

My History

from 1711 to June 17, 1943

קלונ־מס בן יעקב
יששכר בן קלונ־מס

אברהם בן יששכר

יששכר בן אברהם

נפתול־י בן יששכר

יששכר בן נפתול־י

נפתול־י בן יששכר

Sept 26th 1907
Abraham Kolb
Lillian Abraham Kolb

The *James Kolb*
Kolb
Family

Bernard Kolb Hugo Kolb
Herbert Kolb Helen
Emma Kolb Ernst

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Historic background of the 18 th century | 1 |
| Jud Kallmann in Sugenheim | 4 |
| The Kahls book | 6 |
| The Baerlein Kolb story | 16 |
| Hayum Fleischmann and Magdalene Kalb | 17 |
| The Kolb family | 21 |
| The Bear family | 22 |
| My father Berhard Kolb | 23 |
| Bernhard Kolb in active duty | 25 |
| Bar Kochba sport club | 31 |
| World War I started | 33 |
| The Hessdoerfer family | 54 |
| The Enslein family and my mother's story | 55 |
| Aunt Paula's story | 56 |
| Erna's story | 63 |
| My story | 68 |
| The bicycle adventures | 73 |
| The Fun Voyage to the Isle of Juist | 77 |
| The start of the Nazi area | 85 |
| Uncle Siegfried's coat | 91 |
| Three train ride without tickets | 101 |
| The distructuon of the Main Synagogue | 109 |
| My trip to Berlin August 1938 | 118 |
| November 9, 1938. My father's story | 121 |
| November 9, 1938. My story | 126 |
| The new room January 1939 | 134 |
| Starting wood working | 135 |
| Hella's big disaster | 139 |
| Back to Nuremberg | 149 |
| The first deportation from Nuremberg | 152 |
| The second deportation | 160 |
| The third deportation and Erna's wedding | 172 |



My father, Aunt Paula, Hella, Erna and me in Norderney July 1928

The year was 1700. William III and Mary, the daughter of James II, were on the throne in England. Louis XIV, the 62 year old "Roi Soleil", was king of France and Peter I, (the Great) was Czar of Russia. He had just returned two years before from Amsterdam and Zaandam, where he worked as a ship's carpenter and had just discarded the old Russian calendar on the first of January. Leopold I was emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

At that time there lived a Jewish man with the name of Kalonymus, in the little village of Kaubenheim in central Franconia, near the imperial town of Windsheim. Like all the other Jews in the village, he was a cattle trader. Kalonymus or Callmann, as they called him in the village, got married, probably in the early years of the 18th century, to Jacobina, the daughter of another local Jew named Loewen. Loewen, who probably was at least 20 years older than Callmann, was married to Kehla. Besides Jacobina, they had two sons, Jacob and Beerlein. It is possible that Jacobina was the oldest child and might have been named after the Loewen's father.

The first son of Callmann was born in 1711 and was named Jacob. This was in the same year when Louis, the Dauphin of France, the son of Louis XIV, died. It is possible that before or after Jacob, girls were born, but there are no records of this.

January 24, 1712, Frederick II was born in Berlin, the third son of Frederick William I and Sophie Dorothea of Hanover. He was the heir to the throne of Prussia, as the two older sons of the king had died before Frederick was born. He became Frederick the Great later in life and was just about one year younger than Jacob Callmann.

Louis XIV of France died on September 1, 1715 and his 5 year old Great-grandson Louis became Louis XV, king of France. His grandfather, Louis Duke of Burgundy had died on March 8, 1712. Louis XV, the great-grandson of Louis XIV, was the third son of his father, the Dauphin Louis, who had died in 1711.

On May 13, 1717, Maria Theresia was born in Vienna, the oldest daughter of Emperor Karl VI of Austria.

In the Year 1722 a second son was born to Jacobina and Callmann and was named Behrla. There are different spellings of that name, including Berlein and Beerlein. He was my Great-great-great-grandfather.

In 1728 a third son was born and was named Hirsch. This was just one year before on May 2, 1729, the princess Sophie Augusta of Anhalt-Zerbst was born in Stettin, who on September 1, 1745 was married to Peter Freodorowitch, the future Tsar Peter III. On July 9, 1762, she became Tsarina Catherine II (The Great).

On May 31, 1740 Frederick II, became King of Prussia after the death of his father Friedrich Wilhelm I.

When her father died on October 20, 1740, Maria Theresia became Empress of Hungary, Bohemia and Grand-duchess of Austria. She had married in 1736 and upon taking the throne, made her husband, Franz Stephan from Lorraine, a co-regent.

On December 16, 1740 Frederick, after just 6 months as King of Prussia, started the first Silesian war against Austria by marching his troops into Silesia. Jacob Callmann was 29 years old, but might not have heard about the war, as Silesia seemed very far away. Jacob tried to move to a larger town about five miles north called Sugenheim. As Jews were not permitted to move freely from one place to another, he wrote a request to the office of the Baron Von Seckendorff for permission to settle in the Market town. He was going to get married to a Jewish girl from Sugenheim who was the only child of the local Jew Simon. I believe that Simon also sometimes was mentioned as Shimel.

On June 9, 1744 the office in Sugenheim asked the local administration of Kaubenheim, which was 4 miles distant in Kuelssheim, where the administration office was, for a report about the Jew Jacob. The answer was as follows, which is translated in the legal language of the day.

Lenkersheim, June 12, 1744

Highly Esteemed Noble and Vesser Especially High-honored Sir, Official Caretaker!

I herewith send you the answer I owe you for your letter from June 9. The son of Callmann from Kaubenheim was, during the time of his protection by this court here, exact to us in all his doings and besides very loyal and helpful. He also was not less exact in his duties to his Lordship. Instead of him I rather loose two other Jews we have here under our protection. As it is quite hard to estimate the wealth of Jews who are involved in open trade, it is equally impossible to guess the wealth of Jacob Jew. For his little house, when he sells it, he should get about 300 Rheinisch Guilders. Whenever he sells his inventory and immovables I will make him tell me under oath, as he then has to pay us the usual "Leaving Tax". As soon as this is done I will communicate with you. In the meantime you will be in my highest esteem yours very truly, very loyal

Gh. Killinger

Kuelssheim June 12, Anno 1744

Back to Simon or Shimel in Sugenheim. There were two brothers who lived in Castell, a small village about 13 kilometers northwest of Sugenheim. The name of one brother was Frommel the other one was Schmuel. Frommel had 12 children. His third son was called Shimel. This Shimel must have had a house in Krautostheim, as he also had the protection there from the Barons of Schwarzenberg. I believe later on, probably at the time when he got married, he moved to Sugenheim and there came under the protection of the Barons of Seckendorff. As Shimel had only one child, it is possible that his wife died very young and it seems he never got married again.

Jacob was permitted to move to Sugenheim and received the Baron's protective letter. On July 4, 1744, the following document was written in the office of the duke:

Resolution:

Therefore it should be acknowledged that the repair of the dwelling is necessary, the money to be paid to the community is very little. Therefore the Jew has to be told, that he should get along with the community. One should not give more trees to him than is absolutely necessary.

July 4, 1744

signed Seckendorf

M: (Markt Sugenheim) July 4, 1744

Submissive Report:

The newly accepted, protected Jew Jacob Kallmann reported respectfully, that he can not move into the lately bought house from the heirs of Braunberger, before this would be repaired. Also this is only a very small house he definitely has reason to add to its length. He wants to build a new wall 30 feet long, as the old house is really only 17 ½ feet wide.

6 feet extension

23 ½ feet wide

30 feet long for this attended venture, he needs 25 building-tree-trunks, as follows

12 trees half-measure fir

12 small trees }

1 oak for columns and door steps

As it is a community right for owners of dwelling, that these trees are given free of cost, he asked the honored Lordship for the same.

There is now no question that the building needs to be repaired, as the back gable was torn down. It is known that it has to be mentioned for what reason the wood is needed.

As far as it is permissible, that the wood is given free from the community forest, in case one has to do patch or repair work, the subjects has to pay 6 Kreuzer for a new construction for fir trunk, but 12 Kreuzer to the community clerk.

The question is now, should it be considered a new building, as the addition would be 6 feet, and the roof beams have to be taken off. Now, if it should it be considered a new building the Jew Calmann would owe the 6 Kreuzer, Fraenkisch. I would like to ask the Lordship, how should I consider the wood now, and do I have the permission to give the Jew the building wood?

*With sincere devotion to your barony Excellency,
your faithful subject and servant
Johann Anton Erhardt*

At the end of August 1744, Frederick started the second Selisian war.

On December 12, 1746, Berlein the second son of Callmann also wanted to move to larger town, Sugenheim, and after having requested to move, went with his father Callmann to Sugenheim. A document was written up for the sale of the house of Shimel, the father-in-law of his brother, who probably by that time lived alone in the house, as it seems his daughter and son-in-law Jacob had moved to their own house in Sugenheim. The deed was written in the office of the Barons as follows:

On December 12, 1746, we have signed and agreed on the accord that Calman Jew from Kaubenheim buys for his son Behrla, from Shimel Jew from Sugenheim, his until now owned house for two hundred Rheinisch guilders with the condition, that he pays one

hundred Rheinisch guilders on Behrlein's wedding day, regardless if that will be sometimes in the future or right away. The other one hundred guilder, to complete the full price, are payable in the next three years, annually 33 fl. 20 Kreuzer. The first installment shall be paid one year after the marriage, so that the third will finish the depths three years after the wedding. Calman Jew made the distinctive condition that Shimel Jew, as the seller has to pay the money for protection, taxes, local community taxes, or anything that might come up which has to be paid, as long as Berla is not a groom. But as long as the Shimel Jew has to pay for all these expenses, he also has the right to use the house for his own pleasure.

*Calman Jew from Kaubenheim, the buyer
Shimel Jew from Sugenheim, the seller*

Actum Markt Sugenheim December 12, 1746

They came, Simon Jew, from here and Berlein Jew from Kaubenheim with his father Callmann and state as follows:

The above named Simon Jew wants to sell his house, which he owned until now, the way it is. Also, the Pfinzlein, (probably the meadow) which belongs to it and which is located between Martin Schimmel and Georg Boonreuther the Older, as well as the ordinary cabbage bed which he started a year ago. Also included is everything that is riveted or nailed on, in the village or in the field. Included are all the rights for Berlein Jew and he will give to him the payments in easy terms, in the beginning 200 guilders Rheinisch to pay in cash. The rest of 180 guilders Rheinisch, also in cash, which is deposited at the official's office, where the deed shall be written.

Act. et Super

2.fl 24 Kreuzer for the deed and letter of protection

---- 16 Kreuzer for protocol charges

---- 16 Kreuzer for the promises

----- 6 Kreuzer for the Lordship

3.fl 2 Kreuzer

Hasel January 23, 1747

*Deed and
Protection
for
Berlein Judt*

I, Christoph Wolfgang Philipp von Seckendorff, Lord Certificate of Markt Sugenheim, of Dutzenenthal, Drutenheim, Ober-and-Untergau, Unteraltenberheim and Egenhausen herewith announce to everyone concerned and to everyone who has to know about it, that the sale and resale was finalized and registered correctly between Simon our protected Jew until now from here, and Berlein Kallmann son of a Jew from Kaubenheim. Not only that the sale was consented to but the buyer Berlein Jew was taken into my protection. I also decided the sale is correct and in force. Included in this transaction of the house formerly owned by Simon Jew, who lost our protection, is the Pfinzlein belonging to the house, which is situated between Martin

Schimmel and Georg Boonreuther the Older, and who last year planted a cabbage bed. Also it includes everything that is immobile or nailed to the house. It is a Fiefdom of mine and therefore subject and taxable by me as follows:

In case of sale, trade or other exchanges every tenth guilder as a house-tax. As a marriage-tax every twelfth Guilder. Besides this annually and every year specially

1 Florin 12 Kreuzer taxes

15 Kreuzer interest

15 Kreuzer before Mardigras

1 Florin 15 Kreuzer tax on money

1 Florin 20 Kreuzer G'd's money

and this all has to be paid by law and right. This way I accept the sale of the house as for the benefit of the community. Further more it has to be made available for listing for the Royal and Electors quartermaster the same way as the rest of the community. Berlein Jew brought as a down payment 200 Florins Rheinisch and has to pay another 180 Florins Rheinisch for the complete payments of the house according to the sales agreement.

As the cash payment was already received, the buyer Berlein Jew becomes now owner of the house and will also get my protection. For this he will pay annually 5 Florins Baronly protection and a special Thaler for New Year; also a whole Guilder so called Goose-money he owes every year on Martini. Besides this, he shall pledge allegiance to me his undisputed Lord and Master and therefore shall not seek judgment of anybody else but me and my officials, without my special consent. He shall not submit to any other court of law. Instead he shall support me in all my ways and shall help to protect me of all dangers. The consequences of not following these rules would be a severe Barony punishment.

1. He and his family shall not do any business or trade on any Feast-Sun-or Holidays, neither with Christians or Jews. Instead he shall be law-abiding and lawful all the days and shall celebrate these days in the same manner as he celebrates his Sabbath.

2. He shall not take one Pfennig interest, nor shall he take unrealistic interest, nor shall he take an unrealistic profit from Christians but he shall make his living in honest trade and shall live in a way that nobody has reason to complain about him.

3. He also has to pay to the pastor from town the so called Jurim Stohle, like all the other Jews and usual interest as a New Years gift. In general he shall follow all the rules of all my subjects and all the duties the Jews have, exactly and annually. He also has to swear off the usual Jewish oath.

This document is now valid and in power for me and my progeny and I sign this deed and Protection certificate with my name and affix my Baronial seal on it to no damage to me and my progeny.

Written for Berlein Jew for him to follow.

So done in Markt Sugenheim December 12, 1747

Behrlein married Madel Samuel (Schmuel) from Castel after December 1746. Schmuel was the brother of Frommel; therefore Madel was a cousin of Shimel. Her father had died sometime before. Behrlein and Madel's first child was Terzela who was born between 1748 and 1751. Then came a son in 1752, Madel gave him the name Samuel, after her father. Later on, after 1813, he took the last name Gutmann. The third child, a daughter, was named Roestel and in 1757 or 1763 another son, Abraham was born. All the children were born in the house No. 80. Behrlein probably died between 1800 and 1802, as only the youngest of Abraham's sons was called Beerlein.

In 1752, 13 Jews, most of them with families, lived in Sugenheim. Some belonged to the outer castle, some to the inner castle:

Jews belonging to the outer castle:

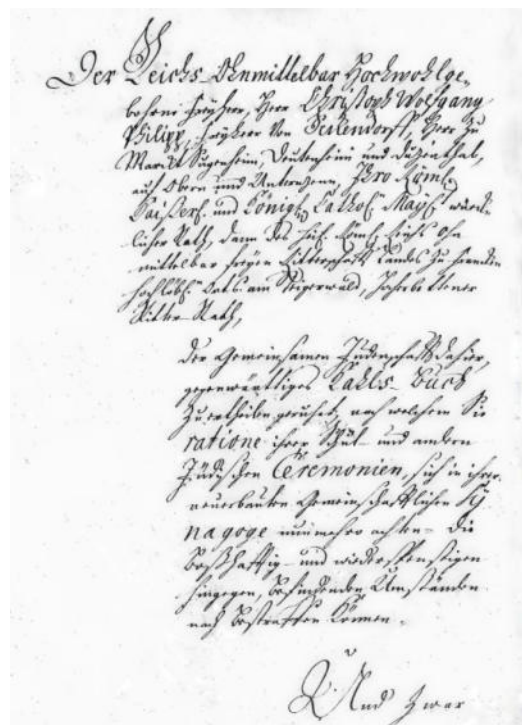
Jacob Callmann
Simon
Joel
Simon Goetz
Beerlein Jacob
Moses Gustel

Jews belonging to the inner castle:

Eysig
Loew
Gump
Loeser
Josef
Beerlein Callmann
Hirsch

On May 16, 1755 the Barons von Seckendorff gave to the Jewish community some land without payment, for building a Synagogue. They only had to pay each year 4 Reichstaler property tax. The synagogue was inaugurated on August 7, 1756.

On August 29, 1756 Frederick II of Prussia started the Seven year war by crossing the border of Saxony with 60,000 men to attack the Austrian empire in Bohemia.



December 30, 1756 the Barons of Seckendorff had a document written, which announced the laws and bylaws of the Jewish congregation of Sugenheim. This document was called the Kahlsbuch. It reads as follows:

Inasmuch as the Jews here in our town of Sugenheim are not yet provided with a fixed code of laws; as a result of which much quarreling and confusion have developed among them and both of the local lords have been annoyed several times, therefore both of the jointly ruling lords, namely the Right Honorable Imperial Immediate Baron, Sir Christoph Friedrich, Baron of Seckendorff, Lord of Markt Sugenheim, Unterzenn, Egenhausen, Uper-and-Lower-Altenbernheim, Rosebach, Rockenbach, Schornweisach, Weingartensgreuth and Ebnet, Knight of the Royal Prussian

large black eagle medal, His Highprincely Excellency from Brandenburg Onolzbach Prime minister, Privy Council president, Country judge of the Imperial Country court, Castle Duchy of Nuremberg, also high officer of the cities and towns Uffenheim, Mainbernheim, Prichsenstadt, Castell and Stephanberg, and also

The Right Honorable Imperial-Immediate Baron Sir Christoph Wolfgang Philipp, Markt Sugenheim, Deutenheim and Duzenthal, of Upper-and-Lowerzen, his Roman Majesty, Right Council, also of the holy Roman Empire especial free Knighthood of Steigerwald, highly honored knight, council, who is willing to present to the entire community presently written Kahlsbook, in which they will be guided on how to conduct themselves and during their Jewish ceremonies, in their newly, collectively erected synagogue, but ones will be punished severely, as follow:

1.

Monday and Thursday there will be service in the schul.

As one must go to schul every Monday and Thursday, every one who remains at home will be punished with a fine of 1 Kreuzer for the communal treasury.

2.

Punishment for whoever does not go to Schul on Jom Kipur Kothen.

If the head of the family, does not come to schul, and cannot bring proof that either he was sent somewhere by our gracious Lordship, or had something out of town, which could not be postponed; he shall be punished, either with quarter pound of wax for the communal treasury, or shall not be called to the Torah for one month.

3.

The chazzan shall call the man for service regularly.

Whenever there are services, the chazzan (cantor) has to call the people regularly, so that nobody can have an excuse of ignorance. Should the chazzan forget on the particular days, he shall be fined ten Kreuzer the first time. But should he forget more often, he should be fined fifteen to twenty Kreuzer in the communal treasury, or he might be dismissed.

4.

*Punishment for anyone who will talk
about unimportant things in the schul*

No man shall say one word between Borach Shammer and Shemono Ezra. He shall not talk to anybody, but he shall recite the prayers seriously. After that prayer one may say something, if it is absolutely necessary. But Tforim Bedelim (unimportant things), are forbidden under the threat of a fine of one quarter pound of wax for the communal treasury.

5.

*On Jomim Neroim (High holidays) no congregant
is permitted to lead at the prayers.*

*On the high holidays, none of the congregants is permitted to lead the service.
This is supposed to be done by a cantor, except, if the entire congregation is in
favor of it.*

6.

Penalty for quarreling in the schul

Anybody who quarrels, insults and verbally abuses another in the schul, has to pay twenty Kreuzer fine, half to the Lordship and half to the treasury of the congregation.

7.

Penalty for, pulling, hitting or pushing in the schul

Should one or the other pull, hit or push each another in the schul, then each one of them has to be fined, without fail, one guilder, half to the Lordship and half to the treasury of the congregation. Should the two heads of the community, or the treasurer of the congregation ignore the matter, for reason of friendship, than each of them will be fined one pound of wax, if the other members bring the partiality to attention.

8.

The calling to the Torah in the schul

On Monday and Thursday, two Levites and one Israelite, however on Saturday three Levites and three Israelites are called to the Torah, after each other, according to their rank. But on Rosh Hashana, Succoth, Shavuot, Pesach as well as Yom Kippur and on the day which is called Matnes Jad the calling up will be distributed in the Jewish congregation as follows: Each time a Levite and an Israelite together. The normal procedure of calling to the Torah will be interrupted.

9.

About calling to the Torah of strangers

If a strange Jew comes to our town, he, as the youngest, (newest) will be called up as the last one, after all the members. Besides, if one should insult another because of being called up to the Torah, he should pay a fine Knas of quarter of a pound of wax as a Hectisch communal punishment. Should any embarrassment have occurred, then the punishment prescribed in article 7 should be meted out.

10.

The calling up to the Torah of guests.

If a traveling poor man or a guest happened to be in the schul, then he will be called up to the Torah as a courtesy. Because a member has to be left out, this one is going to be Chiaf, and he has the right to be called on the next weekday or on Sabbath.

11.

Calling up because of marriage or minyon

If somebody becomes a Bar Mitzvah, is a groom before his wedding, is given a special mitzvah to his bride, being a godfather at a circumcision, or his wife rises from childbed, it is his right to be called to the Torah the next Sabbath or holiday.

and

so that nobody gets this honor for nothing, he has to contribute.

12.

What must be contributed to the treasury

He has let them recite a blessing (Mishaberach) and has to pledge to give a gift for the upkeep of the building. He has to pay immediately after Shabbas, one

quarter pound of wax. Similarly, the Balsegen, (one who helps the cantor at the reading of the Torah) has to be called to Torah during the week and on Sabbath when he relinquishes that job. Under the threat of the ban, he is not permitted to call himself to the torah as long as he is the Balsegen, unless he gets the permission from all of the entire congregation.

About Mitzvah.

13.

The first bid for an honor has to be two Pfennig and then increased by the congregants. He who offers the most, gets it and whatever he promised he has to pay, if made in the presence of the whole congregation. Should he, however not pay, than the two communal leaders and the treasurer can put him into the ban. The honor which one buys on Simchat Torah for the entire year has to be paid in six weeks or he gets into the ban.

14.

The punishment for quarreling about the bookstands.

If a couple of congregants are quarreling about a stand, or even start fighting, each of them will be fined one guilder, half for the Lordship and the other half for Jewish community. Besides, the bookstands of the ones who were fighting, will be put into the back of the schul facing each other and kept there for one year long.

15.

Fines for moving the bookstands.

The one who dares maliciously to move the bookstand of another and because of that gets in the way of another who wants to take the three steps backward, has to be fined one quarter pound of wax, to prevent disorder from occurring in the schul. Should, however, that fine not be a warning to the congregant, and should he continue in his malice in spite of it, he is to be put into the ban.

16.

About the initiation fee.

Every non native Jew, who moved here, or will move here, after the synagogue was built, and will get the protection in the future, has to pay eighteen guilders, Rheinisch. A local Jewish son, four guilders, and a local Jewish daughter, eight guilders Rheinisch has to be paid in cash for the benefit of the whole community.

17.

Concerning the communal treasurer.

A different communal treasurer will be taken every year according to his rank. He will be free of showing an accounting of his income and expenses, as any member of this community will trust him. He will act according to his Jewish conscience and not defraud the treasury.

The power of the Barnossim and treasurer.

The treasurer with the two Barnossim (heads of the congregation), will have the power, given to him by this Kahlsbook to order the fines and the ban. They can be assured of full assistance from the local government, in case of anyone's obstinate behavior. Also...

18.

...the Barnosssim have to assist the treasurer with the collection of the moneys, and not allow arrears to pile up. If necessary to put the debtors into the ban, or make them pay in any permissible manner.

19.

Hiring of a Chazzan

When hiring a cantor, the voices of all the members and all those who have children to be taught, have to heard. They will have to vote for a capable person who is also a qualified teacher and is able to understand thoroughly the ritual slaughtering of animals. He must also show where he comes from and show proof of his past conduct and be able to show proper documents of his knowledge.

20.

*The wages of a Chazzan and
information about children.*

The cantor's wages are made up of three parts as follows:

one third has to be paid by the ones to be taught

one third by taxation of wealth of the members of the congregation

one third, a fixed amount by each head of the family.

A boy has to go to school until thirteen, a daughter until eleven years old.

A Chumash-child (5 books of Moses) has to go every day for one hour,

a Tephilla-child (prayer book) one half hour,

and an Aleph-Beth child one quarter hour to learn.

21.

Paying the Chazzan.

Every head of a family, who lives in the town, if he already has a child, is expected to contribute as much to the cantor, as if he would have a Aleph-Beth child, even though it is still too young to be sent to school.

22.

Discharging of a Chazzan.

A cantor cannot be discharged by the request of only a few of the congregants who dislike him. Inasmuch as he can only be hired by the majority of the congregants and those who have children in school, he can also only be dismissed the same way.

23.

The local Jews estimated on the fifth of September of this year, that the taxation is as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Eyssig (will pay taxes on)</i> | <i>2.600</i> |
| <i>Jacob Callmann</i> | <i>3.000</i> |
| <i>Meyer Jacob</i> | <i>1.800</i> |
| <i>Gump</i> | <i>900</i> |
| <i>Loew</i> | <i>1.400</i> |
| <i>Laesser</i> | <i>600</i> |
| <i>Beerlein Callmann</i> | <i>900</i> |
| <i>Simon Goetz</i> | <i>200</i> |
| <i>Nathan Lazarus</i> | <i>400</i> |
| <i>Nathan Salomon</i> | <i>100</i> |
| <i>Joseph</i> | <i>150</i> |

Hirsch 350 guilders .

This arrangement should last for a three year period. In case one or the other would have an inheritance, he will be assessed again. If he had gains through his trade in these three years, this will not be included in this assessment. Because of the Lordship's agreement, it will not be changed.

24.

Matzah flour.

The expenses for milling the matzah flour, and the cleaning of the mill have always been levied in a way that each one has paid the same amount. As this was an unjust ruling, it will, in the future, be changed, so that each one will be taxed by the amount he uses.

25.

Membership fee for the schul.

The amount necessary for the upkeep of the schul, in the future will be met, half by estimated wealth, and half by each head of the family.

26.

Meal ticket for guest.

As on festivals and holidays, the guests are not permitted to travel, every day meal tickets have to be supplied. If any of these guests are sick, and cannot be sent away, they are lodged with the cantor. The food however has to be supplied by a different member, every day. He will get one of his meal tickets back from the can.

Their funeral.

If one of these guest should die, and has nothing for his funeral, the expenses have to be borne by the communal treasury.

27.

Distribution of the meal tickets.

The meal tickets are going to be levied as follows: Eight for every head of a family and two for every hundred guilders capital, as only half of it is assessed. The Barnossim (elected officials of the schul) and the treasurer are responsible for the right amount of tickets being assigned to each. The Chazzan has to assign them properly and impartially, so that the poor do not have too much of a burden and the rich not too little. He should be fined a pound of wax to the communal chest for each time he is convicted of wrong doings.

28.

Purim.

On Purim, by a fine of one guilder to the Lordship, nobody should dare to run around masquerading in foolish costumes, and carrying candles or torches and

Simchat Torah.

On Simchat Torah, the Jews and Jewesses shall not have fun by throwing things. (throwing fruits at the children). They would be fined with a quarter pound of wax for the treasury and one half guilder punishment to the Lordship.

29.

Business on Sundays and holidays.

Under the threat of a fine of one guilder punishment from the Lordship, none of the Jews should dare, on Christian Sun-feast and holidays, to go to the house of a

Christian, either before or after the service, or wait for them in the street and induce them under the pretext of a good profit. On the contrary, he should, just like the Jews rest on their Sabbath, let the Christians celebrate their Sunday and holiday quietly.

30.

Prayers for the Lordship in the schul.

It is the duty and obligation for every subject to pray for his Lordship, therefore the whole Jewish congregation shall offer the prayers for the honorable Lordship, which are approved by them.

31.

Punishment for obstinate people.

In case anybody should venture to oppose to the regulations, the Barnossim and the treasurer should reprimand him and warn him about the consequential punishment. If he does not obey they should place him in the ban.

32.

Publication of this Kahlsbook.

In order that none of the households may have an excuse of ignorance, the Barnossim shall right now and every year on Pentecost, have the Chazzan read this Kahlsbook in the schul, word by word, very clearly without any deviation.

In witness whereof and for further authentication, the honorable, gracious, baronial rulers have graciously deigned to confirm this communal constitution with their esteemed signature in their own hand and with the hereditary Baronial seal.

Markt Sugenheim December 30, Anno 1756

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Signed: Christoph Friedrich</i> | <i>Signed Christoph Wolfgang Philipp</i> |
| <i>Baron of Seckendorff</i> | <i>Baron of Seckendorff</i> |
| <i>(seal)</i> | <i>(seal)</i> |

Two younger members of the congregation, Joseph Hirsch (he might be the son of Behrlein's brother Hirsch) and Baerlein Jacob, (he might be a nephew of his brother Jacob) got passes from the Baron to go to Fulda in Hessen to collect funds for the building of the synagogue.

On May 1, 1756, Behrlein Calmann, who was for a long time Barnes (head) of the congregation, dedicated a Torah to the Jewish community of Sugenheim. Around the Etz Chaim (the disk on the wooden handles of the torah) was a little strip of parchment with the inscription that Madel the wife of Issachar Baer ben Kalonymus Halevi, had sewn the parchment sheets together, with thread spun by her.

Madel died on November 1785, two years after the United States signed the peace of Versailles on April 19, 1783. Behrlein married a second time, a widow named Hinelein Samuel, who had a son. She was probably the widow of his wife Madel's brother Baruch.

On August 17, 1786, Frederic II, the king of Prussia died.

Abraham Behrlein, the youngest son, applied for the letter of protection from the Baron, and on March 27, 1787, probably just before his wedding to Reizlein Beer, the daughter of Jeremias from Huettenheim.

Behrlein paid for the Letter of Protection for his son Abraham. It read as follows:

*Letter of Protection for Abraham Berlein Jew
from Markt Sugenheim.
March 27, 1787*

*Tax: 24 Frankonian Guilders
instead of Ducats for the Office of the
High Barony Lordship's
Accounting Office
4 Guilders instead of Ducats
for writing this Letter of Protection.
28 Guilders Frankonian.
The 22 of June 1778*

We, Friedrich Christoph Carl Ludwig "Friedrich Carl" Alexander Friedrich Wilhelm "Christoph Albrecht" Franz Paul Christoph " Jacob Wolfgang Carl Wilhelm "Johann Carl Christoph "Cherglins Joseph Carl Franz Sigmund Ludwig " Carl Friedrich Hubert Leopold, all the Barons of Seckendorff as owners of the Inner castle the Feudal estate of Markt Sugenheim with the required documents and declare publicly with this document:

As we were informed by our subjects, that our communal Protected Jew, Berlein Callmann, here from Markt Sugenheim, wants to marry off his second and youngest son named Abraham Berlein and transfer to him half of his, at this time owned house in the Maas, which is under our high-and-low jurisdiction and loyal to us; and pay us annually:

15 Kreuzer Frankonian before the 1st of lent, as well as

1 Guilder 20 Kreuzer Frankonian as a messenger pay, as well as

1 Guilder Frankonian ordinary Christmas tax, as well as any other tax which might come up. Not to forget that in case of a death, according to the "Head-right", the best cattle in his stable has to be given, or in not doing that 8 Guilder Frankonien in gold instead. Further more in case of sales as well as trading every 10th guilder, and in case of a marriage every 20th guilder has to be given as hand-earnings.

In case of inheritance 16 Kreuzer Frankonian, a so called profit tax, also considered hand-earnings. Besides that, in case of moving away, there will be an after-tax of every 10th guilder which is booked correctly and compiled in the books of inventory. It will be written in the book of the Maas, that half of the house will be his property after the old Berlein Callmann died, but in the meantime until this happens, Berlein can live there free and without rent, he also wants to mention with added subordinately request for gracious ratification about the transfer of the half house and would grant his youngest son the protection, and as this house used to be double occupied in the old days, to grant the bidder his request.

We announce that we shall take the approved Abraham Berlein Jew under our protection, that he as well as his future wife and all of his family can enjoy our shelter and protection. For that, as he is now permitted to live here, he shall show his gratitude and loyalty by paying yearly and every year, five guilder Frankonien, protective money, one guilder 36 Kr. Barony New Years

money and 28 Kr. Goose money, besides the annual taxes before the deadline of Martini. As long as Abraham Berlein will enjoy our protection he will accept us as his lawful government, and for that reason will not take any order from anybody else but us or our appointed officers. He will not submit to any other court and in general he shall be aware of our benefit and by all means shall prevent us from any kind of damage or loss. In case he contravenes he will be severely punished and it would mean the immediate loss of our protection therefore we advise him to follow these points:

1. Neither he, Abraham Berlein, nor anybody of his family shall pursue any kind of business or trading of any kind on the Christian Sun-or Holidays. Neither with Christians nor Jews, but instead he shall celebrate these days in the same manner as he celebrates his Sabbath.

2. He shall not take one Pfennig of interest or usurious profit from the Christians, but rather shall he make an honest livelihood and a decent conduct, that neither a citizen nor a foreign person would have to complain about him.

3. Should he, Abraham Berlein, ever have anything to do with mint of the country or of cities, in case he gets in charge of gold or silver coins, he shall not take any of the weight or change the amount of the contents. In no way shall he be part of any such behavior. He shall completely stay off the trade of old broken and raw silver and the exchange of one kind of coins with another. He shall not melt coins, not weigh, whip or chip them. He shall not accept coins which are not permitted in this district. But should he in anyway get one or the other into his hands, he at once should bring them to us, his lawful lords and report to us who first gave them to him.

4. Abraham Berlein shall pay the congregational pastor the Jurium Stolie and our officials the customary New Years money the same as all the other Protected Jews have to do at the customary time.

We expect he will do all his duties perfectly and on time and does promise not to use the Jewish oath, instead accepting his guilt.

This letter of protection was written and given into the hands of Abraham Berlein Jew.

This was done in Markt Sugenheim on the 27th of March, 1787 before me, having the power of attorney by all the other Lordships.

Abraham married around June 1787, Reizlein, the daughter of Jeremias Beer from Huettenheim. Her father had died earlier and the arraignments for the marriage were made by her brother Baruch, who later on took the name Bernbacher.

Behrla Callmann wrote a letter to the Baron:

Your Excellency, Reichsunmittelbar "Hochwohlgeborener Baron , hochgebietener (gracious, highly lordly) Sir! (Some of these titles can not be translated, but really don't mean anything.)

In deepest humility I thank you submissively, for the grace and protection I have enjoyed, already for the last 40 years. As I am sickly and in my 70 years of age, and am unable to work and supply myself with the necessities to feed myself, I wistfully beg you to reduce my payments of the Barony charges. As I had to give dowry to my four children,

who were lucky to be taken into the protection of your Lordship; therefore I am without any means and am not able to pay my dues. Your high-barony Excellency will please show me your humane gentleness and will grant my request. The heavenly father will bless you and show his grace to you forever.

*Confidently looking hopefully forward to the gracious granting of my request, with the deep respect to your Excellency, your humble obedient servant,
Behrla Callman Jew*

Markt Sugenheim April 15, 1790

Johann Georg Vogel who was the official in the office of the Baron, writes and advises the Baron to reduce the protection tax to half. He mentions that for 43 years this old Jew Beerlein Kallmann, has paid since 1746 yearly, 5 guilders for protection, 4 guilder 30 Kreuzer into the coffers of the baron, and 45 Kreuzer goose money. He bought the protection for his first son Samuel on August 18, 1774 and for his youngest son Abraham on March 27, 1787, and paid the transfer tax of 30 guilders Rheinisch and 24 guilders Franconian for the transfer of his house to both his sons.

On August 4, 1791, Behrla acknowledged that the duke reduced his protection amount to half. But he writes that at his age, his eyes and hearing are very weak, and he cannot earn one Kreuzer any more and asks to get completely freed from the taxation.

Abraham and Reizlein had eight children: Madel (Magdalena*), born August 1789/90, named after Abrahams mother, Madel, Malcka born 1792, Jeremias born 1793, Samuel born August 4, 1796, a girl born 1798, Kahlmann born 1800, Berlein born 1802 and another girl Babette born 1810.

Abraham took the family name Kalb in 1813 and his three sons changed it to Kolb. Abraham died before 1821. Berlein Abraham Kolb, the youngest son, married three times. The first wife was a daughter of Kupfermann. The second wife is not known. He got married the third time to Friedericke Sternschein who was born on September 1816 in Ullstadt, a village just two kilometers from Sugenheim. Baerlein got matriculated on March 31, 1821, when his mother a widow, relinquished the matricule. He was 19 years old.

Berlein Abraham and Friedericke had two children, Sara and a younger brother, my grandfather, Hermann born on February 2, 1853. Berlein died before the 1880s and Friedericke on November 4, 1881.

The following message was engraved on the back of the tomb stone. (It is now completely unreadable) *“Hier ruht die Huelle eines biedereren Weibes namens Friedericke Kolb geborene Sternschein, ehemals aus Sugenheim, eine edle Perle ihrem Manne, eine prachtvolle Krone ihren Kindern, alle ihre Handlungen gewaehrte Gottfurcht, sie war mildthaetig gegen Arme, wohlsprechend dem Durstigen, ihre Naechstenliebe bewies sie durch aufopfernde Wohltaetigkeit, sie segnete das zeitliche am 3. November 1881 zum Leidwesen ihrer Kinder, und allen die Zeugen ihrer loeblichen Handlungen waren. Friede ihrer Asche.”*

"Here rests the remains of an honest woman of the name Friedericka Kolb, nee Sternschein, formerly from Sugenheim. A noble pearl to her husband, a magnificent crown to her children. All her actions granted piety. She was kindhearted towards the poor, comforting the thirsty; her love of the fellow man she proved through charity. She departed this life on November 3, 1881 to the sorrow of her children and all the witnesses of her praiseworthy actions. Peace be with her."

The following story my father told me. I am not sure if it happened exactly like that and don't know when this happened. Let's presume it would be at the time when Baerlein was looking for a wife for the first time. As I know the name of this first wife was Kupfermann, I believe the story is about her.

Young Baerlein was just 19 years old when he got the matricel (this was the register every Jew in Germany had to have to be permitted to live in a particular village or town) from his mother after his father died in March 1821. It seemed his father, who was at that time 64 years old, could not do his trade as a cattle dealer any more. His brother Jeremias, who was 10 years older and his brother Samuel, who was seven years older, seem to no longer be living in Sugenheim. Samuel got married in 1832 and might have already lived in Frankenwinheim before his marriage. Berlein, probably now in his early 20's was looking for a wife.

He was told, probably by a marriage broker, that a man named Kupfermann had a marriageable, 19 year old daughter. Berlein made some contact with the family and was invited for a dinner. He went to see the girl and maybe, if she was the right one, would ask her father for her hand in marriage. He went to the house, which was probably in a village not too far from Sugenheim.

Mr. Kupfermann asked him in and he was introduced to the rest of the family. There was the mother Mrs. Kupfermann and two girls. One, who seemed about 19 years old and a younger sister about 16. The older girl who knew what it was all about was very nervous and very bashful. She was afraid of looking at the young man and blushed as soon as their eyes accidentally met. Dinner was soon served and the conversation was just very general. Everybody besides the older girl tried to make conversation with the good looking young man. After desert, which the younger girl brought in and mentioned that she had done the backing, Mr. Kupfermann asked the young man to the parlor.

Both of them sat down in easy chairs and now the conversation became a little bit more to the point. Papa Kupfermann asked the young man what he is doing and Baerlein told him he is continuing his father's cattle business since his father's death. He said, he lives in his parents' house, which half of it was written over on his name, but there was enough room for a young couple as all his siblings, besides his younger sister had moved out already. He also told the older man, that he was not rich, but makes a comfortable living. He even takes care of his elderly widowed mother.

Mr. Kupfermann told Baerlein that his daughter is a good cook, she is very particular about cleanliness and knows how to sew. She was very good to her little sister and would make, as he said an excellent wife and mother.

After all the financial details and what she will get as a dowry was settled the father ask if they could shake hands on the deal and if he should call in his daughter, to tell her about the decision.

"Yes", said Baerlein, "but which one of the girls are you calling in"?

"Naturally the older ones" said Mr. Kupfermann.

"Wait a minute" said Baerlein."I want to marry the younger one!"

Mr. Kupfermann was stunned. He did not expect this at all. He was sure that Baerlein was interested in his older daughter. He excused himself and went out of the room. He asked Mrs. Kupfermann to the bedroom and explained to her what happened. Mrs. Kupfermann was not surprised at all. She told her husband she saw how the young man always looked at the younger girl during dinner. The older one being very bashfully did not look up at all. Mrs. Kupfermann said it seems he liked the way the younger one was not the least bit nervous, coy, or bashful at all when she spoke to him.

"I am just as shocked by your revelation!" said he, "what am I going to tell him?"

"Tell him", said Mrs. Kupfermann, you have to talk to your daughter first!"

He went back into the parlor and again he was shocked. His younger daughter was sitting next to the young man talking to him. Papa Kupfermann was not able to say one word. He turned and went out of the room and called his wife. Mrs. Kupfermann who was not as surprised as her husband, walked in to tell the girl that the young man wants to marry her. She expected the girl would be very surprised too, but the girl said: "I know, he told me already!"

Baerlein married the younger girl.

The story of the life of Magdalena Kalb.

Hayum Fleischmann was born August 1787 in Lutherisch Hallstadt near Bamberg. In 1821 he married Lea, born in 1781, the 40 year old widow of the tradesman Moses Jacob Rosenberg from Buechenbach. Moses Jacob Rosenberg died 1816/1817.

Moses and Lea had 5 children: Jeanette, born 1807, Simon born 1809, Ernestine born 1811, Karoline born 1813 and Leo born 1, 1, 1816.

Lea had no money at the time of death of her husband and was registered in Buechenbach as poor and needy of grains from the community. Her brother-in-law Hesslein Jacob Rosenberg was the guardian. At the marriage of Hayum Fleischmann to Lea, he had to guaranty a mortgage of 100 Guilders on the house for Lea's children. It seems that Moses Jacob Rosenberg had financial troubles from 1813 until his death in 1816 as he could not pay the community taxes. Finally the community forgave the amount because of poverty and because Moses had died in the meantime. The only thing that he left to his wife and children was the house No.26b. This house was built in 1778 and was bought in 1805 by Lesser Jacob Rosenberg, another brother of Moses. In 1811 he sold for 600 guilders, half of this house to his father Jacob Rosenberg and half to his brother Moses. The half of the property was small; the house together with the stable was 50 square meters, the vegetable garden was 60 square meters and the field 750 square meters.

Hayum Fleischmann bought the Matricel number 14 (which each Jew had to have is the number and means he got an existing Schutzbrief which was obsolete Mr. Rosenbeg died.) A Schutzbrief (the letter of protection) after that he got the permission to live and work in Buechenbach. This was the same number that Moses Jacob Rosenberg had received on October 9, 1802. The Matricel number 14 went first, after the death of her husband, to Lea on February 23, 1820 and after the marriage to Hayum Fleischmann, this Schutzbrief went to him. On June 7, 1821 he finally was matriculised. He was listed as a haberdasher, the same as Lea in 1820.

In 1827 Hayum Fleischmann got the additional permission from the police to trade in furs and haberdashery in an open store. It seems that the family was doing financially all right, as Hayum always paid the Handfrohn (the Jewish tax) of 1Guilder15 Kreuzer punctually. On May 29, 1825 Henla Loeb a son was born to Hayum and Lea. As the family increased financial problem started again. Hayum was not able to pay the property tax for the next two years.

In 1826 Lea died and a mortgage decree guaranteed that Henla, the son of Lea and Hayum, would get 50 Guilder. He finally paid the tax he owed, but again could not pay the Jewish tax for the year 1827/28.

Hayum was married again, probably in June 1827, to Magdalena, the oldest daughter of Abraham Baerlein Kalb from Sugenheim. She was born August 1789/90. She was 37 years old. Magdalena bore a son , Bernhard on December 25, 1829, a girl Betty, on August 28, 1831 and another son, Jeremias on September 16, 1833. Jeremias died probably in the spring of 1835 on postulate (covered with blisters).

1828/29 Hayum paid the community tax in "natura". That meant he volunteered himself to work one day a year for the community. Probably the payment of 100 Guilders for the four still living children of Lea and Moses Jacob Rosenberg was due. Hayum paid the amount in the presence of the children's guardian in the county court in Herzogenaurach. He was only able to do this with the dowry of his second wife, Magdalena. This was registered into the book of register as a mortgage. It is noted that the family Fleischmann did not own any capital. They only owned the house, the small property and his business.

The financial problems did not get any better and on January 28, 1829 Hayum borrowed 30 Guilders from his brother-in-law Nathan Maier from Heiligenstadt. (probably a husband of Hayum's sister) That money was supposed to be paid back on Jacobi in 1829. Luckily Maier did not press for the repayment and Hayum owed the money for 23 years.

Five months later, he borrowed from Lazarus Morgenstern from Buechenbach, 50 Guilder 41 Kreutzer with a promissory note to pay back the debt in 3 installments. The first at Michaeli (*Michaelmas*) 1829, the second at Lichtmess (*Candlemas*) 1830 and the third at Easter 1830. As he was not able to make any payment, Mr. Morgenstern had it listed in the mortgage book. Hayum objected to this very much, because he would no longer be able to borrow money from anybody else. In 1843 the debt was finally paid, as now only a debt of 3 guilder existed.

Even further on his business was no good if one compares his business in the year 1830/31 with the other Jewish businesses. His payment of 1 guider 30 Kreuzer business tax was far below the

average of 3 Guilder 9 Kreuzer of the rest of Buechenbach Jews. One can believe that the Fleischmann family was the poorest of the Jewish congregation. Actually there were 4 other Jews who only paid 1 guilder tax, but they all had larger property.

In 1832 his business got even worse, as after tax revision his taxes were cut one third; this meant he was assessed only 30 Kreuzer. This happened at a time when all the taxes of the Jews from Buechenbach were increased. One can compare the tax of the other 14 retail stores, who paid an average of 2 guilder 46 6/7 Kreuzer. Ten of the Jewish haberdasheries paid 3 guilder 20 Kreuzer.

Lesser Rosenberg had died in the meantime and the Fleischmanns had to share what was growing in the vegetable garden with the widow Rosenberg. Also, half of whatever was in the little stable belonged to the neighbor.

In 1843 the 4 children from the marriage of Lea and Moses Rosenberg were still alive.

In 1840 Henla Loew went to the Catholic Sunday school. Since May 1836 Bernhard went to the Jewish school and from 1842/43 also to the Sunday school. Betty started school in 1838.

June 1849, Henla was a draft dodger from the Bavarian Military and soon immigrated to the United States.

November 1852, Hayum Fleischmann made the announcement at the District Court in Herzogenaurach that he had three children in Baltimore in the U.S.A. They were probably Henla, Bernhard and Ernestine Rosenberg, one of his step children. She emigrated in 1840. During that same year, seven adults and five children emigrated to U.S.A. from Buchenbach.

At the end of 1852 Hayum Fleischmann, who was now 67 years old, decided to emigrate with his wife and daughter. It is possible that the children in U.S.A. asked their parents to come and probably sent money for the voyage, as Mr. Zenk, the head officer, wrote in the Certificate of Conduct that the Fleischmanns travel with assistance of money from their children in North America.

