1724-1804)

<sup>4</sup> Arts museum in Munich

<sup>5</sup> Very religious Jews with strict religious regulations

<sup>6</sup> Jews from Eastern Europe (Poland or Russia), who immigrated to Bavaria