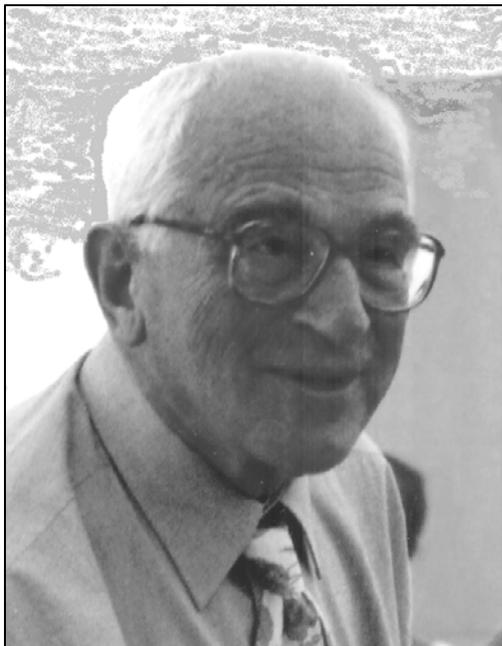


Lutz F. Haber (1921–2004)



Ludwig Fritz Haber, always known as Lutz, was born in Berlin, Germany, on July 21, 1921. He was the youngest son of Nobel laureate (1918) Fritz Haber and his wife Charlotte. With his sister Eva, he attended the Kurt Hahn Schule Schloss Salem junior school when he was quite young. Because of the problems that Jews were encountering in Germany, Fritz Haber decided it would be safer for the children and their mother to live in Switzerland. As a result they moved to Lausanne and both children continued their education at the École Nouvelle where Lutz quickly learned French.

In 1933, Fritz Haber resigned as Director of the Institute of Physical and Electrochemistry at Berlin-Dahlem and left Germany due to the Nazi regime's anti-Semitic policies (the institute was renamed the Fritz Haber Institute after his death.) He was offered a laboratory in Cambridge University by Sir William H. Pope and moved to London in the autumn of 1933, but because he was suffering for some time from heart disease and, fearing the English winter, he traveled to Switzerland to be with his family. He died in

Basle, Switzerland on January 29, 1934 before he was able to start work at Cambridge. Later that year Lutz and his mother and sister came to live in London, where Lutz went to St. Paul's School (an English public school) where he quickly learned another language—English. He excelled at St. Paul's and passed all the necessary exams needed for acceptance to the London School of Economics.

Shortly after Lutz began his studies at the London School of Economics (1938), World War II broke out. Due to the bombing in London, the London School of Economics was evacuated from central London to Peterhouse (a Cambridge college). Because of his German nationality Lutz was considered an 'enemy' alien and was interned on the Isle of Man (1940) and then taken to Canada. His sister Eva emigrated to Kenya just before the war and did not return to England for many years. Eventually, Lutz was found to be a 'friendly alien' and was returned to England. In due course, he was repatriated and completed his B.Sc. in economics at the London School of Economics. Upon graduating, he accepted a job with the Manchester Oil Refinery Limited at Trafford Park, Manchester. Lutz continued his education and received his master's degree in economics at the London School of Economics in Cambridge.

At the end of the war, Lutz returned to London and received his doctorate at the London School of Economics (1949), and then obtained a job with Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI). He became a British subject and married Pamela Alice Browne on May 12, 1949. Because of his fluency in several languages he was able to undertake original research in economic research in France and Germany. His first book *The Chemical Industry During the Nineteenth Century: A Study of the Economic Aspect of Applied Chemistry in Europe and North America* (1958, 1969) was based on his doctoral thesis and published while he was working for ICI. He was recruited and hired by Esso Chemicals, and also started work on his second book *The Chemical Industry 1900–1930: International Growth and Technological Change* (1971). Lutz Haber's first two books are still considered to be standard studies of the chemical industry.

In the early 1970s, he was offered a job by the National Economic Development Office (NEDO). NEDO provided the staff for research and assistance to the National Economic Development Council presided over by the prime minister or the chancellor of the exchequer to discuss matters of national economic policy in the United Kingdom. There he worked happily until he was invited to become

Reader in Economic History at the University of Surrey (1973). While he was there he started *The Poisonous Cloud: Chemical Warfare in the First World War* (1986). In preparing this book he visited war veterans, the battle fields in France and even got a colleague to gas him to find out what it felt like. In the introduction to another book about his father by Dietrich Stoltzenberg (*Fritz Haber: Chemist, Nobel Laureate, German, Jew* (2004) Lutz discussed his father's dilemma as director of the German gas warfare program, remarking that "the responsibility for chemical warfare [during World War I] rested on his [Fritz Haber's] shoulders, and despite the passage of years it has never been lifted."

Lutz traveled abroad frequently in search of material for his books. He wrote his books in his spare time while working full-time. His books have now been translated into Japanese by Masaya Sato, and published in Japan.

In 1988, Lutz Haber received the Dexter Award for his contributions to the history of chemistry, particularly his books on the historic aspects of the economic development of the chemical industry in Europe and North America.

In his retirement Lutz became very interested in the rich history of Bath, England. He spent considerable time working with local historians researching notable individuals from Bath and was closely associated with some of its fine museums. He wrote a short history of Haile Selassie's stay in Bath during World War II ("The Emperor Haile Selassie I in Bath 1939–1940," in *Bath History*, Vol III (1990)) and also the history of the Holburne Museum in Bath ("The First 75 Years of the Holburne Museum," in *Bath History*, Vol V (1994)).

Lutz sometimes appeared to be a rather austere person whose work was his life, but there were other sides to his character. He enjoyed good food, good wine, and good company, and frequently made special journeys, almost pilgrimages, to find them. In the company of close friends, he would display a dry sense of humor that was sometimes ironic but never sarcastic. Sadly many of his most faithful friends died before him. Lutz Haber was a quiet and loving individual, a stimulating intellectual, and a faithful husband, father, and brother to his wife Pamela, stepson Colin Bright, and sister Eva (Haber) Lewis. He died on February 19, 2004 at his home in Bath, England.

Sources

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Photo courtesy of Mrs. Pamela A. Haber.