November 3, 1852 Hayum went to the county court in Herzogenaurach, appeared at the county court before the actuary Billmann and requested permission to immigrate as soon as possible for him, his wife and daughter. He brought along two certificates of good conduct. These should make it possible for him to get the permission to leave the country and get a passport and a visa. This first paper proved that he did not owe any money and also that the congregational president Seckel Rosenberg pledged with his own private fortune for eventual later claims. The second paper was from the district forester, that there was no debt of wood or labor allocation.

Hayum Fleischmann asked to put his emigration request into the paper and on the board of the court to notify anybody he might owe money to. The court officer told Fleischmann of the dangers of the voyage. But Hayum did not change his mind. He also put his house and the property up for sale. On November 8, 1852 the sale of the house and property was registered through a letter at the court, to be sold to Paulus Schreyer in Buechenbach.

Not only did Hayum Fleischmann himself do everything to leave the village as soon as possible, but the Jewish congregation of Buechenbach, the village administration, the county court in

Herzogenaurach and the government of Upper Franconia did everything so that the Jewish family could move fast. Congregation president Rosenberg declared if there should be any other claims from the village, he would be liable with his own money.

From November 11, until 24, the notification was on the court-board and on November 13, in the evening issue of the Nuernberger Zeitung (*Nuremberg newspaper*) and the Fuerther Tagblatt (*Newspaper in Fuerth*). The Inteligenzblatt der Stadt Erangen (*Newspaper in Erlangen*) published on November 15, 1852 as follows:

Announcement of the Royal Bavarian County Court Herzogenaurach

The Israelite Hayum Fleischmann from Buechenbach wants to emigrate with his wife Magdalena and his daughter Betti to North America.

Any claim against them has to be recognized in the next 14 days. Avoidance of it can't be honored.

Herzogenaurach, November 6, 1852

Royal Bavarian County Court Heydenreich

During the time 2 creditors came forward. On November 15, 1852 the citizen of Buechenbach, Adam Hausenstein put in a claim of 5 Guilder 24 Kreuzer at the County Court. It was paid at that time. On November 17, 1852, Seckel Rosenberg asked for 23 guilder 7 kreuzer for a debt which the Jewish congregation took for the cemetery in Baiersdorf. Hayum was very surprised about the claims of the president. Three days later he showed a receipt to the court from Rosenberg, that he had paid everything to the Jewish congregation.

After that he got the emigration permission from the court on November 22, which permitted them to buy the ship tickets. He bought the tickets from an agent in Erlangen, Johann Leonhard Hertlein who was the agent for the Hamburg – America Packet Line. He got passage on the U.S. Mail Steam Ship Washington.

On the ship list he was listed as Mr. Fleischmann 32 years old, a farmer. Actually he was at that time 65. Magdalena was listed as Mrs. Fleischmann, a female lady 32 years old. She was at that time 63. Betty was listed as Miss Fleischmann, 18 years old. She was actually 21.

The ship went first to Halifax, Nova Scotia, than to New York and from there to Baltimore. This was early in 1853.

The Kolbs

My grandfather Herrmann was born on February 5th 1853, the second child of Berlein and Friedericke Sternschein. He had an older Sister Sarah, but I do not know the birthday. There is almost nothing I know about my grandfather. He was married to Emma Baer on July 6th, 1880 in the new Hauptsynagogue in Nuremberg. My father told me that this was the first wedding in the synagogue, but I am not sure about this. I do not have a photo of my grandfather, but remember there was one of him as a young man, but like all our pictures, it was lost during the war. I remember also that my father had a very small beer mug, probably a child's, which was broken on top. My father cherished it as the only thing he had from his father. This also was lost during the war.



But I do have the beer mug my grandfather got as a wedding present from his friend the forester-innkeeper. It says so on the pewter cover: "To my friend Kolb from the forester-innkeeper!" In the middle of the top are two running deer carved into the crown of a deer antler.

I do not remember to whom my father gave this mug before we were deported, but very possibly to Mrs. Stroessenreuther, more about her later.

All I know about my grandfather is that he was a successful cattle and mainly horse dealer. As my father was only ten years old at the time his father died, he probably never did know exactly what really happened. I was told a different story from a man in Sugenheim after World War two, probably in 1953 when I went there to visit the cemetery in Ullstadt where my grandfather was buried.

My father told me that his father died of blood poisoning, but did not know why. The man in Sugenheim, who was about the same age as my father, knew that my grandfather was hunting with his friend the forester when he accidentally shot himself in the hand. It seems this was well known in the town.

As my father came into the Jewish orphan school in Fuerth very soon after the accident and his mother sold the house and moved with the rest of her children to Nuremberg, he never heard the real story. I remember when we came back from Europe I told him what I had heard.



Nr. 421.

Nürnberg, am _____ Jahr
 Juli _____ tausend acht hundert achtzig und zwei

Vor dem unterzeichneten Standesbeamten erschienen
 heute zum Zwecke der Eheschließung:

1. der Herrmann Kolb
 der Persönlichkeit nach Erziehungs- und Gesellen-
 Lehrlings- Johann Wagner aus Kannt,
 israelitischer Religion, geboren den 5ten Februar
des Jahres tausend acht hundert
acht und fünfzig zu Kugelfirn
wohnt zu Kugelfirn

Sohn des verstorbenen Unterförsters Leopold Kolb
 und Elisabeth geb. Storck
 zu Kugelfirn

2. die Emma Baer
 der Persönlichkeit nach Erziehungs- und Gesellen-
 Lehrlings- Johann Wagner aus Kannt,
israelitischer Religion, geboren den 2ten Februar
des Jahres tausend acht hundert
acht und fünfzig zu Kugelfirn
Ante-Verlobte, wohnhaft zu Kugelfirn

Tochter des Kaufmanns Salomon Baer und Elisabeth
verstorbenen Isidor Labbe geboren wohnhaft
 zu Kugelfirn

Wedding certificate of Herrmann Kolb and Emma Baer

The Baers

My grandmother, Emma Baer, born on February 10, 1861 in Roth, was the second child of Johann Julius Sussmann Baer who was born July 21, 1829 and his wife Babette Wilmersdoerfer born April, 8, 1839 in Floss.

Julius Baer was born as the fourth child of Sussmann Kallmann Baer born October 10, 1780 and his wife Ester.

Sussmann Kallman was the son of Kallmann Baer.

Babaette Wilmersdoerfer was born April 8, 1839 in Floss the 6th child of Samson Joseph Wilmersdoerfer born July 1790 in Bruck and Jette (Judith) Hoenigsberger born May 15, 1799

Sanson Joseph was the son of Joseph Wilmersdoerfer from Bruck



Johann Julius Sussman Baer

The Hoenigsbergers

Jette Hoenigsberger was the oldest child of Josef Hoenigsberger born 1765 and his wife Buma Levy born 1766.

Josef was the son of Aron Hoenigsberger born 1733 and his wife Senele born 1746.

Aron was the son of Enoch Hoenich Jakob born 1690

Enoch was the son of Jakob Enoch Hoenich born 1660

Jakob was the son of Enoch Maier Hoenich born 1635 in Neustadt a/d Waldnaab

Enoch Maier was the second son of Maier born 1610 in Neustadt a/d Waldnaab



Babette Wilmersdoerfer-Baer

My grandmother Emma Baer, was married on July 6, 1880. She was just 19 years old. When this photo was made. She was married to Herrmann Kolb in Nuremberg.





My father Bernhard was born on Friday September 22nd, 1882 (9th of Tishri 5643) in the same house as his father and most of his Siblings, in Sugenheim, a small town in central Franconia. He was the firstborn son of the horse and cattle dealer Herrmann Kolb and his wife Emma. He was a very quiet child and worried his parents as he did not speak before he was 3 years old.

His father once took him along on a business trip to Wuerzburg. They traveled, as was usual in those days, with a horse drawn wagon. The distance is about 28 miles and took a good part of the day. Arriving in the town, they went to an inn where Hermann usually stopped. On that day, no business could be conducted anymore, so they stayed there overnight.

Early the next morning, Hermann had to go to the market in the town and left his little boy with the daughter of the innkeeper, to be watched. The girl, a teenager, always kept on checking what the little one was doing. He stood for hours on one bench looking out of the window and enjoyed the new surroundings. The inn was located on a large plaza where, during the day, the local military were exercised. The soldiers were parading up and down. This was not only new, but very interesting for the little boy.

Later in the day, when the soldiers had left, it became boring just to look out of the window. While nobody was watching him, he walked out of the door and across street; traffic was no problem in the 1880s. On that plaza was a little guardhouse, painted in diagonal stripes in the Bavarian colors. Usually during the military exercises one soldier was stationed there. Now nobody was around, and this looked like a nice place to play in. So little Bernhard went in and out of this little guard house and had a good time playing there. At the inn nobody missed him.

A little while later a policeman came by and watched that little boy for a time. He never had seen him before. As there were no adults around, he went to the child and asked him for his name. No answer. He asked where his mom was. Again no answer. The little boy did not answer any of the questions the man asked. So the policeman took the child by the hand and walked with him to the police station.

During the later afternoon, Hermann came back to the inn and looked for his child. Now the people there suddenly remembered that they were supposed to watch him and they had not seen him for quite a while. Hermann screamed at the girl and ran out of the house. He looked all over the neighborhood and asked everybody he met on the street whether they had seen the child, but nobody could help him. Now he got very nervous and ran to the police station to report his child missing.

An officer asked him where the child was last and to describe him and then told the worried father to look into the next room. There was little Bernhard playing with a couple of the off duty policemen, not worried a bit. The policemen told Hermann, that they kept on asking the boy all kinds of

questions such as what his name was and where he came from, etc., but he never spoke one word. Father and son were finally reunited again.

When he was six years old, Bernhard started first grade in the Jewish school in Sugenheim. This was a very small town, and not many Jewish families were living there. Children from first to the eighth grade were in the one-room school.

One day Hermann Kolb, who was on friendly terms with the teacher, met him on the street and asked him how his son was doing. "He gave me quite a surprise the other day," said the teacher. Hermann asked obviously, "What did he do?" "Oh no, it wasn't anything bad. I asked the eighth graders a mathematical question. Not one of them raised his hand. Your little guy lifted his hand. I told him to sit down; he would not know the answer as he is only in the first grade. But his hand came up again. I almost screamed at him as he did not sit down and lower his hand. So I asked him what he wanted. Your Bernhard said: I know the answer. Sure! I said, you know the answer, so what is it? Believe it or not, he was right. This little fellow had the right answer and none of the big kids knew it!"

Hermann Kolb died on January 10th, 1893. He was survived by his wife who was almost 32 years old and six small children. The oldest one, my father, was just ten years old. In April 1893 Bernhard was enrolled in the Jewish Orphan School in Fuerth and later in the Jewish High School there. His brother Siegfried, who was just a year younger, was also admitted to these same schools.

Here are some anecdotes about that time: Once the boys in the orphanage got radishes for supper. This was not a usual thing, therefore one boy did not know what they were and asked Bernhard how one eats them. Bernhard showed him, using the other kids' radishes.

At another time, during Pesach, the non Jewish boys came to the door and begged for matzos. There was one boy who always made anti-Semitic remarks and terrorized the Jewish children whenever he had a chance. He also came for matzos. They opened the big courtyard gate a little and told him to come in. As soon as he was there some of the boys closed the door and bolted it. They dragged their prisoner to a table, pulled him across, and Bernhard brushed his hair with one of the big outdoor brooms. "How do you like these matzos?" they shouted, before they let him go.

Bernhard became a Bar Mitzvah in the small synagogue in Sugenheim on September 28th 1895, which was Yom Kippur, the 10th of Tishri 5656. Instead of a party, which was not popular at that time or even permitted on that holiday, he had to fast the whole day.

In October 1895 mother Kolb moved with the rest of her smaller children to Alexanderstrasse 5 in Nuremberg.

On August 1st 1896 Bernhard became a merchant apprentice at J. Rosenthal yard goods and wool in Nuremberg. Later on he worked for Wilmersdoerfer Brothers and then for Adolf Kraemer, also in Nuremberg, then Jakob Seligmann in Memmingen, Fritz Zuerndorfer in Hoerde-Dortmund and finally for Schatzmann & Loebenberger in Marktbreit.

Since his sixteenth year in 1898, Bernhard was very active in sports. He became a member of the Maennerturnverein in Nuremberg. As the younger brothers grew up, they also joined the club.

My father's brother Hugo was born on February 15th 1890, in Sugenheim. Therefore his Bar Mitzvah was on the 14th of February 1903 in Nuremberg which was the 17th of Shevat 5663. Bernhard made a poem for the occasion and only parts of it still exists:

*Nun steuert Dein Schifflein in's Leben hinein,
Du bist sein Lenker und Leiter.
Noch lacht Dir der herrlichste Sonnenschein,
Doch es geht nicht immer so weiter.*

Into adult life your ship will glide,
You are on its helm and its rudder,
Still, the sea is calm, no cloud in sight,
But it won't stay like that forever.

*Ganz plötzlich kommet von Westen her
Der heulende Sturm geflogen,
Es brauset und stürmt das mächtige Meer
Und haushoch türmen sich Wogen.*

Then suddenly there comes from the west,
Whipping the white foaming waters
With thundering force, a wild tempest
And sky-high are spraying the breakers.

*Ob auch die Wellen zu schwindelnden Höh'n
In den tiefsten Abgrund Dich tragen,
Fest musst Du an Deinem Ruder steh'n
nicht lange wanken und zagen.*

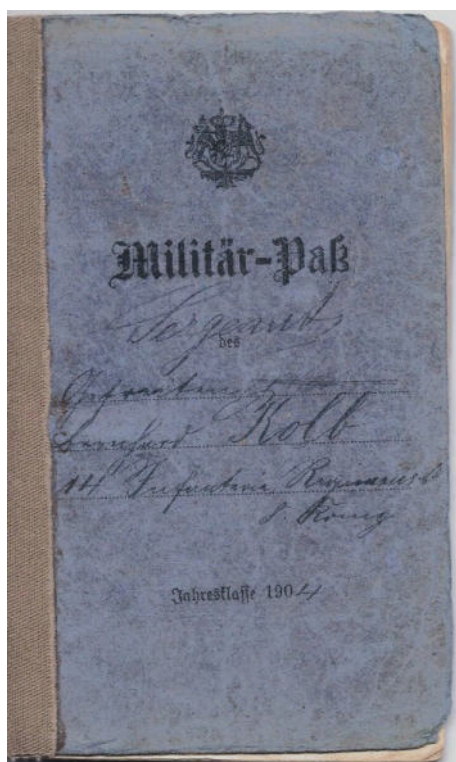
Your ship is threatened to break apart,
And you will be thrown to the wave.
Hold tight the rudder, don't lose heart,
The timid the heaven won't save.

*Und laesst Du nicht los vom Steuer die Hand
Richt'st Deinen Blick stets gerade aus,
So erreichst Du sicher den rettenden Strand,
Kannst ruh'n Dich von den Gefahren aus.*

When you ride out the tempest, the hurricane,
You find safety at still distant shores.
From boyhood you will now become a man,
And a happy future will be yours.

Bernhard Kolb was drafted on October 10th 1904, to the 8th Bavarian Infantry Regiment in Metz. Metz was known as the worst garrison. The sergeant from the district command Nuremberg, a friend of his second cousin, Hermann Sternschein, who was in active service at that time, gave him good advice.

He was told that he should put an advertisement in a Nuremberg newspaper, asking for a man who was drafted to the 14th Infantry Regiment in Nuremberg and would consider changing with him for compensation. The district command permitted the exchange and a barber's helper who accepted the deal and got the promised 300.00 Marks.



Bernhard started on October 26th 1904 for active duty in peace time, in the 14th Bavarian Infantry Regiment, 8th Company. It was part of the 3rd Bavarian Army Corps of the 5th Bavarian Infantry Division and the 9th Bavarian Infantry Brigade of the Royal Bavarian Army. The basic training was no problem for him as he had already been involved in sports for many years. He was a member of the MTV (Maenner Turnverein).

As he very soon became the company scribe, he was ordered to fill out his military passport. I am sure the word Sergeant was added much later, maybe in 1917.

Saturday afternoon was always the time for cleaning and with traditional German military history, a time of chicanery of the worst kind. Kolb was lucky again. A friend from his youth and a comrade from the M.T.V. (*Maenner Turnverein Nuremberg*) sport club was the scribe of the company. On the first Saturday he already requested him as a helper, and Kolb never had to do that hated cleaning time.

In the theoretic classes he had the first success, as he learned by heart and remembered all the names of the officers and the organization of the garrison and the army.

A simple, good looking peasant boy, a very nice hillbilly, became his intimate friend. The boy told him that since he had gotten out of school and worked as a shepherd, he never wrote a word or read anything. He had forgotten everything. The fellow had a girlfriend in a small village in the Oberpfalz who worked in the local post office there. When the first love letter arrived, Kolb had to read it to the boy and was asked to answer it also. The fellow was not even the slightest bit interested in what was written as an answer. He said: "You know what to write and what this girl wants to know." It started to be a very active and funny correspondence between the girlfriend and the unknown author of these love letters. After all, the girl knew very well that her lover had not written these letters.

Everything went very well with the back and forth of the love letters, until one day the soldiers were ordered to write down the words to a song during one of the lessons. The boy admitted that he could neither write nor read at all. "So how come you get letters all the time?" The officer asked. He revealed the little secret. Now Kolb had to get a slate-board and a writing utensil and had to teach the boy every day. There was no result and after a while everyone forgot about it, and the whole thing stopped.

Captain Wells, the commanding officer of the company, was known as a notorious anti-Semite. Because he was totally incompetent and above the age limit, he was furloughed most of the time and in the service for only a short period. Bernhard Kolb was the only Jew besides a couple of *Einjaehrige* volunteers (college graduates, who had to serve only one year in active training). At reveille in one of the first weeks Captain Wells screamed at him: "There he stands like the eternal Jew!" Shortly afterwards the recruiting officer took Kolb aside and asked him if he would like to file a complaint. The officer wanted to get one over this hated superior officer. Kolb did not want to file any, as it was known that the captain would be there for only a short time. Shortly afterwards he was again furloughed. His substitute, first lieutenant Michaelis, was the exact opposite, a fine loyal superior officer. Kolb had quite a bit of contact with this officer because of his Saturday work in the company scribe's office.

During May 1905, at a maneuver, private Kolb was ordered by his officer to climb a tree and listen and watch to see what he could find out about the opposing forces. A farmer who was working his field nearby could easily go back and forth between the two armies. From him Kolb found out what was happening on the other side. A couple of hours later the colonel came and asked the soldier for a report. Kolb knew where the trenches were, about the guards, the patrols, where the enemy was located and where the reserve units were. Because of his Saturday afternoon work he quite frequently had to write reports about situations like this and therefore had some experience. The colonel was very pleased and the lieutenant was very happy and told Kolb: "Today you earned your private first class buttons!" But in the German army things did not happen that fast.

A couple of weeks later in June 1905 there was another maneuver. While exercising to jump forward a couple of feet and then throw himself down again, Kolb fell into a broken seltzer bottle and cut his left wrist. His lieutenant tore off his suspenders and tied it around the soldiers' wrist to stop the bleeding. He was admitted to a military hospital for surgery. After 8 days everything was healed, therefore the time of recovery was over and he was released from the hospital. First lieutenant Michaelis went along to the chief surgeon and asked that Kolb be exempt from maneuvers and any outside services, because he had other things to do for him. When the healed wrist was shown to the doctor, the doctor complained: "The sewing of that wound was done too nice, after all," he said, "this is the wrist of a soldier, not the face of a woman!"

Through a good word from Lieutenant Michaelis, whom Kolb had worked for in the office, he was released to recover until the time of the September maneuvers. Even then he did not have to do any outdoor training.

At another time, when he got a couple of days furlough, he and a fellow soldier were waiting at a railroad station for a connecting train home. There was a railroad auction just in progress. Both wanted to kill some time, and so they went to watch. After a little while the auctioneer lifted up a box in which he explained was a camera and asked for a bid. Nobody raised his hand. Kolb said to his friend: "I am going to start the bidding, just watch!" He raised his hand and bid five Marks. Nothing happened, nobody was interested. That is the way my father got his first camera. Photography was still in the beginning stages at that time and Kolb did not know the least bit about it. Luckily there was a little book in the box which at least explained the most fundamental things about photography.

It happened during a night exercise on one of the first days of the fall maneuvers, that a soldier, an *Einjaehriger* (one who had to serve only one year), lost his helmet. A soldier without a helmet was impossible in the German army: "Kolb give your helmet to the soldier E/J. Rosenfelder!" The officer commanded. That done, a *Sanitaeter* (male nurse) had to wrap up Kolb's head completely with red *Verbandpaeckchen* (bandages). He was now assigned to the baggage wagon. This was a wonderful job where one did not have to do anything. It just happened that while he was at that assigned post the commander in chief of the Bavarian Army, Prince Leopold, a brother of King Ludwig III of Bavaria, came by to inspect this infantry unit. Quickly all the soldiers had to form two lines and present arms as the prince walked between the lines. There between the uniformed looking lines with peaked helmets stood one fellow with a bandage around his head and a peaked woolen cap. Seeing the soldier with this knitted cap and bandages all over his head he asked the lieutenant what had happened to this soldier. The officer answered, that he had run his head into a rusty nail!

Later on, after it was all clear and Prince Leopold had gone, he told Kolb: "Come with me!" Both of them walked to the staff surgeon, who was a friend of the lieutenant. "Take a look, at this man's wound and see what you can do about it!" He told this superior officer. "I have to take his bandage off." "Go ahead!" The doctor now unwrapped the very long bandage, walked all around the soldier and said: "I can't see a thing!" Now the lieutenant explained what happened and everybody had a good laugh.

It might have been at the same time when the company was in Grafenwoehr for maneuvers. Kolb had to work as a scribe in the office. He was still busy while the company was marched off through the woods. This was the end of the time in Grafenwoehr, so he had to be at the railroad station at the same time as the rest of the company. He was told there was a bicycle that he could use to catch up

with the marching columns. As he was finished with the work in the office, he jumped on the bicycle and rode down the hill. But when he tried to use the brake the chain jumped off the wheel. There was no hand brake on that bicycle, and the road through the woods was going slightly downhill. First, there was nothing to worry about, as he was the only one on that little road. But that bicycle was going faster and faster and now he saw the marching soldiers in front of him.

The road was just as wide as the marching column of three in a row. He had to decide fairly quickly what to do. If he stayed on this road unable stop, he would knock over several of the soldiers. So, he turned into the forest. The trees in the German woods are usually planted in rows, but there is not too much room between them. Using his feet as a brake on the tire of his front wheel, and balancing the vehicle between the trees, knocking a couple of them with his shoulder, he finally managed to stop his wild ride. If he would have braked too suddenly, he would have gone head over heels over the handlebars. The soldiers who saw him thought for sure he would run into one of the trees and get killed, or at least badly hurt, but luckily everything worked out fine.

After the maneuvers and the graduation of the older annual set, when they were demilitarized from the army, Bernhard Kolb was made the company scribe. This also meant he finally got his promotion to private first class, on October 10th 1905. This job was one of the most sought after. Besides the officer and the sergeant, he was now the most important person in the company. It also had its bad side. Only very seldom did he get leave on Sunday. He never had to do training exercises and did not have to worry about constant chicanery. He had no guard duties and had the permission to leave the base any day until 12 o'clock midnight, when he was not busy.

On October 1st the notorious Captain Wells returned because on that day the promotions were due. His first words, when he saw Kolb in the office of the company, were: "That guy, whom I cannot stand, is the company scribe?" Kolb asked to be reassigned at once. Now the sergeant quieted the soldier by telling him not to worry, because on November 1st, Wells will be furloughed again. A couple of times he still harassed the soldier, but November 1st came, and that s.o.b was gone again.

Kolb became pretty independent. With a very able sergeant, the 8th Company became the best organized one in the regiment.

Another sergeant, also one of the anti-Semites, who had tortured Kolb already way back at the basic training because he was a Jew, came into the office once and said: "Here one does not know who gives the command, the chief or the Kolb!" Lieutenant Michaelis heard it and gave that swine a good dressing down. As the company scribe Kolb, wrote his own military passport.

After his active duty when he got out of the army he became his own boss as a textile merchant. He also became his businesses only salesman. By bicycle he traveled all through the countryside of Mittelfranken, visiting little towns and villages and selling shirts, underwear, etc. He even had his own trademark sewn into his merchandise.

September 24th 1906, he was deactivated into the reserve. He now had learned more about his camera and how to develop and print pictures. When he came to small towns and villages he asked the mayors there if they would be interested in having photographs of their towns made for the tourist trade. This way he started a little free-lance job of photography. At that time pictures had to be made one by

one. After having the negative developed, washed and hardened, it was put in a frame on top of a photosensitive paper. Then this frame was closed, and put outside for a certain amount of time, to be exposed by the sunlight. One had to develop and fix the print afterwards. As each frame could only hold one picture, this operation took quite some time.

Kolb was redrafted for 20 days reserve training as a scribe, by the district command in Nuremberg from February 17th 1908 until March 7th 1908 and from March 4th 1912 until March 23rd 1912. Because of his training as a scribe, his orders were that he had to report immediately in case of war, at the proscribed command post in Nuremberg even before a general mobilization was ordered,. He was given papers valid for any rail transportation in such a case.

His military passport mentions:

Paragraph 11: He was trained with the rifle No. 88 and No. 98 and as a scribe and group leader. He was also trained in close combat from June 17th, until June 27th in the 3rd AMC (*III Armee korps*)

Paragraph 12: He made no claims for compensation in case of mobilization.

Boot size 26.5, width 2. Written and signed in Nuremberg on September 24th, 1906

His behavior was very good and he had no punishment, signed by Heydenreich, colonel and commander of the district.

On September 17th 1908, he asked for a pension and on September 18th 1908, it was denied under No. 4695. The same thing happened when he applied again on October 4th 1909. Both times

On April 2nd 1912, he was put into the *Landwehr*.

For the sport feast in Wuerzburg in 1912 my father wrote the following little poem.

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| <i>Dass Turner voll Hunger und durstig sein, Weiss unser Vorstand aus fruheren Tagen. Gab dem Hausmeistere Broetchen und Wein Es schleunigst nach dem Turnplatz zu tragen.</i> | Athlets always are hungry and thirsty Our president knows that too Gave the janitor Seibold orders To bring rolls and wine to the sports field. |
| <i>Doch mit des Geschicken Maechten Ist kein ewiger Bund zu flechten Und das Unglueck schreitet schnell Seibold wurde auf der Stell'---</i> | But one doesn't know the powers Who unforeseen suddenly arrive A misfortune quickly happens Just at that moment the janitor--- |
| <i>---Magenkrank – die Turner warten Denkt er, lief zum Luisengarten. Auf dem Weg from schnellen Laufen Musste er gar oft verschnaufen.</i> | ---- got an awful stomach colic as the athlets wait at Luisengarden. He runs there so very quickly And had to stop just for a breather. |
| <i>Herrlich duftete der Schinken Und die Flasche tat ihm winken. Der Versuchung zu entfliehen War sein redliches Bemuehen,</i> | Oh, how wonderful the ham smells And the wine was so seductive To fight off this bad temptation He was trying very hard. |
| <i>Lief ohne Raast und ohn' Erholung</i> | Running without recuperatone |

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| <p><i>Hin zu unserer Massenwohnung. Doch hier was sein Mut gebrochen, Kaum hat er das Fleisch gerochen,</i></p> <p><i>Sah des Wines goldnes Leuchten. "Nur die Lippen 'mal anfeuchten, Koennt wohl der empoerte Magen Nicht ein Schickenbrot vertragen?"</i></p> <p><i>Und ein Broetchen nach dem andern, Musste nach dem Magen wandern. Auch der Wein tat seine Wunder Life von selbst die Drossel nunter.</i></p> <p><i>Doch ihr Leute glaubt es mir, Nicht nach Wurst und Wein die Gier, Sondern war sein einz'ges Streben, Recht lang im Verein zu leben.—</i></p> <p><i>Doch jetzt muss ich euch Schlimmes erzaehlen, Nicht im Reime bracht es der Dichter, Den zu schrecklich war'n die Verbrechen Und zu grausen war'n die Taten. Vier Mann waren es und alle verheiratet, Schlummert der Ehering auch in der Weste. Doch halt! Ich darf nicht weiter erezaehlen, Wuerd' es erfahren die Ehegesponstin, Das Hausgeraete von Holz und Porzellan Zerschmettert wuerd es am Suendenkopf.</i></p> | <p>To the sportr clubs living quarters. But then his willpower brok He smelled that sweet aroma..</p> <p>Seeing the wines golden color „Only moisten my lips a little Could the indignant stomach Not feel better with just one roll?“</p> <p>One ham roll right after the other Went down into his hungry belly And the wine, what a miracle, Ran uncontrollably down his gullet.</p> <p>But just believe me fellows Not hungry was it for wine and sausage Only one desire have I to honest And truly serve the club for ever.</p> <p>But now I have to tell something terrible The poet could not put it into rhyme. Too horrible was the crime And too terrible the deeds Four men, and all of them were married Even the ring they hid in a pocket. But stop! I cannot tell you more The wives would find out about it Then pots, pans and china dishes Would be thrown on the sinners heads.</p> |
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At the distribution of the advertising beer mugs in the sport club my father wrote another poem.

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| <p><i>Als nach der letzten Kneipe, ich legte mich ins Bett Glaubt' ich es brummen Bienen im Kopf mir um die Wett'.</i></p> <p><i>Kaum war ich eingeschlafen da traeuimte ich schon ganz Ich sah mein Werbekrueglein' Im hellsten Lichterglanz.</i></p> <p><i>Und wie seit alten Zeiten der Traumgott alles kann Mein Krueglein kam mir naeher, fing gleich zu reden an:</i></p> <p><i>"Du hast mich dort gelassen, beim Wirt vom M.T.V. Nun bin ich selbst gekommen, denn ich bin deine Frau.</i></p> <p><i>Heut ist ja unsere Brautnacht, da will ich bei dir sein Du sollst mir Treue schw hoeren, dass ich auf ewig dein.</i></p> | <p>After the last drinking session, at home I went to bed. But felt a swarm of bees are buzzing in my head.</p> <p>I fell asleep in moments, but I saw it as I dreamed, My advertising beer-mug in brightest light it gleamed</p> <p>Just like in ancient times when Morpheus ruled - I hear My little mug came closer and whispered, in my ear:</p> <p>" You left me at the gym's inn, at the innkeeper's bar. I came to you my lover because married we now are.</p> <p>Today, s' our brides night, pledge me you leave me never I promise I'll be always true and will love you forever.</p> |
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| <p><i>Und wie die anderen Frauen so mache ich es auch Les' vor die Kriegsartikel, denn das ist doch der Brauch.</i></p> <p><i>Wenn abends nach dem Turnen, nach mir dein Arm ausstreckt Der Willkommkuss sei kraeftig, will sehen ob's dir schmeckt.</i></p> <p><i>Wie viel Du trinkst ist mir egal, das Eine halt nur fest Schau' dass d'nicht kommst in Streiterei und grad nachhause geh'st.</i></p> <p><i>Dafuer will ich dann sorgen, dass gut gefuellt ich bin Und dass vom vorigen Tag kein Nachtwaechter ist drin.</i></p> <p><i>Dann hab' ich noch 'ne Bitte die deinen Freunden gilt Denen noch kein solch' Weibchen den Liebesdurst gestillt.</i></p> <p><i>Seht, ich hab viele Schwestern, die sind noch keusch und rein Und jeder moechte eilens auch einen Turner frei'n.</i></p> <p><i>Sie waeren nicht sproede beim Kuessen und blieben auch treu wie Gold, Sie wuerden euch nicht verwehren den koestlichsten Minnesold.</i></p> <p><i>Drum auf ihr saeumigen Werber, ihr Turner vom M.T.V. Ein jeder muss sich erringen so eine glaeserne Frau.</i></p> | <p>Like other women do, - listen now you are no fool Our marriage will be wonderful if you play by the rule:</p> <p>Ev'nings after work-out, you stretch for us to meet My welcome kiss is hearty, I hope you like it sweet.</p> <p>Drink' as you may desire, but no more than what is right And always be wary off and don't get in a fight.</p> <p>I promise I will always be filled up to the brim And make sure that no old beer will be left within.</p> <p>I'm asking you to tell all your friends about our love life first; Mainly the ones without a mug which would have stilled their thirst.</p> <p>I have many sisters who are virgin and are still pure Each of them would be happy to find a gymnast for.</p> <p>They wouldn't be coy in kissing and they are true as gold They would be more than happy to feel your embracing hold!"</p> <p>Come on, you lingering suitors, you are the sport club's pride, Each one has to acquire one gleaming, glassy bride.</p> |
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On top left Stefan, right Hugo. Sitting
Siegfried and Bernhard Kolb 1910

During the end of the year 1912, three men took the initiative to start a Jewish sport and gymnastic club in Nuremberg. They were Paul Baruch, David Katz and Bernhard Kolb.

In the fall 1913 a few men from the Zionist group of Nuremberg, met on the *Stammtisch* at the Cafe Central and founded the Jewish Gymnastic-and -Sports Club. Bernhard Kolb became the sport coach for the club after the war. The first coach was Nathan Kahn, who was killed on September 30th, 1918, as a lieutenant. Bernhard Kolb, as well as all four of his brothers, were active members of the *Maennerturnerein* (Men's Gymnastic Club) Nuremberg, which was located at Landgrabenstrasse 140. Because of his membership for years in that club, he was instrumental in renting the gymnasium for Jewish men and women. The club was called *Juedischer Turnverein Nuernberg* (Jewish Sport Club Nuremberg). Every Wednesday the women exercised from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. and the men from 8:30 to 10:00 p.m. There were a lot of voices against the founding of a Jewish sports club at that time, and even prominent men of the Jewish congregation were very much in opposition to the creation of this club. These men even called for a large meeting to oppose a Jewish sport club.

During the summer of 1914 my father wrote the following poem:

*Was rauscht im deutschen Blätterwald,
Wie ist die Luft so schwül?
Die unheimliche Ruhe weicht gar bald
einem schrecklich verwegenen Spiel.*

*Die Grossen im Reich, die wollen mit Macht
Die glimmende Glut entfachen,
Sie suchen Gewinn und haben nicht Acht
Auf des Todes hohläugigem Lachen.*

*Ihr jagt die Vaeter hinaus in die Schlacht,
Dem sicheren Tod entgegen,
Wenn Weib und Kind auch am Hungertuch nagt,
Was ist euch am Volk gelegen?*

*Ihr reisst der Mutter, trotz Jammer und Klagen,
Die Söhne hinweg und schickt sie zum Tod.
Fünf ziehen hinaus, fünf werden erschlagen,
Sie allein bleibt zurück in bitterster Not.*

*Und euch, die ihr die Kriegsfanfare
Ins Land geschmettert tu' ich kund:
„Nicht segnen euch des Landes Schaaren
Nein, fluchen wird euch jeder Mund!“*

*Drum auf mein Volk, erkenne deine Stärke,
Wirf ab das Joch, das dir die Stime drückt
Und leg den Grundstein zu dem grossen Werke,
Das alle Menschen hoch beglückt.*

*Dann wird einst die Geschichte künden
Von jenem Volk das sich ermannt,
Das Keck zerriss die Augenbinden
Den Krieg von seinen Herd verbannt*

*

The author of this poetry
Had faith in German decency,
But history has shown since then
The real face of these supermen.

They're told by their Teutonic leader
That German blood is so much sweeter.
To kill, to rape and mutilate
By German law is German right.

What rustles in the German press?
How sultry is this summer night!
This hideous quiet soon will pass
When it unfolds that game of might.

The heads of the Reich are longing with lust
And blow into the ember till t's blazing,
Only profit they see, but they don't care for us,
Are blind to death's hollow-eyed laughing.

You tear the father from child and from wife
To do battle. You know he'll get slaughtered.
If the family can't without him survive,
You don't care for the masses; you ought to.

A mother cries in sorrowful grief and pain;
Her sons you have taken away.
Five go to the front, all five of them slain.
In desperation the mother will stay.

You fanfare blowers, who glorify war,
Nobody will praise your tune.
Millions will curse you wherever you are.
May heaven help all of us soon.

"Wake up my people, and use your strength
Throw off your yoke and your shackle.
Stand up like free men when liberty bangs
On your door like a new *Mene Tekel!*"

Then history all over the globe will praise
The heroes who threw the war lovers
Down into the cleft with crown and mace
And saved millions of lives forever

*

To murder children just for fun,
If mothers scream, then use your gun.
Take anything you might admire
Out of their houses if you desire.

It is not stealing what you do,
All that belongs to me and you.
Remember you're the master race;
One sees it on your Aryan face.

Go let them starve if bread is scarce.
Don't waste a crumb for them to share

And use your whip that they behave.
You are their lord, they are your slaves.
Many millions died in agony
Because of German cruelty.

On August 1st, 1914, at 7:30 P.M. the German ambassador handed a declaration of war to the Russian Foreign Minister. Bernhard Kolb had to report on that same day to the 6th Bavarian Reserve Regiment in Nuremberg. His youngest brother Stefan had been in active duty with the 14th Bavarian Infantry Regiment since 1913. On August 4th the regiment was sent to the Western Front.

On August 2nd, 1914, Germany began the invasion of France through the Duchy of Luxembourg. As this territory was neutralized in 1867 by powers including Germany, this was a breach of the treaty. England asked Germany if it would respect the neutrality of Belgium. Britain as well as Germany were guarantors of the neutrality of Belgium since the foundation of that kingdom in 1831. Germany replied to Britain that it could not answer the question at that time.

On August 3rd, 1914, Germany sent an ultimatum to Belgium, demanding free passage for its troops. Germany said it has information that France was to use Belgium as a military base. This was a lie.

Belgium refused entrance to German troops and demanded that Germany respect its neutrality. The German propaganda was another lie, when it announced that French planes had bombed Nuremberg and another city. The truth is that during the four years of war, Nuremberg was never bombed.

On August 4th 1914, England sent an ultimatum to Germany, demanding a satisfactory reply by midnight, on the question of the neutrality of Belgium. On the afternoon of the 4th, German cavalry units appeared at the mouth of the Liege gateway. These were the advance guards of the German infantry brigades of General Karl von Buelow's Second Army.

In the morning of August 4th 1914 Sir E. Goschen, the British ambassador in Berlin called on Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg for a final interview. The Chancellor answered: "...just for a scrap of paper Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her!"

King George proclaimed a mobilization of the British Army. No reply having been received from Germany, the British foreign office announced that a state of war existed with Germany, dating from 11:00 p.m. on August 4th.

On August 5th 1914, Siegfried Kolb had to report for duty to the Replacement Battalion and Bernhard had to report to Fuerth.

On the same day, Montenegro declared war on Austria-Hungary. President Wilson of the United States of America offered the good offices of the U.S.A. in an attempt to bring about a settlement of the European difficulties. On this day, the Germans began an attack upon the city of Liege, and were

repulsed with heavy losses by the Belgians, who were led by General Ge'rad Mathieu Leman. The Belgian King, Albert, ordered the troops to hold on until the end.

General Erich Ludendorff became separated from his troops in the confusion of the battle and complained about armed resistance by Belgian civilians. German soldiers were given orders to execute these so-called *francs tireurs* (civilian snipers). The Germans killed hundreds of innocent civilians and Belgian priests without trial or any shred of proof for what they called instigating resistance.

General Moltke wrote on the 5th of August: "Our advance in Belgium is certainly brutal!"

On August 6th, 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia, and Serbia declared war on Germany. That day, Bernhard Kolb was mobilized to the 6th Reserve Infantry Regiment, 12th Company. They were part of the 1st Bavarian Reserve Corps of the 5th Reserve Division, 9th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Brigade. Lieutenant-Colonel Leibrock was the commanding officer of the 5th Bavarian Reserve Division

On August 8th, 1914, Montenegro declared war on Germany.

On August 12th, 1914, France declared war on Austria-Hungary.

On August 11th and 12th 1914, the regiment with Bernhard Kolb arrived in Saarlautern. They marched to an area near Sarrewerden.

On the 15th of August the division was first in reserve under the army headquarters in the area of Druhlingen. After that they went into the area of Harskirchen and afterwards to Muenster-Vibersviller.

During the battle near Luneville, from August 11th until August 17th, the company was under fire for the first time.

Bernhard's brother Siegfried was called up to the 9th Bavarian Brigade-Reserve Battalion on the same day and marched into the frontline in Lorraine on August 16th 1914.

On August 23rd 1914, Japan declared war on Germany and on August 25th 1914, on Austria-Hungary.

On August 24th 1914 during the battle in Lorraine near St. Die, Siegfried Kolb was wounded in the thigh. He was shipped back in a casualty train.

On the 25th of August, 1914, the 6th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Company together with the 5th Bavarian Reserve Division were ordered to advance on both sides of the lakes at Mittersheim, north-west of Sarrebourg. The forest there was thick and one could not see very far. The French defended the area very heavily. Even so, the Germans conquered Angviller and followed the retreating French to Bisping and Desseling. At the battle of defending the attack of the XXth French army corps the regiment lost 36 killed and 217 wounded. One of the was Bernhard Kolb who was wounded in the left ankle by a ricocheting grenade splinter at Loudrefing (*the Germans called it Lauterfingen*). He was picked up by an ambulance of a cavalry regiment where he was given first aid and had his wound bandaged. Afterwards, a column of trucks came by and took him to a military hospital in Chateau Salins 28 kilometers away.

The wounded were just being put on a special train and one of the nurses told him to try to get to the nearby railroad station. One foot bandaged, he exerted all his strength and hobbled to the station, and managed to get there just a moment before the train took off. Climbing into a cattle car, there were other wounded lying on the bare floor: [Direction homeland](#). Almost immediately the train began to move.

He wrote the following poem in the train on August 28th, 1914. Only a very small part of a large piece still exists:

*Wen trägt man in Chateau Salins zur Bahn,
Wer sind die Männer so bleich und still?
Die Leiber zerfetzt, was hab'n sie getan?
Es sind die Kämpfer von Luneville.*

What's going on in Chateau Salins?
They carry young men there in the trains,
Their bodies are torn, they are very still?
These are the fighters of Luneville.

The train went to Zweibruecken, Germersheim and to Heidelberg. There, finally, for the first time they got something to eat and a little straw to lie on. The train kept on going farther east, and as he watched the names on the railroad stations, he happily noticed, that they were going towards Wuerzburg. His excitement mounted when the train then went south and arrived in Nuremberg.

As the train stopped, the orders came: "It is forbidden", in Germany everything is always forbidden, "for anybody to leave the train!" So far the trip had taken already three days. Kolb and a couple of other soldiers managed to get off the train anyway. A lot of people were standing on a bridge over the railroad, watching the train with the wounded. Again he was lucky as he noticed an acquaintance between the onlookers and begged him to notify his mother. A short time later she arrived and Bernhard managed to persuade the officer in charge to send him to a military hospital in Nuremberg, to the *Reserve Lazarett* (Reserve military hospital) in the schoolhouse of the *Knauerstrasse*. Many wounded were already there. He became the patient of two Jewish nurses who took very good care of him.

On the 26th of August the German soldiers, under the command of General von Lutwitz, the military governor of Brussels, set fire to the Belgian town of Louvain. It had stood since the 11th century and had a world renowned library of 150,000 volumes. The whole city was burned to the ground, and many civilians were executed under the pretext that German soldiers had been fired on and killed by civilians. A typical act of German bravery, which was the trademark of their occupation of Belgium.

Bernhard Kolb asked to have his little camera brought to the hospital. He developed some of the photographs he had taken of some of the soldiers. After printing the pictures, he laid them out to dry on the empty bed next to him. Three days later, one of the nurses came in and ordered him to clear the bed, as they needed it for another wounded soldier. Kolb complained a lot and asked why they could not use another empty bed. It did not help him, and he had to clean up. They brought in a wounded soldier on a stretcher, and he saw that it was his brother Siegfried who was wounded in the upper thigh on August 24th near St. Die' in the Vosges mountains. They were treated in beds next to each other.

Siegfried Kolb, the second son of Hermann Kolb and Emma Baer, was born December 1st, 1883, in Sugenheim. He went to the Jewish school in Sugenheim and, after the death of his father on January 10th 1893, to the *Buergerschule* in Fuerth. This was a school for Jewish orphans. He learned the tailoring trade

and, after years of working for somebody else, started his own business. He had been drafted to active duty into the 11th Bavarian Infantry Regiment in Regensburg in 1903 and released to the reserve in 1905. On the 6th of August, 1914, he was recalled and sent to the Western Front as a corporal with the 9th Bavarian Replacement Brigade.

On August 28th Austria-Hungary declared war on Belgium. That day Bernhard Kolb who was still in Reserve military hospital in Nuremberg developed puss in the heel and stayed there and was then transferred to the Reserve military hospital Brueckenkopf, in Ingoldstadt.

On September 21st, 1914, he was ordered to the Replacement troop depot

On November 4th, Russia and Serbia declared war on Turkey.

On November 5th, Great Britain and France declared war on Turkey.

Bernhard's youngest brother, Stefan, was born March 1st, 1891, in Sugenheim, went to the public school in Nuremberg and became a commercial apprentice. Later on he learned window dressing and was working in different places as a decorator. In October 1913, he was drafted to the Bavarian Infantry Regiment No. 14, 6th Company for active duty and went to war on August 6th, 1914.

The regiment left Nuremberg by train, led by commander Colonel L. Hierthes. During the night of August 7th - 8th the regiment went west and disembarked at Courcelles-sur-Nied. At first, like all troops of the 3rd Bavarian Army Corps, they had to dig a defensive position. In the brutal heat, they were digging trenches between Sailly-Achatel and Juville, left of the Royal Bavarian 21st Infantry Regiment. The regiment was then sent 5 miles farther east, back to Han-sur Nied. From there the 6th Army had to undertake strenuous marches towards the south, often changing their position. On the 20th of August, 1914, when the German offensive started, the regiment came under artillery fire for the first time, near Faxe. Early in the morning of the 25th a strong counterattack with heavy artillery fire by the French XXth army corps from Serre, about 8 miles east of Nancy, took place against the forward position of the 1st Company on the edge of the woods of St. Libair. These troops, as well as those of the 21st Infantry Regiment had to lie down for hours, as the well aimed artillery fire of the French on their position kept them pinned down. The losses of the first day of battle were very severe, especially the one of the 14th Infantry Regiment. The toll was 6 officers and 118 noncommissioned officers and men dead or wounded.

The next several days brought strenuous changing of positions, which had to be performed under steady enemy artillery fire. The worst was the night between the 4th and the 5th of September. A panic broke out during the intermixing of different units near Remereville south-west of Chateau-Salins. At daybreak the French pulled back. The losses at Remereville were 11 officers dead, including, the battalion commanders Major Maurer and Major von Bezold, as well as Captain Ritter von Traitteur also 11 officers were wounded 140 noncommissioned officers and soldiers were dead and 389 wounded. Also a fairly large number of soldiers were missing in action. One of the fallen soldiers was Stefan Kolb, who died at Remereville on that night



Stefan Kolb

French General Dubail reported that the Germans, in this case the Bavarian Regiments, were barbarians. Before evacuating a town, they behaved like

vandals, they sacked the houses in which they had been billeted, ripped up the chairs and mattresses, ruthlessly scattered the contents of closets, tore down curtains, smashed and trampled furniture, and destroyed ornaments and utensils, anything they could lay their hands on.

During the end of August General Alexander von Kluck decided against the planned direction, the Schlieffen Plan, which was of going around Paris on the west. He believed the French were already beaten and now went southeast to encircle the French forces in the east. Kluck informed the OHL (*Oberste Heeres Leitung*) Supreme Headquarters of this move. On August 31st a lucky English pilot detected Kluck's movement and reported the whereabouts and movement of the German army.

On September 5th, the German army crossed the Marne River. General Joseph Simon Gallieni was taken out of retirement and became the military governor of Paris. He rushed 6,000 troops in taxis to the front to reinforce General Maunoury, who was hard pressed by Kluck. General Foch managed to hold his ground against General Hausen's army. General Foch said: "Attack, whatever happens! The Germans are at the extreme limits of their efforts. Victory will come to the side that outlasts the other!" The 5th, the 6th, and the 9th French armies attacked the Germans from the south and the British Expeditionary Force attacked the gap between Kluck's 1st and Buelow's 2nd army. The German front collapsed and was thrown back. This was called, by the Allies, the miracle on the Marne. The attack lasted till September 9th. The German front was beaten back to the Aisne river.

On September 9th, Field Marshal Count Helmuth von Moltke suffered a nervous breakdown when he heard about the disaster and wrote to his wife: "It is going badly. The battles to the east of Paris will go against us. One of our armies must fall back and the others will have to follow. The great hopes with which we began the war will abruptly change!"

On September 13th 1914, General von Moltke reported to the Kaiser: "Your Majesty, we have lost the war!"

At the battle on the Marne, the crown prince of Germany, Frederick William, said to an American correspondent: "We have lost the war. It will go on for a long time, but lost it is already!" After the defeat on the Marne, the Germans had lost their chance for a quick victory and the front settled down to trench warfare for the next four years.

On the 14th of September, the Germans reached the Aisne River. Bernhard Kolb was dismissed on September 18th from the military hospital. His mother had gotten the announcement, that his youngest brother Stefan got killed in the night of September 4th to 5th at Arrancourt.

On September 25th, Bernhard Kolb was directed to the Recruit Depot No. II.

On October 28th, he received 7 Mark 10 Pfennig for cleaning material at the Recruit Depot

On October 10th Bernhard Kolb was ordered to the Reserve Recruit Depot of the Replacement Battalion of the Reserve Regiment No. 6, 1st Company as a company scribe.



Siegfried Kolb

Babette, the only sister, was born in Sugenheim on January 29th, 1888. She went to public school in Nuremberg and was married on May 28th, 1909 to Max Mendel Singer who was born on November 3rd, 1884 in Wolostkow in Galizien. They lived in Nuremberg, in Landau and at the start of the war in Basel, Switzerland. Max, who was a citizen of Austria, volunteered for the Austrian army. He went to the Russian front and was taken prisoner there. His wife, Babette, moved with their four-year-old daughter, Ruth, to her mother in Nuremberg.

Siegfried Kolb, who was a corporal, was wounded on August 23th, 1914. He voluntarily went back to his unit on the front on November 16th, 1914. He arrived at his unit on November 22nd, 1914. During the night of November 24th, 1914, on the first patrol near Provenche'res-sur-Fave, he was killed by an infantry bullet at Bois Brule in the Vosges Mountains of France.

Hugo Kolb, the fourth son of Hermann and Emma Kolb, was born February 15th, 1890. He went to public school and then to the *Oberrealschule* (high school) in Nuremberg. He became a merchant. In 1910 he was drafted to active duty in the 22nd Bavarian Infantry Regiment in Landau. He was earlier dismissed because of sickness and reassigned to the Replacement – Reserve. He lived in Elberfeld and in September 1914 he volunteered for the artillery so as not to get drafted to East Prussia but very soon he was shipped to the eastern Front. On April 1st, 1915, he was badly wounded in the knee and taken back to a military hospital. In July 1916, he was sent the second time to the front, this time to the west and a little later to the east again, to Rumania. He caught pneumonia in February 1918 in Rumania, and from then until the end of the war he was in Amberg.

For New Years day 1915 Bernhard Kolb wrote this poem

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| <i>Die Erde deckt sich Heut' mit Schnee Das Leichentuch der Heldenschaar Oh, wieviel Leid und wieviel Weh Deckst du in diesem schweren Jahr</i> | The snow covers the heroes slain, A shroud for all who are lying here. Oh, how much sorrow, how much pain You cover in that fateful year. |
| <i>Zwei Brueder must auch ich Dir geben Schlaft wohl ihr Helden im ewigen Leben.</i> | Two brothers I have given thee Sleep heroes in eternity. |

On April 22nd 1915, the Germans discharged chlorine gas from cylinders over the Allied lines on the Western Front in the section of Ypres. The German press boasted of this "triumph of chemistry."

On May 23rd, 1915, Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary.

On June 3rd, 1915, San Marino declared war on Austria-Hungary.

The Royal Bavarian 6th Reserve Infantry Regiment was mauled in the summer of 1915 by English forces, to such an extent that the troops did not know whether the enemy had broken through and was now behind them. The staff officers, including the commanding officer, Colonel Leibrock, were captured. The losses, including those captured, were 1,774. Of 37 officers, only five were alive after the battle. The official report of July 1st, 1915, stated: "Nothing is known about this regiment."

On August 21st, 1915, Italy declared war on Turkey.

On October 14th, 1915, Bulgaria declared war on Serbia.

On October 15th, 1915, Great Britain and Montenegro declared war on Bulgaria.

On October 16th, 1915, France and Italy declared war on Bulgaria.

The 6th Reserve Infantry Regiment was taken off the line and sent into the rear to Marcoing, southwest of Cambrai, to recuperate. Bernhard Kolb was transferred to the Replacement Battalion of the Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 6, 1st Company on October 30th 1915 in Fuerth as the company scribe. On the 8th of December, the regiment got a new commanding officer, Colonel Max von Baligand. After that the regiment received new quarters, and their living conditions improved. At the end of the month, the regiment was taken farther back, near Metz. This generally meant that the regiment would be transferred to a new area. The German 10th Bavarian Infantry Division was ordered to come to rescue the Austrian Army which was beaten by the Russians in the Carpathian Mountains. It is not sure whether part of the 6th Regiment was sent to the east, but Bernhard Kolb was not.

From June 17th, 1916, on through the summer, he was on the front near Verdun and in the battles between the Moselle and the Meuse River. At a celebration of the company in a rest-billet, he wrote a little humorous poem, which was lost during the Second World War, and he rewrote it from memory after the war.

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|---|---|
| <i>Ich soll' heut was Neues bringen, Das Euch Allen gut gefällt Und ich hoff ' es wird gelingen An guten Stoff hat's nicht gefehlt.</i> | I shall bring you something new What every one of you will do I hope I will be with success, There always was lots to express. |
| <i>Doch zu vorderst muss ich bitten Mir zu grollen nicht deswegen Werd' ich meinen Spott ausschütten, Darf sich Keiner gross aufregen.</i> | But at the start I want to beg you, Not to hold a grudge at me In case I would ridicule Nobody should lose his cool |
| <i>Denn als Dichter vergisst man die Klassen, Lernt nur die Menschen lieben und hassen. Sieht keine Kleinen und kennt keine Grossen, Achtet auch nicht auf das Band an den Hosen.¹</i> | A poet will forget the grate Loves people only; does not hate. Does not see big ones nor the small Not the stripe on pants at all. |
| <i>In Michel² ist manch schoenes Weib Für Herren der beste Zeitvertreib.</i> | In St. Mihiel is a female person For gentleman the best diversion |

¹Staff officer had red stripes on their pants.

²St. Mihiel

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| <p><i>Ein junger Krieger dacht' auch dies, Aber von der Wache liess Man ihn schnell vom Bettchen heben Mitten aus dem Liebesleben.</i></p> <p><i>Römerlager heisst ein Örtchen Wo manch' heisses Liebeswörtchen Süss erklang im Hochgefühl: Liebchen brauchst Dich nicht genieren, Willst ein Tänzchen mal probieren. Lass nur Hemd und Höschen fallen Und die Flaschenpfropfen knallen.</i></p> <p><i>Alles ist jetzt Lust und Freude, Jeder amüsiert sich heute; Doch das Unglück schreitet hier In Gestalt des Schwalangier.³</i></p> <p><i>Wie ein Spuck vor'm Sonnenlichte Ist die Freude jetzt zu Nichte. An die Tür klebt man 'nen roten Zettel:" Eintritt streng verboten!"</i></p> | <p>A young warrior thought that too. But also the sentries knew They took him quickly out of that Making love in a woman's bed.</p> <p>Roman quarters was it called Sweet love words were whispered there With feeling: and great sentiment: "Don't be too embarrassed Dear Wouldn't you dance with me here?" And while corks from bottles pop Says he: "Let your panties drop!" .</p> <p>"Let's dance together in the nude, Don't hesitate, it'll do you good!" It seemed all was fine and dandy Until the girl without her panty</p> <p>Met in the hall a <i>Chevauleger</i> He was so stern and without humor, Then a sticker put, the bummer: "This house is off limit for militare.</p> |
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On March 9th, 1916, Germany declared war on Portugal.

On March 15th, 1916, Austria-Hungary declared war on Portugal.

In the second quarter of 1916, the 21st Infantry Regiment had 52 men killed and 151 wounded. It had a comparatively quiet time in the woods of Ailly.

In the spring of 1916, the Australians were sent to northern France after having fought the Turkish army for two seasons on the Gallipoli Peninsula. They occupied the trenches in front of Neuve Chapelle and Laventie facing Aubers. Since the autumn of the previous year this was supposed to be a quiet sector. They were sent there to accustom them to the trenches on the Western Front. It had been decided that the 5th Australian Division and the 61st British should attack. They were standing on both sides of the Sugar Loaf Salient and were supposed to pierce the German line towards Lille, so that the Germans would not be able to send troops against the hard-pressed British on the Somme some thirty miles to the south. Because of bad weather the attack was postponed a couple of times.

³ Chevauleger

On June 6th, 1916 Kolb was transferred to the 5th company of the 5th Infantry Regiment and sent to the front. They were located near St. Mihiel on the Meuse River on the so called *Scharfe Eck* (sharp corner). The line there was only ten meters from the enemy. Therefore there was no action, a quiet section. The soldiers only had to go on night patrols, which was not very difficult. Kolb does not remember any casualties there at that time. He became known there to the officers and soldiers because of his humorous performances.

On July 16th, 1916, the 21st Infantry Regiment was replaced by the 2nd Bavarian Infantry Regiment and they were transported first to Namur and finally to Billy-Montigny, south of Lille. Bernhard Kolb was ordered, to the 21st Infantry Regiment as a replacement.

On July 16th, 1916 from Billy-Montigny they were transported by truck to Salaumines where the 5th Bavarian Infantry Division had to replace the 6th Reserve Corps.

On July 17th, the Australian commander, General Monro, proposed again to postpone the attack because of bad weather but changed his mind and ordered the attack. The Germans had abandoned the trenches in the rain-swept flatland and were now occupying the higher ground. The attack was a disaster, as from their position the Germans had the advantage to pick the attackers off easily.

In the night of the 19th to the 20th of July, the German regiment was ordered into the trenches of the 86th Reserve Regiment. Because of heavy Australian artillery fire, this section was left in a barely defensible condition. Their infantry was not very active, but their artillery was that much more so.

Therefore, everything was on extreme alert at all times, as an attack was feared at any moment.

August Kolb, the third of the Kolb brothers, was born November 11th 1888 in Sugenheim, went first to public school in Sugenheim and afterwards, when his widowed mother moved with her children to Nuremberg, to public school there. He learned the trade of a fine-baker and later on had his own bakery in Landau, where he lived with his mother. He was drafted on February 2nd 1915, by the 15th Bavarian Infantry Regiment, 11th Company and was sent to the Western Front in February 1915. He was first stationed in the area of St. Mihiel. Fort Vaux was captured by the Germans in February 1916. At the battle for the fortress Vaux he was hit in the neck by a shrapnel splinter, in the so called *Totenschlucht* (Death Valley). He died on August 1st 1916, at Fort Vaux, Verdun. The fort was recaptured by the French the next day on August 2nd, 1916 without resistance. This was the third son of Emma Kolb who lost his life for his imperial majesty, Kaiser Wilhelm II. and the glory of the German Reich. "The gratitude of the thankful fatherland will not ever be forgotten."



1916, second from left August Kolb

During the fall of 1916 the regiment established the second and third machine gun company. After the death of her third son, Emma Kolb asked that her oldest son, Bernhard, be taken out of the front line. This was refused because "as a leader of a machine gun marksman group he is indispensable!" First

Lieutenant Herold was furious about the refusal and wanted to help Kolb. He ordered him back to assist with the loading and unloading of provisions, but after three days the response came, that no soldier from the frontline was allowed to do that, only men who were classified KV. (Not for service on the front)

On August 27th, 1916, Rumania declared war on Austria-Hungary.

On August 28th, Italy declared war on Germany, and Germany declared war on Rumania.

On August 30th, Turkey declared war on Rumania.

On September 1st, 1916, Bulgaria declared war on Rumania.

On September 1, 1916 the regiment was told about a new relocation, and they had a premonition where it would be. On the Somme, strengthening of the lines was desperately needed. The 5th Bavarian Infantry Division, belonging to the Army group *Kirchbach* had to relieve the 56th Infantry Division, which was pretty much ground up. The trenches were west of Morval and east of Ginchy. To the left of them was the 7th Division and to the right the 185th Division. The Germans later called it the *Gallwitzriegel* (So called after General Gallwitz). There were no trenches in the first line, only shell holes that were connected by small grooves which were supposed to be some kind of linkup with each other. There were no dugouts. While the 14th and 19th Infantry Regiments were under heavy attacks from the English on September 9th, 1916, the 21st was still in reserve near Ytres, northeast of Combles, and were very busy digging trenches at Saily-Saillisel.

On the morning of September 12th the English guns started the bombardment all the way to Bapaume. The British infantry outnumbered the Germans four to one at this particular time. They also had far more cannons and almost total supremacy in the air. All day long they lobbed shells on the German trenches and on the last uncaptured corner of the so called Delville Woods. On the right, the 6th British Division pushed forward to the Ginchy-Morval road, but stopped short of it. It poured that night as on the one or two previous days. The German casualties increased.



Siegfried Hessdoerfer
1916

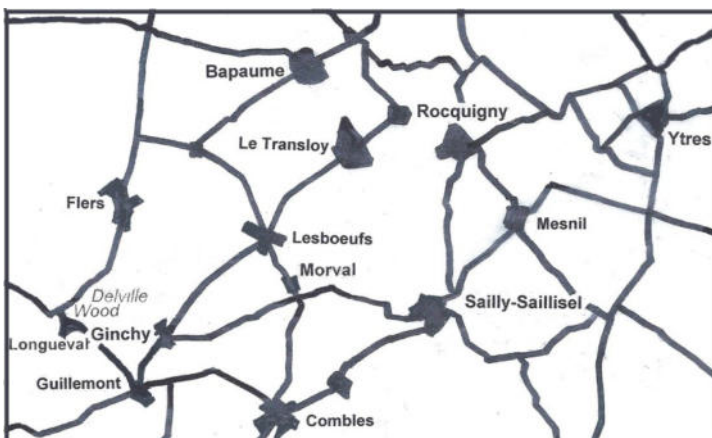
Eugen Hessdoerfer was born on March 7th, 1890, in Ottensoos the oldest son of the hop dealer Siegfried Hessdoerfer and his wife, Fanny. He went to the Realschule (high school) in Nuremberg after his family moved to the city in 1911. Afterwards he worked in the business of his father. In the fall of 1912, he was drafted to active duty to the 9th Company of the 14th Bavarian Infantry

Regiment. On the 6th of September, 1914, the regiment went to war. He was on the front at the battles in Lorraine,

(the battle of the frontier), around Metz, in the Champagne, in Aillywoods on the Loretto hills and on the Somme.



Eugen Hessdoerfer in
Metz 1916



At the peak of the battle on the Somme the regiment went into the trenches at

Longueval – Delville wood. After a four day constant fire the English attacked for the first time on September 15th with tanks and managed to advance almost 4 km. Also on September 12th 1916, shortly before he was going on leave; his parents and sisters expected Eugen momentarily home for the high holidays. As far as is known he was crossing a road. One of his comrades told him to watch out as the enemy could observe the road. He answered that he was too tired and did not care. He was killed by machine-gun fire at Rocquigny, 3.5 miles northeast of Morval and only about 3 miles east where my father was at that time. The 9th and 11th company had only 30 survivors. His belongings were sent to his parents, including a pocket watch with a bullet stuck in it. Eugen Hessdoerfer was buried in Re'vigny. He was the oldest brother of the future wife of Bernhard Kolb. The heavy fought for village of Flers had to be abandoned.

The 14th Regiment had survived the pounding of the day's bombardment on the edge of the woods. There were almost no trees more than two feet high in the Delville Woods left standing.

Of the regiment by September 13th 1916, two officers and 28 men were dead, and one officer and 82 men wounded.

On September 15th the English went over the top east of Ginchy at twenty past six in the morning and attacked again, mainly on the northern wing of the section of the 2nd Company of the 21st Infantry Regiment. A German quadrilateral redoubt had held up the advance towards Morval. British tanks came up to the German trenches and shot with revolver canons. Tear gas was also shot into that area. The section of the 3rd Battalion of the 21st Regiment suffered most of all. The extremely heavy bombardment leveled the trenches. It was reported: "From the section of the 6th Company to the right of the road only very weak traces are visible. Nobody from the company has seen the sent ordinance. Help is needed badly. The 7th Company does not answer!"

During that same night of the 15th Kolb had traveled the distance of 12 kilometers from the front to the Battalion Headquarters and back three times. He had just slept for a short time, when at 10:00 o'clock at night, the company scribe woke him up. He was ordered to go to the trenches again with one of the officers, as they had lost all contact with the front. It was a ghastly night, pitch dark, and the British artillery bombarded the area continuously so that no relief column could get through.

The British troops of General Rawlinson were ordered to break through the remaining German lines. The French 6th army attempted to clear the Germans from the British right flank. The 15th Scottish Division captured with a single tank Martinpuich. The Canadians who were northwest of the Albert-Bapaume road and outpaced their seven tanks to capture Courcelette.

The surfaced roads were almost impassable because of the pouring rain and the shell holes. There were columns of ammunition wagons coming back empty from the lines. Because of the continued indescribable noise of the artillery fire, the horses were very nervous and threw the two soldiers off their bicycles. The mud was sometimes knee deep. One wagon with six horses, which were killed by a direct hit, was just pushed a little to the side. As they came closer to the trenches, they hid their bicycles, and then made their way forward, sometimes crawling from shell hole to shell hole. The officer said that this was impossible; they should rather turn back. Kolb answered, that it was more or less the same every day, and he always had to do it. This is already his fourth trip on that day. The officer was too scared to try to go back by himself. Finally, far after midnight they got to the trenches.

The dug-out was shaking from the explosions of each close hit. The situation there was very serious although the line was still holding.

Now they had to go back again the same way. At 3:00 a.m. They finally reached the Battalion Headquarters where the general was nervously awaiting the report. The officer who came along was in such a situation for the first time. He was pretty shaken up by the experience and promised he would try to get a medal of bravery for the soldier who did that every day. As usually happened, it turned out this officer got the medal of bravery for himself but nothing for the soldier, my father. A couple of days later the regiment was relieved and could go back. They had suffered more than 50% casualties.

At another time, an enemy observation airplane saw Kolb and, realizing he was a messenger bringing information back from the front-line, tried to shoot him with airplane-darts. Kolb jumped off his bicycle and managed to hide in a field of thistles until the pilot gave up searching for him and the danger was over.

Another time, while traveling by bicycle again, he passed under constant shrapnel fire and heard something hit the bicycle. He kept on pedaling faster and faster to get out of the line of fire. He noticed that the back wheel got flat, but he could not do anything about it. After he finally could stop, he found that one of the shrapnel steel balls had gone through the back fender into the wheel, just a very short distance behind the saddle.

On a quieter day, private Kolb and another soldier were resting and talking, sitting in the trench on a primitive bench they had built out of scraps of broken furniture, when suddenly they heard an explosion nearby. They also heard that a piece of shrapnel must have hit very close by. They looked all over and could not find anything at first. As they got up from the bench they noticed the steel ball had hit the bench, right between them, almost touching each of their legs.

At another time, he was sitting in the dug-out with three other soldiers, playing cards during one of the artillery bombardments. The only light came through the door, which had to be closed quickly with a string, when they heard an incoming shell and it sounded as if it could hit nearby. Kolb had gone outside for a couple of minutes when suddenly there was a close explosion. Kolb went back down into the dug-out. All three of the soldiers he just left were dead. They had missed closing the door in time.

Two hours after the English had left their trenches, the wireless report to the German headquarters was that a tank had been seen in the streets of Flers with a large number of British troops following it.

The news was no better for the 2nd Battalion on the 16th of September, 1916. The situation became very serious. Even though the 21st Regiment held their section, the English came into the Gallwitzriegel. There was no more water. The trenches had to be secured to the flanks everywhere. The English had also advanced on the right wing. It became very critical when the 7th Regiment was thrown farther back to Lesboeufs.

The casualties of the 2nd Battalion, on the 14th and 15th of September, 1916 were 57 dead and 87 wounded, more than 50%. The situation became even worse when the regiment was completely outflanked in the southwest. They had held their section for six days but they now retreated under fire to

Morval. There were no forces for a counterattack. On the 19th of September, they finally were relieved. The 3rd Battalion was completely destroyed, and the survivors of the battalion, including its commander, became English prisoners of war. The overall casualty count for the regiment in the battle of the Somme was 31 officers and 1,069 men dead or wounded.

Bernhard Kolb was transported with the regiment to Haubourdin, southwest of Lille. The front was at Fromelles. The English trench was east of Fauquissart. As the lines in this sector were pretty much established, the English as well as the German pioneers were digging underneath the opposing lines. They were placing mines beneath the enemy trenches and exploded them the moment of attack. This caused casualties, confusion as well as panic in some cases. One of these explosions of a mine severely damaged my father's left ear.

He had to travel every day by train and streetcar to the nearby city of Lille and was treated at the ear hospital there for deafness caused by the explosion. From October 18th until October 30th, he had to go to the Resevelazarett E in Lille.

On September 30th, 1916, the regiment got the order to march to the railroad. They guessed and hoped for a trip and a couple of days of rest. But instead they heard the rumors about the situation on the Somme. Help was very urgently needed there. Instead of a rest area, they were shipped there.

The trenches in Flandern were constantly under a couple of feet of water and mud. There were shell-holes everywhere and were filled up to the top with water and mud. Wounded fell into these holes and drowned in them. At night to find your way between them was extremely difficult, one wrong step and you were gone. Even the rest of the terrain was knee deep in mud. On September 24th 1916, the 21st Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment was relieved by the Infantry Regiment 14.

My father's military passport shows that from June 17th until October 28th 1916, he was part of the 5th Company of the 21st Infantry Regiment at the front at the Somme River.

In October 1916 after the battles in St. Mihiel and in Flanders, he was asked by the commanding officer, who knew about his talent, to write another satiric poem about what had happened on the front:

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| <i>Es war für uns 'nen grosse Freud', Dass für Ostende wir bereit. Doch, weil es nachts nach Gas gerochen, Ward schnell die Reise abgebrochen. Man trieb mit uns ein loses Spiel, Die Somme war das Ausflugsziel.</i> | We all were in a joyful mood; To Ostend all of us will ride. Oh boy, that message sounded good!-- Because it smelled of gas that night, The trip was canceled, - what a shame, So we went to the Somme again. |
| <i>Herr Hauptmann sagt, Ihr alle wisst, Das Land, wo Milch und Honig⁴ fließt.</i> | The captain said: "All of you know The land of milk and honey, ¹³ |

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| <p><i>An der Somme blut'gem Strande Hat gekämpft die Kompanie, Mann und Führer im Verbande, Heldenmutig wie noch nie.</i></p> <p><i>Harte Köpfe brauch'n wir alle Ganz besonders in dem Falle Wie's 'nem Vize⁵ ist passiert Und nicht seinen Kopf verliert.</i></p> <p><i>Flog doch ihm ein feindlich Eisen, Zentnerschwer, er kann's beweisen, Mitemang an' d Schädel ran, Hat ihn garnichts angetan.</i></p> <p><i>Unser Herold stehts im Graben, Wenn man's noch so nennen sollte, Ging es dreckig stets zu haben Stützend, wo es wanken wollte.</i></p> <p><i>Schüttet so ein ganz Verflaxter⁶ Bis zum Hals zu diesen Ritter, Ruft er lachend seinen Wichser Einen Regenschirm für die Splitter.</i></p> <p><i>Bei dem Militär ist Sitte, Dass so um die Monatsmitte Nachschaut der Sanitätssoldat Wer wohl einen Kopfschuss hat.</i></p> <p><i>Doch dabei ist's schon passiert, Dass, der dort die Aufsicht führt Selber kam in's Lazarett Hundertzwölf⁷ steht ob'n am Bett.</i></p> <p><i>Für ein Suspensorium Sorgt das Ministerium. Legt ihm auch die Orden bei MVK⁸ und EK zwei.⁹</i></p> | <p>The Austrian would need you now On the Balkan where it's sunny!" You know the Somme's blood-soaked banks So heroic fought there all the ranks.</p> <p>Heads built as hard as granite rock. One needs them here with lots of luck. A sarge¹⁴ there, he can demonstrate His skull is still much harder made.</p> <p>One hundred pounds of English steel Not one ounce less that is for real. Flew on his head with quite a force But did not scratch his skin of course.</p> <p>Our Herold¹⁵ shored up trenches, Where the bombs and all the shells Had collapsed 'em; ---with some branches, In that men created hell.</p> <p>One came close now to this fella' To his chin was buried he: "Orderly, quick an umbrella So the splinters don't hit me!"</p> <p>In the middle of each month An army health inspector comes, Checks each soldier large or small That in his head there is no hole.¹⁶</p> <p>But it happened, what a shame That the one who for this came Must go to the Lazarett: "Hundred twelve "¹⁷ is on his bed.</p> <p>To applaud the infantry There is our ministry. They'll send medals ev'ry day, EK 2¹⁸ and MVK.¹⁹</p> |
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⁵Vice-Sargent

⁶a direct hit

⁷the number means that the man had syphilis

| | |
|---|--|
| <p><i>Handgranaten sind von Nutzen. Einer will dies stark benutzen. Schmeisst damit die Kreuz und Quer Über Freund und Feind daher.</i></p> <p><i>Aber keiner wird ihn zanken, Sondern für den Fahrschein¹⁰ danken. Und als Lohn für sein Betragen Zieren jetzt zwei Knöpfe den Kragen.¹¹</i></p> <p><i>Unschädlich ist jetzt der Soldat Pflanzt Rettich, Kraut und Kopfsalat.¹²</i></p> <p><i>Deutsche Flieger soll's auch geben, Sollen wir es noch erleben, Dass wir hier im Schützengraben Auch mal ein' gesehen haben.</i></p> <p><i>Endlich heisst's Ablösung vor Und aus der Hölle dunklem Tor,</i></p> | <p>Hand grenades are used in combats, One of our German comrades Threw them over friend and foe, Everywhere those things would go.</p> <p>At him mad, will be no one; He gave them a ticket home. For heroism he did perform Two buttons²⁰ adorn his uniform.</p> <p>Now that soldier is no more threat He grows radish beets and salad head.²¹</p> <p>German airplanes should exist We were told, but must have missed. Any of these flying things Showing off their skill on wings.</p> <p>We in the trenches, you and I Like to see one, before we die.</p> |
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⁸Kriegs Veditenst Kreuz

⁹Eisere Kreuz 2. Klasse

¹⁴sargent

¹⁵first leutenant

¹⁶an inspection about syphilis

¹⁷the number indicated that the soldier had the infection

¹⁸Iron Cross second class

¹⁹Military Distinguished Service Cross

¹⁰when wounded , a ticket back home

¹¹a promotion to Gefreiter

¹²he was ordered back because he was considered being shell-shocked

²⁰he was promoted to private first class

²¹he was taken back because he was shell shocked

*Tritt hervor die Kompanie.
Ihre Pflicht erfüllte sie.*

*Keine Handbreit hat der Feind.
Manche deutsche Mutter weint,
Manches Mädchenherz wird klagen
Um den Liebsten der erschlagen,
Draussen auf der blut'gen Wahlstat
Sein Hoechstes hingegeben hat.*

*Mög' der Geist der Heldenschaaren
Uns mit neuer Kraft beselen,
Bis aus tausendstimmigen Kehlen
Deutschere Sieg die Welt durchdringt
Der den deutschen Frieden bringt.*

The good news, s'hard to believe:
"Out of Hell!" We got relieved.

It is true, the British won.
But our company held on
And not one inch we have lost
Without a terribly high cost.
Tears of mothers everywhere
Girlfriends mourn their lovers there
Who have given up their lives
In that senseless slaughtering.
Widows have they made of wives,
Million children now can sing:
"Hail to Wilhelm's²² greediness
Our fathers you have slain,
Orphans are we, you're to blame! "

To explain the 13th rhyme: As my father read his little satiric poem on a stage in a rest area some place behind the front; even though he did not mention any name, but when he read about this part, the soldier tore off his two buttons, walked by the stage, threw it at Kolb and stormed out.



Bernhard and Hugo Kolb 1917

Towards the end of October, Bernhard Kolb was sent to a field hospital with severe frostbite on both feet

While in the hospital, on October 28th he got the message that his mother had asked again for a deferment because of a special law, the blood decree, as already three of his brothers had been killed during the war. He was made G.K.V. which meant, that he would still be in the armed forces but not sent to the front-line. He was sent to the 21st Infantry Regiment in Fuerth, *Maistrasse* to an ear hospital.

On November 26th 1916, he was ordered to the Replacement Battalion of the 14th Infantry Regiment, 1st Replacement Company and sent to Nuremberg as a company-scribe and sergeant



From left: My grandmother Emma Kolb, Hugo, Bernhard, Babette Singer-Kolb and Ruth

assistant. On January 1st 1917, he was promoted to the rank of corporal.

On January 8th 1917, the highest military and civil officials of Germany decided at a meeting in Pless on unrestricted use of submarines, even though they were pretty sure that this would bring the United States of America into the war. General Paul von Hindenburg and General Erich Ludendorff of the German High Command were certain, that by the time the Americans would be able to send troops, the war would be won.

On January 31st, 1917, the United States was notified that unrestricted submarine warfare would begin the following day.

On February 3rd, the United States government severed relations with the German government. During February and March several American ships were sunk by German submarines.

On April 6th, the United States of America declared war on Germany.

On April 7th, Panama and Cuba declared war on Germany.

On April 12th, Bernhard Kolb was transferred to the 14th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Replacement Company. He got sick with diphtheria and was treated for three weeks in the Reserve Military Hospital, Ludwigsfeld in Nuremberg. His military passport states that he was at the 3rd Replacement Company I Reserve 14th Infantry Regiment from the 13th of April 1917, until the 21st of May, 1917.

On April 24th, 1917, the 14th Infantry Regiment went into the front line in the area of Armentieres, west of Houplines and later near Frelinghien on the river Leie.

On the 22nd of May, he was transferred to the Recruit Depot No. 1 of the Replacement Battalion of the 14th Infantry Regiment and seemed to have arrived there on May 24th, 1917. He was there until March 18th, 1918.

On May 30, 1917 the British started the preliminary bombardment of the German lines. This was one of the most powerful ones of the war. This time they had no shortage of shells. The bombardment continued until Monday, June 7th. At 3:10 a.m. the attack started on the Messines-Wytchaete Ridge. They exploded the mines under the German lines, and the British Infantry advanced on a 9 mile front. The Germans retreated across the Leie river. They had held this position for two-and-a-half years. Their losses of killed, wounded and being taken prisoners were enormous.

It is possible that my father took part in the fighting on this section of the front as it seems he was there or very close to it at the time the 14th Infantry Regiment was in the Messines-Wytchaete Ridge area.

On June 15th, 1917 he received the Prussian Iron Cross II. Class. The date when he received the Medal for injury in black, is not registered in the passport.

From the 17th to the 27th of June, 1917, my father was ordered to take a course, class No. 2 in close hand-to-hand combat and bayonet fighting, communication by telephone and, after that, storm

troop training No. 3 in Grafenwoehr. After that he received training on the heavy machine-gun in Erlangen.

On June 27th, 1917, Greece declared war on Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany and Turkey.

On July 22nd, Siam declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary.

On August 4th, Liberia declared war on Germany.

On August 14th, China declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary.

On October 26th, Brazil declared war on Germany.

On November 9th, he was in the Reservelazarett II, at Ludwigsfeld in Nuremberg because of Diphtheria.

On December 10th, Panama declared war on Austria-Hungary.

On December 16th, Cuba declared war on Austria-Hungary.

From February 1st until the 15th, 1918, my father had to take another course, class No. 3, in hand-to-hand fighting.

On February 1st, 1918, he was promoted to the rank of sergeant.

On March 18th, he was ordered to the Field-Recruit Depot of the 5th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Division on the front.

On April 9th until June 10th, 1918, he was taken back again to the Recruit-Depot.

On April 23rd, Guatemala declared war on Germany.

On May 8th, Nicaragua declared war on Germany and Austria-Hungary.

On May 23rd, Costa Rica declared war on Germany.

On June 10th, Kolb was ordered to the Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 7, 2nd Company, and was in the trenches again, between Arras and Albert, during the second battle of the Somme. The battle lasted from June 10th until July 27th, 1918.

On July 12th, Haiti declared war on Germany.

On July 19th, Honduras declared war on Germany.

On July 28th, Kolb again was transferred back to the Recruit Depot of the 5th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Division on the front.

On October 28th, 1918, mutiny broke out in the German fleet. It spread rapidly to Hamburg, Bremen and Luebeck.

On November 7th to 8th, revolution broke out in Munich. The king of Bavaria abdicated.

On November 9th, Prince Max of Baden announced the abdication of Emperor Wilhelm II.

On November 10th, Emperor Wilhelm II fled to Holland.

On November 11th, 1918, at 11:00 A.M. hostilities ceased on the Western Front. Matthias Erzberger signed the armistice agreement aboard a train in the forest of Compiegne. The war was over!

The Allied Powers had demanded, in the accord of the armistice, that the German troops immediately evacuate all occupied territories. They set a timetable how far the Germans had to fall back each day and how far the allies would advance. The Recruit Depot was between Arras and Albert and had about one thousand young recruits under the command of one major, one sergeant and about a dozen corporals. The noncommissioned officers kept on asking their commanding officer, to give them the permission to leave with the troops, as they did not want to fall into American hands and become prisoners even after the war. The major, who had a car, kept on dragging his feet and stalling, saying that there was still lots of time. After another couple of days, the deadline came very close, the noncoms again sent the sergeant Kolb to the major to ask for permission to leave.

As before, it was denied again. At this point Kolb told the officer that now, even without his order, they are going to march. The major answered that if they leave he would have him court marshaled. When the corporals, who were standing outside, heard this, they loaded their rifles. The clicking could be heard inside. Only then did the major have no more objections to the homeward march of the soldiers.

On November 19th, 1918, the soldiers of the Recruit Depot started the march back home.

On December 5th, Bernhard Kolb was transferred to the Replacement Battalion of the Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 10, 1st Company.

On January 11th, 1919, he was transferred to the 11th Infantry Regiment 1st Democratic Company

On March 27th, he was discharged to go to Nuremberg

On March 29th, he was transferred to the 5th Democratic Company of the 1st Democratic Battalion of Nuremberg.

On March 31st, he was transferred to the District Command in Nuremberg and released from the army.

On April 4th, according to orders of the 14th Infantry Regiment, he was promoted to staff-sergeant. As soon as he came back to Nuremberg he was ordered to the district command to be involved in the demobilization of the troops returning home. Even though there was protest, he was made an administration official of the civil state service for casualties of the war.

On August 11th, 1920 the government of the German Reich adopted the paragraphs 135 to 137, the complete freedom of religion, freedom of conscience, as well as full citizen rights to the Jewish people.

In 1920 the anti-Semitic propaganda was already getting very strong. Bernhard Kolb was lucky to be very well liked by his superiors and, because of his ability, trusted with very important cases.

On June 19th, 1920 he was officially furloughed and received 50.00 Mark severance pay and 4.50 Mark march pay.(probably means for traveling expenses.)

On December 31st, he received the Bavarian Military Distinguished Service Medal III. class.

After the war Erich Kaestner wrote the following poems:

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| <p><i>Wenn wir den Krieg gewonnen hätten, Mit Wogenprall und Sturmgebraus, dann wäre Deutschland nicht zu retten Und gliche einem Irrenhaus.</i></p> | <p>If we had really won the war, With trumpets blare and thunder's roar Then Germany would have become A lunatic asylum.</p> |
| <p><i>Man würde uns nach Noten zähmen Wie einen wilden Völkerstamm. Wir sprängen, wenn Sergeanten kämen, Vom Trottoir und stünden stramm.</i></p> | <p>They'll tame and whip us to submission, Wild savages they think we are. For sergeant we get in position, Stand tight and jump from <i>trottoir</i>.</p> |
| <p><i>Wenn wir den Krieg gewonnen hätten, Dann wären wir ein stolzer Staat. Und Pressten noch in unsern Betten Die Hände an die Hosennaht.</i></p> | <p>If we had really won the war, We would be the most boasting land, And when at night in bed we are On trousers' seam we kept the hand.</p> |
| <p><i>Die Frauen müssten Kinder werfen. Ein Kind im Jahre. Oder Haft. Der Staat braucht Kinder als Konserven. Und Blut schmeckt ihm wie Himbeersaft.</i></p> | <p>The women have to spawn offsprings. One child a year: "Or to jail she goes!" States need children for safe keeping And blood it drinks like orange juice.</p> |
| <p><i>Die Grenze wär ein Schützengraben. Der Mond wär ein Gefreitenknopf. Wir würden eine Kaiser haben Und einen Helm statt einen Kopf.</i></p> | <p>The borders would be dugout trenches. The moon would wear a private's badge. We would have Kaiser Wilhelm's henchmen And helmets have we, but no heads.</p> |
| <p><i>Wenn wir den Krieg gewonnen hätten, Dann wäre jedermann Soldat. Ein Volk der Laffen und Lafetten! Und ringsherum wär Stacheldraht!</i></p> | <p>If we had really won the war, Than every man is <i>militaire</i>. A nation of morons, that we are And barb'd wire was everywhere.</p> |
| <p><i>Dann würde auf Befehl geboren.</i></p> | <p>To bear children would be dictated.</p> |

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| <p><i>Weil Menschen ziemlich billig sind. Und weil man mit Kanonenrohren Allein die Kriege nicht gewinnt.</i></p> <p><i>Dann läge die Vernunft in Ketten. Und stünde stündlich vor Gericht Und Kriege gäb's wie Operette. Wenn wir den Krieg gewonnen hätten- zum Glück gewannen wir ihn nicht!</i></p> | <p>Cheap are the Homo sapiens. Countries could never be invaded With guns alone, - they could not win.</p> <p>In chains lay sanity and reason Day in day out in court they are. We would have wars in every season, If we had really won the war. But fortunat'ly we did not.</p> |
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His first book of poetry was published at the end of 1927. In 1933 his books were burned on a large plaza in Berlin. A mob of university students in SA uniforms were standing there while Josef Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda minister, was holding a rally and calling out each of the names of 24 German authors, Kaestner included, whose books would be wiped out for ever. Erich Kaestner also wrote:

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| <p><i>Kennst Du das land, wo die Kanonen blühn Du kennst es nicht? Du wirst es kennenlernen! Dort stehn die Prokuristen stolz un kühn In den Bureaus, als wären es Kasernen.</i></p> <p><i>Dort wachsen unterm Schlips Gefreitenknöpfe. Und unsichtbare Helme trägt man dort. Gesichter hat man dort, doch keine Köpfe. Und wer zu Bett geht, pflanzt sich auch schon fort!</i></p> <p><i>Wenn dort ein Vorgesetzter etwas will Und es ist sein Beruf etwas zu wollen- Steht der Verstand erst stramm und zweitens still. Die Augen rechts! Und mit dem Rückgrat rollen!</i></p> <p><i>Die Kinder kommen dort mit kleinen Sporen Und mit gezognem Scheitel auf die Welt. Dort wird man nicht als Zivilist geboren. Dort wird befördert, wer die Schnauze hält.</i></p> <p><i>Kennst Du das Land? Es könnte glücklich sein. Es könnte glücklich sein und glücklich machen! Dort giebt es Äcker, Kohle Stahl und Stein Und Fleiss und Kraft und andre schöne Sachen</i></p> <p><i>Selbst Geist und Güte gibt's dort dann und wann! Und wahres Heldentum. Doch nicht bei vielen. Dort steckt ein Kind in jedem zweiten Mann Das will mit Bleisoldaten spielen.</i></p> <p><i>Dort reift die Freiheit nicht. Dort bleibt sie grün. Was man auch baut, - es werden stehts Kasernen. Kennst Du das Land, wo die Kanonen blühn? Du kennst es nicht? Du wirst es kennenlernen!</i></p> | <p>Do you know the land, where cannons flower? You don't?- - Oh you'll soon feel the proof! There procurators proudly show their power With bulging chest like rooster on the roof.</p> <p>There epaulets on every shoulder grow Invisible helmets where they should have heads. They have a face there, just no brain, you know, And propagate when they arrive in beds.</p> <p>When managers want something done, And it's their duty to demand, - for fun. His brain gets tight, and second it goes blah, The eyes turn right! And curl your vertebra!</p> <p>With tiny spurs a child comes to this sphere And his hair parted all perfectly straight. No one is born just as civilian there. One gets promoted who shuts up and waits.</p> <p>D'you know that country? Lucky it could be Not only fortunate, but prosperous for all. They do have diligence, vigor and energy You can find acre there, and steel and coal.</p> <p>Find intellect and kindness, - if you can Heroic courage! - With luck you find one. There is a child in ev'ry second man Who plays with lead soldiers and with gun.</p> <p>Liberty doesn't ripen there; it withered up and died. Instead of dwellings, - barracks they erect. You know that land! - Where might makes right! I guess you have to learn the fact!</p> |
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During the war years 1914 -1918 only the women's sports clubs were active as all the men were in the army. Only in 1919 the club started anew with the men who survived the war. The sports club changed its name in 1919 to Bar Kochba Nuernberg . More about this sport club later.

The Hessdoerfers



My grandfather Siegfried Hessdoerfer
1900



The house in Ottensoos



My grandmother Fanny Hessdoerfer
1914

My grandfather Siegfried Hessdoerfer was born on November 23, 1858 in Ottensoos as the fifth child of Ezechiel Hessdoerfer who was born January 1819 in Ottensoos and his wife Renate Neu, born on March 14, 1823 in Wilhermsdorf.

Ezechiel was the son of Seckel Ezechiel who was born 1783 in Ottensoos and his wife Johanna Groesch born September 1786 in Forth. Ezechiel was the fourth child of Koppel; Ben Izchok Seckel, born in Ottensoos and his wife Sorel Bat Abraham.

Koppel was the son of Ezechiel Baer Hestoefer who was born 1748 in Ottensoos and his wife Haendel who was born in 1749.

Ezechiel Baer was the grandson of Izchok Secken Ben Abraham (Eisig Rebitzer) born 1685 in Ottensoos.

Izchok Seckel was the son of Abraham Ben Benjamin Rebitzer born 1597 in Ottensoos.

Abraham was the son of Benjamin Rebitzer born around 1560

Benjamin was the son of a man with the partial name of Ben Hirsch Jud Rebitzer born 1530 probably also in Ottensoos

Benjamin was the grandson of Hirsch Jud Rebitzer born also probably in Ottensoos he was mentioned in the Schaittacher register in 1505

The Ensleins

My grandmother Fanny Enslein was born on October 31, 1865 in Jochsberg. She was the third child of Jsaak Baer (Seckel Baer) Enslein born February 5, 1815 in Jochsberg and his wife Sofie Steiner born May 25, 1827 in Steinhard.

Jsaak was the son of Mordechai Marx (Samuel) Enslein born June 2, 1779 in Jochsberg and his wife Pesle (Babette) born August 3, 1790.

Mordechai was the son of Samuel Enslein born in 1736 or 1737 in Jochsberg and his wife Karoline born August 1822 or October 1823.

My mother, Reta Hessdoerfer, the third child and the oldest daughter of Siegfried and Fanny Hessdoerfer, was born on October 18, 1892 in Ottensoos, a small village east of Nuremberg. Her favorite doll, when she was a small child, was a black cast iron boot-jack. She dressed it and always kept on saying, how heavy her child was. She went to the public school in Ottensoos

Once in summer during vacation when Reta was about eight years old, she was permitted to visit her Aunt Dina, the sister of her father, and Uncle Moritz Gunzenhaeuser.. The Gunzenhaeusers lived in Memmelsdorf. a small village north of Bamberg and I can't imagine how she could have gotten there alone; somebody must have taken her there and again brought her back home. Reta had a great time. The Gunzenhaeusers had eight children. Regina, Hedwig and Cilly were quite a bit older and did not want to bother with this little girl. Also Isidor, called Isi was about seven years older and had different interests. She got along very well with her next younger cousin, Emil, who also was almost four years her senior.

Then there were Max and Siegfried, who were actually more her age, but she just liked Emil better. Jette was just a little girl, four years younger than Reta.

The holiday was over too soon and the time came when Reta had to go home again. Emil kept on bothering her to stay a little longer. He liked her too, and they really became good friends. But she said her mother told her to come home on a certain day, which was coming that weekend. When finally the day of her departure came, Emil said to Reta: "I know why you want to go home so suddenly, you stole all our apples!"

"I did not" she screamed, "What gave you such an idea!"

"You didn't?" said he, "Why don't you open your suitcase and let's see."

"Sure", she said and opened the suitcase. It was full of apples. Reta could not get a word out, she was shocked. She started crying and screaming, that she did not take even one apple.

When Aunt Dina heard this commotion she came running out of the kitchen. "What is the matter? Why are you crying? All the time you were here you got along so well" she said. Between sobs Reta said, that Emil accused her of stealing the apples, and she did not put them in her suitcase. Aunt Dina knew right away who the culprit was and tried to catch Emil, but he knew what was coming and ran out the door.

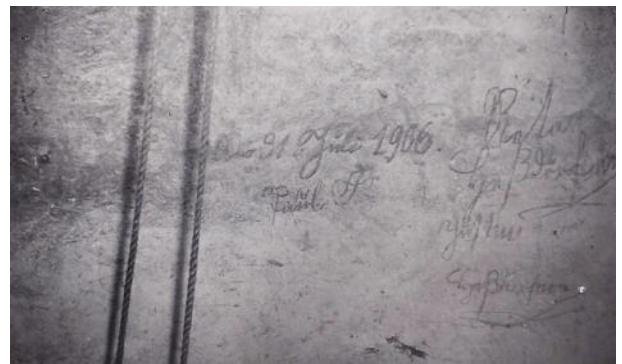
It took a while to calm Reta down, but everything was straightened out. Emil had to bring all the apples down in the cellar again.

The Hessdoerfers had rented part of a house in Bahnhofstrasse 5 in Ottensoos. The first floor was occupied by the family of the owner, the Seidenfadens. The Hessdoerfers had six children. One boy, Max died as a baby. There were two boys, Eugen the oldest was 2 years older than Reta and Justin 5 years younger, and three more girls besides Reta. Paula was 3 1/2 years younger, Hertha, 8 years younger and Thea who was almost 13 years younger.

When Thea was just a baby the older girls liked to wheel her around in the baby-carriage. There were no sidewalks in the village but the roads were pretty safe at that time, and the children always played in the street. After all, horse or oxen drawn wagons never went too fast and were no danger to the children.

After pushing the carriage a while Reta felt like playing hide and seek with the other kids. She stood the carriage on the side of the road and left it there. Baby carriages at that time did not have breaks and as the road was slightly higher in the middle than on the side, the carriage rolled slowly into the ditch, spilling the baby into the mud. The baby never even was awakened by the spill.

July 31st, 1906, when Thea was just one year old, the wall in the attic of Bahnhofstrasse had to be plastered. While the plaster was still wet, two of the Hessdoerfer children, Reta and Justin, and the son of the Seidenfadens, Paul, sneaked up and wrote their names into the wet plaster. *(I took that photo in 1953 when it was still readable. But when we were back in 1996 the wall was plastered over)*



Paula, the second daughter was born on February 27, 1896. She was a very pretty little girl and managed to convince her big brother Eugen to take her along once when he went to the city of Nuremberg. It was the first time Paula was in the big city and everything there was new to her. Eugen held his little sister by the hand as they went through the fruit market in Nuremberg. Paula knew what apples or pears or plums were, but there were some fruits she had never seen before in her life. "What are those yellow things there that come in bundles?" she asked. Eugen said:

"They are called bananas."

"Oh, Eugen please buy me one of these bananas," she begged.
 "No", he said," you would not like it."
 "But how do you know, did you ever eat one?"
 "No, I did not, but I know you are a very fussy eater."
 "But Eugen, they look so delicious and I am sure I like it!"
 "Paula, these are fruits from a foreign country, I don't even know from where they come!"
 " Eugen look, that boy over there is getting one, please, please, buy me one too!"



Eugen Hessdoerfer 1904

"OK." said Eugen finally, "I'll buy you one, but you better eat it, or you will have a lot of trouble if I spend all the money already!"

"Don't worry", she said, "I'll eat it!"

So Eugen bought one banana and gave it to Paula.

"Don't eat it right this minute", he said," the people will think you are starved. Wait till we are around the corner"!

Now Eugen did not know how to eat a banana either and when Paula finally was permitted to eat it she bit right into it without taking the skin off. She made a face, but was afraid of her big brother and ate it. When she came to the inside of the fruit, she found out, that one should have taken the skin off first.

In 1913 Paula was 17 years old and was permitted to visit her Uncle Salomon and Aunt Mina in Leuthershausen during the summer. Uncle Salomon was a younger brother of her mother. There were a lot of cousins there too. There was Gretel the oldest one, then Cilly, Jakob, Isi and the youngest one Ella. Right away Jakob became very interested in the beautiful girl and Paula too, liked the good looking young man who was just two years her senior. Both of them spent a lot of time together in that short vacation and even afterwards kept on writing to each other. Paula loved Jakob and Jakob loved Paula. Now both of the parents became very worried that this love would end up in a wedding and did everything on both sides to discourage the two lovers. They told them it would be disasterous if two first cousins were going to get married.



Paula Hessdoerfer and Jakob Enslein

Justin, Paula's younger brother, was a very easy going child. At one time his mother sent him to the grocer to buy a nutmeg for her. Nutmeg is called *Muskat Nuss* in German. As this was a hard word for a little boy to remember, he kept saying it to himself on his way to the store. Constantly repeating *Muskat Nuss*, *Muskat nuss* .

When he opened the door there a bell rang to alert the grocer that a customer entered. The lady asked Justin what he wanted and now he had forgotten what it was called. He remembered it was a nut. But what kind of a nut? It had a strange name. He remembered it must have started with an "M". Oh yes, now he remembered: "*A Meshuggene Nuss*".

At another time he was sitting on the little wall next to the stone stairs outside the house. Somebody walked by and said: "Justin, don't sit there, you are going to fall off!"

"No", he said, "I am talented." With that he fell off the wall.

Justin was four years older than Hertha, who was born in 1900. Both children went skating in the winter on the local pond. Hertha fell through the ice. It was not very deep and there was really no danger to the child. But Justin ran home to report the accident. He was telling it to everybody he met on his way home. People asked him why he did not help his sister out of the water. "I did not want my mother to lose two children," was his answer.

As a little girl Hertha was very easy going but also very careless. She was sewing something and the thimble fell down and rolled under the sofa. She did not pick it up, but said: "When one looks for it next time, one can't find it!"

Siegfried Hessdoerfer was a dealer in hops and besides had a little general store in Leinburg, another small village about 10 km to the south of Ottensoos. This was too far to come home every night by horse and wagon and besides, the road went around the **Moritzberg** and was at least 14 to 15 km long. When Reta was 14 years old, she was finished with school. She stayed with her father in Leinburg and cooked and kept house for him during the week. On Friday evening before Shabbat both of them drove back to Ottensoos, which might have taken them at least 3 to 3 ½ hours.



Hertha and Thea 1912

It was the year 1908. Reta was about 16 years old. She was sent to the large city of Nuremberg to learn a trade, as there was not much opportunity for a young Jewish girl in Ottensoos. The parents made arrangements for her to live and eat in a home for Jewish girls. It was called the *Stift*. Girls from all over southern Germany were living there. Reta became an apprentice in a millinery shop. At that time, beginning of the twentieth century a well dressed woman never went out without a hat. All the work was done by hand and therefore making hats was a good profession. A couple of years later her sister Paula also came to the *Stift* and learned the same trade.

In 1911 Siegfried Hessdoerfer gave up his store in Leinburg and moved his hops business and his family to Nuremberg. They rented an apartment in Peter-Henlein Strasse 42 which was right around the corner from the Alexander Strasse where the Kolb family lived. The younger children went to school there and Reta and Paula moved back with their family. Also, two of their friends from the *Stift* moved in with them for a while. Later on the two sisters started their own business, and made women's hats until early in the 1920s, even after both of them were married.

Thea, the youngest of the Hessdoerfer girls, was only a teenager at that time. After school she delivered the hats to the customers and earned a little pocket money when she was given a tip.

Shortly after the war, Fanny Hessdoerfer inherited a large sum of money from a relative in the United States. Justin, her only surviving son, was in his early twenties, and asked his mother whether she would lend him the money so he could start his own business. Justin had learned as an apprentice to be a merchant in men's suits. His mother gave him the money, with his pledge to provide for the dowries of his two younger sisters. With this he started the Men's Clothing Company of Hessdoerfer & Hermann. They rented the back of the building of Alexanderstrasse 5. and produced men's suits and overcoats. But the partnership did not work out for long and the two men separated. The Kolb family lived in the front of the same building and there I am sure the Kolbs and Hessdoerfers met.

Justin Hessdoerfer hired Hugo Kolb who also had been an apprentice in men's clothes, as a salesman. Later on, after the partnership with Hermann did not work out, Justin took Hugo as a partner in his business. The company was now called Hessdoerfer & Kolb.

In the beginning of the year 1919 the anti-Semitism in Nuernberg was already at a point that the organization, Defense against Anti-Semitism, which was started in 1890, printed the following announcement in the newspaper: "During the last week an irresponsible provocation was busy trying to destroy the denominational peace in our native town and sabotage it!"

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| July 16 th 1920, Bernhard Kolb's pension of a sergeant was 10% (of his army pay) | |
| | amounting yearly to <u>RM 72.00</u> |
| It breaks down like this: | Pension, monthly to RM 6.00 |
| | war increase 5.00 |

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| | Pension increase <u>2.25</u> |
| Total starting May 1 st 1919 | RM 23.25 |

Besides this he was to receive a steady increase of 40% because of inflation starting May 1st 1919

and 30% starting May 1st 1920. Reexamination 1924.

He reported his address on June 23rd 1920 as Nuremberg, Alexanderstrasse 5.

On April 20th 1920 my father married Reta Hessdoerfer, in the Hauptsynagogue in Nuremberg. The ceremony was performed by Rabbi Max Freudenthal. As it was shortly after the war and that time it was impossible to get an apartment, both newlyweds went home to their respective parents. My grandmother Emma Kolb, who was already a widow for 27 years, lived in an apartment in Alexanderstrasse 5 and the parents of my mother right around the corner in Peter-Hehnlein Strasse 42. The factory of my Uncle



Standing second from left, Justin Hessdoerfer. Behind my father Hugo Kolb and Paula Hessdoerfer. Next to her Hertha Hessdoerfer. On the bottom row from left: Emma Kolb, Ruth Singer, Siegfried Hessdoerfer, Thea Hessdoerfer and Fanny Hessdoerfer

Justin was the same address in the back building in Alexanderstrasse 5..

On May 27th 1920 Bernhard Kolb and Reta Hessdoerfer got married at the *Rathaus* (city hall) to become man and wife by civil law. They finally had found an apartment, a small basement flat, in the Birkenstrasse 8 and now they could move in together.

On November 3rd 1920 Hugo Kolb got married to Paula Hessdoerfer, my mother's sister. The young couple found an apartment in Heinrich Strasse in Schweinau, where their two children were born. My grandmother, Emma Kolb, lived with them

On June 15th, 1921 the Jewish Gymnastic and Sport Club Bar Kochba was registered in the organization registry at the Amtsgericht Nuremberg.

On February 7th 1922 a girl was born at 11:00 a.m. in Nuremberg to Paula and Hugo Kolb. She was named Hella.

On February 27th 1922, at 10:30 a.m., I was born. They gave me the name Herbert and the Hebrew name Naphtoli Ben Issachar, after my grandfather Hermann. Hella was also named after him. We were the first grandchildren of our grandparents, Emma Kolb and Fanny and Siegfried Hessdoerfer.



Aunt Paula and my mother with left Hella and me.

My mother and her sister Paula, still continued their millinery shop and every day the two ladies were sitting together in one of the apartments, sewing lady's hats. My mother had a lot of milk and Aunt Paula had very little. Therefore my mother was nursing Hella as well as me.

As soon as I could walk, Grandpa Hessdoerfer came every day to the nearby apartment on Birkenstrasse, where my parents and I lived and took me for a little walk. Opa Hessdoerfer, or as we called him, Hessdoerfer's Grossvater always walked very slowly with a cane; he had asthma, He looked much older than his 65 years. He never got over the death of his oldest son Eugen who was killed on September 12th 1916 in World War I, just days before he was to come home on furlough for the high holidays.

Not surprising I had to have a cane too. It was a common sight to see the old man and the little boy walking side by side. The two became completely inseparable and every day they walked for hours. The granddaughter Hella lived much farther away and it was impossible for the old man to visit there often.

On February 7th 1923, my father accepted a position as a tax-counselor at the *Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde* (Jewish Community) of Nuremberg. Shortly afterwards, on March 31, was the first day of Pesach. Because of the instigation by Julius Streicher and the Jew baiting in his gutter-press, The Stuermer, the Jewish people of Nuremberg feared an attack on the synagogue was imminent. Streicher's agitation of the masses was based on his promulgation of the lies of ritual murders around the time of Pesach. My father as well as other Jewish men spent the nights of the whole week of Pesach in the basement of the synagogue. During the high holidays of the same year the congregation

arraigned a security and guard service. From then on, every year the synagogue was guarded against the Nazi hoodlums the same way.

May 28th 1923, Hertha, the second youngest daughter of Fanny and Siegfried Hessdoerfer, who was born on August 28, 1900, got married in Nuernberg to Siegfried Fleischmann who was born on June 7, 1896, in Oberlangenstadt.

The following stories are the only ones I remember that my mother told me about Hertha. When she was a little girl she was very easy going but also quite careless. She was sewing something and the thimble fell down and rolled under the couch. She did not pick it up, but said: "When one looks for it next time, one can't find it!" At another time one of the neighbors the family was friendly with, gave Hertha a piece of chocolate. Hertha thanked the lady but said: "If you had given that chocolate to my brother Justin, he would have said this is a little piece!"

Because of the extreme inflation, in June 1923 the congregation could not pay my father's salary any more. This was an especially bad time for him to be unemployed as my mother was pregnant again. The job situation in the country was very difficult. After a couple of days he started as a book-keeper in the men's clothing company of his brother-in law Justin and his brother Hugo, Hessdoerfer & Kolb.

This was the time of the highest inflation in Germany and it was very difficult to get anything at all, including food. Besides, prices changed so rapidly, sometimes twice a day, that even getting paid every day, by the evening one could not afford even a loaf of bread any more.

During the summer my father went by bicycle to nearby villages and tried to get butter or eggs or even vegetable from the farmers. Very often he took me along in a little basket, which was mounted in front of the bicycle. I was only a little more than a year old. I believe having a baby along might have made it a little easier to get food item.



Hella and I on Aufsessplatz

On July 31st 1923, at 8:15 a.m. a second child, a girl was born to my parents. They named her Erna, after the brother of my mother, Eugen who was killed in the war. Erna got the Hebrew name Esther. Five days later, on August 5th 1923 at 12:00 noon, Justin and Baerbel Hessdoerfer had their first child, a boy and called him Erich, also named after Eugen Hessdoerfer.



Hella about 1923

My Grandparents lived in the second floor apartment in Peter-Henlein Strasse 42. Like every apartment building in Nuernberg at that time, one had to walk up. The stairs went first one way and than turned 180 degrees and went in the opposite direction on the landing. There was a stained glass window. Some of the glass was broken and it was repaired with a length of adhesive tape. I was just a year and a half old when my sister was born, and following incident must have happened shortly after Erna's birth. As I noticed that repaired window I called it "*Baby's Bauch*" (baby's stomach), because of the criss-cross taping of the window looked

like the tape on Erna's belly button. This is the earliest thing I remember. I was about one and a half year old.

Hella grew into a very lively little child, while I was much quieter. As the grandfather himself was a very docile man, he was extremely partial to me. When we both were at the grandparents' house and Hella was running around, he was always afraid something would happen to me, his favorite. He kept on saying: "Take that *meshuggene Frauenzimmer* (the crazy woman) away, I am afraid she is going to scratch the eyes out of the little boy yet!"

Our apartment in Birkenstrasse had a large tiled stove in the corner of the living room. There was a space in the middle of it for heating a kettle of water. In front of this were two little brass doors which looked like little garden doors, to hide the kettle. As the stove was not used in summer this little door was standing open. It just happened that a bird flew through the window of the apartment and somehow grandpa chased it into that opening at the stove. He closed the door and now I had a little bird in a make-shift bird-cage. Probably after a while my mother let the bird free again.

November 1923, the Jewish congregation asked my father to come back and offered him even better conditions. From then on he was responsible for the whole administration and management of the reorganization of the congregation. The Jewish congregation of Nuremberg had increased to 10,200 members and at that time was financially the best of all Jewish congregations in Germany.

January 31st 1924 at 4:15 a.m. a boy was born to Aunt Paula and Uncle Hugo, and was given the name Ernst, again they named him after Eugen, the brother of Paula. His Hebrew name: Ezechiel Ben Zvi.

July 23rd 1924, Hertha and Siegfried Fleischmann moved to a third floor apartment in Hastverstrasse 32.



My father took this photo on my second birthday in 1924

On October 1st 1924, we moved to the fifth floor walk up, the top mansard apartment on Steinheilstrasse, 19. This again was a small apartment, only a living room, one bedroom and kitchen, but already much larger than the one in Birkenstrasse. All the rooms had dormers and there was no bathroom or toilet in the apartment. When the moving van came to the Birkenstrasse to pick up the furniture, Erna, who was at that time only 14 months old, cried, when her crib was put into the van. Even though she did not talk yet, she was afraid she would no longer have a place to sleep.

In that new apartment, I did not sleep in my parents' bedroom any more but I slept in the living room on a couch behind a wall screen



Steinheilstrasse 19. The corner with the two windows was our living room and the window to the right was the bedroom.

which was attached on top to a wooden frame, which was standing in front of the couch. Erna was still sleeping in her crib in the bedroom. I still remember that the screen had a forest scene with elks on it. This new apartment was quite a bit further from Peter Henlein Strasse, but our grandfather still came almost every day for the walk with me.

I remember my parents had a stroller and I had a seat in front of the regular seat where my sister sat in.

My mother always had to go with us children to the toilet, as soon as we were out of diapers. This toilet was for both of the apartments on the same floor and was just like an outhouse, a wooden bench with a big round hole cut out. As Mama was scared that a child could fall into this big hole, she always went with us.

One day, I must have been about three or three and a half years old, she went to that lavatory with me. But she left the apartment door a little open so she could still watch her little girl. Erna was about two years old. Erna was a very lively girl, but she still did not speak clearly. My mother had not taken her apartment key along and before she knew it, Erna had slammed the front door shut. The lock was at least five feet from the floor.

Now Mama Kolb got very excited, as up there in the fifth floor, were no window guards or anything else protecting the windows. She tried to keep Erna occupied next to the door. Also she asked our next door neighbor to please go to her parents and pick up the spare key: we did not have a telephone. Our grandparents lived about 15 to 20 minutes away, and this was the only way, as she could not go herself, and leave the baby in the apartment alone. She kept my sister occupied, talking to her constantly. To keep Erna near the door was easier said than done. Erna said something that sounded like she is going to open the door. "No, no", shouted my mother, "Don't go away from the door!" One heard loud rumbling noises, with my mother still begging Erna to come back to the door. Nothing doing! The noises continued and after a short time the door opened.

Erna had pushed or pulled one of the big easy chairs from the living room out into the hall, climbed on top of it, probably had to climb even on the backrest, and opened the door. This must have happened in 1925 or 1926.

June 16th 1925, Aunt Hertha and Uncle Siegfried Fleischmann, had their first child, Max. Max was named after a brother of Siegfried who was killed in 1916 during WWI.

Once, on a Friday evening, probably the same year, Papa Kolb was just going to make Kiddush, when Erna was suddenly very excited, running from the living room to the front door of the apartment. She still did not speak very clear, and constantly was repeating one word: "*Kawiskan!*" Nobody could figure out what she meant. She took my father by the hand pulling him to the front door and repeating the same word "*Kawiskan, Kawiskan*", over and over again. Papa Kolb opened the door and looked outside, but that was not what she meant, she kept on pointing at the door and always repeating:



Aunt Paula with Hella and Ernst 1925

"Kawiskan, Kawiskan!" Finally everybody gave up and went back to the dinner table. Erna also had stopped, and the whole matter was forgotten.

Many years later in a different apartment, - one usually took the door lock along when one moved. My father installed the lock into our new front door. Something got jammed in the lock. I probably was 15 or 16 years old and took the lock apart to see what was jamming it. I found a little dried up substance jammed in the mechanism. We now remembered the incident of the *Kawiskan*. The lock jammed because of a pumpkin pit Erna had stuffed into it. The German word for pumpkin pit is *"Kerbiskern."*

During the summer months in 1925 the two Kolb families rented rooms on a farm in the small village of Huettenbach. Huettenbach is not very far from Ottensoos, and it is possible that my grandparents had known the farmers before. The village is about 20 miles east of Nuremberg. Both fathers went to work and came back every night either by train or by bicycle.



My father with Erna, my mother, unknown lady in the center, Aunt Paula and right Uncle Hugo with Ernst. In the center Selma Weil and Paul Baruch with a group of hikers from the sport club. In front left I and on the right Hella and Thea.



The four of us enjoyed watching the chicken and ducklings and playing in the sandbox



My little white goat kid followed me around wherever I went. I still remember one walk through the woods where probably only I, one of the two bigger children were taken along. My little goat came along too. It seems it was quite a long walk for a little boy, because I as well as the goat got tired and did not want to walk any more. Both of us had to be carried home. The farm had a laundry washing room down in the cellar. All the women had a lot of dirty laundry and one day they fired up the stove to boil the laundry. I remember that little room was filled with steam and there were, including grandmother, at least three women in that laundry room. The only window in that room was broken and the shards of glass were still hanging in the frame with jagged edges. I must have been in that laundry room because I remember what happened very vividly. Ernst was only two and a half years old and was playing outside. Suddenly he noticed his mother through that broken window and decided to visit her. All the women in that room screamed that he should not crawl through, but all in vain. I still can see Aunt Paula pulling big bloody shards of the glass out of his thighs.

During the summer of 1925, I was just 3 ½ years old, my father enrolled me in the Bar Kochba Nuremberg, the Jewish athletic and sport club. My mother brought me every Wednesday afternoon from 4 until 5 for gymnastic and exercise for children between 4 and 6 years old to the *Maennerturnverein* (men athletic club) on Landgrabenstrasse. During the summer 1927 my father enrolled my sister too.

The Bar Kochba ladies' relay team. They were the last. Second from the left Thea Hessdoerfer, sixth Selma Weil, ninth Emilie Horwitz. In the back Paul Baruch and Hugo Kolb



The second year, in the summer of 1926 the Hessdoerfer and the Fleischmann families joined us in Huettenbach. Our Hessdoerfer grandparents as well as my father's mother, stayed for the summer. The hikers from the Bar Kochba sports club came by again on one of the Sunday club hikes.

On top grandmother Kolb next to Aunt Paula and Uncle Hugo. On the left in suit Uncle Justine Hessdoerfer and next to him Mr. and Mrs. Federlein. In front of him Erna Erlangeer, a friend of Thea with Ernst in her arms. Slightly in front of Erna Erlanger is Aunt Baerbel Hessdoerfer and next to her Erich. On the right side, my father with Erna to his left is Bruno Gutmann and to his right Fritz Phillip. In front of him Thea with Hella and next to her my mother and me.



On another weekend in 1926 the young people of the Jewish Sport club Bar Kochba, came by on one of their weekly hikes. With them was Aunt Thea with all her friends and lots of sport club friends of my father. They all came by to visit our families.



Starting left: Erna, Erich, Ernst, Hella, I, two ladies I don't remember, my mother, Bruno Gutmann, Aunt Thea, another lady, Fritz Phillip, Erna Erlangere, Aunt Paula, Aunt Baerbel, my father Uncle Hugo, Mr. and Mrs. Federlein, a man before Uncle Justin and another man



Grandfather Hessdoerfer



Erna, Erich and I

Max Fleischmann was only one year old. All the bigger children had a wonderful time playing ring around the roses around him.



Wading in a tiny brook on the farm

On one of the weekends, when all the men were around, the uncles decided for sport to jump across the brook which ran by, in front of the farm, next to the road. All of us children and our mothers were watching. This was not a very wide brook and for the two men, Papa and Uncle Hugo, who were active in the sport club, not much of a challenge.

Uncle Justin made it too, with a little coaxing. Uncle Siegfried did not want to stay back and be ridiculed by his brothers-in-law. He went quite a way back to have enough



Bar Kochba lady team. Thea fourth from the right

momentum to be able to get over the brook. He ran and run, but shied the last second, could not stop any more, and fell on his stomach into the brook. I don't remember, but I am sure the uncles as well as my father were standing around and had a good laugh.

I also remember one time when my father and Uncle Hugo had to ride on bicycles to a neighboring village to go shopping for something. Both of them took their oldest children, Hella and me, along. We each were standing in the backpack of our fathers with our arms and head sticking out.

Back again in Nuremberg every Saturday morning, my father always took me every Saturday along to synagogue. On one of these Saturdays he had made arrangement with a doctor, a good friend of his, to bring me after the services to the practice, to have my enlarged tonsils removed. It was not supposed to be a big operation. Papa did not say anything about it to me. Like on every Saturday we were just walking next to each other. Somehow I remember my father had a towel along. I always asked my father all kinds of questions and on this morning I just said:

"Papa, is it possible that I die before you?" I don't know what my father answered, but this innocent question shook up my father. He was never superstitious, but this question bothered him so much that he never went to the doctor and even today I still have my tonsils.

While we were living in the apartment in Steinheilstrasse my parents rented a small garden a short distant away. They grew all kinds of vegetables, had a couple of currant bushes and also one or two fruit trees. My father also built a little hen house, fenced it in and kept a couple of chicken there; at



The four of us in our little garden

least once, even a turkey. I always liked animals. One particular black and white chicken was my pet. The chicken knew me too and came to me like a little dog whenever I called it and followed me around. It also knew how to sneak through the fence. I gave it the name Schluepferle (Something which could squeeze through.) Once in a while my father took one of his chickens to the Shochet and had it killed the kosher way. When I recognized that the dead chicken my father brought home was my pet, not only did I not eat from this chicken, I never ate chicken again all my life.

Very often on Sundays the whole family came to our garden and we children could play in the sandbox. My father and the uncles played cards in a little gazebo in the back of the garden. My mother was busy talking to her sisters and sister-in law.

Friday, September 17th 1926, was Erev Yom Kippur 5687. As usual in the 1920s all the well dressed men had high hats. As the Jewish congregation was steadily expanding and there were not enough seats in the synagogue for the High Holidays, the congregation rented a large hall to accommodate all the people. For years the *Kulturverein* had been rented for these three days.

As usual my father took me along on Kol Nidre night, I was four year old. He placed me on the bench all the way in front on the left side, right behind the Bimah, where all the other little boys were

sitting. The girls had a bench also in front on the other side. Papa told me to stay there until after the services and he would pick me up as soon as they had finished.

The services were over and I waited just where he told me to stay. I remember I did see him sometimes way in the back, talking to people as he always did. This was not very unusual, as everybody knew him, and he too knew everybody. Patiently I waited. I knew my father. It always took a long time until he picked me up. This day it took particularly long. But this was not unusual.

The hall slowly emptied. Somebody came to me and asked what I was waiting for, and I told him, for my father. The man, who knew me, said: "Your father went home!" I thought this man just wanted to scare me, and I still did not move from the designated place. But it got later and later and finally they started turning the lights off. My father still did not return, someone told me, I had to get outside, as they would turn off the lights and lock the building. So he took me by the hand and led me to the sidewalk.

There were still quite a few people standing around talking. Almost everyone knew me, the son of the secretary of the congregation. But they also knew that Kolb had already left. What should they do with me now?

A young man, Mr. Paulus, said he knows where the Kolbs live and he would bring me home. Together with his young wife the three of us now walked towards the Steinheilstrasse.

In the meantime, my father had completely forgotten that he had me along, and went first to Peter-Henlein Strasse which was more or less on his way home to wish his in-laws a "*Good Yom Tov*." They even asked why he did not have me along as he usually did. But even that did not remind him of anything. He only stayed a short while and then finally walked home. He walked up the five floors, kissed his wife and his little daughter and wished them a good holiday. My mother asked him where I was, but even that did not remind him. He just answered, "I don't know!". My mother thought he is playing a little trick, and I was outside the door. So after another couple of minutes she said to my father: "I think you should let him in now!" Innocently my father asked: "Whom?" "Did you leave Herbert in front of the apartment door?" she asked. "No!" My mother now realized that I was not there. "Where did you leave the child?" She now shouted a bit excited. It finally dawned on him that he had taken me along, but completely forgot about it.

He stormed down the 5 floors, out of the door and, even though he was a pretty good athlete, this time he made the five floors in Olympic record time. In front of the door he met the two grown-ups with his son. Nobody ever let him forget that he had forgotten his child on a Kol Nidre night.



Erna 1927

At another time, this might have been a couple of years earlier also during the High Holidays, he was standing in front of the *Kulturverein* building. He, his brother Hugo, sister-in-law Thea and other relatives were standing around talking. It was fashionable then that men went to synagogue in top hats. A man on a bicycle rode by shouting an anti-Semitic slur at the people. As if on command Uncle Hugo and my father took



Erich Hessdoerfer 1927

off after that bicycle rider, both in their holiday best and with top hats. Luckily they did not catch him, as they might have taught one of the earlier Nazis a lesson, with possible serious consequences.

In the summer of 1927, the Bernhard Kolb family and the Justin Hessdoerfers, went to Bad Mergentheim for a couple of weeks. I believe Uncle Justin had to go there for a cure. This was not very interesting for the three children, as all you could do was walk on the promenade with a glass of that particular, smelly water in your hand.



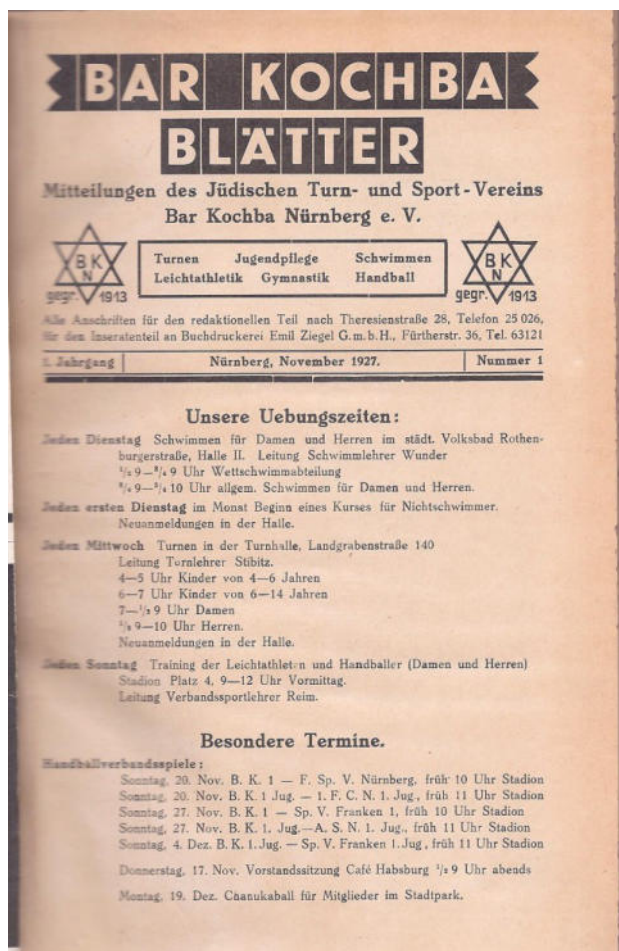
The photo on the left shows us and the Hessdoerfers walking around dressed up in Bad Mergentheim. After all it was a spa and one had to dress up. The picture on the right is a peculiar coincidence. After WWII I was the only younger survivor in Nuremberg and people felt sorry, that I could not have a date. Mrs. Tischer knew a family whom she said, were not Nazis and therefore she made a date for me with their young daughter. The father was the president of the Nuremberg Zoo and the family lived there.

I rode all the way out there on my bicycle. The lady asked me in and soon offered me coffee and cake. The daughter was about 16 years old, but she did not impress me, after all she was German and I could not stand any of them. I believe she was even pretty. But there was nothing to talk about and after coffee the lady brought out her photo album. She told me that they were married in 1927 and they went on their honeymoon to Bad Mergentheim. I told her, I was five years old at the time and I too was there in the summer of 1927, with my parents and sister and my uncle, aunt and cousin.

She turned the page and there was a photo, obviously taken by one of the photographers who were standing along the walks of the spa, shooting photos of every one coming by. Our picture was taken also on one of these occasions. As I looked at the picture of this newly married couple I became very excited, I saw that right behind them was my father, my uncle, my cousin and I.

There were three photos on that filmstrip and the lady gave me one. I don't remember the name of the family, but that photograph of us all walking on the same spa walkway, was the only thing we had in common

At a prearranged time all of us were picked up in Bad Mergentheim by the chauffeur of Hessdoerfer & Kolb with the company car and traveled for a couple of days along the Rheine River.



November 1927, the first issue of the *Bar Kochba Blaetter* (The newspaper of the Jewish sport club) was published. This paper was issued every month and reported about the activities of the club.



Mr. David Katz a friend and sport colleague of my father gave me a bound book of the Bar Kochka newspaper when we visited him on our way back from western Canada in Winibeck in 1972. These were the monthly issues from November 1927 until October 1929. I took a lot of information about the athletic club from these pages

Mr. Katz, together with my father and Mr. Paul Baruch were the ones who in 1913 were planning a Jewish sport club in Nuremberg.

In 1928 Paul von Hindenburg was elected President of the German Reich. Even though he was one of the primary war criminals, whose action was mainly responsible for killing millions of soldiers on both sides, he was put up as a candidate for president by the Social Democratic party.

The photo on the right was the first photo I took. My father was with both of us in the garden. He set his camera up on a tripod and told me to push the cable release. Erna, I remember, was skeptical about me doing it and said so. Because of this she looked right at me and kept her eyes open for once. It seems my father liked the picture of him too, as he used it later on his passport.



As reported in the in the notes of the general membership meeting of the Bar Kochba Sport Club, on January 23rd 1928, between 70 and 80 people were present. Besides voting for president, treasurer, etc., Bernhard Kolb was elected as a trustee. His step-cousin Emilie Horwitz was also elected as a trustee. At the February 27th 1928, board of directors meeting, both of the trustees excused themselves and were missing. Maybe my father did not go to the meeting, as this was my sixth birthday.

March 21st 1928, the sport club had a performance to demonstrate what its gymnasts and athletes could do. There were 500 spectators and all the seats were sold out. The applause was strongest for the men gymnasts on the parallel bars. One of these men was Bernhard Kolb. My father was the oldest performer and Erna was the youngest. It might have been at the same performance or during the one in the year before, when the small children were just performing little things like crawling through each other's legs. As Erna was crawling through her partner legs she either made herself higher or the boy was very small, but anyway she gave the boy a ride on her back. She got loud applause.



Left picture: I am the fourth boy on the left in the center row. Mr. Rothgang the first grade teacher.

Right picture: Hella is in the second row from the front on the right side and Lisl Sauer is third in first row left.

After Easter, in 1928, my cousin Hella and I started first grade in public schools. I went to the Luther schoolhouse, which was about a ten minute walk from the apartment. Hella went to the Reutersbrunnen School, as her family had moved on August 16th, 1927 to the third floor walk-up apartment at Bleichstrasse 18. My first class teacher was Mr. Rothgang. The only thing I still remember about him is that on the first day of school, he played the violin. In my class were 41 boys. Throughout all my school years, I never was in a class together with girls. It was strange, the way they taught first graders how to learn reading at that time. Every child got a fairly large flat cardboard box with lots of little chips; each one of them had a letter printed on it, just like Scrabble pieces. We had to form the words with these particular letters and place them on the cardboard strips, which were on the inside cover of the box. These letters were in the typeface of a typical German alphabet called *Fraktur*.

We also had a black slate board which had lines on one side. There we started writing the German script. One used a sharpened slate stylus, which, when one pressed a little too much, made a screeching kind of a sound on the slate board. This happened mainly when one made the down stroke; the up stroke had to be thinner than the down stroke. Both of the alphabets, the reading letters in the box and the writing on the blackboard, had absolutely nothing in common with each other.

Each day we learned another letter and for home work one had to fill the blackboard with this newly learned letter. There is a story I heard about it. A little girl had as homework to practice the lower case "i". She very carefully put all the dots on top of the "i". Proudly she showed it to her older brother. But as she held the blackboard up-side-down, all the dots were on the bottom of the letter. Quickly she wiped them off after her brother reminded her that the dots have to be on top and she put them now on top of the letter. But she was mystified after she took her blackboard out of the satchel in school all the dots were on the bottom again.

In the area where we lived the men were mostly blue collar workers who were employed in the nearby large factories of Siemens and Schuckert. There were not many Jewish people living in this part of the city, and therefore there was no Hebrew class in the Luther schoolhouse. Twice a week in the courtyard of the school I met a little Jewish girl who went to the girls class of the same grade, and we both walked together for a Hebrew class to the schoolhouse in the Landgrabenstrasse, behind the Christus church. This walk took at least twenty to thirty minutes.

On one of our walks the girl told me that her cat had kittens and if I want to see them I should come to her apartment after class. The Hebrew class must have been the last hour of the morning, and after school was finished I went with my friend to her apartment to look at the kittens. My mother did not know about my little side trip before going home. As she could pretty much figure out how long it would take to walk from Landgrabenstrasse to Steinheilstrasse, she could not imagine why I did not get home. She must have been quite a bit worried until I finally arrived. I presume I must have been at least an hour late.

May 19th 1928, Bar Kochba Nuremberg celebrated its founding 15 years ago in the hall of the Nuremberg zoological garden. The celebration started with the crowning march from "The Prophet" by Meyerbeer. Again, there were 500 spectators including the rabbis from Nuremberg and Fuerth and a lot of important people from the congregation. The speakers remembered the fifteen years of the existence of the club. Homage was given especially to the three men who started it all: Paul Baruch, David Katz and Bernhard Kolb. All the founding members were present and each one received an artistically designed certificate.

The overture of Offenbach's "Orpheus in the Underworld" started the second part of the evening, the sporting events. The women showed their precision with rope-jumping. The spectators again, just like during the March 21st show, enthusiastically applauded the performance of the "old men" on the parallel bars even though three of the top athletes could not be present; one of these was my father. Then there came a humorous gymnastic performance by the men. At the end there was a rococo dance play. (It is possible, that my father was not there as on the Wednesday before, while coaching young boys exercising on the horse, was badly hurt when one of the young fellows instead of side-vaulting to the right went to the left and hit my father with his feet into the lower abdomen.)

Every Sunday morning, weather permitting, my father and Uncle Hugo went to the *Sportplatz* (athletic field) of the BKN sport club, southeast of the city. They always went by bicycle. Their young sister-in-law Thea, who also was a member of the club, recently had gotten a bicycle. Even though she knew how to ride it, she never became very proficient. One day, this might have been in the early 1920s, the two men took her along on their Sunday trip to the sport field. At that time there was not much car

traffic yet and early Sunday morning there was almost none at all. Everything went fine and they had no trouble getting to the athletic field. Around midday all three of them started on their way home.

There still was no traffic. Just in the center of one relatively wide road, stood a police man. At that time, the uniform of the police was the old blue uniform of the Bavarian army and the pike helmet of the time before 1916.

Hugo and my father told Thea to drive nicely by the policeman. Thea wanted to drive like an old bicycle expert and tried to ignore the policeman, but for some strange reason like he would be a magnet, she kept on getting closer and closer to the center of the road. Her two brothers-in-laws kept calling to her, telling her that she should get back to the right side of the street; but nothing doing. She was hypnotized by the officer and kept on pedaling directly at him. She could not steer away; she could not stop; she just pedaled directly to the officer and ended up with her front wheel between the man's legs. The policeman just grabbed the handlebar, and there she was, eye to eye with the policeman. He just smiled at the embarrassed girl. She could not even apologize. Thea never became a very active bicycle rider.

I was now six years old and was permitted to go to the garden with a friend. My mother gave me a thermos with milk to take along for an afternoon snack. We played and after we got hungry sat down for a snack. I could read at that time, and I saw on the label it was written that the thermos was "unbreakable". After we ate we were trying to build something. There were always small pieces of wood in the arbor. Also there were a couple of nails, but what we really needed was a hammer, and there was none. I remembered that the label on the thermos read, "unbreakable" In that case, I thought, we can use it as a hammer. The manufacturer probably did not figure that it would be unbreakable for any unorthodox use. When I came home I told my parents, that the guaranty on that bottle was a misrepresentation, the bottle broke.

July 1st 1928, there was a contest among the members of the Jewish Sport Club Bar Kochba Nuremberg. The people were classified by age. Under the category of "older men", which were men born before 1892, the following people are recorded:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Hugo Kolb, his time for the 100 meter sprint was | 13.8 seconds |
| 2. Steinberg | 14.0 seconds |
| 3. Bernhard Kolb | 4 meters behind |
- High jump:
- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Steinberg | 1.45 meters |
| 2. Heilbronn | 1.40 meters |
| 3. Hugo Kolb | 1.35 meters |
- Shot put:
- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| 1. Hugo Kolb | 7.42 meters |
| 2. Bernhard Kolb | 6.99 meters |
| 3. Heilbronn | 6.94 meters |

In July the two Kolb families went on vacation together. The doctor thought the salty air of the North Sea would be a good cure for my enlarged tonsils. Both families had planned their vacation at the

same time. Norderney was chosen as the destination. Norderney is the largest of the Westfriesisch Islands. When the day came we took a taxi, which was already something special and went to the railroad station. Then we boarded an express train from Nuremberg to Hamburg. The wagons had separated compartments and the conductor had to go from compartment to compartment on a board on the outside of the wagon. I believe at that time there were just 3rd class trains used for express. Our two families and Ida Fleischmann, the sister of Uncle Siegfried, came along. We were nine people including, four children. The compartments were all separate and therefore we had this one all for ourselves. Food and drinks were taken from home and everybody settled down for the long haul to the north.

It did not take very long until some of the children got hungry. Aunt Paula opened a special little suitcase which was just for food. What an unpleasant surprise. To their astonishment and horror, the salami was swimming in the milk. The thermos bottle had opened up.

The train took more than 24 hours and when it got dark the two fathers tied a hammock from the luggage net, from one side over to the other side. Hella and I, the two older children, were put up there to sleep. The smaller ones, Erna and Ernst were held in the arms of their mothers. As we two on top had a lot of fun, Erna and Ernst on the bottom complained and finally managed to be put into the hammock too. Now it was really getting very lively up there, none of us thought of sleeping. We swung and jumped around and had a wonderful time until one of the ropes broke. Luckily none of us fell out, but now we had to sleep on the hard wooden benches.

The next morning we arrived in Hamburg and after a short sightseeing trip to the city, we went to the harbor to board the Roland, a steamship which was going to Helgoland. Helgoland is a small island in the North-Sea between the German coast and England, 44.5 km from the German coast. It is just one large red rock in the middle of the ocean. Everything started out very smoothly; the children enjoyed their first voyage on a real big ship; sitting outside on the deck, the fresh sea air in their hair. But as soon as the steamer came into the open sea, it started rolling from side to side. One by one the adults got seasick and each one of them had to hold on to one of the children, so they would not be blown off the boat. They tried to get the children to sleep, but Erna and Ernst still kept throwing up. The storm increased and the ship rolled more and more. Even in the bad state my mother was in, she kept on thinking about her poor parents, who might be losing so many children in one day. It did not turn out quite that bad. Hella and I were completely oblivious to the whole thing. We slept through it. We probably were the only passengers who did not get sick. A couple of hours later the island of Helgoland came in sight. By then the storm had subsided a little. Helgoland has no harbor where a steamship this size could land. They anchored about a mile from the coast and little boats the size of large rowboats came to pick up the passengers. This operation took quite a while as these boats could only take a small number of people. After landing everybody felt fine again, since we were on solid ground. But Helgoland was only a stop-over and the destination was Norderney, southwest from Helgoland. Our parents were already scared of this new voyage, but this trip was as smooth as could be. The North-Sea was just like a lake. By the time we got off the ship it was already night and the harbor was a long way from the town and the hotel where reservation were made before hand. There were no cars on the island and taxis were horse-drawn carriages. Our parents hired the carriage number 6 and surprising enough everybody fitted in. This horse and carriage trip was the highlight of the vacation for us children. In the hotel everybody finally could relax settled down to get some rest.

The next morning and for the next 4 weeks everybody went to the beach and enjoyed the water and the sand. One could not really swim as the waves were very high but we children had a lot of fun building sand castles and splashing around in the water. Forgotten was the terrible ordeal of the voyage to Helgoland. I remember that during that summer vacation in Norderney I lost my first tooth. I was six and a half years old.

An accident happened when Hella and Erna played on a see-saw during one of our hikes on the island. Hella, who was also already six and a half years old, was heavier than Erna who was just five. Suddenly, when Hella was on the bottom, she decided to get off. Erna, who was still sitting up there, came down with full force and for a couple of days could not walk because of the impact.



Third from left my mother and Aunt Paula with Hella and me. In the center my father with Erna standing on his head and second from right, Uncle Hugo with Ernst.



My father and Aunt Paula with Erna, Hella and me. My father usually wore his bathingsuit with one shoulder strap off, which seemed to be the fashion for men at that time



Hella and I with my mother in front and Uncle Hugo and Aunt Paula with Ernst on the life guard's ladder.



On the right: I on my mother, Erna on my father, Ernst on Uncle Hugo and Hella on the shoulder of a stranger. Ida Fleischmann in front in white bathing suit.

On the return trip the adults were afraid of another long sea voyage and therefore we took the short voyage south from Norderney to Norddeich on the mainland. This voyage took only about one hour. By train we went to Berlin to visit Aunt Babette, Uncle Hugo and my father's sister, and her daughter Ruth. We only stayed a couple of days, visiting the Lustgarten and other sights, and then traveled home by train again.

October 14th 1928 was another contest of Bar Kochba Nuremberg. Hugo Kolb took 3rd place with 34 points in the 200 meters hurdle in 35.9 seconds; shot-put 7.91 meters and broad jump 4.31 meters.

At the board of directors' meeting on December 13th 1928 it was decided that Bernhard Kolb would be the coach in charge of gymnastics for the women's group.

June 29th 1929, Manfred (Fredy), a second son was born to Aunt Baerbel and Uncle Justin. My cousin Max Fleischmann started as member in the Bar Kochba sport club. In the club tournament on July 28th 1929, Hugo Kolb, took second place in broad jump in the category of old men.

On the 31st of July, 1929, Erna would become 6 years old, and this particular day is the only one where one could decide to start school in that year or the next. Erna would be the youngest child in 1929 and the oldest, the next year. My parents asked her what she would like to do. Her answer: "Please let me be a child for another year!" This settled it; she was registered only in 1930

In the summer of 1929, we went a second time to the North Sea island of Norderney. This time Aunt Thea came along. The Hugo Kolb family did not join us but went to Wiesbaden because of a treatment for Hella, who had troubles with her bladder. Because of the last year's experience our family took the short boat trip from Norddeich over to the island. Again it was a summer of beach and sea water.



The four of us are on top, left center and Thea is in the center in front. My father holds up his Kodak camera.



In the left center is my mother and Thea with me. In the center in front is Erna and pretty far right, with one shoulder bared, is my father.

One day, when all of us were just on a leisurely stroll along the harbor, we were listening to the excursion ship captains advertising their pleasure trip to the next island, Juist. Constantly these men were shouting their prices and underbidding their competitors. This seemed to be the right moment to take one of these tours. My father bought the tickets for the three adults and the two children and we went on board. This was just a small steamboat, probably used more for fishing than for tourists. As we were one of the first ones on board, my father sat down on the most forward chair at the bow of the deck. The boat was far from full so the captains and the crew were still shouting out their advertising, hoping to get more passengers.

It just happened that my father had to go to the toilet. He asked one of the crew members, but was told that there was no facility on that ship. He had to go to ask at a couple of other ships, until he finally found one with a toilet.

In the meantime an older, pretty fat lady came and sat down on the seat which my father had occupied before. My mother told the lady that this seat was taken, but the woman would not move, as she said, there are no reserved seats on the ship. So when my father came back he had no choice but to take one of the two chairs in the second row. These chairs were just regular foldable garden chairs. At the front in the bow was room for only one chair and as the boat got wider there were two, then three chairs and so on.

Just before the ship took off, my parents heard one sailor saying to another: "It looks like we're getting a little wind over!" After already sitting about an hour on the ship, the voyage started. We were not gone five minutes out of the harbor when the wind started howling and the waves started getting higher and higher. As the ship was not very large the voyage was soon like a rollercoaster ride. From the top of a wave it went down into the valley and the first big wave which hit the bow went right over the deck. The fat lady in the first seat got the full force of it. The rest of the passengers also got pretty wet. From then on every wave went over the deck; there was no dry place anywhere. It was also impossible to get up, everybody just held on to their seats, not to be washed overboard. This soaking went on for the whole trip. There was not one dry thread on anybody.

The isle of Juist had no harbor either. The ships stopped miles out in the sea. One saw small horse drawn wagons with very high wheels entering the water at the beach. These wagons were specially built for that purpose. The deck and the seats in them were at least six feet above the ground. A very lively shouting match started now. The drivers of these little wagons called over to the sailors that the ship would have to come closer to the shore, because their horses were starting to swim. The sailors answered that they couldn't go any closer as the keels were already hitting the ground. After arguing back and forth for a while they finally came together. One by one the passengers were helped from the ship to the little wagons. Each held about ten people so the transfer took quite a while. But this again was fun for us children. As everybody was soaked one could not do any sightseeing in that condition, so all five of us went to a local coffee shop. As soon as we sat down, a big puddle developed under the table, and the natives who came to the shop thought we must have just been rescued from a sinking ship. All we could do is stay in that shop until the boat went back to Norderney.

A couple of hours later, on the return trip, everything was uneventful, even though we were still wet and cold no more waves went over the deck, besides all us passengers were down in the hold of the ship. My father wore a necktie, as it was customary in those days. No well dressed man would go out without one. Besides, in a fancy resort place like Norderney it would be improper. The saltwater had printed the necktie on his white shirt. My mother and Aunt Thea, had pocketbooks along, which, after the voyage, became unglued and separated into different layers. They had to hold them together like a books. This was our *Lustfahrt in der See* (a joyride at sea).

On the trip home we first went to Bremen and after a day of sightseeing we made a quick stopover in Wiesbaden and visited the family of Hugo Kolb and stayed there a couple of days.



On a boat trip in the harbor of Bremen. We are on the topdeck above the "HAF" of Hafenrundfahrt



All nine of us in the center during our short visit in Wildungen



Aunt Paula, Hella and Ernst visited the Kolb's grandmother on the right, in the Jewish old peoples home in Nuremberg.

As in every year, the Fleischmanns went to Bad Reichenhall on vacation. Uncle Siegfried had asthma and believed this would be good for him. He is in the center in dark coat and Aunt Hertha on his right. Max is the little boy in front.

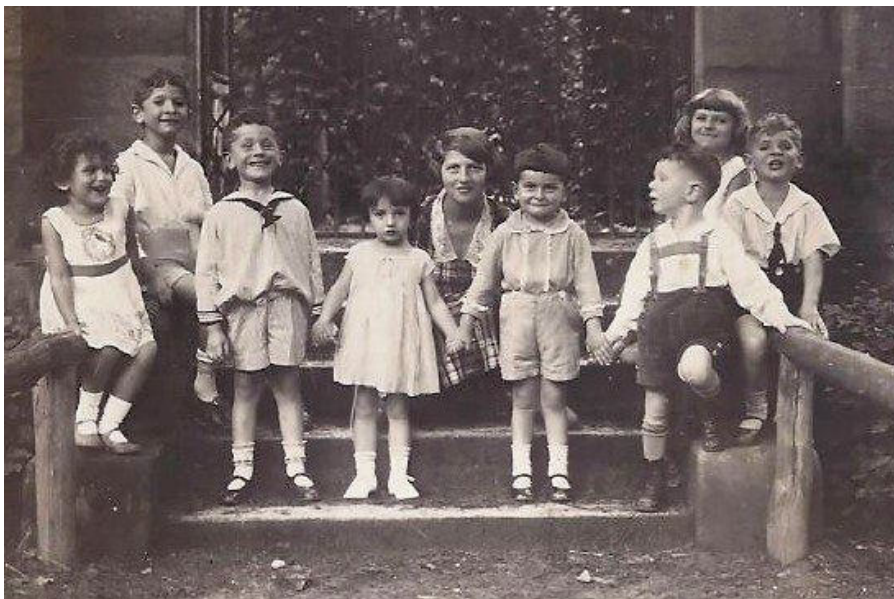


July 28th 1929, at the sport club's contest, Hugo Kolb was second in broad jump and second in shot-put with 7.63 meters. The date of the contest was changed a couple of time. The last change was from August 4th to July 28th, to avoid a collision with a Nazi celebration in Nuremberg.

Other news in the Bar Kochba newspaper from September 1929 is the following announcement: "On the first of October Bernhard Kolb was active in the sport club, for ten years. He is an old *Sportler* (athlete) and also an old member of the *Maenner Turn Verein*. (Men's Athletic Club) He has served the club well as a *Vorturner* (coach). He is also a member of the board of directors. As a new member he

had registered his 3 1/2 year old son and heir in the club."

By that time I was already seven and a half years old and I as well Erna and almost all my cousins had been members of the club for several years.



Besides Erna and me who are sitting on the left side railing, are from the left Erich Hessdoerfer, Susie Fleischmann, who was not related to me but to Erich. Her father was Max Fleischmann who had a furniture store and was a cousin of Aunt Baerbel. Next is Max Fleischmann, "the black Max", whose father Hermann was the brother of Aunt Baerbel. On the right side in front, my cousin Max Fleischmann. His father also was a cousin of the other Fleischmanns. Behind him are Hella and Ernst. In the center behind is my cousin Ruth Singer who was in Nuremberg for a visit,

MY parents had found a larger apartment and on November 15th 1929, we moved to the second floor of Knauerstrasse 15. This apartment had a living room, an extra room adjacent to it, called *Herrenzimmer* (study); it was also the library, which was newly furnished and therefore completely taboo for us children. In there was a large three door closet for books, two arm chairs, a brand new solid oak desk. This used to be the piece of furniture which the cabinet maker had to make for his license as a master cabinet maker. Therefore it was called "the master piece". There also was a sofa standing near the area of the bay window. The apartment had two bedrooms and for the first time there was a bathroom and also a regular toilet. It was what is called a cold water flat.

We two children got our own bedroom, furnished with the old white bedroom furniture of our parents. Mama and Papa bought new walnut bedroom furniture and even commissioned somebody to paint an oil painting with a flower arraignment. My parents also bought an icebox, and as the ice factory was very close by. A cake of ice, or more accurately a part of it, was brought up every second day.

Right across the street was the schoolhouse and I just had to cross the street and go around the corner for the boys' entrance. Not only did boys and girls have separate entrances but segregated classes as well. At the ten o'clock break, when everybody had to go into the court yard, the sexes were kept completely separated. Teachers were standing guard to assure that no fraternization took place. The girls as well as the boys were walking around in separate circles like in a prison yard.

Erna was 6 years old. But my parents held her back from school as she would have been the youngest. And besides, she was very small for her age. But she was a very active girl. Right around the corner was Aunt Emilie's Kindergarden. Emilie Horwitz was a half cousin of my father.

On January 15, 1930 during the planned gymnastic display of the Bar Kochba sport club it was mentioned that in the intermediate grade Bernhard Kolb was victor with 63 points.

Erna started first grade in the Knauerschule in spring of 1930. The school was the same place my father was brought to after he was wounded in the war. Ernst and Erich started school at the same time in their own neighborhood. As each district in the city was different, I remember that my cousins Hella and Ernst always were in mixed classes with boys and girls together.

During the summer vacation in 1930 we went to Tegernsee in the Bavarian Alps. Thea went along again. This time my father had his bicycle shipped by train. Wherever we went on a day trip we went on my father's bicycle. Erna was sitting in front on a little seat which was mounted on the horizontal bar and I was sitting in the back, usually with a backpack. If we came to a hill, I had to jump off, as this was too hard for my father. Besides, he could not get off before I was off. We had already been traveling



Steinheilstrasse 19

like this for years in and around Nuremberg. My mother and Aunt Thea followed by train or bus wherever we went and we met them at our destination.

Once on a hike up to the Baumgarten Alm, a medium high mountain we were headed for a little hut where one could buy fresh milk. The cattle as well as the herder were up in the mountain all summer long. We were almost there when black storm clouds rose on the horizon. Storms came up very quickly in alpine areas. Papa said: "Let's hurry up so that we get to the hut before the storm and rain come!" Everybody hurried on when my shoe lace opened. I kneeled down to retie it, while the rest of them ran to get to the shelter. Having the shoe tied, I got up to follow the others when I suddenly realized that a young bull was heading straight for me. I took off as if shot from a catapult and reached the rest of the party just before entering the hut. I screamed: "Watch out, there is a bull coming!" They all looked, but there was nothing. The animal was not after me at all, but just running.

This picture on the right was taken when, on the way back, we stopped in Munich and went for lunch to the Hofbraeuhaus Inn.



Winter 1930, Hertha, Max and Ruth Fleischmann

On April 9th 1930, the Fleischmanns moved to the second floor apartment of Aeussere Laufergasse 33 and on September 20th 1930, Ruth was born. Thea Hessdoerfer became engaged to Willi Weinschenk sometime in early 1931 and they planned their wedding for later on that year. In early spring all the families of Kolb, Hessdoerfer and Fleischmann were invited to meet the parents of the new uncle and brother-in-law. Aunts Baerbel and Hertha did not come along since their babies were still too small. It was a beautiful sunny, wintry day. All of us went by train and then for a long hike through the countryside towards Windsbach, where Moritz and Sarah Weinschenk lived.



The children, now we were six, threw snowballs with the snow which was still there on the edges of the road. We were sliding over the frozen puddles and in general had a lot of fun. Ernst was always the little ruffian, picking on Max, who was a year and a half younger. We just came up near a farm to a very large frozen puddle. Ernst gave Max a push and Max slid way out on that puddle. The ice was not very thick anymore and right in the middle it suddenly broke. Max broke through and there he was, up to his chest in water. "My god!", screamed some of the party. They did not think that the water was so deep. It was not. Max fell and was sitting up. This was no ordinary puddle. It was the overflow of the dunghill of the farm. Max not only was wet up to his armpits but smelled like the dunghill too.

Luckily there was a local inn close by. Everybody went in and got refreshment. Poor Max had to be completely undressed. His clothes, after being washed, were hanging on the old tiled stove to dry. Ernst had to take off his underpants and had to give them to Max. After an hour or so, when all Max's clothes were dry, the excursion continued and we walked to Windsbach to the Weinschenks' house.



Erna in second grade. She is the second on the right side in the second row from the front. Margot Schwarz the Third on the left in row three in front of the teacher Mr. Fugger, is Margot Neuburger now Mrs. Aal and third on the same row is Margot Reis. I was told the girl next to Erna's right is Sofie Hugel now Mrs. Perz. She was supposed to be a special friend of Erna,

In the summer of 1931 the two Kolb families again went on vacation together. This time we took the train to Innsbruck in Austria. From there, after hiking up on the mountain and spending one or two days sightseeing there, we hiked for a week through the Karwendel-and-Wetterstein Mountains, all along the valleys of the Austrian and Bavarian Alps. Most of the time it was raining and one could not enjoy the beautiful sights, as the clouds were very low. But we each had a *Loden* overcoat, which is made of a woolen cloth and is waterproofed. I believe we stayed overnight in little local inns on the way. During the rain I found a young swallow floating in the gutter in the town of Mittenwald. It probably fell out of its nest. I rescued it and sat it on the branch of a tree and hoped it would survive. We passed the Walchen-and-Kochelsee. I do not remember if we all, parents as well as children, had back packs, but I am sure we had to have some underwear along to change and also carried some food. We hiked for about one week.

The rest of the vacation we went to Wolfratshausen, a small town near the Starnberger See, where we had reservations. I believe the suitcases were already sent there from home. In the hotel there was another couple from Nuremberg with their two daughters of the same ages as we. The parents

were friends and all of them belonged to the bowling club of the Jewish sports club. This hotel had a very big garden and there were all kinds of things for us children to do

Besides getting breakfast, lunch and supper there, one also got bread and jam with milk in the afternoon. One day after lunch the adults went for a hike, but none of us children felt like coming along, so we stayed in the yard to play. Around four o'clock a waitress came and asked if we want some snack. "Sure!" we said and sat down on a table. Now the waitress came with milk and slices of bread, butter and marmalade. We were hungry, but now we had to make up for the food our parents would miss. Each of us six ate six to eight slices of bread with butter and jam. The waitress had to keep on coming with more and more bread. I don't remember if we were able to eat anything for supper at all.

Back home again, grandmother Kolb was somewhere in vacation with her widowed sister Lina Ickelheimer. Lina was born on the same day, February 10th, one year after our grandmother. Somebody must have brought them back by car, and as they drove past the house they stopped to visit. My father went downstairs to greet them. Mama was just giving Erna and me chocolate-milk before we had to go to bed. Papa came up and asked Mama also to come downstairs a minute. My mother put the drink on the table, put the sugar bowl in the middle, and told us to help ourselves and behave.



My grandmother Emma Kolb and her sister
Lina Ickelheimer



The wedding of Thea Hessdoerfer and Willi Weinschenk

First each one of us took one spoon full of sugar and then another, and another. We kept on doing that, spoon full after spoon full into the chocolate milk until a little brown island of sugar stood out of the cup. At that point the chocolate-milk was completely undrinkable.

October 1st 1931, our grandfather Siegfried Hessdoerfer died. He had suffered from asthma. He was a broken man after he heard of the death of his oldest son during the war in 1916 and never really recovered from it. Uncle Justin now full-filled the pledge to his mother to take care of the dowry of his younger sister, He, together with Uncle Hugo

started a new company and made Thea a co-owner of it. On that same day, Willi Weinschenk, the fiancé of Thea, was hired as a traveling salesman by the new sister company ERNUEDA, which stood for *Erste Nuernberger Damenmaentel Fabrik* (First Ladies Coat Factory, Nuremberg)

Paul von Hindenburg was reelected as president in 1932, even though he was 85 years old and by no means capable of confronting and changing the rising economic difficulties in Germany

April 10th 1932, Thea Hessdoerfer got married to Willi Weinschenk in the big *Hauptsynagogue* in Nuremberg. The wedding had to be postponed from 1931 because of the death of Thea's father. The whole family was at the wedding and afterwards at the dinner party. All the bigger nephews and nieces recited poetry which my father composed for the occasion.

July 1st 1932 Willi became managing director and partner of the ERNUEDA G.M.B.H. He held this position until the companies were forced into liquidation by the Nazis on November 12th 1938.

Sometime in early 1932 Hella and I were in the forth grade and had to take tests for a high school. Both of us were accepted: Hella to the Lyceum in the *Frauentor Schule* and I to the *Reformgymnasium* on the *Egydienberg*. Both of us started the new schools at the beginning of the school year. As my school was on the opposite part of the city, I had to get a streetcar student pass, which permitted me unlimited use for a month to and from home to school. This pass had to be renewed every month with a monthly stamp. Later on in the second and third year of high school, I rode my bicycle to school.



My street car ID-photo about 1934



This was the first grade in 1932 of the Reform Gymnasiun, class B1. We were 33 students, 22 Jewish boys and 11 Catholics.

The Jewish students which I remember are from top left:

First row: First Max Bergmann, fifth Erich Bader, sixth Peter Gutmann, seventh Walter Strauss and ninth Kurt Schulherr.

Secend row: First Erich Spaeth, sixth Rudolf Ehrenreich, eighth Walter Jaffe and ninth Siegfried Blaubaum next to the class teacher Dr. Konrad Kupfer who was teaching German, Geography and Pennmanship.

Third row: Third Ernst Oestreicher and sixth Kurt Freitag.

Fourth row: Fourth Hans Rothenberg, sixth Kurt Gutmann, seventh I and eighth Heinz Lauer

During that summer, the Hugo Kolbs went for vacation and cure to Birkenau and our family again went to Tegernsee. As we did in 1930, we went on mountain tours and rowboat rides on the lake. The situation in Germany deteriorated as the Nazis became stronger and attacks on Jews and political opposition parties were constant. Nuremberg, which used to be called, "The Red High Castle" was now well known as being one of the strongholds of the Nazis.

January 30th 1933, the Nazi party was voted into office and Adolf Hitler became chancellor. After engineering the fire in the *Reichstags* building, which the Nazis set, and blamed a Dutch man, Van der Lupe for it, Hitler had no trouble pushing the Enabling Act through, which gave him dictatorial power.

February 28th 1933, The *Reichsgesetzblatt* (The German Reichs Law publication) wrote as follows:

Paragraph 1

The articles 114, 115, 117, 118, 123, 124 and 153 of the constitution of the German Reich will be from this point on, until otherwise ruled, extinguished. Because of that, there will be restrictions to the freedom of the right of free speech, including the freedom of the press, the right to congregate in clubs, or associations. There will be interventions in letter-, post-, telegram- and telephone secrecy. Also there will be regulations for the search in houses and seizure as well as limitation of private property even beyond the limits of the laws allowing that.

Paragraph 2

Should one of the states not act to apply the decree to reestablish public security and stability, the government of the Reich can temporarily take over the duties of the state.

Paragraph 3

The offices of the states and the local authorities have to follow the orders mentioned in paragraph 2.

Paragraph 4

Anyone who challenges the edict of the offices of the state, or the government of the Reich, according to paragraph 2, or anybody who would lure or incite others to oppose the ordinance, will be severely punished with jail, not less than one month, or a fine of RM 150.00 to RM 15,000.00.

Anyone who, because of his interference to paragraph 1, will bring danger to the life of someone else, will be punished with jail and in the case of more circumstances requiring leniency not below six months.

Should his action cause the death of a person, the death penalty will be mandatory. In case of leniency, jail, not less than two years. Besides this, the seizure of his wealth can be ordered.

Anybody who incites to action against chapter 2 will be jailed and in case of leniency, not less than three months.

Paragraph 5

Criminals are to be punished with the death penalty, which used to have the penalty of 15 years jail, according to paragraph 81, for high treason, paragraph 229, for importing poison, paragraph 307, for arson, paragraph 311, for

explosives, paragraph 312, for flooding, paragraph 315, chapter 2, for sabotage of the rail system, paragraph 324, for dangerous poisoning of the public:

1. Who would kill the president of the Reich or any member of the federal or state government, or colludes to kill, or volunteers to assist in the assassination, or conspire with others to murder;

2. Anyone who, in the case of paragraph 115 chapter 2, of the penalty law, utmost breach of the peace, the rebellion with use of arms, or knowingly collaborates with armed rebels;

3. whoever uses kidnapping, paragraph 239 of the penal code, with the intention to use the victims as hostages in his political fight.

Paragraph 6

This decree will be in power the day of the announcement.

Berlin, February, 1933

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| The President of the Reich, | von Hindenburg |
| The Chancellor of the Reich, | Adolph Hitler |
| The Minister of the Interior, | Frick |
| The Minister of Justice, | Dr. Guertner |

Right from the beginning, the attacks on Jews increased. Josef Goebbels proclaimed a day of boycott on Jewish businesses. In the night of March 31st 1933, the Nuremberg associations of SA, SS Steelhelmets (another rightist group), World War Veterans, sport and youth organizations marched with lighted torches, flags and bands to a mass rally on the *Hauptmark* (the large market place) They arrived at 8:30 p.m. where the new Nazi-Lord-Mayor of Nuremberg, Liebel welcomed them. The assistant head of propaganda for the Nuremberg area, Mr. Zimmermann announced, that welfare office will not pay for a Jewish doctor any more. Also not for prescriptions bought at a Jewish drugstore. That from this day forward, no German would enter a Jewish store or go to a Jewish doctor or lawyer. Then Liebel spoke again, mentioning that pictures would be taken of all the traitors. The rally ended after the mob screamed "Sieg Heil!" for Streicher, Hitler and Hindenburg and then they sang the Horst-Wessel song and the German national anthem.

During the night a group of 900 SA-men and 100 from the SS were busy preparing signs for the boycott and received lists of Jewish stores and department stores and other businesses.

At 10:00 a.m., on April 1st 1933 the Nazis put there hoodlums in front of the Jewish businesses all over Nuremberg. (This was going on all over Germany.) Their job was to inform the population, that



When my father, Uncle Hugo and Uncle Siegfried came together, they always played cards

the store was Jewish and to warn them about entering it. To intimidate people entering the stores they were photographing them. All over town people were standing around these stores. Should anybody dare to enter, the mob slandered them in abusive language. It took the German rabble only two months to embrace the Nazis philosophy.

After the boycott the Nazi hierarchy requested the offices of the Jewish congregations of Nuremberg and Fuerth to pay for the cost and the food for the guards who were positioned in front of the Jewish stores.

To show their loyalty to the new government they denounced Jews, as well as each other to the party. The firm of Hessdoerfer & Kolb produced all kinds of men's wear and as it was the local custom in Bavaria, the imitation Tyrol type short pants. The color of these were brown. An apprentice who worked for the company went to the local Nazi headquarters, the so called "Brown House" and denounced my Uncle Justin Hessdoerfer, saying that he had material there to make the brown Nazi pants. Certainly none of these were ever manufactured in that company. Justin was ordered to the infamous headquarters and was brutally beaten. This was by no means an isolated act. It happened from January 1933 on, all over in Nuremberg.



From left: Erich and Uncle Justin Hessdoerfer, I, Hella, Fredy Hessdoerfer
Uncle Hugo, Ernst, Max Fleischmann, Erna and my father

Uncle Justin did not want to stay in his apartment in Nuremberg, where he was under constant threat of violence. He bought a property in Neu-Katzwang, a small village not far from the city. It was a fairly large property. The entrance was up on a little hill in the woods and went down into a flat area in the valley. There was first just a little gazebo but Justin had a house built there, as he had the intention of moving there, away from the city, to be left alone. One of the rooms he gave to my parents in case we wanted to stay overnight.

Our whole family flocked out to Neu-Katzwang on weekends to spend a quiet time away from the city and the harassment of the Nazis. First my father rode there with his bicycle with us two children on it. My mother, who never learned how to ride a bicycle, followed with the rest of the family by train.

In early spring 1933, my father bought two bicycles, one for Erna and one for me. Uncle Justin also bought one for Erich. As we all did not know how to ride yet, the bicycles were taken to the property in Katzwang, by the delivery truck of the company. The next weekend we were supposed to learn how to ride the bicycles. All three of us were quite excited about it. Our fathers and one or another of our uncles, went with us and the bicycles up the hill to a small bicycle road which ran close to the regular road through the woods. After a couple of tries to balance on the vehicle, the adults separated about 100 meters apart, to help us to get on and off.

Erna, who at that time was not quite ten years yet, was still very small for her age. As the bicycles were adult size, she kept on losing the pedals. They tied her feet to the pedals, but that did not help much, as when she wanted to get off, she just fell. Erich had trouble riding straight between the trees and was in constant danger of colliding with one of them. I was lucky. First of all I was older and I just got on the bicycle and rode it. The only trouble I had was to get on and off. But with my father at the beginning and an uncle standing on opposite end of the stretch of road, this created not much of a problem.

After a couple of hours of practicing, everybody went down to join the rest of the family for a snack. By now I knew how to get on the bicycle, but still not how to get off. I rode it down in the valley,

but suddenly realized that I did not know how to get off. Luckily there was Uncle Siegfried walking. I drove close to him, threw my arms around his neck and was safe. After a couple of more practice runs, I managed to get off by myself, too.

My father first had the intention of riding back home with all three children, but decided that the two younger ones were by no means ready to take to the city and into the traffic. There were some tears, but nothing doing. I still did not know how to take one hand off the handlebar to give signals when to turn. But I was riding in front of my father and he told me when to turn or when to get off the bicycle. This was a very exiting trip and took about two hours.

Erna got a special kind of a part to lower her saddle and one or two weeks later she also was allowed to ride her bicycle home. From that time on the three of us went by bicycle to many places in the country. Erich's bicycle stayed in Katzwang and he used it just around the area as his parents did not ride.

As soon as Erna and I knew how to ride the bicycles we used it also to visit our cousins. Actually it only would take about 20 minutes to walk there, but by bicycle one could make it in 5 minutes. One had to pass an area where Nazi children always were harassing us and therefore it was safer to go by on a bicycle. One time, both of us were just on our way home. Bleichstrasse went slightly uphill towards Fuerther Strasse. I rode in front with Erna close behind. There suddenly out of Obere Kesselbergstrasse, a small crossroad on the right side, one of the Nazi boys came running and grabbed the mudguard of my bicycle, trying to through me off. The boy was barefoot. I was struggling now not to fall off. When Erna saw this, she drove her front wheel into the side of that boy's leg. He screamed out, but let go of my bicycle. She had saved me.

Around the same time. Erna and Ernst were talking about the job of their fathers and how they were doing. Ernst said he heard his father say that business is not good at all right now. Erna answered that she heard from her father, that the synagogue business is always going good.

This little anecdote which follows might have happened around this time or probably even earlier.

I believe it was a Sunday morning when my father just walked by the Nuremberg railroad station, when a man approached him and asked if he would know where he could find an address book. As a telephone was rare, one needed this book to find the address of people. My father asked if he had inquired in any of the hotels around there.

The man said he was in all of them and they did not have one of these books.

As the man looked like he might be Jewish and my father had this wonderful memory for the names and addresses of almost every Jew in the city, he asked the man, whom he was looking for. The man was a little astounded, after all Nuremberg was a city of more than 350,000 people, but he really had no other choice and told my father the name.

As there were two with the same last name members of the Jewish community my father asked the stranger for the first name. The stranger gave him the first name too and my father told him that he

is lucky, the family lives very close at Bahnhofstrasse, (Railroad Street.) My father gave him the house number too.

The man probably thought this stranger gave him an address to get rid of him. But he took the only chance and walked to the given address. He was very surprised, when the wife of the man he was looking for opened the door. He said to her: "I can't believe this", and told her the story about the address books and the stranger who gave him the address. The lady seemed not to be surprised and told him: "You must have met Mr. Kolb." This surprised him even more, as she knew to whom he spoke.

During the vacation in summer 1933, our family went by train for the third time to Tegernsee. This time my father shipped all three bicycles to our vacation destination. Now we could make tours by bicycle. But my mother still always had to take a bus or a railroad to meet us when we arrived. She tried bicycling a couple of times, but never mastered riding it. Later on the families of Hugo Kolb and the Hessdoerfers joined us in Tegernsee.



On the lake in Tegernsee. Erna, Ernst, I, Paula, Hella, Hugo, Grandmother Fanny Hessdoerfer my father and my mother

Tegernsee is a vacation spot. There are a couple of little towns and villages all around the lake. Right across from the town of Tegernsee, on the west end of the lake is the village of Wiesee. On June 29th 1933 the Nazis killed the leader of the SA, Ernst Roehm and about 400 of his followers. Until this day he was the second in command after Hitler. These men, even though they were Nazis, were for a more liberal approach of the Nazi philosophy. The Nazis called the massacre "the night of the long knives".

Justin Hessdoerfer left Germany in the middle of the night, during the summer of 1933, and went to Zagreb in Yugoslavia. He never came back to Germany until 21 years later, sometime in spring of 1954. His family joined him in Yugoslavia in 1934.

Erna started in the Labenwolf Lyceum in 1934. In her class were a few Jewish girls. One of her classmates was the daughter of Willy Liebel, the Nazi mayor of



Erna's photo of her streetcar ID



Erna on the left standing and some of her friends sitting. Fourth from the left Ruth Fleischer, Ingeborg Levinger and Marianne Friedmann. The fifth from the right Erika Gosser. Upper row, far left Herta Gosser. In that row seventh from right is Hildegard Liebel

Nuremberg. This girl was rather stupid, and did not have any friends in the class but became very friendly with the Jewish girl who helped her out when she did not know the answer or forgot to take things along. In general the German girls were much more anti-Semitic than the boys and did not keep any social contact with the few Jewish girls.

Like I, my sister also had to take the streetcar to school.

On July 13th 1934 my father, like every veteran of WWI received the Honor-cross medal for front fighters with the letter which read: "By permission of the Fuehrer and Reichskanzler Adolf Hitler, the medal, which was established from the Reichspresident Generalfeldmarschall Hindenburg!"

The situation in Germany became gradually worse for Jews, and in summer of 1934 my parents decided to spend the vacation out of the country. The destination was Marienbad in Czechoslovakia. My father wanted us to take our bicycles along, but as we children were not such trained bicycle riders and one did not know whether one could find an inn in the *Oberpfalz* (an eastern state between Nuremberg and Czechoslovakia), which would let Jews stay overnight, they again wanted to ship them by train.

It just happened that a Jewish person on vacation in Czechoslovakia, had died and the hearse of the Jewish community had to pick up the deceased. The hearse was just a medium size dark blue van which had two doors in the back. Mr. Julius Klein, the custodian of the Jewish cemetery, was a friend of my father and so it was decided that the hearse would take the three bicycles, us children and our father along. Everybody had room enough to ride in front. We only went as far as Waidhaus, a town on the Czechoslovakian border. We took the bicycles off and rode the rest of the way.



Willi and Thea Weinschenk in Marienbad

It was late in the day by the time we arrived in Waidhaus and we must have stayed in an inn shortly afterwards in Czechoslovakia. The next morning we paddled almost straight north and around lunchtime we visited a girlfriend of my mother; I remember her last name was Kuh. It really was not very far, maybe less than 100 km, but we must have stayed a while, because it was already late at night when we arrived in Marienbad. The road was very hilly and my father kept urging us on. When we arrived our mother was already there. She had gone by train, as usual. The Weinschenks, Thea and Willi, also were there for a vacation. They had a room in the city while my parents had rented rooms on a farm, a couple of kilometers out in the country.

Marienbad is a spa and people walk all dressed up along the promenade, with little glass cups in their hands and drink the local water which is supposed to be good for all kinds of ills. That water smells like something coming out of a dunghill and does not taste much better either. Everywhere on that promenade are fountains, where one can refill his cup. There also is a park where the people sit around with their cups and listen to live music played by orchestras. Should one suddenly feel like having something else to drink besides that very healthy water, one could go to one of the many cafes and have refreshment like ice cream and cake and still not miss the concert. Children are allowed to be there but they have to sit like little stuffed animals on chairs and be quiet. No running around or playing permitted. If this was supposed to be a vacation for me it was not one I would have chosen.



The four of us listening to the music in Marienbad

I hated it and so I finally managed to persuade my parents to leave me on the farm. There I did not have to be dressed up like a miniature waiter. Besides cows, goats, a couple of cats, there were four little dachshund puppies on the farm. Now that was much more interesting to me and I loved it. Erna, like a good little girl, went along to town, ate ice cream very slowly, so one did not have to order too often, and behaved in general like a little lady. They met the Weinschenks in town and a good time was had by all. Thea and Willi were already there for a week or two and soon they left to go home.

One day my parents decided to go with one of the tour busses for a day trip to Karlsbad, another one of the spa towns. Erna always became car sick and it also happened on that short trip. The bus had to stop and Erna had to walk around outside with our mother for a couple of minutes. In Karlsbad there was actually nothing to see or to do but to walk around with your little cups and taste the water there, which might have had a different flavor, but tasted just as bad as that in Marienbad.

So we walked and walked, as there was really nothing else to do, until the bus went back to Marienbad. During our stroll through the city, my father had the feeling that a man was following us. It was known that the Germans had agents in Czechoslovakia to spy on Jews or political anti-Nazis. Papa Kolb told us: "When you come to the next corner, go around and keep on walking, I'll find out what this man wants!" Just past the corner my father waited.

As soon as the stranger turned, my father approached him and asked why he followed us. "Aren't you Mr. Kolb from Nuremberg?", said the man. "Yes, what do you want from me!" asked Papa Kolb. "Don't you remember me?" Asked the stranger. "No!" "I was in your office just a couple of weeks ago!" "What was the reason?" "Don't you remember, I bought a couple of overcoats from you!" "Now I see", said my father, "you did not come to me, but you were in my brother's place at Hessdoerfer & Kolb. I am sorry, I thought you are one of the Nazi-spies!"

In the summer of 1934, during our vacation in Czechoslovakia, President Paul von Hindenburg died and Adolf Hitler was given dictatorial power as the chancellor.

On the evening of September 9th 1934, the Rosh Hashanah holiday began. This was also one of the first days of the *Reichsparteitag* (the party congress of the Nazi party in Nuremberg). At the time of the evening service a couple of companies of about 300 to 400 SA-men arrived in front of the synagogue. They proved their Germanic heroism by insulting some of the Jewish people who tried to enter the main entrance of the synagogue from the Hans Sachs Platz. Somebody had managed to close the iron gates. On the doors and the fence the Nazis hung pictures from the anti-Semitic hate paper "Der Stuermer". They also started climbing over the fence to enter the synagogue. A Gestapo man who was inside the synagogue realized what was going on and called the police headquarters for reinforcements to prevent a riot. It was obvious that this was organized by the Nuremberg party office.

The Fleischmanns had an apartment in the Aeusseren Laufergasse. This was only a very short distance from the school I attended, the Reformgymnasium. My father had suggested to Uncle Siegfried to invest in some valuable postage stamps, as they would keep the value and are easy to take along at the emigration. Uncle Siegfried asked me to catalogue the stamps, as he did not know anything about it. On Saturday we had only half a day school and at lunchtime and a couple of times I rode over there on my bicycle. For several hours I was cataloging stamps and put them accordingly on pages.

I remember at least one time after getting tired of this job, I played with my little cousin Ruth. She was just 4 years old. In the hall I was rolling a ball to her. I was very surprised, that she could never find the ball. There was not much light in the hall, but it was not dark. I asked my Aunt what the matter was, that Ruth could not find the ball. She did not know either, but a short time later they went with the child to an eye doctor and found out that little Ruth was going blind. She had just had middle-ear suppuration and the infection went into the eyes. In a very short time she was completely blind.

Against orders of the *Reichswirtschaftsminister* (the minister of economy) Streicher ordered another boycott of the Jewish stores in Nuremberg during the Christmas week. This time the Nazi guards in front of the stores did not let anybody enter. As usual, the police did nothing to prevent it.

It now became more or less a routine for all the uncles and my father to come together on a Saturday night to play cards in one or the other's apartment, as Jews could not go anywhere any more without being harassed by the Germans. On one of these nights Uncle Hugo, Uncle Siegfried and his brother Eugen Fleischmann gathered in our apartment for the weekly game. Uncle Siegfried did something to Erna, I don't remember what, she did not get upset, but she was mad at him. So she conspired with me to do something to get even. Erna and I shared one bedroom at that time and we were very close. We two conspirators now took Siegfried's jacket and coat from the hanger in the hall, got needle and thread and lots and lots of old newspapers.

Our mother, who was busy in the kitchen, did not notice anything, and the four men were so absorbed in their card game that nothing could get them from their concentration. It was just about bedtime for us. Erna and I went to work on the clothing in our room. First we sewed the sleeves of the jacket and the coat closed. Then inside one pocket we found a streetcar ticket booklet. That was also solidly sewn on. Even every buttonhole was sewn together.

Done with the sewing we now crumpled newspaper and stuffed it solidly into the sleeves and pockets. After everything was filled, the sleeves as well as the pockets were stitched together. Now we both sneaked out in the hall again and hung up the clothing. We heard the loud noise of the card players and knew there was no way the men would hear us. We went back to our room, locked the door and went to sleep.

It was long after midnight when the card game finally came to an end. The men went into the hall to collect their clothing. What a surprise! Uncle Siegfried's jacket looked like he was in it already. Hugo, Eugen and my father could not stop laughing and Siegfried got madder and madder. He stormed down the hall to get at us, but our room was an impregnable fortress. He could not just leave and leave the cloths there, it was winter. He ripped and ripped, threw the paper balls all over the hall and stormed out of the house. The next morning the hall looked like a battlefield. Even weeks after this, the top button hole on his coat was still sewn closed.

On Saturday, February 2nd 1935, I became a Bar Mitzvah. I was the first boy of the family. Everybody came to the synagogue and afterwards to the dinner in our apartment. Aunt Babette, my father's sister, came for the occasion from Berlin. After the synagogue service many people came to the apartment. This was the custom at that time, to wish Mazal Tov and everybody brought a gift for the Bar Mitzvah boy.

From the left: My father, Uncle Siegfried, Willi Weinschenk and behind him Thea, Uncle Hugo, Aunt Paula and behind my mother. In the first row sitting: Grandmother Hessdoerfer Max, I, Hella and in front of her Aunt Hertha, Erna and behind her Ernest. In front of her Grandmother Kplb and Aunt Babaette Singer



My Bar Mitzvah table with presents

The table on which everything was displayed was soon filled. The colleagues of my father gave me a pair of skis and ski boots. Erna gave me a small portable chess set and a pocket knife. Eugen Fleischmann gave me a set of oil paints. I got lots of books, and what was at that time very popular, quite a few fountain pens. I got stamps, a little Voigtlaender camera and a pair of binoculars, probably from my father and shirts and a suitcase most certainly from my mother. Mrs. Stoessenreuther, a lady who every Friday

came to help my mother, brought a framed painting. I also got two alarm clocks and flashlights, wallets and a

briefcase, a pair of skates and a talith and two silver cups.

The most unique gift was the silver cup from Siegfried Mezger a cousin of my mother. Siegfried was the only son of a sister of my grandmother. He had no children and was divorced. He was only married for a very short time and was very close to my mother. He brought a silver kiddush cup which was in his family for generations. He wanted somebody of the family to have it, so that it would stay in the family. It is possible that this cup came from the Enslein family, which was the one of his mother, but I am not sure about that.



Later this little silver cup had on a unique history and I want to tell about it at that time. Four years after my Bar Mitzvah, in 1939, the German government made a law that Jews were forbidden to own any item made of precious metal, like silver and gold. Everything, besides one set of flatware in silver for each member of the family, had to be taken to the governmental pawnshop. One could not cheat, as everything had been listed before, in case somebody wanted to take it along when one emigrated.

After the war in 1953, I was in a court hearing for the compensation case for my parents' apartment. At that time, besides that I had to testify about the furniture in the apartment. The silver that was taken from us also came up in the hearing. I do not know why, but this little silver cup appeared separately from the listings my parents submitted to the governmental pawn shop. The court had an itemized listing of everything each Jew had to submit. There was everything listed by the items and by the weight. My silver cup was indicated as having a silver value of 50 Reichsmarks. This was the permitted compensation for the cup. I was also notified that now, in 1953 after the devaluation of the Reichsmark in 1948 which exchanged 10 Reichsmark for 1Deutsch Mark, they said I will be reimbursed 5.00 Marks for the cup. The antique or art value was not mentioned.

I complained and did not accept the ruling. At that time the court told me that in the Germanischen Museum in Nuremberg there were a couple of items which were taken in 1938, and if I want to try and find anything that belongs to us, I could look there. The court wrote a letter for me, with which I went to the museum.

A guard went down into the basement with me and showed me the silver items which were taken from the Jews. There was quite a lot standing around. I immediately recognized my cup. Certainly I was not permitted to take it. I therefore asked the attendant if I could take a photo of it. Just a couple of days earlier I had bought a camera and a **flashlight** which coincidentally I had with me. He permitted it and I took two pictures of the cup. Like anything in Germany, they could not give me the cup, as they needed a witness or bills, which naturally was impossible.

The only witnesses still alive were my parents and after having the film developed, I mailed the photos to them in the U.S.A. By the time the declaration of my father came back to Europe we had left and were back in the United States.

In 1985 we were back in Europe and I took the two photos along. When we were in Nuremberg I sent the photos through a contact to the museum and requested the silver cup. The president of the museum at that time came to meet me in front of the building and told me: " I am sorry Mr. Kolb, but this cup is not in the museum!" An obvious lie.

I kept on writing about the cup, but never even got an answer. In 1995, I wrote a pretty nasty letter to the president of the museum, telling him, that the Germans tried to get everything back that some allied soldiers took as booty after the war, but they do not have the slightest intention of giving back even one item that they stole during the Nazi time. Again no answer.

After my uncle Willi Weinschenk died in 1992, I took the Weinschenks photo albums home, but did not look at them until early in 1996. In one of the books I found a photograph which my father took of the table with all the presents I got at my Bar Mitzvah. In the center of the table stands that little silver cup.

I had this picture photographed and sent the copy together with the two photos I took in 1953 in the museum. I am sure I wrote a fairly strong letter too. A copy of this letter I sent to Ms. Loelhoeffel in the office of International Relation, in Nuremberg. I had been in contact with her before.

She wrote back and said, that the city office has nothing to do with the museum; they are not part of the city. But anyway she included a copy of a letter she wrote to the president of the museum. She also said I should not write any strong letter right now and just should let it ride for a while. I did.

In April 1996, I got a phone call from Ms. Loelhoeffel. She told me that I would get the silver cup back, I just would have to write a letter as to how or with whom, they should send it. I wrote to the museum, they should not send it, but I will pick it up myself.

July 1996 we flew to Europe and on July 14, 1996 the cup was returned to me in the office of the president of the museum, by the curator of articles from the 17th century, Dr. Eikermann.

I was told that the little silver cup, for which the German compensation court awarded me 5 Mark, was a rare antique, made in the 17th century by a Nuremberg silversmith by the name of Konrad Weiss.

Back to Spring of 1935. At the Christian holiday of Pentecost, my parents had made arrangements in a hotel somewhere north of Nuremberg, to be in the country for a couple of days. As usual, Papa, Erna and I went by bicycle and my mother followed by train. This was only a short vacation and on the end of the weekend we were on the way home. My mother had already left by train. And the three of us peddled homeward towards the late afternoon or evening. First we traveled on little country roads but finally we reached the main road, Bamberg – Nuremberg. One could not ride next to each other on that road, as there was much more traffic than on the little dirt roads. I was riding first, then Erna and, so that he could always see us, my father took up the rear.

It was a nice sunny day and we just peddled through Baiersdorf. On the south end of the little town is an old town gate, but only the two uprights where the doors used to be hinged, were still standing. The highway goes through between them. On the right door post a stone wall not more than 3 feet high started. I as well as my sister had just past the gate, when an old red convertible car came up the road from the south. The road fell off towards the side. Being very far on the right of the road it looked like he would hit the fence of the gardens.

Suddenly the driver must have realized it and steered very sharply to his left, directly towards me. As I was pretty close to that stone wall, I managed, I don't know how, to jump from the bicycle over the wall, where a fraction of a second later the car hit it at an angle. The driver now turned the steering wheel sharply to the right and just missed Erna. Somebody sitting behind that low wall lifted her off her bicycle, over the wall. In front of my father the car fell on its right side and the two passengers, who were standing in the back, dived out.

There were quite a lot of people sitting behind that little wall, just watching the traffic going by. They screamed at the driver, who had also fallen out of his car. He, like his passengers, was not hurt, but seemed quite drunk.

Lots of men now helped to lift that car, which was lying diagonally on the road, back on its wheels. There was lots of glass now on the road from the broken windows and my father directed the traffic around it. The driver of the car asked if we had any damage on the bicycle and in that moment we did not notice any, even though the car hit my bicycle exactly where I left it.

The car was on its wheel now, everybody was happy that nobody got hurt. The car went back in the direction it came from going south and we also started traveling in the same direction. Because of the excitement only now did we notice all kind of damages on my bicycle. The lamp was damaged, the mudguards were bent and scratched up and I also believe the frame was somehow damaged, but not so badly that one could not use it. My father had written up the license plate of the car and was now sorry not to have seen the damage before. But what could we do now, so we traveled on. As we came a short time later to Erlangen there was a church festival going on right on the street. It was a *Kirchweih* (an annual church festival). A tremendous amount of people were on the street so that we could not even ride on the bicycles and had to push them. The inns were crowded with people. That's where these three men were before and might have had a little too much to drink. My father said the two of us should stay there with the three bicycles and he would go to the police station give them the information of the driver and report the incident.

My father now made his way through the mob of people and unbelievably found himself standing in front of the driver of the red convertible. My father told him he was going to the police station to report the accident, as we have quite some damage on the one bicycle. The man said: "Don't go to the police, I will replace anything that was damaged. I have a bicycle store in Nuremberg."

My father did not report it and we really got all the damaged parts replaced. The bicycle of my father's was very old and he thought that with all these new parts we got he could make himself a newer and better looking one now.

As it became more and more difficult for Jews to go any place on the weekend, during the summer we quite often went to the Jewish cemetery. Mr. Klein, the custodian gave my father a small piece of empty land, which we could cultivate as a garden and grow some vegetables. My sister and I could play outdoors, not being bothered by the German children. It became a routine; we rode by bicycle there and my mother took the street car.

It just happened that on one Sunday evening, as we wanted to go home, there was a terrible thunderstorm and it rained cats and dogs. We could not go home by bicycles and it also was quite a long walk to the streetcar station. Mr. Klein said we should leave our bicycles there and he would drive us home with his car. We put our bikes into a small room, it might have been a small garage and Mr. Klein locked it before he drove us home.

One of the next evening during the week, three of us went to the cemetery again by streetcar to pick up our bicycles. Mr. Klein, who was the only one who had a key to it, opened the door and found only two of the bicycles were in the room. Mine was gone. How could anybody take it, nobody had a key and there was not even a window in that room. This mystery was never solved but my bicycle was gone.

Now the replaced parts from the bicycle shop and some new parts which my father bought had to be used to make a new bicycle for me, as I needed one to go to school.

My father had always written up the number which is engraved into the frame of each bicycle and gave the information of my stolen one to the police. The mystery of the disappeared bicycle not only never was solved, but it became more mysterious.

Weeks after the disappearance, probably in early fall of that year, my father got a call from the police, that a bicycle with the number that my father had reported was found. My father asked where and was told in Feucht, a small town southeast of Nuremberg. He should come down there to identify it. Papa told Mr. Klein, who was just as interested to find out who might have been the thief. Maybe it was one of his workers. But how could anyone get into the room?

Mr. Klein offered to drive there with his car and I was permitted to come along, after all, it was my bike. It was late afternoon when we got there and went to the police station. A policeman showed us the bicycle, which was much encrusted with dirt and almost unrecognizable, but no question, it was my bicycle. I remember the generator for the light was missing and the lamp still had the same dents in it from the accident in Baiersdorf.

How did it get to Feucht, and how did they know it was stolen?

The policeman now told us: He and colleague were on a nightly patrol in the village, when they saw a man pushing a bicycle through the village. They stopped him and asked why he walked the bike. He said his battery for the light went dead. (It was forbidden to ride at night without light.) One of the men said, "I am sure as soon as you are out of town, you will ride it again. You better get some batteries. I have a store, if you want to come with me, I will sell you a battery. You can leave your bike with my colleague and come with me." The man did. They went to the store, he bought the battery, but he never returned for his bicycle. The policemen then checked the number and found out it was reported stolen.

As I mentioned before, Friday was always a very busy day for my mother. She started out early before Mrs. Stroessenreuther came to help with cleaning and other chores. The kitchen had a large stove. On top were four gas burners but underneath was an oven which was heated with wood. For all the cooking which was done for the Shabbat this oven was fired up only on Fridays. Then my mother started to prepare the dough for the Challah and the cakes. Either Erna or I had to bring these to the bakery, usually at the time when we came home from school at lunch time. Later on in the afternoon, after school, one had to pick up the baked goods from the bakery again. As at that time after 1932 I was already in high school and did not have a lunch break, this was always Erna's job.

That one time Erna was balancing the large tin with a cherry pie down the two stories of the apartment building. She was very handy. On the bottom there was the large, pretty heavy front door. It was not easy to balance the tin on one hand, while with the other try to open the door. She had done this already quite often and was sure of herself, but this time she lost her balance. The tin slipped and fell on the floor. A lot of the cherries which were not too solidly inserted in the dough were rolling all over the hall. She didn't delay very long. Erna put the tin on the landing, picked up all the cherries and placed them back into the dough. Nobody ever knew about it and it looked just as good as before.

The apartment in Knauerstrasse 15 had a long, dark, L-shaped hall. I came home on a Saturday afternoon before anybody else. Shortly afterwards Erna arrived, but did not know I was home already. All the rooms were off the center hall. I was just coming out of one room when Erna entered, and so I stood very still in one doorway. As she passed me I just said: "Excuse me, what time is it?" Not seeing me in the dark, she got a shock and jumped.

Some time later I told this incident to my cousin. Ernst thought that was a great idea to scare his sister. Erna and I were always very close, while he and Hella were always fighting. One day when Hella was just busy drying the dishes he sneaked out of his room and positioned himself near the kitchen door. Hella thought she heard something, but no one came into the kitchen. She now went to see where the noise came from. She just was drying a frying pan. As she went out of the kitchen door, Ernst was also standing in a dark place said: "Excuse me, what time is it?" He thought it only worked with this sentence, but Hella did not get shocked, instead she hit him over the head with the frying pan.

As the situation in Germany steadily deteriorated, Jews did not want to stay in the country for their vacation. Besides, it was difficult to find a place where one could still go. Both of the Kolb families planned to go together again. This time to Switzerland. This was summer 1935. In the meantime Hella and Ernst got bicycles too. My father now went with three children, Hella did not want to come along and for Ernst this was the first big bicycle trip. Our little group took off from Nuremberg early one morning in mid-summer. We had food along and usually around lunchtime we sat down on the edge of the road to eat. Whenever we had kosher sausages, that was a real treat. We had a little spirit-stove and all we needed was water and as soon as it was heated up, we had a feast



With the help of Aunt Paula and Hella my mother tried to ride a bicycle again



On the diving board in Heiden. Erna, Hildegard Blum, Ernst, Hella, I and my father

We had stayed overnight in some inns which did not have a sign, "Jews not welcome" and on the third day we arrived as planned in Friedrichshafen on the Lake Konstanz. There we met up with the rest of the party who arrived by train. Everybody then went to the pier and took a ship across the Lake to Rorschach on the Swiss side. The bicycles and all of the luggage were taken along. After landing, we had to push our bicycles with the entire family's luggage, up the hill to

Heiden. This was a pretty strenuous trip and it took hours to get up there to the destination. Hotels were rented beforehand in different places in the village. Several other families, usually Jews and some even from Nuremberg with children, were in the same village, many even in the same hotel. Everybody enjoyed it. For the adults there was a bowling alley and we went to the swimming pool or found things to do.

Frequently we took day trips and at least twice my father went not only with us, but took other children along. I remember the one trip to St. Gallen where we visited the beautiful cloister church.

My mother now wanted to try to ride a bicycle. She asked Aunt Paula and Hella to help. She did not want my father to do it as she said he had no patience. She tried and tried, but no way could she find her balance. She did not manage it and finally gave up.

Our parents also wanted to see a little more of Switzerland and when it was time to leave my mother, Aunt Paula, Hella and Uncle Hugo went by train to Zurich. My father had another tour planned for us to travel by bicycle. The four of us pedaled first easterly along the lake towards the Rheine River Valley and then along the Austrian border and later on the Liechtenstein border towards Geigans. The weather was beautiful and the sight of the mountains exhilarating. At night we asked for rooms in a small inn, but because of the tourist season could only find one small room with one bed. We were told that there is a small chamber up in the attic with two beds but no light. Also the toilet of the floor below had to be used. If we want it we could have it. Ernst and I did not mind, but what to do about Erna?

She was just eleven, but still was not very tall and there was an enormously large chest of drawers in the room. With a couple of extra blankets and a pillow, she got a place to sleep too. The drawers were pretty deep and Erna looked like she was in a crib. Before going upstairs to the attic, Erna was in her bed already, Ernst and I pushed the drawer with Erna back into the chest; so Erna was safely deposited inside. When my father came back from the bathroom he rescued her. We in the meantime had gone to our own room.

Up in the attic we had a good time. We took along our lights from the bicycles and used them as flashlights. Ernst remembered a bag of dried apricots his mother gave him for the trip. While we were eating, we were telling each other ghost stories.

The next day it rained almost all day, but we had no choice but to get back on our bicycles and continue the trip: After all, the others were waiting for us. We turned westerly and after a while rode along the south shore of the Walensee and later on the Zuericher See. In the evening we arrived, a little wet, at the hotel in Zurich, where the rest of the family was awaiting us.

A couple of days were spent in Zurich and then we had to start the trip to go home. We, the bikers, started out first and shortly afterwards the railway riders left. Everybody met once more in Romanshorn in Switzerland, where together we took the ship to Friedrichshafen on the German side of the large lake. From there my father and we three children traveled again by bicycle. The rest of the family stayed for the night in Friedrichshafen. They were supposed to take the train the next morning for the trip back to Nuremberg.



On the ferry to Friedrichshafen

The first night we stayed at Weingarten in the same inn we stayed on the way coming. After a good night sleep, Papa Kolb told his crew that there was a big mountain to pass on the way home and he thought it might be a good idea to cycle to, I believe, Mochenwangen, a little village station and take a train from there to Ulm. This way we would not have to push our bicycles with the packages, up the mountain for a couple of hours.

Early in the morning everybody got up, as it was still quite a distance to go before we would come to that particular railroad station. It was cool in the morning and with all our packages we did not go very fast. The countryside there was rolling hills and the train was to arrive at 10:00 o'clock in that village. We pedaled and pedaled as fast as we could. As we came to the top of the last hill we heard the whistle of the train and saw it coming towards the village from the south. "This is our train." My father said. "we have to get down there very, very quickly". The station was just a whistle stop. My father kept imploring us to go faster and faster or we will miss the train. Finally we arrived on the station just a couple of seconds after the train. While my father went to the ticket office, a railroad official told us children to go ahead to the baggage car and put our bicycles there in the meantime. At this little station one had to go around the back of the train, over the rails and then run along the whole train, as the baggage car was all the way in front right behind the steam engine.

The three of us ran and lifted our bicycles up to the man who in that baggage car. Having done this we went into the first wagon for passengers, right behind. That railroad car had an open platform and we could look back from where my father had to come.

We saw him coming, running as fast as he could, around the last wagon just at that moment the station master lifted his red sign to signal the engineer to start the train. My father tried to lift his bicycle to some passengers in the last wagon, but it was too late. By now the train was already going pretty fast. He could not make it.

Erna, Ernst and I were now alone on the moving train without tickets or one penny of money. Erna started crying for a minute, but the nice conductor told her that in a short time an express train will stop at that station too, and our father will be only a little bit later in Ulm.

So far so good, but we knew that on that express train were also the two mothers, my uncle and Hella and if they find my father without the children, they might murder him.

Arriving in Ulm the three of us got off the train, got our bicycles from the baggage car and went towards the barrier where one has to surrender the tickets. As we did not have any, we could not get out. We had no other choice but to stay inside the gate before going through the control. About an hour later the express train arrived. Ulm's railroad station had several platforms. I told the two younger ones to stay with the bicycles while I try to find my father. I went to the right platform and when the train stopped I went to the baggage car, after all I knew my father had to come there for his bicycle. The attendant asked me what I am waiting for and I told him, that this is my father's bicycle and I was waiting for him.

In the meantime my father kept a very low profile, as he also knew that his wife and the rest of the family was on that train. As soon as the train stopped he ran towards the gate where he expected the children to be; he wanted to be there before the others came by. They had to change trains too and had a couple of hours between to have lunch and look around in Ulm. Soon my father found the two children who told him that I went to the train to find him. Now he remembered his bicycle and ran back to get it. I was still standing there, and was worrying that the train now would take off again, with my father's bicycle. Finally he came and with his ticket he could retrieve it. There was not a minute to spare, as the train took off again. The two of us, went as fast as possible towards the gate and got there just a

moment before the other family members came by. Everything worked out fine, and my father could explain everything now without any problem.

The railroad travelers got home a couple of hours later and the four of us on bicycles took another two days. We cooked on the side of the road again and sat in the grass eating the sausages with black farmer's bread. The weather stayed nice, the days went by uneventfully and we arrived home safely.

September 15th 1935, during the *Reichsparteitag*, (the Nazi party congress) in Nuremberg, the German government announced the so called Nuremberg Laws. These were the laws "for the protection of the German blood and honor". It forbade marriages between Jews and German or kindred blood. Severe punishment was threatened for anybody violating this decree.

September 25th, 1935. The operation of the Jewish Gymnastic and Sport Club Bar Kochba was forbidden by the decrees from July 19, 1933 and March 20, 1934 by the Interior Politish Police Commissioner of Bavaria in Munich. It had to be given a new name and now was called "ITUS-Nuremberg", *Israelitischer Turn und Sportverein* (Jewish gymnastic and sport club). All obeer Germany all the Jewish sport clubs had to have that name.

October 9th 1935 at 5:00 a.m., my grandmother Emma Kolb died. I believe this was the first time I was at a funeral.

After three years in the Reform Gymnasium, in 1935 I as well as all the Jewish students of my class left the Gymnasium. Most of the boys went to the Jewish high school in Fuerth. I and a couple of the other boys went to the *Handelschule*. (Comercial school). All of us stayed there until the end of the schoolyear in 1936. My father tried to get me into a lithographic printing place in Nuremberg as an apprentice, but it was not permitted from the *Arbeitsfront*, (the labor board of the Nazis). Therefore I had no other chance, but to become an apprentice in the men's clothing factory of my uncle Hugo, in the clothing manufacturing place of Hessdoerfer and Kolb.

On July 2nd 1936, the Fleischmann family moved to the third floor apartment of the Obere Kanalstrasse 4. I do not know if they were forced out of their apartment in the Aeussere Laufertorstrasse or, as I rather suspect, they moved there because the Jewish elementary school was in the same street. My little cousin Ruth was going to be six years old in September and had to go to this school. Ruth became blind when she was four. This happened after an ear infection, when it was not permitted for her to be treated by experts in a German hospital. She started the regular classes and had no problem to keep up with the rest of the children. Erna, taught her to type, and this way Ruth did her homework like all the other children. Our grandmother Fanny Hessdoerfer, who had given up her apartment sometime ago, now always lived with the families of one of her daughters. At this time she moved in with Hertha and her family.

Sometimes during the 1930th, Siegfried and Eugen Fleischmann opened two retail paint and varnish stores. One was on the corner of Wiesenstrasse and Gibitzenhoferstrasse, the other on Sulzbacher Strasse.

At Hessdoerfer and Kolb I was trained to do all kind of commercial work like selling, typing bills as an office clerk, answering the telephone and switching the call on the switchboard as well as working sometimes with the cutter and later on by myself. on the fabric cutting machine. They did not let me use the big band-saw, but I became quite familiar with the handheld machine. Every lunchtime, it did not matter what I was doing, I had to go around to all the employees in the third floor of H & K as well as in the second were the sister company of Ernueda was and write up a list what each one of the employees wanted for lunch. Having done this I had to go out and buy all the food items. This sometimes got me into troubles, as some of the people wanted their orders from a special store. I was not allowed to do that, as it might have taken too long to go to different places for more or less the same item. I also had to help packing the orders of suits and coats and in the evening had to go with the company's truck driver to the railroad station, to mail the packages and pick up what came. I did not like the time in the company and considered my 2 years there a waste of time. Some of the people were nice, but a lot of them were Nazis. I did not have too much trouble, after all I was the nephew of the boss.

Besides on Friday when one had to work without a regular break, between 12:00 o'clock noon and 2:00 p.m. was a lunch break. I always went home on my bicycle. The company was in the old part of the city, in Luitpodstrass 7 and it was a short ride, probably not more then 10 to 15 minutes.

As usually I rode west in the Luitpoldstrasse, turned left on Sterngasse and at Sterntor I turned west again along the Ring. There, right across from the Hotel Deuscher Hof, I noticed there were a lot of people standing, looking up on the building. I got off my bike and asked somebody what was happening, as I could not see anything unusual on the hotel. I was told; "The Fuehrer is there!"

At that time there was nobody on the balcony or at a window, but the mob just waited to see if their beloved Fuehrer would show his visage to his screaming Volksgenossen.

I was not interested in seeing him therefore I did not wait but drove on. After the Plaerrer I turned into the Gostenhoferhauptstrasse, which ends at the Bauerngasse and there Knauerstrasse starts. Halfway through the winding but actually quite narrow main street, I saw across the street a man trying to catch a cat with a bag. But the cat never waited for him to be close enough and ran a little further. This was like a comedy. I got of my bicycle and watched.

At that moment three large convertible cars came very fast down the road from Plaerrer. I just managed to get my bicycle and myself on the sidewalk, not be run over. In one of these cars, probably in the first one sat Hitler. He probably was on its way to the army barrack which I believe were called Gustav-Adolf-Kaserne.

All the apartment houses in Nuremberg have their front doors locked and therefore there are bells on the outside of the front entrance door. Up in the apartment there was a buzzer, which when used, opened the door. Knauerstrasse 15 was the house right across from the Knauer School. The German children were either told by their teachers to annoy Jews, or had been taught to do so by the Nazi propaganda. They knew in which apartment Jews lived. They pushed the bells and stuck match or a toothpick next to the bell button, so the people would have to come downstairs and pull the toothpicks out to stop the ringing. This way the Jews became also fair game for the Nazi mob. The German youth knew that a Jewish person could not touch them, and with typical German cowardliness they picked on

defenseless victims. The older Jewish people in the house did not want to get involved and let the bell ring until the howling mob finally would disappear.

Erna was just home when this happened at one time. She said to her mother she is going to go down and pull out the matches. My mother said: "Don't go, they'll just beat you up!" Erna went anyway, opened the front door, went out into the middle of the howling mob and pulled all the matches out and went back upstairs. The Nazi kids were so taken aback that anybody would have the guts to come right into their midst, that nothing happened. Nobody touched her and the bells stopped ringing.

My father as well as my Uncle Hugo left their children in the German schools, not to give in to the Nazis. At that time they could not yet evict children if their fathers were soldiers who had served at the front during the war. It was not pleasant for the Jewish children as the anti-Semitism was becoming very pronounced, from the teachers as well as from the other pupils. It was worse in the girl's schools.

Hella went to the Lyceum of the *Frauentor* School. This was the worst Nazi schools of all the schools in Nuremberg. The principal was Mr. Laemmermeier a well known Nazi and his wife was the head of the Nuremberger *N.S. Frauenschaft* (The Nazi Women Auxiliary). There were constant propaganda speeches which referred to the Jews as parasites, as there were in other schools. But the *Frauentor* School always went a little further and hired a so-called authority, a specialist in race political knowledge. All the Jewish girls had to participate in these lectures as well.

The expert lecturer who was specially hired for this lecture explained to the class the difference between the northern Aryan and southern Aryan types. To show how right he is he proceeded to prove it with an example. He will, he said, call out first a typical northern Germanic type. He waved for one girl to come forward. This was the blond Hella Kolb. Asking her about her Aryan forefathers, she told him that she was Jewish. This was not a satisfactory answer for the expert. He wanted to know which part of her family had at least some German blood. This she also denied and told him that as far back as can be traced everybody on both sides of her parents' families was Jewish. He angrily sent her back to her seat and said now he is going to call out a girl who represents the stouter, southern Germanic type. He now managed to pick another Jewish student, Baerbel Burger. He also argued with her about her ancestors but was told that there again was no Aryan blood in her veins. This race expert managed to pick two Jewish girls out of a class of about 20 students to illustrate the types of true Germanic blood type.

When Mr. Laemmermeier found out about this, he canceled his contract but the curriculum of race political knowledge continued; from now on the Jewish students were not permitted to participate in that important subject any more. It also got very bad in all the public schools for Jewish children. In Spring of 1935 Uncle Hugo took Hella out of this school, like all the other fathers of students in that school. Hella went to the Jewish high school in Fuerth.

In 1936 Erich Hessdoerfer was becoming a Bar Mitzvah and the two Kolb families decided to go to Zagreb for the occasion. Shortly ahead of us, Thea and Willi Weinschenk went to Yugoslavia to visit the Hessdoerfers too. Now, in July, my father and us two children, and also Hella and Ernst, went by bicycles for a three day trip to Traunstein on the German-Austrian border. Everything was beautifully organized that in Traunstein we would meet my mother, Aunt Paula, Uncle Hugo and grandmother Hessdoerfer.

My mother had brought a hot meal along for us in a large thermos bottle. The Express trains have a little foldable table right next to the window and the meal for my father was fixed on that little table ready to eat. The train went the short distance to the border and stopped first on the German customs station for checking the passports. After that was done, a few minutes later it went over to the Austrian station. The conductor on the train told my father that if he wants to take the bicycles along he has to get off the train and walk over to the customs station and get the permission papers to take the bicycles along. He would have to bring the tickets, the passports and special permission for the bicycles along. So he took the papers and went.

Austria was in 1936 very strict with tourists from Germany, as the relationship between the two countries was strained after the 1934 murder of the Austrian chancellor Dollfuss by Austrian Nazis. No German tourist was allowed to leave the train in Austria and the trains were sealed and did not stop while going through that country at all.

My father was getting the run around in the Austrian offices. He was sent from one place to another. He told the officials that his family is on that train and he does not want to miss it. The officials assured him that the train will be standing there for quite a while, and he has nothing to fear.

But it did happen, the train took off, and not only was he not on the train but he had all the tickets and passports. The conductor on our train quieted the excited people, telling them that an Orient Express would leave in about an hour and will catch up with our train in Yetzenitz, the border station with Yugoslavia. My father also was assured of this by the Austrian officers at the station.

The trip through Austria, even though going through beautiful country side was not enjoyed, as everybody was very nervous. My father's food still stood on the table. Every moment we came closer and closer to the border and did not know what would happen when the border guards would ask for the papers, which we obviously did not have.

But everything worked out just fine. Our train stopped at the border and nervousness of the adults almost reached the breaking point. On the rail to our right a train came in next of ours. As it stopped, my Papa looked right from his window into ours.

By then it was already late afternoon. We had no troubles at the passport control, and when the train got into motion through the Slovenian country side, my father finally got his now pretty cold lunch. In Bled, a well known vacation place, we got off and went to the previously rented hotel.

During the night Uncle Justin Hessdoerfer arrived by train from Zagreb, and still in the same night, took his mother home with him. Our two families stayed for the next three weeks in Bled from where we made day trips as we always did during the vacations, some of us by bike and the rest by buses or trains. Bled has a beautiful lake for swimming and boating. Only rowboats are allowed on the lake; the only motorboat belonged to the boy king, Peter, whom we sometimes saw giving his friends a ride.

Just before the weekend of the Bar Mitzvah everybody went by train to Zagreb. I don't remember what we did with the bicycles. We roomed in hotels, as the Hessdoerfers had a very small apartment. On Saturday morning was the Bar Mitzvah but I don't remember anything about it. In the afternoon, after

dinner the Hessdoerfers showed their guests all the sights and points of interest in the city. Erich and I went by ourselves. We used to be not only very close when we were small children, but also looked more like brothers than cousins. After the weekend everybody went back home again, including our grandmother. My father and we four children again went by bicycle for the last stretch after we came to the German border.

In early 1937 the ritual killing of animals was forbidden in Bavaria. The kosher meat had to be imported from outside Bavaria, mostly from Ulm, which is in the state of Wuerttemberg. Now Jews were taxed differently than the rest of the population. First, any special compensations were taken away. There was no more reduction for support of parents, children and siblings in case of sickness. Then they canceled the child reduction. After that all Jews were taxed in class 1, which meant, like single people instead of families. The young men who were of draft age were declared unworthy of bearing arms, but never the less had to pay the 50% increase of the income tax, which was a tax for armament.

On Shevuoth in 1937 Erna became Bat Mitzvah, or confirmed, as it was called at that time. There still were quite a number of Jews living in Nuremberg and the confirmation class was quite large. Rabbi Heilbronn officiated at the ceremony.



Rabbi Heilbronn leads the Bat Mitzva class out of the synagogue after the service.



At the Bat Mitzvah party on the grounds of the Jewish Old People home



Top row from the left: Rabbi Heilbronn, Lore Seidenberger, Lotte Ehrlich, Kaethe Blum, the daughter of Eabbi Andorn, Rita Goldstein, Ruth Fleischer, Erna, Hilde Lifgens. Bottom row: Margot Schwarz, Margot Reis, Hildegard Blum, Marianne Friedmann, Betty Burger, Fraenze Vogt, Erika Deutsch Louise Vorhaus, Ilse Rosenfeld, Rosl Bein, Kaethe Heymann and Marianne Seidenberger



The table with the Bat Mitzvah presents



The Bat Mitzvah dinner.



It became very difficult for Jews to get a passport and permission to take money out of Germany. Therefore, it was impossible to spend the vacation in a foreign country. After looking around for a place to go on vacation, my parents heard about Haigerloch..



Both photos in Haigerloch were taken in 1938, as the Fleischmanns were not there in 1937



On the right: Erna on her birthday on July 31, 1937. In back of this picture was written: To my friend Ruth on her 14th Birthday

This was a small town south of Stuttgart in *Hohenzollern*, a small area independent from Wuertemberg. The Jewish people lived on one side of the town and the non-Jews on the opposite side of a small mountain.

That was a place one could still go if one of the Jewish families would rent a room. The two Kolb families were lucky and found lodging places.



Haigerloch used to have a fairly large Jewish community and was like an oasis in Nazi Germany.
Dinner at Gasthof zur Rose in Haigerloch

There were a lot of native Jewish children and also people and children from other cities in Germany for that same reason as we. It was a peaceful place and one did not have any contact with the rest of the population. There was a little swimming hole in a small river some place in the woods. All the beaches and swimming pools in Germany were, at that time, forbidden for Jews. One could breathe there like in a free country. Haigerloch had even a Jewish restaurant, The *Gasthof zur Rose*. We ate there every lunch time and probably even every dinner.

By comparison, in Nuremberg the capital of anti-Semitism, Julius Streicher constantly agitated the masses with his inflammatory speeches and articles in his hate paper, *The Stuermer*. He incited the population, so that always more and more attacks on Jews occurred.

Uncle Hugo had made arrangement with the school, which was called New Herrlingen in Bunce Court, near Faversham, in Kent, England. Hella, together with her friend Anni Dingfelder, went there on April 13th, 1937. During the summer the two girls came back home and after the vacation both of them went back to England on September 20th, 1937.



One of the local boys Egon Levy, tore his pants on the trip and as we always had a sewing kit along I fixed it for him.

We made lots of friends there of the local teenagers and also some children who were vacationing there. Together we went to the brook. It was just a little deeper part in the brook, but one really could not swim there. A couple of times I went with some of the boys on bicycle tours. Once we went to Ichenhausen to visit relatives, Paula and Karl Neuburger.

Towards the beginning of the year 1938 it became impossible for Uncle Hugo to transfer money for Hella's tuition to England. She also suffered from home sickness. In March 1938, the Hugo Kolbs moved into a 3rd floor apartment in *Fuertherstrasse 38*.

Our grandmother Fanny Hessdoerfer died on March 14th, 1938. Inside the death cloth (shroud) she had placed a piece of paper with the following letter written to her children:

Nuremberg, October 21, 1935

My dear children! Now, that everything has come out different than we expected, I beg you, do not let my Justin come to my funeral, so that nothing should happen to him. Even if I should not be lucky enough to see him once more in my lifetime. Further on I ask you to have as little as possible said during my funeral. You, my Dearest, know what I was for you. In case you do not need my clothes and linens, please send them to Frieda (Ellinger), or if she is not alive any more, to Zitta (Heipert, nee Ellinger). May the Almighty keep you healthy and reward and bless you for everything you did for me. This is my last and dearest wish.

Your ever loving mother

On April 18th, 1938, Hella went by train to Berlin to start in a Jewish school for laboratory assistants.

On April 28th, 1938, the decree was announced that Jews had to report and register all their assets. (RGBl. 1938, page 922, in the official German government paper).

Hella came back to Nuremberg on June 1st, 1938, and went with her parents and all of us to Haigerloch. This time Hella traveled with my father and us by bicycle. Ernst and Max came along too. Ernst already went with us in 1937. Again we had a wonderful time and did not feel any of the persecution like in Nuremberg. We went swimming and made bicycle tours. Sometimes with my father.

July 6th, 1938, the highly publicized conference in the Hotel Royal in Evian les Bains in France, on the southern shore of Lake Geneva, started. For two days the delegates disputed about the selection of the president. When the conference finally started, one after the other delegates made it clear that their countries were unwilling to accept refugees.

The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were not represented.

Italy refused the invitation.

Hungary, Rumania and Poland sent observers with the only purpose of requesting, that they too be relieved of their Jews.

The German Reich refused to co-operate on the grounds that the matter concerned them alone.

Australia announced: " As we have no real racial problem, we are not desirous of importing one!"

New Zealand was unwilling to lift its restrictions.

The British Colonial Empire reported no territory suitable to the large-scale settlement of Jewish refugees.

Canada wanted only agricultural immigrants and no others.

Columbia, Uruguay and Venezuela the same.

Peru did not want immigration of doctors, lawyers, etc.

France, which had already taken two hundred thousand refugees and three million aliens, said it had reached its saturation point.

Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama said they did not want any traders or intellectuals.

Argentina, which has a population of one-tenth of the United States, said it had taken almost as many refugees as the United States and could not be counted on for a large scale immigration.

The Netherlands and Denmark said they had already taken twenty-five thousand refugees into their small countries, and would continue to take more.

The United States agreed to accept its full quota of 27,370 annually from Germany and Austria.

The conference adjourned on July 15, 1938 and American and British Papers wrote: "Evian" spelled backwards is "naive". The Times magazine wrote: "Evian is the home of a famous spring of still and unexciting table water. After a week of many warm words of idealism and few practical suggestions, the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees took some of the same characteristics".

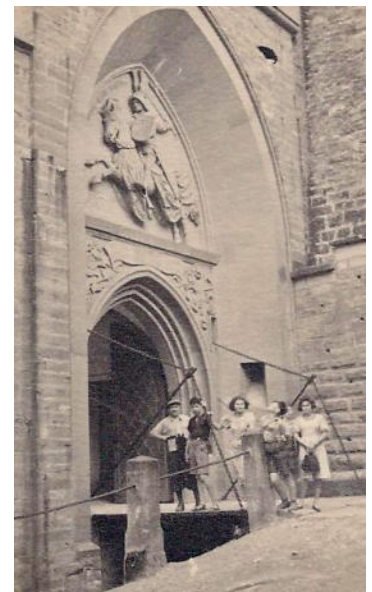
July 23rd, 1938, the official German paper announced in its publication, that Jews were forced to carry the identification card, marked with a large J. on the outside. (RGI 1938, page 922).

On July 25th, 1938, the 4th decree of the *Reichsbuergergesetz*, (The German citizen law) Jewish doctors lost their right to work in their profession. Only by special recommendation of the *Reichsaertztammer* (The organization of German physicians) the Reichs-minister of the Interior could grant a temporary cancellation of this decree and even then, only for the treatment of Jewish patients. (RGI I 1938, page 963).

The German press published after the conference: **"Jews for sale-who wants them? No one!"**



Everybody, even the Fleischmanns, came along to Haigerloch this summer. For many years they used to go for vacation to Reichenhall, for treatment of Siegfried's asthma, but now they were not permitted there anymore. Some of us children again traveled with my father by bicycle and the rest came by train. It was like the year before, one forgot for a little while the inhumanity of the Germans, and lived like normal people in a peaceful environment. There still was a kosher dining place and on Saturday morning, after the services, people were standing around the synagogue talking without being heckled.



On a bicycle trip to the Hohenzoller castle



Max, Ernst and Erna in Haigerloch

We went with my father on bicycle tours and the cousins went along too. One trip went to the Hohenzoller castle and on the way back we visited a Jewish cemetery.

August 2nd, 1938, Willi Weinschenk received the number 8180 from the United States Consulate on the waiting list for a visa. It says: You are registered under the number 8180 on August 2nd, 1938 on the waiting list of the applicants for a visa. Should you change your address, you have to report it promptly.

After we receive assured proof of the capability of you being able to make a living in America and your number comes up, you will be mailed a summons for your formal application. This summons will be mailed about 4 weeks prior to the appointment for a physical examination.

On any correspondence you have to add your waiting number.

For sometime now, the city of Nuremberg tried to buy the synagogue, but the officials of the congregation were not willing to sell it. In comparison the Jewish congregation of Munich which did sell their synagogue. Therefore on August 3rd, 1938, the city of Nuremberg decided to expropriate the synagogue, and on August 10, 1938, the Nazis started to demolish the synagogue in Nuremberg after they had expropriated it, because the Jewish congregation was not willing to sell it, unlike the Munich congregation, which did.



Erna, my father, my mother and I.

The mayor of Nuremberg made following announcement:

Reichsministerialblatt (Official decree of the ministry) No. 33 from the 5th of August 1938.

In accordance with the paragraph 1 chapter 2 of the law from October 4th, 1937, rebuilding the German cities (*Reichsgesetzblatt* I. page 1054) (the official paper of the government) in connection with the decree of the Fuehrer and Reichschancellor about the building codes in the *Stadt der Reichsparteitage* (City of the Nazi party congress) Nuremberg from April 9th, 1938

(*Reichsgesetzblatt* I page 379) the following will be decided:

I.

1. Being according to paragraph 1 Chapter 2 of the law from October 4th, 1937, renewal of German cities, in the old part of the town, inside the wall of the *Stadt der Reichsparteitage*, Nuremberg, following properties fall under these categories:

The properties, Hans Sachs place 4 and Neue Gasse 12 are listed in the book of property listing for taxation, in Nuremberg-Sebald in book No. 61, sheet 1412, page 403, map 1495. The size is indicated as 0.260 Hektar and 0.001 Hektar on map No. 1501 1/2 (*Sternplan nummer*)

2. Evaluation of this will be assessed.

II.

The regulation is empowered one day after the announcement.

Berlin, July 27th, 1938.

The chairman of the Organization of the Reichsparteitag Nuremberg

Signed, Kerrl, Minister of the Reich

The minutes of the public meeting of the city officials on August 3rd, 1938 are as follows:

First regulation for the renewal of the city, the *Stadt der Reichsparteitage*, Nuremberg.

The mayor Willy Liebel reports:

"With the decree of the 9th of April. 1938, the *Fuehrer* and *Reichskanzler* had ordered the start of the building changes and the creation of the *Reichsparteitagsgelaende* where the party congress would take place and the planning of the city for this occasion.

June 22nd, 1938, I spoke quite explicitly to the city council, about the measures to be taken, for the conclusion and the possibilities, mentioned by the Reichs ministry of labor, on June 1st. At that time I spoke already, about the restoration of the incomparable beauty of the picture of the old antique Nuremberg. We will now go ahead and get rid of ugly, obtrusive buildings that do not fit into the style of the old part of the city. These kind of positive measures we only are able to perform after the decree, which I mentioned before. I will now follow up these possibilities to the utmost in the years to come. With your help, which your cooperation in the last five years has proved, we will be able to fulfill the beautification of our city. The citizen of Nuremberg will show their understanding, the way they always have and will give any assistance necessary. I am sure of that.

The worst sin of the last century is, without any question, the synagogue, which is located on the northern shore of the Pegnitz River, across the Isle Schuett, with its idyllic and charming old houses. The representatives of the citizens of Nuremberg, whose democratic, foggy, Jewish influenced minds, permitted the Jews, on March 5th, 1869, in this same room, to build an un-German, impudent, obtrusive, oriental building there, on the Hans Sachs place. On the south side, stands the *Heilige-Geist Kirche* (The church of the Holy Spirit), there, where for hundreds of years the insignias of the Reich and the crown and jewels of former kings and emperors were kept.

This, especially mentioned in the building permit, was done to the specification of the Jewish ritual requirement. It was built in the middle of a nice old German town. The near-eastern cupola structure, boasting as a symbol of the former Jewish domination in Nuremberg, always looked, even from

quite a distance, like a foreign body in the city. As Nurembergers and *Nazionalsozialisten*, (Nazis) it always was an eyesore to us, and as in so many other things, destiny has given us the task to right the wrongs of former generations, to the betterment of the city.

A complete clearing up of this unhappy condition can only be done by total removal of the synagogue building. Together with the demolition, one can do some of the necessary rebuilding of houses in the old part of the town. On the north side of the synagogue property is the office building of the *Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde* (Jewish congregation). This building takes away from the houses around the Hans Sachs Platz, in the Neuen Gasse, the now mandatory courtyard space. To change this situation, we also have to remove this building.

According to my inquiry, the Reichs-minister Kerl, the commissioner in charge under the authority of the *Fuehrer* and *Reichskanzler*, gave the first order on July 27th, 1938, about the renewal of the "*Stadt der Reichsparteitage* Nuremberg". His answer, that the properties of Hans Sachs Platz 4 and Neue Gasse 12, on which, at that time, the above mentioned Synagogue and office building of the *Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde* are located, in that sense fall under the decree of the 4th of October 1937, the renewal of German towns. This regulation becomes valid, one day after its publication in the paper of the *Reichsministry*, which is, as far as I know, tomorrow.

The declaration of *Reichsminister* Kerl becomes law and with that the seizure of the properties. The execution of the seizure was given to me from the *Reichsminister* of labor on June 1st 1938. The city of the *Reichsparteitage* Nuremberg is responsible for the seizure and the clean up.

Of course, I will hasten to use the right given me and start seizure procedure with the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde*. It is made easier for me by the Bavarian law from August 1st, 1933. It is extremely important that the work of destruction can begin at once, as soon as the legal regulation has started and one does not have to wait for the outcome of the legalities. The hard work we have done the last couple of weeks, to prepare before hand and with the application and utilization of all possible laws, it will be possible to succeed in the removal of the synagogue and the office building of the Jewish congregation.

Gentlemen of the city council and of the press, and all the people, I can announce to you the event which has historical significance for Nuremberg. I have ordered the demolition of the synagogue on Hans Sachs Platz and it will be started within one week. By the time of the *Reichsparteitag* 1938, presumably most of it would be done.

During the next weeks, the peace and quiet on the Hans Sachs Platz will be temporarily disturbed, even during the night hours, but we can expect that the people in that neighborhood will show understanding. After all, they are the immediate beneficiaries of that (disturbance) and in the future they will not have to look and listen to the Yiddish chatter of the *Mishpoche*, every week.

With the destruction of the synagogue, this unhappy chapter of the building history of the last century, will now finally have the only possible solution. The "shame of Nuremberg" will be

eradicated, the way the "Stuermer" wrote lately and correctly: "ostentatious, soulless and insolent above the sea of roofs of Nuremberg."

In the negotiation in my behalf, in early June, about the demolition of the synagogue on the Hans Sachs Platz, contrary to the Jews of the *Hauptstadt der Bewegung* (Capital of the movement) Munich, the Jews of the *Stadt der Reichsparteitage* Nuremberg, refused to give up the properties and the buildings voluntarily. Because of that, we had to take the more complicated, time consuming way of seizure.

The Jews had already accepted this for a while, but the lying, international, Jewish hate press announced for the past one and a half months about the destruction of the synagogue as an accomplished fact.

The Jewish *Presszentrale* in Zurich, No. 995 from June 17th, 1938, writes, and you can look at it, it is displayed on the table:

"In Munich and in Nuremberg the large congregational synagogues, were torn down, more or less over night. It was almost impossible to rescue the ritual objects. In both cases these were magnificent buildings and they had to disappear because they needed parking areas for cars."

To this impudent Jewish hate lie one could only say, it is a shame that

1. one can not break down the Synagogue overnight, but it would take weeks of strenuous work.
2. The Jews of Nuremberg have to take their cult objects out of the synagogue very soon, but they can secure them with no haste. We would like it even better if the whole Jewish congregation of Nuremberg would solemnly and finally leave the city of the *Reichsparteitage* and would go to Palestine.

3. We by no means want to establish a car parking place on that location.

Now to counteract other horror stories, I want to establish the fact that the Jews of Nuremberg have another Synagogue in the Essenwein Strasse with a seating capacity of between 4 and 500 people.

We also found out that the Synagogue on Hans Sachs Platz was, in recent years, even on the Jewish holidays, only occupied by 500 persons. It would be no problem to arrange the Jewish "Yahweh" services in the future with corresponding, repetition of the service. But I want to tell the Jews and Jewesses today, that they should not show themselves so contemptuously abusive and arrogant, before or after their Synagogue visits, the way they used to do it at some times on the Hans Sachs Platz and surrounding areas.

About the use of these soon to become empty areas, which we will have through the razing of the synagogue, I shall give you, my councilmen, notice at the given time."

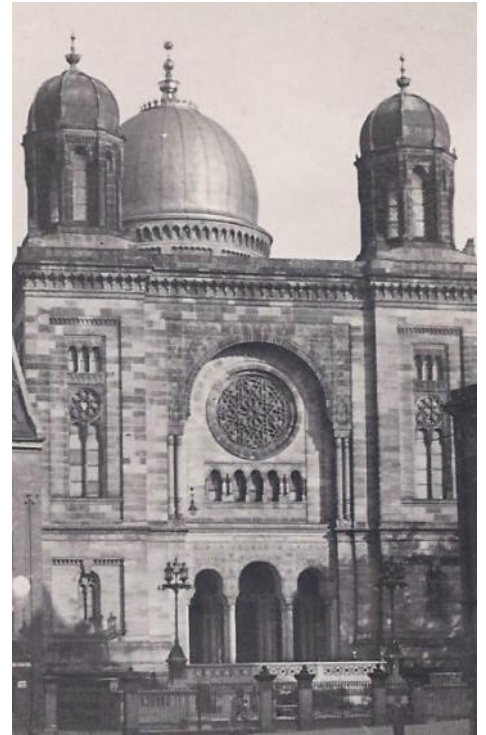
The Mayor of the *Stadt der Reichsparteitage*

Suddenly, a bombshell hit! A telephone call from the Jewish congregation of Nuremberg to my father in Haigerloch. He has to return as fast as possible. The Nazis were starting the demolition of the synagogue. He left immediately by train for Nuremberg.

The offices of the Jewish congregation were right next to the synagogue in the *Neue Gasse*. Before my father went up to his office he took photos of the synagogue from different angles and from across the Pegnitz River from the little Island Schuett. Having done this, he put the camera in his briefcase and walked up the one flight of stairs to his office.



Two Gestapo men were already present and as he entered they confronted him with the following accusation: "You stole the *Judenstain* and the golden key and you want to smuggle them to America!"



These two pictures from the synagogue are some of the one he took on that day



The Judenstain

The Judenstain used to be the keystone on the ark of the synagogue which was destroyed when the Jews were expelled from Nuremberg in 1499. It was found in 1909, where it was built into a house in the Wunderburggasse 8 and was bought by the Jewish congregation. It was built inside the new synagogue over the entrance door. The golden key was just an iron key, gold-plated for the amount of 50 Pfennig and displayed in a little glass case. It was the key with which the mayor of Nuremberg, in 1874, opened the synagogue for its inauguration. The congregation had it gold plated and it was displayed inside the synagogue.

My father had the nerve of answering them: "Sure, I want to wear the stone on my watch chain!" (This stone weighed more than 300 pounds.)

"So where is the stone, if you did not take it?" They asked.

"I have not the slightest idea, I just came back from my vacation."

"You are under arrest, until the stone is found!" My father asked the two Gestapo men if he could leave his briefcase in his office, which they permitted. It would not have been very good for him, would they have found the camera in the briefcase.

Nobody in the office knew where the stone was. When the Nazis informed the congregation about the imminent destruction of the synagogue, everybody available started removing Torahs, prayer books, talesim, etc. and had them shipped to different places for safekeeping. After all, the stone was not so important, and nobody paid any attention to where it was sent.

The two Gestapo men took my father along and put him in jail. He finally was permitted to make one telephone call to his office, and asked them, to please find out where the stone was because the Gestapo will hold him until it was found. The people in the office kept on calling all the areas where things were sent, and after a while traced it. The stone, together with lots of other items, was shipped to the new Jewish cemetery in Schniegling. The people in the office called the Gestapo and told them about it, and my father was released again.

Julius Streicher had organized a spectacular ceremony to which he invited local Nazi dignitaries and representatives of the German press. At 10:15 on the morning of August 10th, 1938 he appeared on a podium overlooking a large crowd and spoke:

"Volksgenossen und Volksgenossinen (German men and women)!

I ask you, does this house, with its oriental style, fit into our German city?"

" No!" Screamed the rabble out of thousands of throats.

"We now have the last stone to fit into the building for refurbishing of Nuremberg. This last stone is not a stone of reconstruction. It is a stone which has to be torn out. I am talking about the synagogue, which rightfully, again in these weeks, was called the shame of Nuremberg. Today we tear down a synagogue and never will there be another being built again!"

He spoke for 1 1/2 hours, his well known rhetoric of hate, from his pure German blood and his pure German soul and at the end he said:

"You Nuremberger workers, who were slaves of the Jews, who now happily help to build the Reich of Adolf Hitler, I now give you the command, START!" He then went to the lectern and personally maneuvered a large crane, which dismantled the great star that surmounted the large center cupola to the roaring screams of "Heil", of the assembled *Volksgenossen*. Then by his command they dynamited the two candelabras on the staircase of the main entrance. Streicher called this, the happiest day of his life.

He might have remembered that statement, 8 years, 3 months and 28 days later, on October 16th, 1947, when the hangman put the noose around his neck to hang him for crimes against humanity.

The speaker of the city council, *Ratsherr* Haberkern, thanked the *Oberbuergermeister* (mayor) in the name of the entire citizenry of Nuremberg. He also explained that the picture of the Judophile mayor Von Stromer was replaced with a picture of mayor Johannes Scharrer.

After reading this protocol there was a secret meeting of the council in which it was decided to allot 55,000.00 RM for the destruction of the synagogue and the covering of this amount under extraordinary building measures.

The value of the synagogue was supposed to be arranged from a commission. At least the paper which the Jewish community received said so. Even before the documents were delivered to the Jewish congregation, the workmen came and put up scaffolding all around the building. One had knowledge about this through the newspaper, and the employees of the congregation took the valuable religious objects out of the synagogue to safe places. They also had the well known *Judenstain*, a relic from the synagogue which was destroyed in 1399, taken out of the wall where it was cemented and had it shipped to the Jewish cemetery. Early in the morning, a mob entered the synagogue to loot. Everything that they got into their hands, which the workmen they threw into the street to the yelling mob.

The destruction was supposed to be finished at the start of the *Reichsparteitag* 1938. Eight pressure hammers worked on the foundation with very little result. A very large crane was ordered from outside the city.

Not quite seven years later, this centuries old city, the so called "Jewel Box of Germany", lay 91% destroyed and thousands of the yelling mob lay buried under the ruins.

The offices from the Jewish congregation were forced out of its offices and moved to Lindenaststrasse 6.

On August 17th, 1938, (RGI. I, page 1044) it was decreed, that all Jews over the age of six years have to add an additional name after their first name. Males had to add the name "Israel", and females the name "Sara". Only people who had Jewish first names, which the Fuehrer had specially listed and permitted, were exempt from doing so. Anybody forgetting, or for any other reason, not signing his letters or official documents without this additional name, would be punished with jail.

On August 28th, 1938, I went by train to Berlin. My father had enrolled me in the *Privaten Berufsfachschule fuer Mode, Graphik und Dekoration* (art school for fashion, graphic and window dressing) there. This was the only art school for Jewish children in Germany. My father had also rented a room in the same apartment where Hella already was, in the *Nuernberger Strasse*, on the south-east corner of Augsburger Strasse in the Apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Davidsohn. As I had no idea about the metropolis, Hella, picked me up at the Anhalter railroad station. She had already been there since April of that year.

Both of us found each other very quickly, and then made our way to the station for the inter-city train, called S-Bahn. I arrived with 2 large trunks, and even with Hella's help we had to struggle. I am

almost sure that somewhere we had to change to the U-Bahn, the subway. On the train Hella told me that the Davidsohns are expecting me, but Aunt Babette, the sister of both of our fathers, also wanted us to come by right away. On Wittenbergplatz we got off the subway. This was not too far from the Apartment. We could walk only very slowly, carrying the heavy cases. Hella led the way.

During the train ride we had conspired not to see the landlords first, as the aunt and Cousin Ruth were waiting for us for supper. The apartment of the Davidsohns was only a couple of blocks away. On Tauentzienstrasse we turned left into Nuernberger Strasse. From across the street we saw Mr. and Mrs. Davidsohn standing at the window, waiting for us. Hella said: "If they see us, we'll never get out. We better walk close to the building, so they can't see us!"

We did; we almost rubbed against the wall, so close we tried to walk in order that the Davidsons could not detect us. Now, without a sound we snuck into the apartment. Hella had a key. We just left the trunks in the girls' room and left again. Mr. and Mrs. Davidsohn were still looking out the window and did not hear or suspect anything.

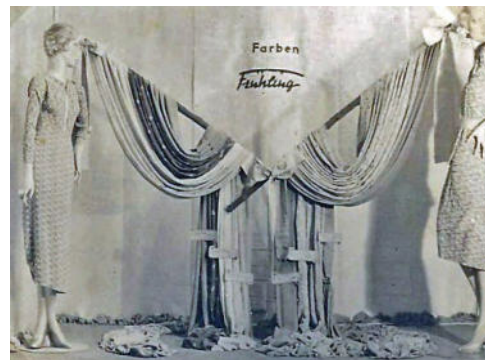
Again, like two rats we snuck out, down the street to the station, and took a train to Alexander Platz. I just went along, but Hella, knew the way very well, and it did not take long until we arrived in cousin Ruth's apartment. I really did not know my aunt very well. I just saw her once for a day, at my Bar Mitzvah. The last time I saw Ruth was in 1928 when I was just six years old. Ruth's husband Herbert Mendel, and little two year old Peter, I had never met before.



My room in Nuernbergstrasse

Luckily the supper was finished soon. During the meal, Hella got a bit worried about what the Davidsohns would say, as we did not even say hello to them. So both of us did not stay very long but went back to the train station and home to the apartment.

Hella brought me now to the landlords for introduction. This first meeting was not very friendly. Both of the adults screamed at us that it was extremely impolite not to come first to them. All the excuses did not help. Mr. and Mrs. Davidsohn were very mad. There I heard for the first time that I did not have a room in that apartment, but in the house next door, in the sixth floor walk-up. As soon as we could, we left the room. Hella introduced me to her two roommates, Hanna Roeder from Stuttgart and Ellen Rosenberg from Fuerth, and then helped me with my suitcases up the many stairs to my room. The Davidsohns had told me firmly to be punctual the next morning for breakfast in their apartment.





The figures and posters had to be made at home

The next morning I was told where the school was and how I had to walk to get there. I started the class for window dressing. In this class were young teenagers like me, boys and girls and also quite a lot of middle aged people, who usually were salespeople who had lost their jobs and intended to learn a new trade in preparation for their emigration.

In a fairly large room were cubicles of all sizes, representing store windows. There was no glass in front and one could decorate these windows with all kinds of items, like groceries, shoes, bottles of wine, or cloth. None of these props were new, some of them even in pretty bad condition. But the classes were interesting and the

This was one of my first decorated windows



Smiles are again everywhere, because Kako tobacco is here again

students very helpful. The instructor Mr. Woychinzki was an expert in draping material around a dummy just with one pin, but in general, he was quite lazy. One learned more from older students than from him. One also had to take classes in calligraphy and poster painting. I had a good time with the other students and made many friends. Once in a while there was a special contest which was judged by the decorating teacher and the teachers of other classes and Mr. Hausdorf, the owner a well known painter.



The second from the left is the calligraphy teacher and a good friend Ernst Nordheimer, the second from the left is the instructor in window decoration Mr Woychinzki. Next to him in the center is a fellow who was for one or two months my room mate. I don't remember his name. In the center row on the right am I and in the bottom row in the center is Kaschub, I also don't remember his first name.

It was quite usual that two students worked together on one window and after a while one got used to working with the same person. Preparation for doing something special usually took a lot of time. Many times I worked with another young fellow a year or two older than I with the name of Kaschub, and we decorated our windows together under the name of KAKO. We became known in the whole school because of our unique ideas. It was not unusual that we got the first prize for our original window at a contest. Towards the end of the year, as there was no chance to learn any more in window dressing, as the usable material was very limited and always the same, I took more and more courses in the graphic arts. I also took courses in the evening.

Mr. Nordheimer was a much better teacher than Mr. Woychinski. He spent a lot of time with each student. He wrote each alphabet down and explained the significance of everything to the student. Mr. Nordheimer was married shortly before



On the staircase. Right front Vera Braun and in the back on the right Gerhard Braun and in front of him Georg Rheinthal. I don't remember the names of the rest of the students



Some of my colleges in graphic art. Far right is Georg Rheinthal and next to him Vera Braun

he was deported to Auschwitz where he and his young wife were killed. Vera and Georg were very good artists. They did not survive the holocaust.



These are the only photos I still have. I must have sent them to my Aunt in America. There were always contests. The one on the left was an aquarelle of a match box. It was to be done during the New Year break, as we did not get any coals



for heating the school. I went home to Nuremberg. But as I did not have my watercolor set along I made the matchbox on a scratchboard. It was liked very much, but I was out of contest as I did not use watercolor. The second one was a contest with the theme "Into the wide world!" A brochure for a travel agency, I made second price. The next is just a poster for the Zoo.



October 5th, 1938, the law about the *Kennkarte* (identification card) for Jews was announced. This document was marked on the cover with a very large "J". The identification card had to be carried at all times and in case of being summoned to an office, had to be shown, even before being asked. In some cases even the post offices asked to see this card when one wanted to buy a postage stamp. In Nuremberg the post offices of *Untere Turnstrasse* and in *Zufuhrstrasse* Jews would not get served before they produced their ID-card.

On April 1, 1939, Hugo Kolb and probably his entire family as well as my parents and sister went to the police headquarters in Nuremberg for the Jewish identification card. I probably had to go at the same time to a police station on



This ID of my uncle Hugo was filed in the police department in Nuremberg. The original was grey like the outside.

Flensburgerstrasse in Berlin.

In 1939 my father, an old athlete, was now the only coach left and was still coaching the teenagers in gymnastics. Most of these children perished during the holocaust. From the left: My father, Otto Kleestadt, Ernst Kolb, the next I don't remember, Arno Kahn, I don't remember, Max Fleischmann, Albert Kimmelstiel and also one I don't remember the name. Bruno Hahn, & Joachim Ascher are not on the photo.

Sitting are Friedl Wassermann, Miriam Blumenthal and Erna Reis.

First the chairs which were standing in the gymnasium for the religious service were put on a side. This and the following pictures are from the preparation for a show in 1939.



Erna Reis, Erna Kolb and Trude Guenther



The pyramid:



My two cousins Ernst Kolb and Max Fleischmann

0 Starting on top left: Otto Kleestadt, Erna Reis, Miriam Blumenthal, Friedl Wassermann and Max Fleischmann. Second row: Otto is sitting on the shoulder of Ernst Kolb and Max on probably Joachim Ascher's shoulder. In front holding up the legs of Hans lauchheimer is Arno Kahn. Hans is holding on to the shoulder of the boy I do not remember

On September 17, 1939, it was decreed that Jews are not permitted to leave their apartments between 8:00 o'clock in the evening and 6:00 o'clock in the morning.

In Leutershausen in the night of October 15, 1938, the windows in the houses of the Jews were broken by local Nazis. Jewish men who lived in the town called the government office in Ansbach for help, but naturally no help came. The families of these people lived in town since many generation. The Jews barricaded their windows and doors. In the night of October 17 to 18th the local Nazis got reinforcement from SA men of neighboring towns broke the into the Jewish houses after removing with large stones and beams of the defending barricades. The inhabitants were warned before and were well hidden. The Nazis were screaming that they all would be beaten to death, screaming: "Judas, jetzt geht's ins Tote Meer!" (*Jews you are now getting into the dead sea!*)

In the early morning of October 18th 1938, it was Shemini-Azereth, my father received a call from our relatives there about the pogrom. My father right away arraigned and drove with a couple of furniture vans to Leutershausen. He also had notified the Nuremberg Gestapo, who sent some men there. The arrival of the vans had a little calming effect on the mentally collapsed people. The synagogue had been looted and put on fire. Anything what still was usable was loaded into the van as well all the Jews from Leutershausen as well as the two Ellinger siblings from Jochsberg and driven to Nuremberg. There they were distributed to relatives. Almost all of them were our relatives.

On October 28, 1938, all the Jews who were born in areas which became Poland after World War 1 were expelled. It did not matter if they were born in Germany, they were considered Polish if the father or grandfather was born in what was now Poland. This included not only the wife but the children as well. Most of these people, who did not manage to emigrate in the short time until the start of WWII were murdered during the holocaust.

The following part was written by my father in German and translated from me.

In the beginning of November 1938, we were given notice that our apartment in Knauerstrasse 15, where we had lived since 1929, had to be vacated at once. My father went to the *Mietschutzgericht* (tenant-protection court) and raised objection about the illegal termination of his tenant rights. The hearing was scheduled for November 11, 1938.

November 9th, 1938 the German government went ahead with its well prepared plan for a nation-wide pogrom against the Jews. In every city, town and village the hordes of Nazis proceeded to burn down the synagogues and destroyed Jewish stores and apartments. The Nazi government announced to the world, that the German people rose up against the Jews when they heard about the murder of the ambassadorial secretary "Von Rath," killed by a young Jewish man, Herschel Greenspan, in Paris. Even though the propaganda minister announced that the German population spontaneously reacted because of the murder in Paris, Nuremberg unmasked the lies of the criminal regime, when the so called German civilian population appeared in Nazi uniforms to prove Gobble's lie.

At 12:00 o'clock midnight all the members of the Nuremberg S.A. were ordered for roll call to the *Hauptmark* (the big market place) in Nuremberg. Even troops of nearby villages were ordered to appear. There they got specific orders from their own officers on how to proceed with the pogrom. Several

groups, who had been trained for years to terrorize the citizens, succeeded in disappearing and did not show up. They did not want to join in the action of that night.

First, they were told to go to the marked Jewish stores which were made easy to identify. Shortly before that night the owners were forced to put their name, including their new middle name Israel, in proscribed condensed typeface with the letters of a specified size in white, on the store window. The uniformed mob went to work to break the windows with iron crowbars and axes they were ordered to bring from home. The rabble, which was notified the evening before, was then permitted to loot these stores. As one could expect, in many cases it came to fights between the robbers. The police did not interfere with the mob.

The brown shirt hordes went to the homes of the Jews after the addresses were given to them by their officers. When the Jewish inhabitants did not open the doors fast enough, they were broken down. Every one of these uniformed Huns was armed with a pistol and usually with a dagger on which the party slogan *Blut und Ehre* (blood and honor), was engraved. They all had with them an assortment of burglary tools, like axes and steel bars for the purpose of breaking into boxes and helping themselves to cash, jewelry, cameras or anything else that they could find, which they then put into their haversacks.

Anyone who got into their way, no matter whether they were men, women or even children, these homicidal gangs beat and tortured them. The pretext of this intrusion was that they were looking for weapons; a prohibition for Jews to own weapons was published the day before.

The vandals went from room to room destroying everything they saw. Every cabinet was broken open, the glass doors or mirrors broken, and the contents thrown on the floor. Where that took too long they just threw the furniture over. Oil paintings or upholstered chairs or couches were cut up with their daggers. Beds and clothing was also ripped and cut to shreds. For special effect they threw marmalade or eggs into the destroyed beds. They destroyed cups and china dishes so thoroughly that many people did not have one dish left to use the next morning. Also, there was no undamaged dress to wear. If they found a camera and did not steal it, they held it by the leather strap and smashed it against the wall.

An original oil painting from Boeckling in the *Lindenast Strasse* No. 21 was cut to pieces. They completely destroyed 10 originals of a value of 80,000.00 RM in house No.10 in the *Campe Strasse*. Money and stock certificates were taken. Even savings bank books were stolen. Some of these were later on returned by mail, without a return address. The apartments of Thea and Willi Weinschenk, of Siegfried and Hertha Fleischmann, of the Hugo Kolbs and of almost all the Jewish families in Nuremberg were completely destroyed. All the rooms were covered with broken glass and china. It was almost impossible to walk in these apartments. The furniture was hacked to pieces, overturned and broken. It looked like a bomb had hit these places.

This is the way the barbarians proved the heroism of the master race in the apartments of all the Jews of Nuremberg. I hope some of these bastards remembered when they came up from the air raid shelters into their destroyed apartment after one of the raids, how the Jewish apartments looked.

The orthodox synagogue in the *Essenweinstrasse* was set on fire by order of the head of the fire department. The hoses were used to prevent the adjoining apartment houses from catching fire. Jewish families, including the children, who lived in the neighborhood of the synagogue, in many cases barefoot and in nightgowns, were forced to the street and had to watch the destruction of the synagogue.

For my family in Nuremberg, the night of November 9th, started like this:

After having another very exhausting session at the Gestapo on that day, my father could not fall asleep. Even though he usually was against taking any medicine, this time he took some sleeping pills. This really helped and he was in a deep sleep when the brown shirted thugs rang the bells downstairs at the front door of the house. My mother did not want to wake him as she thought it was just some Nazis trying to annoy Jews. But they rang again and again and so she decided to wake my father anyway. In the meantime, a Mrs. Foss, who lived in the same house, went downstairs and opened the front door. We knew she was an old Nazi, but was in general not unfriendly to us.

The S.A. troopers came up to the second floor and rang the door bell there. My father, who was by that time fully awake, went into the hall. Through the closed door he asked who they were. "Open the door Jew", they screamed. "Who are you?" "We are the S.A.!", answered the mob. "I only open the door to the police!" My father called back at them. "We are the same as the police!" came the screaming answer from the outside. My father went into his living room, took the telephone off the hook, dialed the emergency number of the police and just said: "This is Knauerstrasse 15. I am under attack from a mob!" With that he hung up.

In the meantime these supermen, who always showed their heroism when they outnumbered an un-armed minority, broke the heavy glass on the top of the door, reached in and opened it. My father tried to defend his apartment, but it did not take these brigands very long to subdue him by beating him on the head and in the face.

The police now came too, after all, they did not know that it was the organized pogrom; it could have been just a regular robbery. My father was taken into so called "protective custody" by the police.

A few days earlier my family had gotten notice to vacate their apartment at once, as a Nazi official wanted to obtain the apartment. They could not manage to get my family out, because my father had made an appeal to the tenant court. Therefore my parents thought that this was just an action directed personally at them, to throw them physically out of the apartment. They had no idea of the general pogrom.

One of the hoodlums saw the trammel for the Shabbat lamp hanging in the living room and said to his cohorts: "Do you know what that is?" None of them knew. "I know", said he, "the Jews use this instrument to kill cattle their kosher way!" With that he took the trammel off its hook and took it along as evidence. They searched the desk where the envelopes with stamps of foreign countries of my father's stamp collection were. They also confiscated them and accused him of having central spy headquarters with foreign countries. Some were valuable ones. Nothing was returned.

Another one of the bandits found the composition Erna had to write for school. She still was one of the only Jewish students in a girl's high school. The title was: "Our Fuehrer." This also was requisitioned, as the villain thought she might have written something derogatory about their beloved Fuehrer.

My father was arrested by the Gestapo agent Eitel, and driven in the police van, first to his office, and then to the jail. He asked the officer if he could call his wife and tell her that he is arrested. He was told that his wife knows where he is.

On the way, he noticed that windows in Jewish stores were smashed, the doors broken, and the stores looted. As he arrived in jail, he found out that a large number of Jewish men and women were already imprisoned there. Now he realized that this was not just an action against him. All the arrested people were brought down to the cells. More and more Jews were brought in, and many showed signs of brutal mistreatment

There was Sigmund Oppenheimer, a man of 80 years, covered with blood. The skin on top of his head was split. Mr. Dingfelder 77 years old was barefooted and dressed only in slacks. Mr. Heimann and Josef Saemann were both tormented; Heimann's face was blackened from beatings on the head. The Nazi thugs did not hesitate to beat women as well. Many of them were brought to jail marked by torture.

Fritz Lorch, who had just been operated on the day before, was pulled out of his bed and beaten to such an extent that he died very soon afterwards. Paul Astruck also was dragged out of bed, and abducted into the woods near Nuremberg. He was found later on, murdered. Paul Lebrecht was slain. The murderers threw him out of the window, but his clothes got stuck on the iron fence of the balcony, where he was found hanging, dead. Nathan Langstadt was found with his throat cut, in the bathroom of his apartment. Simon Loeb also was found dead in his apartment. Jakob Spaeth was thrown down the stairs, where he was found dead.

Besides these, the following were murdered during the same night: Willi Behrends, Friedrich Katz, Emma Ullmann, Siegfried Selling and Karl Bamberger.

On that day the following were reported to have committed suicide: Erich Gans, Nathan Langstadt, Berta Schuelein and Hedwig Suessheim.

Back in jail, my father remembered the scheduled court hearing about the apartment. He asked the director of the jail, Dr. Paulus to arrange a rescheduling of the hearing. This was denied and the apartment had to be vacated at once. The reason the judge gave was that since the Jew did not show up for the hearing, he therefore lost his appeal by default.

The 160 Jewish men were marched under a steady barrage of blows, to the police jail, while the mob, which was informed before hand, cheered and applauded. Women also were abducted and marched to jail, but released after a couple of hours. The men, with them were boys as young as 14 years, were forced so tight into the cells that they almost could not breathe. After a hundred were assembled, they were driven with a police truck to the jail in the courthouse and locked up in the gymnasium. There was just about enough living space for the 160 men, but the hygienic situation was catastrophic. Only two pails were given to them, which naturally had to be emptied in a very short time. The food was so bad, that besides the bread, nobody could eat it. Towards the evening, a number of Jews from Fuerth arrived.

At 4:00 a.m., on November 11th, all the men up to 60 years old were shipped by train to the concentration camp Dachau. On arrival at the railroad station in Dachau the welcoming ceremonies began. The guards used their fists to hit into the faces and on the heads of the prisoners. They were then ordered into another train. Anybody who did not get into one of the cattle cars fast enough got beaten bloody with their rifle butts. At the same time a transport of Jews from Wuerttemberg-Baden arrived. A university professor who said: "This is murder!" was killed on the spot. Each cattle car was filled up with 150 men. The little ventilation windows were nailed closed. Then the three wagons were

towed to the concentration camp 4 km away. The railroad stops a short distance before the actual concentration camp.

There they saw the electric barbed wire and the watchtowers armed with machine-guns. They had to run through the large iron door as quickly as possible, tormented the same way as at the railroad station. Many rows of companions of the same fate were already standing there. The time was 1:30 p.m. It was not allowed to have anything on the head and any spoken word was forbidden. Along these rows the SD-men (*Sicherheits Dienst*, the SS specially trained for concentration camps) now came. Their faces already were marked as hangmen. Anybody who either had a beard or otherwise caught the attention of these uniformed murderers, was first mocked, and in case he did not acknowledge as true the degrading remarks of these hoodlums, was hit with their leather gloves or sticks.

Only after a couple of hours were the prisoners allowed to go to the toilet, and then only with special permission. The Jews from Munich who already had prisoner clothes were not permitted to come close to the new arrivals. The roll call lasted until 10:00 p.m. and the prisoners were standing on one spot all that time. During that day more than 10,000 Jews had arrived. In the barracks everybody had to sit with spread legs, and so close to the next one, that no movement was possible. This was the way they had to stay, and of course nobody could sleep in this position. It was already a relief to be chased outside at 5:00 a.m. for another roll call.

On the 12th, of November, lots of new transports arrived. They could be seen through the barbed wire. The same cruelties were repeated. The Nurembergers were still not absorbed as part of the camp inmates and therefore they did not get any food. At 9:00 p.m. they got as far as the *Jourhaus*, the administration building. In that same building was the clothing section and the showers. Through the windows they saw men constantly going by with bags on their shoulders. The tension and the cruelties by the guards during the past couple of days brought the nerves to the breaking point. A neighbor of my father believed that in the bags these men were carrying murdered Jews.

During the day everything about their life was already registered. Money, rings, watches, wallets, pocket knives, and other little items had to be kept in their hats when entering the barracks. The money was counted and they were permitted to keep 12.00 - 15.00 Marks. The rest was taken after signing. Each one got a big bag with a number and from then on they had lost their identity. Instead of Kolb, my father became *Schutzhaftjude* (Jewish prisoner) No. 25817.

Next they had to get undressed very quickly and run into the bath house. Entering, each one got a polo shirt, a jacket, slacks, socks and military boots. One had to take his own wallet with the rest of the money, handkerchiefs and suspenders. The clothes were not the gray-green striped concentration camp outfits, which only the old non-Jewish prisoners wore, but blue and white striped. The camp commander must have known about the planned internment of the Jews months in advance to have had so many of these uniforms ready. Twenty thousand of these with the yellow and red Star of David were ready before the arrival of the men. The announced reason for the internment of the Jews, was supposed to be a punishment for the murder in Paris just days before. Like any other German announcement, it was just another one of their calculated lies.

The showers naturally had only cold water. Anybody who hesitated a moment, got, a pail of cold water poured over his head, and was worked over with a scrub brush by one of the non-Jewish captives. They could not dry themselves. Next everybody was measured and weighed and asked about all kinds of sicknesses. Then one was called up and had to go to the SS-doctor and his three SS-helpers who

whispered to each man, it would be best to say no to each question about sicknesses. It did not take this medical genius, who was about 22 years old, more than ten seconds to announce everybody perfectly healthy.

Whoever did not turn around at once after this thorough examination was hit hard with a stick on his back, by one of the SS-scoundrels. As often as he managed to hit one of the Jews, he was rewarded with loud laughter from the two others.

Then they had to get dressed very fast and get out into the fresh air from the nice heated hall. It was 3:30 a.m. and the temperature was about 5 degrees Centigrade (40 degrees Fahrenheit). They had to stand there for another roll call until 200 men were assembled. Heavy set men could not close their jackets or slacks. When the right amount was assembled, they were marched off to a barrack. Now they were officially inmates of the concentration camp. After having been given nothing to eat for the last 48 hours, every two men were given 1/2 liter of tea. My father said that nobody could remember ever having drunk a better tea.

The barracks were pretty new, with good sanitary equipment, washroom and toilets. Each barrack had four living rooms and four sleeping rooms meant for 50 men. Each double room had one washroom and 6 toilets and now had to sleep 200 men, which means the capacity of each barrack was 800 men. Along the walls of the sleeping room were two story beds with open straw and for the other room straw sacks were on the floor. The 200 men had as much room as sardines in a can, but in 5 minutes everybody was asleep.

Because it was Sunday they were awakened only at 6:00 a.m. In every room four men were chosen as food carriers. These men were ordered to run on the double to the kitchen and fetch a 50 liter thermos pot filled with coffee. In the meantime the 392 other men had to go to the washroom, which was completely impossible and only a few of them got there. The carriers came back, again running, with the coffee. They had to drink the coffee outdoors. Each man had received 1/4 pound of bread.

The men assigned to clean the barracks had to do their work very fast. The rooms were washed every day, and in the barracks everything was perfectly clean. Now to the roll call, the most feared activity of all inmates. The camp of Dachau is situated on a high plateau just north of the Alps. One can see the snow covered mountains from east to west. Every block of 800 men was standing there, in rows of ten. For the first half hour they were just straightened out. The guards in charge of the prisoners ran along the lines like sheep dogs and beat and pushed the men once to the right and then again to the left. Everybody had to be at the roll call, one could only be sick after that. Some of the men arrived supported on the shoulders of their comrades. Just like the ones who died during the night, these men were laid down on the frozen ground. Everything had to be done with German precision. The deceased had to be counted with the living and only after the roll call could they be written off.

After a while the SS-sergeant, the block commander, came. He walked along the rows and as he went, for no reason, hit anybody he felt like, in the face with his leather gloves. Then the game of straightening the lines started again and continued until the camp commander was finished with his breakfast. It also happened that if he had a rough night and was exhausted, that he forgot his 25,000 prisoners until noon. The men stood and stood and slowly the bitter cold from the frozen ground got from their ice-cold feet into their legs and up into their stomachs. It was forbidden to move the feet or wiggle the fingers. Most of the men had nothing on their heads. Their ears were getting blue-red. Some of the sick could be written off by the time they finally finished the count.

As soon as the commander came: "*Schutzhaeftlinge*, (prisoners) caps off, eyes right!" Dead silence. One did not see anything, one did not hear anything, and one only stood there and froze. Woe if one would have been seen, who took his hands off the seams of his trousers or whispered to his neighbor. Everyone hoped that the number of prisoners was right, otherwise the same torture started all over again. The minimum time of such a roll call was 1 1/2 to 2 hours. On Sunday, everyone had to go back to the barracks for a special cleaning. Shoes always had to be taken off before entry. At 11:30 a.m., the food carriers had to go to the kitchen again to pick up the lunch, which was mostly cabbage, carrots, turnips and potatoes mixed together, or soup with potatoes with skin. Sometimes someone would find a piece of meat, the size of a pea in it. Each man got about 1/2 liter of food. Sunday afternoon was free. It was forbidden to enter another barrack.

The men met relatives, friends, and acquaintances from all over southern Germany and Austria at the canteen. They could buy little articles and coffee and cake with the couple of marks they were allowed to keep. But because everybody wanted to buy something, there was quite a crowded situation. One had to stand in line there patiently, for two hours. Suddenly a board was put up, that the canteen would be closed for two hours. Afterwards they tried it once more.

My father and some others managed to buy newspapers and used them under their shirts to keep the cold off their bodies. In the evening, the food consisted of a little piece of salami, cheese or a herring. The day's ration of bread was 250 grams (1/4 pound).

For this large number of Jews there was no work, therefore, from early in the morning until late at night they were drilled in a military manner. The SS-man gave the job to a non-Jewish prisoner-warden. But this one also did not feel like being outdoors in the cold all day. He ordered a Jew to take over. My father was put in charge of commanding the men of his barrack to do constant knee bends, jumping, and jogging rapidly around the whole camp. Woe to that commanding Jew if one of the SS-thugs saw that he did not keep his charges continuously out of breath. That man would be hit in the face and for the next half hour he took care that nobody would feel the biting cold any more. This game was played out during the whole time of their imprisonment.

After a couple of weeks a few men were released whose papers for emigration were more or less complete. The rest of the prisoners were sent home just before and after Christmas 1938, but not before they were warned not to say one word about the life in the concentration camp to anyone. Should they not follow this advice, they would be taken back there, and the second time they would not leave alive. Everybody thought that this warning became only too true for later prisoners. Even with the fatigue, the constant harassment, the clothing which was ridiculously inadequate for the season, and the starvation diet, only one man died of all the imprisoned Nuremberg

Jews. But quite a number of these men suffered from sicknesses that caused their early death.

My story is quite different, as I was not in Nuremberg on November 9th 1938 but in Berlin where I went to the Jewish Art school of Georg Hausdorf.

As usual I had supper with the Davidsohns and the girls. Now there were



My room upstairs



The Hausdorf school

four girls. Else Ansbacher, a second cousin of Hella and me, also came to Berlin to take a course. She had just arrived the week before and stayed in the same room with Hella, Ellen Rosenberg and Hanna Roeder. After supper I went home to my room up on the fifth floor of the next building. I went to bed and, as usual, slept like a rock.

The next morning I went downstairs and on the few steps over to the other house for breakfast, I noticed a lot of glass on the sidewalk and many broken store windows.

Coming into the apartment, I said that I saw all these broken windows on the street, and asked if anybody knew whether there was an earthquake during the night. Everybody was quite surprised that I did not hear any noise and started to explain to me the little they knew at that time. They had all been awakened by the noise of breaking glass and the screaming of the mob.

The Davidsohns apartment was only one flight up and everybody there was very nervous. They thought it was just a local riot in Nuernbergerstrasse.

After breakfast, I left for school, even though the Davidsohns asked me not to go. They did not know if the Nazis were still around in that street. As usual, I walked down Nuernberger Strasse and turned into Tauentzingstrasse. There were more broken store windows. Then walking around the Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtnis Kirche to the Kuhrfuersten Damm, there were a great many broken windows, and it slowly dawned on me that this destruction was not just local in our street, but all over Berlin. On one spot I had to step over a lot of fire hoses which were going into a cinema, but this, too, did not cause me to stop and look. Coming to the school in Bleibtreustrasse, I heard that there was no school. From a couple of other students who also made it, I heard that not only the store windows were broken, but synagogues were burned, too. With great anxiety everybody started going back home again.

On my way home I remembered that the synagogue on Fasanenstrasse was just around the corner and that was in the area where I saw the fire hoses in the morning. So I turned the corner. There were a lot of people standing around and looking at the still smoldering building. The fire department had the hoses just laying there to hose down the adjoining buildings in case the fire might spread. One of the men standing there saw me, probably noticing that I did not have that smile of the German mob on my face that enjoyed the sight, figured I was a Jew, came over to me and said: "If you don't get out of here in a hurry, we'll take you too!"

I did not wait any longer but walked home to the apartment. The four girls did not go to their schools and everybody was in a very morbid mood. By then people had heard a little more about what happened during the night, and that the pogrom was all over Germany. When I heard that I said to Hella: "I am going to go with the S-Bahn (the Berlin subway which is above ground) to Aunt Babette and see if she is all right". We knew that our aunt was diabetic and not very well. Hella said. "You must be crazy to go out again, they are arresting people all over town!" I said, "I am not going to stay here and look at all your worried faces. I might be able to help her!" Everybody in the apartment told me not to go. The area around Alexander Platz, where Aunt Babette lived, was probably one of the worst, because a lot of the poorer Jews lived there.

"All right", I said, "than I'll go to one of the synagogues and see whether they need help to secure the cultural objects!" I knew that people had to rush to get things out in Nuremberg before they tore down the synagogue. The girls and the adults could not convince me and I left. I walked to the synagogue in the Prinzregentenstrasse. This was a fairly new, completely round building, not very far

from the apartment. Coming close I saw that the building was on fire too. Nobody could get close. There was nothing anybody could do, so I went home again.

When I got back it was already dark. The mood in the apartment was very tense. They had heard that Jewish men were getting arrested throughout the city, and the Nazis were still coming to apartments picking up men. Mr. and Mrs. Davidsohn had made arrangements with a Christian friend, to stay overnight in his garage. They would take the four girls with them. Mrs. Davidsohn's elderly mother also lived in the apartment, but they could not take her along because she could barely walk. I was 16 years old and luckily not subject to the panic of the rest of the people. Besides, I thought it was quite ridiculous to run away. How long could they hide in a garage? So I stayed in the apartment with the old lady.

After the rest of them had gone, it did get kind of spooky. It was very quiet. The old lady stayed in her room and probably went to bed. I turned all the lights off and sat in the living room. Then I got scared too, but what could I do? I had promised to stay in the apartment as a guardian for the old lady and not go back to my own room in the next house. I went into the kitchen and armed myself with a kitchen knife from the flatware. This was completely ridiculous, as the knife was a typical silver dinner knife, round in front. But holding it in my hand gave me a little feeling of confidence again.

So I sat there in a completely dark room at the table, I could not read and did not want to fall asleep either. Suddenly the bell rang. I got a shock and grabbed the knife a little tighter, but I neither made a sound, nor did I go to the door. It is possible it rang several times. The old lady probably was asleep anyway, and did not hear the bell. All night long I sat in that same chair, dozing off a couple of times, but never leaving my post as the protector of the old lady.

Around 7:00 a.m. the Davidsohns and the girls came back. What a relief! I thought the worst was over. They heard that the Nazis were not arresting anymore Jews. At least that's what they believed. A little later in the day, Else decided to take a train back home to her parents in Munich and left for the railroad station. Hella and I went to a telephone office as one could not make long distance calls from a home telephone at that time, and called one of our parents. It was then that we heard that the pogrom seemed to have been much worse in Nuremberg. My father was arrested and Uncle Hugo, Hella's father, had a heart attack. We should try to get home to Nuremberg as soon as possible. No details of the destruction were given. One was careful about what was said since the conversations were easily overheard. We went back to the apartment, told the Davidsohns about it and left the next day by train to Nuremberg. All the schools were closed anyway.

The train ride took eight hours. When Hella came to her parent's apartment on the second floor of Fuertherstrasse 38 she was shocked and horrified by the sight. Her father lay weak in bed, the only bed still halfway usable after the Huns went through the apartment. My uncle had suffered a heart attack. All the furniture was smashed to pieces; the big buffet in the living room was thrown over, and all the crystal and china in there was destroyed. The piano was smashed with an ax. The radio and record player was demolished and all the records were broken. Chairs were broken, some with two, some with three legs gone. There was a large table leg lying somewhere, but nobody could identify to which furniture it belonged. Later on they found out it was from the apartment of the Jewish family one flight up. One of the Nazis probably brought it down as a handy weapon or tool for destruction. There was a cubist oil painting hanging on the wall, cut diagonally with a knife. The upholstered chairs were cut to pieces. The bedroom and the kitchen did not look any better. The supermen had left their signature.

When I arrived home I found out that my father was not only arrested by the police, but also taken to the concentration camp Dachau. The night of the 11th, Nathan Gutmann and Eugen Fleischmann and, I believe, Siegfried Mezger slept in my parent's apartment. They thought that since my father, the only man living in the apartment, was already arrested, the German crooks would not come back there anymore. Like a miracle, nothing was destroyed in our apartment. In the house on Praterstrasse 5, where Eugen Fleischmann, his sister Ida and his brother Siegfried with his family lived, all the furniture and everything else was completely destroyed. One heard the same story everywhere. Most of the men were arrested and shipped to Dachau and the apartments and stores were destroyed and looted.

Surprisingly the German people claimed that they never heard or saw anything and also did not know of anybody who was involved with the looting. Even so, a short time later little girls were walking around with dresses made out of Tallisim. The black or blue stripes were just a decoration on the bottom of the dresses.

On November 14th, 1938, The Reichsgesetzblatt, the official newspaper for the court of justice in Germany, wrote as follows:

Decree

About the Atonement Payments of the Jewish Citizenry of Germany

On November 12, 1938

The hostile behavior of Judaism towards the German people and the German Reich, who do not flinch in the face of cowardly murder, ask for a strong defense and a severe atonement. Therefore I order, for the reason of fulfilling the execution of the Four-Year-Plan from October 18, 1936 (Reichsgesetzblatt I.S. 887), as follows:

1.

The Jews, citizens of Germany, in their entirety, will be punished by a payment of Reichsmark 1,000,000,000.00 to the German Reich.

2.

The Reichsminister der Finanzen (minister of finance) with all ministers of the Reich who are involved with it, have decreed to carry out these regulation.

Berlin November 12th, 1938

The chairman of the Four-Year-Plan

Goering

General Field Marshal

Degree

To repair the streets of the Jewish business people.

I therefore order for the reason of fulfilling the execution of the Four-Years-Plan from October 18, 1936 (Reichsgesetzblatt I.S. 887) as follows:

1.

All the damage which occurred on Jewish apartments and Jewish businesses, because of the indignation of the people, because of the agitation of international Judaism against the nationalsozialistische (Nazi) Germany on November 8, 9, and 10, 1938,

has to be repaired immediately by the Jewish owners.

2.

(1.) The cost of all repairs has to be carried by the Jewish businessman or owner of the apartment.

(2.) The claims of compensation from insurance companies by Jews of German nationality will be confiscated by the German Reich.

3.

The Reichs-Minister for Economic Affairs in collaboration with all the other Reichs-Ministers is empowered to decree further regulations as he so chooses.

Berlin, November 12, 1938

The chairman of the Four-Year-Plan

Goering

General Field Marshal

Hella and I went back to Berlin shortly afterwards in November. Eugen Fleischmann came along too, as there was the news that either the Canadian or Australian consulate in Berlin gave out forms for emigration visas to that particular country. Hella and I went there too and I only remember that there were very many people waiting in front of the closed door. I believe someone came out of the embassy and announced that this was wrong information. Then everybody left dejected.

Probably just before New Year 1938-1939 after the schools closed, Hella and I went back to Nuremberg again. My father was released from the concentration camp Dachau on December 5th, 1938. I was told that actually the Gestapo in Nuremberg requested his release as the people in his office, when asked by the Gestapo about certain information, always answered they don't know. Only Kolb would know. But most of the Jewish men were released around this same time.



New Years eve, Hella, Hanna, Ellen and some of her friends at the Davidsohns

Early in January 1939, Hella and I went back to Berlin. She went to the family where her father had rented a room on Flensburger Strasse and I went with my two suitcases to the place my father had rented through an advertisement in a Jewish paper somewhere in Charlottenburg near or on Kantstrasse.

My former room up on the fifth floor was no palace and I expected nothing better either. I schlepped my suitcases up to the second or third floor and rang the bell. I walked up to the apartment and a middle aged lady of the house invited me in after I told her who I am. She showed me my room, and left me there.

It was very long and narrow, not more than six feet wide. There was one 25 watt light bulb hanging from the ceiling in the middle of that room, no light fixture, it looked more than some kind of a storage room. The bed stood on the right side along the wall near the window and. because of the narrowness of this room there was almost no furniture, I was in shock, but what could I do, my father rented the room with breakfast, lunch and supper for a whole month.

A couple of minutes later the lady called me for supper. I walked into the living room and sat down. There were home fried potatoes on the table. I always love this kind of potatoes. But these were completely green. I never saw such potatoes. I could not eat and excused myself as not being hungry. I also lied and said that I had to go to my cousin. Somewhere on the street, I called Hella. Luckily she had given me the number of the apartment where she was now living. I told her my troubles and said I have to see her right away.

It was usually me who helped her with her troubles, but now I needed her. We met and I told her about my room. I said: "I won't go back there!"

Hella said: "You've got to. You can't sleep on the street, it's January!"

"I will not go back there!"

We decided to go to a post office where I could make a long distance call to my parents and tell them about it.

They were pretty upset and told me to go back. I insisted I can't. Finally they agreed that I could look for another room. But this night I have to go back. By that time it was already pretty late and both of us had no idea where we could find a room. We agreed to meet again early the next morning.

We went home now, I believe I brought Hella first to her house. Luckily the lady had given me a key. I opened the door and sneaked into my room and went to bed fully dressed with the light on. Everything had such a dirty appearance; even that 25 watt pulp was dusty. I slept sitting up leaning against the wall. The next morning as planned, I met Hella. She brought a Jewish newspaper along from the family, to whom she had told my dilemma. There were a few ads in it of rooms for rent. I did not want to get one too far away from Hella or from the school. We saw one advertised in the Bellevue area that would be perfect.

The address was on Dortmunder Strasse. We went there; this was only about five minutes away from where Hella lived. One flight up an elderly lady who lived there with her middle aged daughter opened the door. Yes, she was the one who is renting the room. So we both went in to look. This room was quite large and very nicely furnished, but it cost much more than we expected. We could not rent it by ourselves; we were not even seventeen yet and besides did not have enough money anyway. I told the lady I would like to take the room, but have to ask my parents first. She understood.

Again we went to a telephone and called my parents. They did not want me to take such an expensive room and besides my father had already paid for that other room. I said I do not want to eat there anyway; I rather buy my own food. It went back and forth. I did not give up. I said I am not going back to the room any more, even though my suitcases were still there. Finally my father gave in. I relaxed a little; we had succeeded.

Now we went back to the new apartment and rented it. The lady agreed to wait for the check from my father. Halleluiah! From there both of us went to the horrible apartment in Charlottenburg and told the lady a big lie to get out of the commitment. I said I had found a place where Hella and I could stay together. The lady was quite nice and let us go. We took my two suitcases and left. I felt I finally woke up from a bad dream.

In the new room in Dortmunder Strasse everything seemed like a palace, after the horrible room the day before. But things did not work out so perfectly either. I went to school, taking the train for only couple of stations. But now, I also had to look for someplace where I could eat I did not want food from anybody any more. Luck was with me again. Right on Flensburger Strasse was a small, very nice Jewish restaurant. It was one flight up and just on the way between the train station and my room. The food very good, Mrs. Hammel the innkeeper, treated me like I was her grandson. I went there every lunch time. In the evening I just ate bread and butter in my room, I had to be very economical, I had almost no money. My budget was very low after that expensive rent.

I first did not even notice it, but every day the nice furniture disappeared from the room and got replaced with garden furniture. This was kind of strange, but I did not say anything. After all, I did not want to entertain people there. But things got worse. The landlady told me that I would not be permitted to have the light on after 10:00 p.m. This was impossible, as I came home late from school. I not only had classes in window dressing in the daytime but I became interested in calligraphy and commercial art and took classes in the evening. Besides I had to prepare lots of things for the next day for classes.

Nothing doing, no lights after 10:00 o'clock! There was a window in the door the lady could see the light and kept on knocking on the door until I turned it off.

I had to go to bed at ten o'clock. I could not even read in bed, she kept on knocking. I got the idea to take one of the small table lamps under the cover to read there, but this also was a problem. It got too hot under the blanket and I was afraid the bed would catch fire.

To add insult to injury, Hella came one day to visit me, but the lady said she permits no visitors. No matter that we told her, Hella is my cousin. Nobody was allowed to visit me. She did not let Hella come into the apartment. This went too far, after all she knew that Hella was my cousin. I had come with her to rent the place.

On February 1st, this was my second month to live there, I gave notice that I would move out. I had looked before and had found a room nearby in Lessing Strasse 23. Not only was it much cheaper, it was closer to the S-Bahn station and to the place where Hella lived on Flensburger Strasse.



My room at Lessingstreasse

Mrs. Kuschinski, a small old lady, lived there in the ground floor with her daughter. She had rented another room to a middle aged man. Finally I found a place to stay. I stayed there from March 1939 until May 1941, until I left Berlin. My troubles with rooms was over. Mrs. Kuschinski was another grandmother type and she too treated me like her grandson.

My father wrote a postcard to my Uncle, Justin Hessdoerfer Posterestante in Montevideo. Since 1934 Uncle Justin lived in Zagreb, Yugoslavia where he fled in 1933 after being beaten half dead by the Nuremberg Nazis. His family joined him in 1934. The family was expelled from Yugoslavia because of being Germans and immigrated on October 13, 1938 to Uruguay. They were in the country just two months and they did not have a permanent address yet.

From B. Kolb, Nuremberg, Knauerstrasse 15

January 21, 1939

My Dears,

We were very happy with your letter and hope in the meantime you have found out more about it. We are ready at any time for emigration, should it be earlier that much better. We are worried about our move to another apartment in 10 days. The emigration does not go that fast as you dear Justin imagine. To receive an emigration passport a lot of conditions have to be fulfilled the same as on the other side to the immigration. A relative of mine got an affidavit right away from his boss in the U.S.A. for us all and your cousin Enslein and Klingenstein gave to it a relative-affidavit. But this all is no good since our waiting number perhaps will be called in 2 years, unless very drastic changes happen in the immigration quota. We are advised against trying to travel as tourists to you. According to your letter it may be possible that you would deposit there show-money. I can't find out how much this is. But I was told that at this time immigration into Uruguay is possible. We would submit a confirmation at the consulate that the money is deposited and the immigration is permitted. We would be happy if it would be that far already. To leave nothing undone, we have listed the children for a Kindertransport. A girlfriend of Erna has found sponsors for both of them. But that also goes very slowly. There is still no improvement in Hugo's condition. He is still very weak and he is permitted out of bed only for a very short time. We

worry a lot about him. Herbert and Hella are in Berlin and try to continue their education, which cost a lot of money. But nothing is too much, if they learn a profession which later on might feed them. I number this card with number 3. Did you get the 3 letters? They must have been long ahead of you in Montevideo. We already have sold some furniture, as we have much less room in the new apartment. The move is going to be arranged by Eugen Fleischmann and the Leutershaeusers. The Baers mailed an affidavit for Hugo and his family; but they did not hear anything about it. Willi and Thea have a small chance to go to Palestine. It is the worst for the family of Siegfried Fleischmann because of the unfortunate Ruth. Longing to hear from you, greeting you



The Fleischmann family

Yours Bernhard

I did not leave any room for Reta therefore only the signature. Best regards Reta. For a healthy get together Erna

The back address of the card is Knauerstrasse 27. My parents had moved to the new address. They were expelled from their apartment in Knauerstrasse 15.

My father wrote another postcard on February 2, 1939

My Dears,

with your letter which gave us a lot of hope, we all were very happy. I am giving you once more the dates: Bernhard 9, 22, 82, Sugenheim, Reta 10, 18, 92, Ottensoos, Herbert 2, 27, 22, Nuremberg, Erna 7, 31, 23, Nuremberg. If everything works out please write to us in exact detail about what we should take along. It has to be said, that buying new things is almost impossible, since too high taxes have to be paid for new items. We want to know what kind of furniture, what underwear, color of bed-linen, bedding. Besides we have a couch, two sofas which could be remade as couches. Shoes, if high ones like boots are used there. Suits, shorts, what kind of work clothes?. What kind of work clothes for the women. What kind of other furniture and outfits. I believe you would by now have more of an idea. Since Erich has learned about photography, I am going to take my large 12 x 24 camera along. Should one take a lift, even if it costs a lot of money, which one could use over there as a garage, chicken coop or bed room? Or is it impossible to transport such a monstrosity to the house? Shall one pack the things into trunks or crates? The difference in price to buy it would not matter. Books are on the way, please watch what the postage is. (*That just meant, save the stamps for me*). I wrote to the Consul in Zagreb and put into the letter an international coupon for stamps. But I did not get an answer. Find out if one could use the answering card with additional airmail stamps and how much it would cost. Here an additional stamp for a 5 gram airmail letter as well as for a postcard cost 1.50 Mark. Which kind of electrical current is there? 110 or 220 volt? Can one use a gas range? Yesterday I sold our piano. We moved last week without a moving truck and other help. In spite of that we were done in 4 hours. Reta naturally has a lot of work to manage to put everything in a smaller 3 room apartment. Now we are almost finished.

Many greetings Bernhard

Answer all the questions exactly and anything else you think of. I still can't believe that it would work out, it would be too nice.

Kiss Reta

PS.: Must Erich still go to school?

And postcard on February 8, 1939

My Dears,

On Friday we received your airmail letter with attachment. I immediately called the consul-general in Hamburg and was summoned for Monday. Arriving here on Monday I found out the consulate was closed because of change-over. I still managed to show my paper. I was then told to come today, Wednesday morning. Today I was put off from 10 to 12 o'clock. But even then I was not permitted in. I was told to speak to the chancellor by telephone. As I phoned I was told that my paper was seized by the consul-general. I would hear further on. I am going to travel home now, not having been able to arrive at anything and will see what is going to happen. At first on Monday I was very confident, but now things seemed to be very difficult. I already got all the information at a shipping company about everything. I will keep you posted how this continues. Maybe I also hear from you. I believe Reta wrote you too.

Regards Bernhard

Since spring 1939, after emigration to the United State became completely hopeless, the two Kolb families as well as the Fleischmanns tried to immigrate to Uruguay, where Uncle Justin Hessdoerfer had gone with his family. He had now bought a small cattle farm and hoped the rest of the family would join him. When he heard that I was in a school for window dressing and graphics, he wrote to my parents, that this was a waste of time and money, as nobody in Uruguay would need a window decorator. My father should let me learn a manual trade, as one always could find a job in that.



I am painting in Grunewald

My father spoke to somebody who was involved in the Jewish community in Berlin and found that there was a retraining workshop for cabinet makers. I was told to stop the art school and start in the workshop in Jungfernheide for cabinet makers.

In the spring of 1939 I started in the woodworking shop as an apprentice. There were men to learn a manual trade for their emigration as well as boys like me, who started as apprentices. One could just start there on any day. The first day in the workshop started like this:

I arrived at 7:00 o'clock and got assigned to one of the still empty worktables. It seems that on the day that I started, there were also a couple of other new boys and at least one young adult. The master, Mr. Himmelweiss, was an older master cabinet maker. He ordered us to follow him, as he was to give us the first instruction on how to sharpen a plain plate. We went to a large, hand propelled grinding wheel, which had a small container for water on top that was operated by just releasing a couple of drips on the stone. Now we were shown how to hold and move the plate with the right hand while turning the large wheel with the left. Each one of us new students got a chance to try operating it and we were told what we did wrong.

After the plate was sharpened we all went to a work bench and now this plate had to be honed. One had to hold it at the right angle and in a circular motion, slide it around the honing stone on which a drop of oil was placed. We were told never to hone it on the center of the stone so that it would not get worn down in the middle, but constantly move the metal plate around the top or bottom of the stone over the edges.

This was going on for a while and every one had a chance to do it. Constantly Mr. Himmelweiss checked if the knife was as sharp as a razor. The adult gentleman who was one of the new students, had a very hairy forearm. Mr. Himmelweiss took his arm and to prove that the edge was now sharp, shaved a wide path on to the arm. We all were very amazed about the sharpness of the blade. That was the way we were always supposed to test the sharpness of any cutting tool.

Next we were shown how to put the blade into a very large jack plane, which is about 18 inches long. Just a fraction of a millimeter extended out on the bottom and one had to be sure it was inserted completely square. With a tap of the hammer it was now fastened. At this point we were also shown how to take the blade out again. All this took quite a while. Then he took a 2 feet long, heavy 2 inch board and each of us had to saw a 2 inch strip off with a very large handsaw. The master watched out that we were sawing straight.

Next he gave each of us one of the cut off 2 foot strips and told us to tighten them on the workbench vise. He showed us how to use the jack plane and told us to plane all four sides, but also check very often to see that they are square and the wooden board also was perfectly straight from front to back.

This was not easy and every time he checked he showed us that it was not acceptable. Therefore we planed and planed until the 2 by 2 inch board was just $\frac{1}{4}$ by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. This must have taken a couple days, maybe even weeks until the master accepted it to be perfect. Now after one's work passed this test, he was directed into another small room where we were shown how to draw up a four footed stool, describing exactly the way it had to be made. We had been told about mortise and tenon.

In the meantime, because of planing with the jack planes from morning until quitting times one got blisters on the right hand. I brought a couple of band aids along and put them into my hanging tool chest. After all one also got splinters and if you had nothing you were bleeding on the wood.

We now also worked on the mortises and tenons after we also sharpened and honed the special tool for it. This was also not easy as the tenon had to fit very snugly into the completely straight hole.

Finally, after being checked by the master I was permitted to start my first object, the little stool. One always asked for advice from one of the apprentices who were already longer in the workshop. It was better to talk to them, because the master was very rough.

After weeks, when I came to the finish of my stool one of the fellows told me to collect some of the saw dust. In case one of the glued seams was not completely perfect one should smear a little of the saw dust into it so that the master does not see the space when he checks it. I did this and had a little container with the sawdust in my toolbox. As the gluing with hot glue had to be very fast, one was permitted to ask another fellows to help.

Around this time one of the fellows came to my on my workbench and asked me for a band aide. At that time he saw the little container with saw dust and asked me why I collected that. In jest I said I

use it for headache powder. I did not think he believed it. But a couple of days later he asked me if I could give him some of my headache powder, because he had a headache.

I did not remember it and told him I don't have any. He pointed out to me that I showed it to him a couple of days ago. Then I remembered. Sure I said, just take a handful, but don't let the master see you with it. Then go out into the washroom, put it on your head and let cold water run over it. I did not believe he really would do it. But when the fellow left I immediately asked two other boys to follow him and see what he was doing.

They came back laughing and telling me he went backward under the faucet and let water run over his forehead where he had put the sawdust. A little while later when the fellow came back I asked him if the medicine helped and he said that the head ache was gone.

My stool was finished, sanded glued and to me it looked perfect. I now had to tell Mr. Himmelweiss to look at it and give me the go ahead to go to the next project. One knew if he finds one little imperfection on the item he would hold one leg in his hand and smash the stool on the workbench. That meant that all the work for the last couple of weeks had to be done over again. I was worried and just watched every move he made turning the stool over and over. I expected to hear the crash of it and see all the parts flying in all direction. But nothing happened, he put the stool on the bench and without one word he left. My stool went through his critical examination and was still together.

I now was accepted to go to second object, another stool with slanted legs. I don't remember about this one, but I believe it worked out all right. Perhaps the master did not examine it like the first one, but it was accepted.

As we started so early, there was a 10:00 o'clock break and we all went to the drawing room, which also was also the dining room. As everybody had to do a stool as their first job, there were lots of them in that room which had survived the critical examination of Mr. Himmelweiss. I had an aluminum box in which I had the 10:00 o'clock snack as well as my lunch. Every day I had made a couple of sandwiches, just a couple of slices of bread with butter. As I now could not get to the kosher Mrs. Hamel "s little lunch restaurant on the Flensburger Strasse, I had made special arrangements for it. I bought two large thermos bottles. One of them I brought every night to Mrs. Hamel who filled it with the vegetable and meat she was serving at lunch time. The soup and the dessert I ate in the evening at the time when I brought the other empty thermos to the restaurant. I was very lucky, as Mrs. Hamel was another one of my adopted grandmothers. She had prepared for me some of the left over lunch, which I got in the evening with the soup and dessert.

At lunch time in the workshop we also filed to that room and sat down at a table or around with a circle of friends. One of the fellows, a popular red-haired boy, I don't remember his name, was always sitting in a circle with other boys and he was always busy telling stories. As he was a joker, he had managed once before the 10:00 o'clock break to get unnoticed into my briefcase, took my box with the sandwiches and hid it. I believe I finally found it, but I planned revenge.

Before 12:00 o'clock lunch time I managed unnoticed to get into his bag and as he had two similar aluminum boxes, one with sandwiches and one with cherries. Just before I had set my Jack plane for I fairly thick cut. I made a quite thick plane shaving and put it between one of his two slices of bread.

I told it to some of my friends and told them to watch him while he is eating. As I said, he was always busy telling stories and the rest of the other comrades were sitting around him.

He opened his first box, but he started eating his dessert first. One cherry after the other. The friends I was sitting with a little bit away, were making me motions, what is happening to his sandwich. I told them, that the shaving is in the second box. Finally he started the sandwich. I only had the shaving put into one of two sandwiches and as he ate the first one without any discomfort, I told my friends that the shaving is probably in the second.

He finished the first one and started the second one. We all were waiting for him to realize the shaving. - - - But nothing happened, he ate the sandwich with the shaving and never even blinked an eye. Later on when I told him about the shaving, he said he did not feel it.

Around summer or fall 1939 the Simens organization did not renew the lease and we had to move. I believe on one day all the workbenches were put on a truck together with some of the woodworking machines and transported to the new address. This was near Janowitz bridge in east of central Berlin. It was not the same any more. The master was not permitted to buy new lumber any more as this was after the war had started. We only made repairs for other schools and Jewish organizations. The area was much smaller as we had to move together with an another preparation place for men who learned welding.

At one time a foreman from another preparation place came to the woodworking area and ask if there is anybody who knows the glazier business. A young fellow, a friend of mine, I believe his name was Rabinowitz said his father was a glazier. "Do you know how to cut glass and putty it into the window frame?" He said : "Yes". OK, come on over tomorrow to that other place and bring a friend along as a helper. "I have a glass cutter." said the man.

He picked me. Both of us went the next morning to the described address. The foreman had a table emptied and besides a hammer and a glasscutter he had a pile of glass there too. The window frames were standing behind us against the wall. "OK ", he said "you can start right away."

I knew nothing about glass cutting, therefore I only did the measuring. Rabinowitz knew how to hold this cutting tool and made the first cut. Perfect. He knocked a little on the waste-side with the hammer. Wonderful, I was really impressed. Now after measuring for the second side he started with the cutting tool. It sounded as good as the first time. But after knocking it a little bit with the hammer it broke right through the middle.

Rabinowitz said: "This happens sometimes." We took another piece of glass and started again. Just like before the first cut was perfect. But with the second cut again it went wild. We took another piece and again it happened. The first cut perfect and the second cut killed the whole pane broke again. We kept on using more glass and more glass, but the second cut always ruined everything.

Finally, after a couple of hours Rabinowitz had one pane perfect. I put it into the window frame. Now the foreman came and asked us how many panes we had already made. We told him one. After he saw all the broken glass panes he took the hammer and threw it through our only perfect pane. He also threw us out of the place. This must have been in March 1939, shortly after I had started in the cabinet making workshop on Janowitz bridge.

I still did not give up the art school and went there every evening. After Mr. Hausdorf left the school was closed, but the Jewosh community of Berlin startet one with Jewish teachers. I had very little money, no social life and did not see Hella very much anymore. She was a very popular girl and had a lot of friends.



Hella Kolb 1938

Hella came once in the evening to the Hausdorf school. I was very surprised to see her, as she never came there before. She told me she was in trouble and I must help her. Now it was my turn to help her. Hella and I were always very close, so I was not surprised that she wanted to talk to me. A little while later when the class had finished we left together.

After we were finally alone, Hella, who was like me just 17 years old said: "You have to come with me to a friend's house, where there is a little party, because I am scared!"

What are you scared about; what happened?", I asked, "you are all upset!"

"I'll tell you everything, but you have to come with me to the house of a friend of mine." I had no other choice, as she really seemed very worried. We went to the subway, and while we waited for the train she started:

"In the laboratory there is a fellow who wants to date me. I am not interested in him and I do not feel like going out with him. He kept on bothering me all the time for a date, and I kept on refusing him, I really do not care for the guy!"

"So what is wrong with that?" I asked, "If you don't like the guy forget about him!"

"It's not quite that easy. We have little cabinets in which we keep all kinds of chemicals which we need for experiments. He showed me this morning in his cabinet, besides the usual items, he also has a jar with "strychnine" written on it. He told me he is going to kill himself, if I don't go out with him!"

"Don't believe it. He is just putting on an act." I said.

"No, no he really is going to do it, I am sure of it."

"Don't be silly, he is not going to do anything. What are you going to do about it anyway. You said you can't stand the guy, are you going to give in, just because of his blackmail?"

"I don't know, I am just very worried that it is going to be my fault if he kills himself. After he left the laboratory, I took this jar out of his cabinet and hid it."



Herbert Kolb in Berlin

In the meantime the train came and we went to the friend's apartment. Several young people were there already. One friend, his name was Peter Hertz, was a musician and when the two of us entered, he was just playing the piano. He was quite a comedian too, and never stopped playing the piano, while he leaned back, further and further, until his head was on the floor. That particular colleague of Hella was a friend of Peter and he was there too. Hella stayed close to me, as she did not want to give that fellow a chance to talk to her. During the evening, when that boy believed only Hella was looking at him, he showed her a pistol, which he just took out of his pocket a little. He did not know that I

knew what was going on between both of them. Obviously he did not know that I had been watching him all evening already. I saw the pistol too.

After we left, Hella, who was even more worried now than before, asked me:

"Did you see, he has a revolver and motioned to me that he would use it?"

"Yes" I said "I saw it, and now I am sure the guy is a fake!"

"What do you mean, he has a pistol and he motioned to me that he will kill himself!"

"Yes I saw that, but he can't shoot himself with a cigarette lighter!"

"What are you saying, I saw the revolver!"

"You are right, it looked like a very small revolver, but it just was one of those cigarette lighters you see everywhere advertised in the tobacco stores!"

"Are you sure?"

"Positive!"

"What should I do now?"

"You said you have the jar with the so called "strychnine?"

"Yes"!

"Can you test it?"

"Yes".

"Then do it and you will see it is no poison at all, something probably very harmless!"

Hella was now a little bit more relaxed, but still worried. The next morning she went early and tested the white powder. It was just that, a white harmless powder. During the day he still threatened Hella with his suicide. She said to him:

"I will not go on a date with you, you might as well go ahead and take the strychnine. But I believe you don't have the guts to do it!"

"You saw the revolver too, I can shoot myself!"

"Let me see how you do this with a cigarette lighter?" - This ended the whole affair.

On March 22, 1939, my father brought to the Leihamt (the city pawnshop) 16 items of gold and 110 items of silver, obeying the decree of February 21, 1939, which said, that it is forbidden for Jews to have items of gold, silver or jewels.

On March 27, 1939 Uncle Hugo Kolb brought to the same place 10 items of gold and 38 items of silver.

On March 30, 1939 my future brother-in-law Julius Neuberger brought 7 items of gold and 6 items of silver.

Sometime in October 1940 I asked for a membership card for the Juedische Kulturbund. This was an organization which still was permitted by the Nazis to perform only for Jews in theaters and other performances. I believe I never used it as the one performance I had tickets for, which was a concert of Heiden's "Creation", was cancelled.

On the inside of the ID it said: "This identification card permits the owner of this to go all the performance of the Jewish *Kulturbund* the cultural organization in Germany after purchase of a ticket for the particular performance. (Theater, concert, film other artistic performances and speeches)



Without this identification card the tickets are invalid. I certify with my signature on the next page that I am a Jew by the description of the German law of April 6, 1941

Germany invaded Yugoslavia on April 6 and on April 9, 1941 Greece.

Nuremberg June 28, 1939

My Dears,

So that you don't worry, I send you greetings with this card. We are all healthy thanks to God and hope it is the same with you. Did you do anything already? Nothing happens here at all. Yesterday Hugo went to Hamburg. I am eager to know if he could do anything. I am sure he writes to you from there if he can hear anything there. Hugo also will visit Babette in Berlin. She was expelled because through her marriage she be-came Polish. Terrible! On the first, Herbert comes home for vacation.



My mother

Greeting and Kiss Reta

I am sorry to say, that our matter progresses very slowly.

This week Mr. and Mrs. Schoenenberg are going to Montevideo. You know them. Their brother-in-law Dr. Schmeidler is already there a couple of years. They also had troubles for many months until it worked out. Eugen Fleischmann probably will travel to U.S.A. next week. I expect that Hugo wrote to you in detail. We are very anxious. How is the voltage there. (110



My father

or

220). Do the bicycles there have normal tires like it used to be here or like it is here now half-balloon, which means that before they were 1 ½ inches now 1 ¾ inches. How are the valves? Does one have to have taillights on the pedals? What kind of lights for the bicycles? Generators or batteries or non electrical at all. Hermann and his wife were here visiting us last week for an afternoon.

Hearty greetings

Yours Bernhard

On July 3rd, 1939, probably the schools and the woodworking place were closed for vacation; I went home to Nuremberg and stayed there until the 29th of July.

On September 1, 1939, German troops attacked Poland and World War 2 started. The correspondence between Hella and Lisl had stopped.

My parents were afraid, that some kind of a pogrom was planned by the Nazis against the Jews, therefore they wanted me home. I came home on September 4th, 1939.

As nothing happened at that time, I went back to Berlin on September 9th. This is very surprising, as on the 14th was Rosh Hashanah.

Ever since she could write my mother used to write her name, Reta, with one "t". She did not know that she was registered with two. Now in the summons from the police her name was spelled with two and it said, that she has to sign her name exactly the way it was supposed to be in the birth record. Erna, who went with my mother to the police station, kept on reminding her of this while signing her own card, not to forget the second "t". She repeated over and over: "Don't forget, Reta with two 'tees'!" As she was signing her *Kennkarte*, she started to write my mother's name, she wrote an R for Retta.



On July 3rd, 1939, Hella and I went back to Nuernberg by train. Our schools had a summer break. During the summer of 1939 my father rode with Erna, Max and me to Fischach, a small village south of Augsburg where a lot of Jews used to live. This time it only took us one day for a little more than 100 kilometers. We stayed with Bernhard and Frieda Levi, the uncle and aunt of Willi Weinschenk. As usual my mother traveled there by train. After not quite three weeks we pedaled back to Nuernberg again. On July 25th, 1939 I went back to Berlin by train.. This was the last vacation we had in Germany.



Erna, Leo Levi, a cousin of Willi Weinschenk, my father, I and Siegbert Levi the brother of Leo.

Since spring 1939 after emigration to the United State became completely hopeless, the two Kolb families tried to immigrate to Uruguay, where Uncle Justin Hessdoerfer had gone with his family after they were expelled from Yugoslavia. Justin had bought a small cattle farm and hoped the rest of the family would join him. When he heard that I was in a school for window dressing and graphics, he wrote to my parents, that this was a waste of time, as nobody in Uruguay would need a decorator. My father should let me learn a manual trade, as one always could find a job in that.

Uncle Hugo and Ernst already were learning the locksmith trade, therefore it was decided that I should become a cabinet maker. A workshop sponsored by the Jewish congregation in Berlin, was the only place where Jews could learn cabinet making. My father inquired and sent me there to become a cabinet maker. Shortly afterward, I started in *Berlin-Jungfernheide* as an apprentice. There were about

40 people in that shop, half of them apprentices like me and the other half older people who were learning a new trade for emigration.

The cabinet making shop work was from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon and as I did not want to give up the art courses completely, I went in the later afternoon and in the evening to the art school.

Everybody had his own workbench and a toolbox filled with the most necessary wood working tools. The master and instructor was an older man, Mr. Himmelweiss. Everybody had to learn the fundamental things first; how to sharpen the blade of a plane and of chisels was the first lesson. We were shown the grinding stone which was hand operated. One had to make sure to sharpen the blade completely square. The right hand was used to hold the blade and the left to turn the grinding wheel. When one finally had it square the instructor showed us how to hone it. This operation took hours.

The instructor kept on testing the sharpness of the knife which had to be as sharp as a razor. This he demonstrated, asking one of the older fellows to bare his forearm. . With the now perfectly honed knife, he shaved some of the hair off the arm of the volunteer. This was a young man who had lots of hair on the arm. When one finally had mastered this, then he was shown how to adjust the knife in the plane and how to shave a piece of wood. A 2 inch piece of pine had now to be cut from a plank. After that came the instructions of how to plane the wood. This was not only to learn how to plane, but also consistency and had to check if the piece was completely square. This operation took a couple of days, sometimes weeks, until one was able to plane a piece of wood perfectly straight with each of the four sides exactly 90 degrees from the next. The master kept on checking it and sent the students back to start all over again if his piece was not perfect. From the constant use of the big wooden plane, called a *Rauhbank* (jack-plane), one got blisters on the hand, but nothing was allowed to stop. One had to plane and plane, from morning until quitting time.

If one was finally lucky enough to please the critical eyes of the master, one was permitted to work on his first piece of furniture, a very simple stool. One first had to draw that stool in the drawing room, in parallel perspective. After that was done, one worked on that stool for weeks. It had to be absolutely perfect. We learned how to cut a perfectly square holes into the four legs and how the cross pieces had to fit snug into the legs.

Only after the completion of that first piece, the simple stool, one would graduate to the next more complicated stool with sledged legs. Naturally, everything was done by hand. None of us young apprentices were ever allowed on any of the machines. When one thought that everything was done to perfection and had joined this masterpiece with hot glue, one had to call the master to check it. Students who worked on neighboring benches were permitted to help each other during this gluing process, because of the hot glue it had to be done very fast. The next day, after the clamps were taken off the stool looked perfect, one carefully looked it over that not even a little glue had oozed out. One sanded it off and now one could call Mr. Himmelweiss to check it.

This was the moment of highest tension. Should there only be one joint a fraction off the right angle on any one of the many pieces, he grabbed the stool by one leg, lifted it up, and came down hard on the workbench with it. The stool broke into many pieces, and the unhappy student had to do it all over again for the next couple of weeks. I was lucky, even though I knew of a couple of places which were not one hundred percent, one of the older students had shown me to fill some saw dust mixed with glue into the opening and be sure to sand it to perfection.

Mr. Himmelweiss did not notice them. I breathed in relief and now I was permitted to go to start the second more complicated stool.

All along I went to the fashion and art school. We were off during the lunch time and I had found a kosher kitchen for warm food. Luckily this place was just around the corner where I lived on Flensburger Strasse. Mrs. Hammel the innkeeper of this place was an elderly woman and she treated me as if I were her grandson. Now since I worked far away and had only half an hour lunch break I could not go to Mrs. Hammel any more. But I managed to work out a very good deal with my adopted grandmother.

I bought two large thermos containers. Every night I brought an empty one to the dinner place, and picked up a full one for the next day's lunch. Usually that was pretty late, after closing time, because at 5 p.m. I went back to the art school and continued taking courses in graphics and calligraphy. At night when I came to Mrs. Hammel, she had saved soup for me and desert if there was any and I ate it right there. Sometimes there even was some food left from lunch time, then the nice old lady saved it for me. Very often I was lucky and not only got a warm lunch but also a warm dinner.

We not only worked in the shop, but there was good camaraderie between the men and the boys. They helped each other out and tried to prevent catastrophes with Mr. Himmelweiss, who really was a good teacher, but an obnoxious old man.

From the time when I was told from an older apprentice, I saved some of the sawdust in my tool box in a small can, just in case I would need it. The tool box was mounted above the bench on one of the pillars, I also always had some band aids and other first aid equipment because one always got splinters or blisters.

One day a young fellow, another apprentice, saw all my first aid stuff and the sawdust in my toolbox and asked me why I had saved this sawdust. Just for the fun of it I said I use it as a headache powder.

A week or so later, the boy came to me and asked if he could have a little of the headache powder, as he had an awful head ache. I did not remember the incident and told him I did not have anything like that in my tool box. "Sure," he said, "you showed it to me a while ago!" Now I remembered. "Sure", I said, "take whatever you need." "How do I use it?" asked the fellow. "Just put it on your forehead and let some water run over it. But don't let Mr. Himmelweiss see you!" The fellow took a handful and walked towards the washroom.

There were about eight faucets on one continuous sink.

I did not believe that he would really do it and asked two of the boys who had their benches next to mine, to go quickly to the washroom and see what he is doing with the sawdust. They came back laughing and said, that they saw him standing backwards towards the sink, put the sawdust on his forehead and bent back, almost had to go on his knees, to put his head under the faucet. As soon as he turned the water on, the sawdust washed in his eyes. When he came back to the workshop, he walked by my bench and told me that that stuff really works.

We young teenagers were always fooling around, as long as Mr. Himmelweiss, did not see it. Around ten in the morning we had a ten minute break and everybody went to the drawing room to sit down. A redheaded fellow, I believe Werner was his name, always played tricks on other boys. One day,

he managed to get my briefcase with my sandwiches and hid them. After I looked for it a while, I found them right under the bench of this joker. I knew that this was just for fun, so I did not even say anything to him.

Before the lunch break I succeeded in getting Werner's lunchbox out of his briefcase when he was away from his workbench. Without anybody seeing it, I opened it up, took one of the two sandwiches out, and put a good sized wooden shaving between the two slices of bread, closed them up again, put them back into the satchel next to the fellow's workbench, where it was before.

At lunch time, this was announced by ringing of a bell. Everybody went to the drawing room. There were long tables and lots of stools; these were the ones which survived the critical examination by Mr. Himmelweiss.

The people sat in groups together. I sat there with some of mine, and while we were eating I told them what I did to Werner's sandwich. My friends were watching. Werner, who was a good story teller, usually had a big crowd around him. He had two boxes in his satchel. First, he opened the one which had cherries in it, and started to eat his desert first. Then, finally, he took out one of the sandwiches and ate it. My friends were looking at me with questioning motions. I told them it is not surprising, as he had two sandwiches, this must have been the one without the shaving.

Werner was talking a mile a minute while eating. He started the second sandwich. The boys at my table were sure Werner was going to find the wooden shaving. What a disappointment. He ate the whole sandwich without noticing anything. Afterwards, when I told him what I did, he almost did not believe me.

On August 23rd, 1939, the foreign ministers of Germany and the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact. It was called the Molotov - Ribbentrop Pact.

September 1st, 1939, the German army attacked Poland and World War II started. As nobody knew what was going to happen to the Jews, my parents wanted me to come back to Nuremberg. I took the train on September 5th, 1939 and went home. On September 9th, 1939, after nothing had happened, I went back to Berlin again.

Since the beginning of the war, not one week went by without one or another new decree against the Jewish people. The Germans distributed ration cards for almost all food items besides vegetables. On the Jewish ration cards was a big "J" printed, and each little coupon on there had a number and also a "J". It also was stated that Jews could not get anything on certain numbers. Jews had to shop during restricted hours and only in specially designated stores. Cards were distributed for cigarettes or other tobacco items, but none for Jews.

September 23rd, 1939; it was the Yom Kippur holiday. Radios were confiscated and had to be brought to a specially announced place. Mr. Leo Eisemann was sentenced to 4 to 6 years in jail for being caught with a radio 2 days after the deadline. It was forbidden for Jews to listen to the radio together with non-Jews. All telephones to Jewish apartments were disconnected. Jews were not permitted to buy newspapers and magazines. A curfew for Jewish people from 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. was published shortly after the start of the war. It was forbidden for Jewish veterans from World War I to wear war medals. Jews could not go to a barber shop any more.

Now after the liberal synagogue was destroyed and the orthodox one was burned down in the night of November 9 – 10 in 1938, the gym was used for services. Usually there were two services on Saturday morning for the two denominations. My future brother-in-law, Julius Neuberger was cantor as well as rabbi in the conservative or as it was called liberal service. But this room was still used at other times as a gym. My father who was always active in teaching children in gymnastic, was now again occupied providing teenagers the possibility of sports. At that time were still about 2000 Jewish people living in Nuremberg and he got quite a lot of the children coming to him for exercise. The chairs which were there for religious service, had to be removed. As they were all folding chairs it probably was quite easy to fit them on a side. As far as I remember I never saw the place, but now the gym was ready for its original purpose again. My father coached the children again, it seems nine boys and five girls and even had them prepared for a gymnastic show in 1939 or 1940.

As everything that was rationed, the same thing was done with the coals. There again, the ration for Jews was considerably smaller than the one for Germans. As the allotment of coal was so little it would not reach for more than a couple of days of heating. I, as well as the other man who had rented a room, shared our portions with the Kuschinskis, so that all of us could at least heat one room a little and very often I listened to old records of operas. The rest of the apartment stayed cold. As I always had to prepare drawing paper on a board for the graphic class the next evening after shop, it frequently happened that the water I used for stretching the paper was frozen in the morning.

Quite often during the night, the air raid sirens sounded and everybody had to go to the basement. Usually it was only one English plane flying over Berlin and most of the time the plane only dropped leaflets. Otherwise there was not much action. One heard the anti-aircraft canons shooting, but a couple of minutes later they sounded the all clear signal. After this had been going on quite frequently, lots of people just did not go to the shelters any more. I also stayed in bed, since I had to get up pretty early in the morning. My room was as cold as the outdoors, and early in the morning, when I walked to the train it was bitter cold. Usually I met a friend. Our hands froze, and so one of us had the idea to buy a pack of tobacco and a cheap pipe. We did not want to smoke, but just to warm up our hands.

During the middle of December 1939 there were no more coals and all schools were closed. On December 16th, Hella and I went back to Nuremberg by train and even the trains were unheated. The ride from Berlin to Nuremberg took eight hours. We both stayed in Nuremberg until December 31st, 1939, and then went back to Berlin.

After being thrown out of the German Lyceum for girls, on the 10th of November, 1938, Erna went twice a week to the Jewish extended elementary school in the *Kanalstrasse* for next two years. She was 15 years old. Julius Neuberger was the teacher of that class, and a lot of the teenage girls had a crush on the popular young teacher. Before he was hired in Nuremberg, Julius was teaching in Ansbach. He had moved with his mother to Nuremberg on April 24th, 1938.

In 1940 Erna started as an apprentice in agriculture at the Jewish cemetery in Nuremberg. She learned about flower and vegetable gardening. Her boss was our father's old friend, Paul Baruch.



On April 23rd, 1940, Hella and I went back to Nuremberg to be with our families for Pesach and on May 9th, 1940, two weeks later we went back to Berlin

On July 26th, 1940, Hella and I went back to Nuremberg as the schools and workshops were closed for a month of vacation. I went back to Berlin alone on August 29th, 1940. Hella stayed in Nuremberg and took a job in Fuerth as a dental assistant for Dr. Rosenbaum

Sometime during the fall of 1940, the cabinet making workshop lost its lease on the premises in *Jungfernheide*, or actually was just thrown out and had to move to a workshop together with the welders. This place was in the center of Berlin, near the subway station of *Janowitzbruecke*..

We had to set everything up again, but it never was as nice as in *Jungfernheide*. We also could not get any more lumber and only made repairs for other Jewish workshops. Later on we were permitted to do our own projects. I made a table lamp. As I needed a piece of metal for the bottom to close up the electrical wires, I asked the foreman of the welders for it. He told me to cut as much as I needed from a larger sheet.

I was permitted to use the large metal cutter. This had a long metal arm, which one pulled down to cut the metal. As I was not familiar with the tool, after finishing my cutting job I put the arm up what I thought was the rest position. Not knowing that there was a pin to hold it there in that position.

I took my cut off piece and turned to go back to my work bench, when I suddenly had the impression that one of the other fellows hit me hard on the shoulder that I almost went down on my knees. Luckily I wore like most of us a men's hat with the rim cut off. Actually the long handle who was not secured came down on my head.

One day our foreman, who was a non-Jew cabinet maker journeyman, came by while we were sitting around for lunch and he asked if anyone knew how to cut glass. A young friend of mine working on the bench next to me said his father was a glazier and he would know how to do it. As I was just next to him, the foreman said the two of us should go over to the blacksmiths workshop and fix their windows. This was another place where Jewish men tried to learn a craft for emigration. As we got there, the blacksmith instructor brought us several windows in which one or the other pane was missing or broken and a number of sheets of glass.

I had no idea how to cut glass, and was just there to help my friend to put the glass into the window frames. I was sure he knew what had to be done. We measured the first pane and he went to work with his glass cutter, showing me how one has to hold this tool and then he started cutting.

After scratching a straight line, he told me, one has to knock it a little and I will see, it will break perfectly. It did not. It cracked right through the middle. Something went wrong, he said, let's take a new pane and you will see, it is going to work out fine. On the next sheet the first cut came perfect, but when he made the second one, again the pane broke. So we took another sheet, but that broke too. And another sheet, and another sheet and always the same result. Finally, after many tries, and a lot of broken glass, one came out perfect. I put this pane into the frame, and carefully secured it with little nails. Just at this time, we already had worked a long time on this first window, the foreman came by and saw the many broken pane of glass lying around. He asked us how many windows we had fixed.

When he heard that all we had done in all that time was one pane, he took his hammer and threw it through that finally good piece of glass we had managed to do. Then he threw both of us out.



Some of my friends. From top left: Eduard Braun, Hilde Levi, Tomas Levi and Marcus. Second row: Klaus ?, Rosel Loewenstein who got married to Nordheimer, a girl and Eba, Elisabeth Alsberg. Standing holding a camera Cioma Schoenhaus and sitting next to a girl whos name I don't remember Heinz Jakobowitz



Second from the left: Hilde Krotoschiner, Ruth Ponto and behind Thomas Levi. Next to me is Trude Levi and Eba

Sometimes during the end of 1940 I quit the cabinet making place, and went full time again to the art school. There was not anymore teaching in cabinet making and besides we were not permitted to get any more lumber. The art school was now run by the Jewish congregation of Berlin and was called the *Berufsfachschule fuer Mode, Graphik und Dekoration* (School for Design, Fashion and window dressing) and located in the *Nuernberger* Street. There were a lot of boys and girls, Jewish students who used to go to other art schools and were thrown out and as before older people for getting a new education for emigration. Everybody now went to the only school allowed. The teachers, too, were mostly from other schools, as they, too, were dismissed. Mr. Nordheimer was now again the calligraphy teacher. Not only was this school now much better than the one at Hausdorff, there were also different courses one could take. I made a lot

of new friends and, in general, a good time was had by everyone.

There were classes in graphic art, commercial art, life drawing, calligraphy, fashion design and window dressing. The classes were five days a week and were in the morning and in the afternoon as well as evening. I took a lot of different courses, every day from morning until night. Sometimes the students who lived in the same area, not too far from the school, walked home through the *Tiergarten* Park. In this group were, Georg Rheinthal, Leni Markus, Ruth Ponto and a couple of others. Sometimes on the weekend, a group of us got together and met either in the apartment of one of the native children or we went for a couple of hours to the *Grunewald* for hiking or playing ball.

One night, it was in the winter of 1940 -1941, because of the black-out the park was dark. As it had just snowed we decided to have a snowball fight. We were about eight kids and made two teams. One could hardly see each other. One was never sure if one hit, so we made up a rule that anybody

being hit had to call it out. In that winter, the school sometimes had to be closed, as there were no coals to heat.



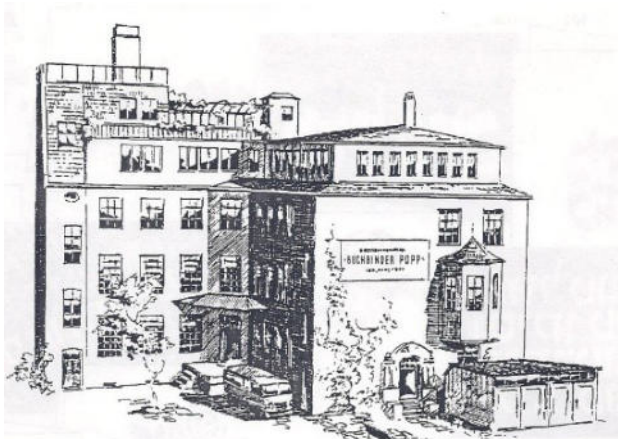
In the Grunewald" Trude, Eba , Thomas, a friend and Hilde

At night I always had a lot of things to prepare for the next day. For instance, one first had to put a bond paper on the drawing board. It had to be fastened all around the edges with paper tape. To get it completely

smooth, one wet it, and when it dried it was laying perfectly smooth on the board. After that, one had to paint the background color with tempera. It took a very long time for the paper to dry, as my room was not heated and it was so cold that the water as well as the paint was frozen in the morning. My room was especially cold, because on the one side, was the bedroom of my landlady which was never heated, on two sides were halls, one of them to the back door and on the fourth wall was a big window towards the garden.

As my bed was very cold too, I had an idea to at least make that a little more comfortable. I bought an aluminum bottle and filled it in the evening with hot water from the only heated stove in the apartment. This hot bottle I put in my bed, at least that way my feet got a little warm. This worked out very well, until one night. My bed was one of those metal contraptions, with vertical rods. When the water bottle got cold, I usually pushed it with my feet towards a side. That night, the clasp must have gotten caught on the bed bars and opened up. I woke up in a shock. The cold water came up to my neck. I jumped out of bed, to at least stop the water which was still in the bottle from escaping. Now everything was soaked. I had to take my wet pajamas off, just put my underwear on, and crawled back into bed. The rest of the night I had to sleep almost on the edge of the bed, to avoid the wet part.

Towards the middle of December school was closed again, as there were no coals at all. On December 21st, 1940, I went home to Nuremberg and stayed there until I was notified that school was in session again. On January 15th, 1941, I went back to Berlin. This time I brought my bicycle along, and now it took me much less time to go to school every morning. As Leni lived very close to me, I sometimes took her along on my bicycle. Probably at the time when I was in Nuremberg I was summoned to the draft board of the German army. Being eighteen I was now to be selected for the German army. The draft board was in a room in the Rosenau, a small park in Nuremberg. Everybody was told as long as we were here in the room, we were under military rule. When an officer walked by one had to stand at attention, etc. One had to be examined by a military doctor and after lots of forms were filled out by the officials there, I don't remember if I was the only Jew there, but after a physical examination and waiting for hours I was told I was not permitted to wear the German uniform and be part of the glorious German army. This document, which had my photo, signed with my full name including Israel, also had the word "Jude" written next to the Nazi eagle. It was signed and sealed by the military commander and the district police commander. I got the expulsion paper, that I was not eligible to become a German soldier. At the same time I also got the (*Ausschliessungsschein*) the expulsion papers from the German labor battalion (*Reichsarbeitsdiens*) as well. January 1st, 1941, as Jews did not have to pay membership to the Nazi party, they were taxed 15% of a so called "social equalizing tax", besides the war addition tax. The income tax for somebody who earned 300.00 Marks was 55%. As most people did not make more than 165.00 Marks the deduction was 60.00 Marks. If anybody had 10,000.00 Marks, any free amount was taken away, and every member of the family had to pay 50.00 Marks capital tax. Even the free amount on citizen tax was taken away, and anybody who had a capital of 501.00 Marks had to pay 42.00 Marks. In April 1941, suddenly and unexpectedly, all schools for Jews were forbidden, and this was the end of the art school too. Now almost all the Jewish people up to the age of 65 were drafted to work in factories, mainly in the defense industry. Erna and Julius were lucky to be working for the company of Emil Putz, who repaired fountain pens and related items. My father was worried that I would be recruited in Berlin and asked me to come home at once. I left Berlin for the last time on April 4th, 1941 and arrived home in Nuremberg on April 5th, 1941.



The book binding factory Popp. We the Jews worked one flight up in the left building where the little door can be seen on the very left side.

Not to have to work in a munitions factory, I tried to get employment in art and art related places. I was also trying to be able to work as a cabinet maker but none of these jobs were permitted for a Jew. I still was luckier than most young people, as the bookbinding factory of Popp in the Fuerther Strasse had a Jewish department and I got hired there. Factories which wanted Jews to work for them had to have special facilities, so the Jews would have no contact with the master race. About 20 Jewish women and men worked at Popp's in a special room, on the first floor in the back of the building. (The little door on the bottom left led to the Jewish work place.)The

Aryan factory was up on the fifth floor, and employed

about 60 people. I knew a couple of the Jewish girls working there, including Friedl Wassermann, whom I knew since my early childhood. She was one of the active participants of the Jewish sport clubs. Actually, she joined the club in December 1928, when she was five year old. Also there were Bella Silbermann and Josepha Blumenthal. The Jewish foreman, Mr. Siegfried Blumenthal, was a friend of my father. I was the only younger man there because all of the others my age were already recruited to work on the railroad or in armament factories.



Two of the girls who worked with me at Popp. Left Fanny Koschland, who was deported to Izbica on March 25, 1942 and Friedl Wassermann deported November 29, 1941. Both girls were murdered.

The Jewish department worked on children's books. First, I had to learn to attach books to the covers. Usually, a man and a woman were working together. The women, or in most cases they were younger girls, were sitting on high stools, and with a big brush covered the one side of the book with paste. The men then positioned the leaves of the book into the inside of the cover. After that, the second side was covered with paste, and the book was

positioned into the cover. After ten books were pasted, the men put all of them straight on top of each other, into the press. While these books were under pressure, the two people worked on the next ten. When the press was opened, the pressed ones were taken out, and a new set was put into the press. Other people produced the covers for these books, pasting the front and back to a cardboard.

For the Jews as well as for the Germans, the quota was 120 books per hour. Even though Jews were paid only the minimum wage as helpers, the same production was expected from us. I and one of the ladies, this was not one of the young girls, once tried to see how many books we really could bind in an hour if we would get paid piecework. Easily we finished 240 books. Not to give the Germans any ideas, we had to slow down for the next couple of hours. Mr. Blumenthal, the Jewish foreman, trained me to work on all the machines. The books were always sewn together on a special sewing machine by one

of the women; three books were printed below each other on one sheet of paper. With one of the large cutting machines, they then had to be separated. Ten piles of them was always cut together. The next operation was to cut each set of ten on three sides with a different cutting machine. There too was a nice camaraderie among all the Jewish people. It was pleasant that we did not interact with any of the supermen, and we were left alone.

September 1st, 1941, the law of marking the Jews physically was announced, and every Jewish person, from a child of six years on, had to wear the yellow star with the black lettering "Jude" on the left side of the chest. This law became effective by September 19th, 1941. As at that time, not enough stars were printed, every person only received two. These stars had to be sewn to the outer clothes and it was forbidden just to attach it with a safety pin. One just had to cut them off some clothing and re sew these stars continuously on other clothes as one changed. The Nazi party was ordered to report any Jew who would hide the star by covering it with his arm. With typical Teutonic courage, the Germans outdid themselves, reporting Jews almost daily. Luckily, the Gestapo ignored most of these denunciations.



Also on September 1, 1941, on paragraph 2b. was announced that it was forbidden for Jews to wear military decorations, medals and similar decorations they received for valour serving in the German army in WWI.

I became very fond of Fanny Koschland, who worked with me in the bookbindery. Fanny was from Fuerth. She liked me too, but the only time we could meet for a couple of minutes was after work and before Fanny had to take the railroad to Fuerth. Even though the tram connected the cities of Nuremberg and Fuerth, since a couple of month Jews were not permitted to use the streetcars any more they had to take the train to Fuerth 7 km west of Nuremberg.. They had to get special permission to use the railroad. This was not too bad in Nuremberg, as the railroad station on *Rothenburger Strasse* was just a couple of blocks from the bookbindery. I don't know how far she had to walk in Fuerth.

Only once, during the winter of 1941/42, we went for a short walk along the canal which went right by the railroad station. Fanny had to be home before curfew , which was at 8 o'clock and she could not notify her parents that she would be late, as Jews did not have telephones any more. As one never knew what could happen, her parents would worry. This station was just a small local station, very close to our apartment. Besides the railroad pass could only be used during the week and therefore we could never get together on Sundays. Jews without any special permission were also forbidden to travel by bicycle from Nuremberg to Fuerth. Fuerth was a different city and to pass the border of either municipal area was forbidden.

Fanny was not quite 18 years old, a friend of my sister, and the child of a strictly orthodox family. On our short walk that winter evening, I kissed her and she returned my kiss. But the next moment she was troubled with remorse and believed she had lost her chastity. She felt very unclean, forgetting herself and kissing a man. I assured her, she is as pure as before and there was nothing wrong with what she did. "Judaism", I said, "does not forbid showing your emotion if you like somebody. Do you really believe it is better to hide your feelings than showing them openly and honestly? Should I, too, hide my feelings towards you? How would we know that we like each other if we don't somehow show it?"

"I know, I know, you are probably right, but I can't help thinking, what would my parents say if they would have seen us! I never did anything like that before!"

"Please, don't torture yourself. You did absolutely nothing wrong. You are as innocent and as clean as you were yesterday. Do you really believe it is a sin to kiss somebody you like? Even in the

Bible you can read that there is nothing wrong. How about Jacob, when he saw Rachel for the first time, he kissed her; and I know you much longer than he did."

"O.K., I am all right now, you are right, but I have to take the train now."

This romance ended just the moment it started. Fanny was deported with her family to Izbica in Poland on March 25, 0. Nobody survived from this transport.

October 18, 1941, my mother's birthday. My father was called to the Gestapo headquarters and, as the secretary of the Jewish congregation, was told about the planned deportation of 1000 Jewish people from Nuremberg. For the transport, people were earmarked who would be able to work and were below 65 years of age. At that time there were still 1835 Jewish people living in Nuremberg, so it meant that the deportation would include all the Jews up to that age limit. My father was successful in reducing this number to 500 by negotiating with the Gestapo. But he was warned not to mention one word to anybody about the deportation.

I remember when he came home, he was completely drained. He could not say anything and just lay down on the couch. After resting a couple of minutes he called Erna and me into the room. My mother came along too. My father said to both of us: "Swear to me, that you kill as many of the Germans as you can!" My mother interrupted him: "Bernhard, Bernhard she called, don't let the children swear to such a horrible thing!"

The Gestapo made the lists and the office of the congregation had to make all necessary preparations. The announcement to the congregation was done by newsletter. The selections were mainly by district.

The Nazi party planned a different deportation for the Jews of Nuremberg at the same time. All the able-bodied men would be brought as labor slaves to the chemical factory Conrad in Roethenbach and all the women to the electromechanical factory, Reiniger, Geberet & Schall in Erlangen. All the older people who could not be used as labor slaves, would be sent to the camp in Buckhof, near Erlangen. Preparations were already being made. The Nazi party was mainly interested in robbery of the apartments and whatever is in it. They wanted to take all the furnishers, clothing and anything that was in the apartment.

On November 11, 1941, Dr. Grafenberger from the Gestapo Nuernberg sent out following directive to all the Gestapo agents and SS-men, on how to proceed with the deportation and what each one's job was:

Organization directive for the handling

of the deportation of Jews

on 11.29.1941.

As it was ordered by the *Reichsfuehrer of the SS*, (The chief of the SS, Heinrich Himmler), on 10.31.41, that on 11.29.41, 1000 Jews from the district of Nuernberg - Fuerth should be deported and made ready for departure.

For the execution of this action, the organized planning is as follows:

Overall chief of operation has the Stapo (state police)

SS-brigadier general, Dr. M a r t i n

Ordered, in charge of the execution:

Criminal-councilor Dr. G r a f e n b e r g e r

Chief of the whole organization:

Criminal-commissioner W o e s c h phone-Nr. 8374, room 414

Assistant: Crim. ass. F l u h r e r,

Police secretary B o e h m (for administration, tools, etc.)

A secretary: Employee Kuerzinger

also at the time of the action 3 officers as a reserve and 1 secretary

and the rest for surveillance and control (SS)....men.

From 11. 27. until 11. 29. 41 crim. ass. R o e d e r is responsible. (The office in the Ludwigstrasse has to be covered throughout the action). Crim. comm. Woesch moves to the provisional camp, Langwasser , camp II, phone.....

For the financial action, governmental asst. K o r n will be exclusively responsible. 2 secretaries will be at his disposal. (Heusinger and Martin)

For the action on 11. 27. bailiffs have to be summoned and instructed about their responsibilities from gov.ass. Korn.

4 deportation groups will be formed

Deportation group I (Nuernberg)

Superintendent: Crim. secr. F i c h t n e r,

secretary: Employee. Pelloth.

For the action will be detailed:

20 criminal policemen to fetch the Jews

3 secretaries

10 security persons (SS) plus

15 state police men for the camp.

The deportation group I has 2 under groupings:

Deportation group I a, includes the deportation numbers from 500 to 750,

Group leader: Crim. ass. U n g e r,

secr. Schuh.

Deportation group 1 b, includes the deportation numbers from 751 to 1000

Group leader: Crim. sec. H e i n k e l m a n n,

secr. Wierer

Deportation group II (Mittlefranken)

Group leader: Pol. secr. M a y e r

secr. Barth.

For the action will be detailed:

5 officers

3 security persons (SS).

Deportation group II includes the deportation numbers from 401 to 500
(Fuerth, Mittelfranken - Land).

Deportation group III (Unterfranken)

Group leader: Crim secr. K l e n k,

Assistant: Crim. Ass. G u n d e l a c h

secr. Eckmeier

For the action will be detailed:

3 officers and

19 security persons (SS) they come from Wuerzburg with the deporting
group III Nr. 201 to 400

Deportation group IV(Oberfranken)

Group leader: Crim.sec. B e d a c h t,

secr. Kassenetter

For the action will be detailed:

3 officers and

6 security persons (SS) they come from there.

Deportation group II includes the deportation numbers from 1 to 200.

The preparations will be made in Bayreuth from crim .com. Meier

(Dep. Nr. 1 - 46)

in Bamberg from crim. insp. Bezold

(Dep. Nr. 47 -175)

in Coburg from crim. sec. Hocker

(Dep. Nr. 175 - 200)

The deportation groups have to prepare all the necessary forms and lists under the direction of crim. comm. Woesch. They also have to determine the rooms for the detention of the Jews from Nuernberg before their deportation. Also to be sure that between 11.23 and 11.27.41, form sheets, typewriters, writing material etc. are in place, and that the deportation numbers are present. In advance they have to have armbands for the Jewish helpers. In general be responsible that everything goes smoothly on 11.23.

The negotiations with the German railroad, etc. about wagons are exclusively handled by crim. comm. Woesch. He is responsible for the provision of transportation (trucks) for transporting the Jews on 11.27.41 as well as their packages and the provision of food in the ghetto (temporary camp is the meant) on 11.27.41. (P.S. Boehm). To give orders to the Jewish congregation for the feeding, etc. cooking possibilities and the housing provisions. Manpower has to be ready for the bodily search of the Jews.

Attention for the preparation of all materials: Portable typewriters, paper, carbon paper, rubber stamps for the *Kennkarten*, (The Jewish identification cards), sealing wax, candles, special stickers for sealing the apartments, (Crim. Comm. Weiner for lead seals pliers for the securing of confiscated articles) Envelopes, wrapping paper for safekeeping of requisitioned objects like jewelry, devises, etc., emergency lighting for the security guards from 11.27 until 11.29.41, food for the security guards and closing of roads towards the camp, vehicles for transporting of the sick and the arrested ones, a stretcher for an possible accident, also, an emergency telephone to the camp and the Gestapo

station for photographs, provision for the accompanying guards and reimbursement for the SS, provision for the Jews of Nuernberg.

- 1.) On 11.23.41, all the extra help officers from *Kripo*, (criminal police), *Stapo*, (state police) at 7:00 a.m. have to be at police headquarters, 4th floor, room 417' for instruction by gov. ass. Korn about the announcement to the Jews that on that day, they will be:
 - a) picked up by the police on 11.27. because of relocating their residences. They are to be told about buying food, getting food for the trip, food for the Ghetto and especially for tools and furnishing for the Ghetto. They are also given their deportation number. The Ghetto tools and the suitcase (not more than 50 kg), should be marked with their deportation numbers. The secretary of the Jewish congregation Kolb is responsible that these items have to be taken by a Jewish labor commando, not later than in the evening of 11.26.41, to a not yet specified collection place. (Special direction to Kolb).
 - b) That their money is confiscated by the Gestapo, retroactive from 10.15.41. Excluded is the material and articles which are mentioned under a), the fee for the transport of RM 52.— per person, and the hand package (blanket for the trip). The declaration of all their moneys has to be filled out completely and honestly and handed in on 11.27. The apartment has to be prepared so, that it can be sealed by the police at the time they leave it on 11.27. (Disconnecting of gas, light and water, submitting their payment to the particular agencies of the city, telling it to the caretaker of the building, etc.), besides a double pair of keys which could under certain circumstances be given sealed, to the caretaker by the police officer on 11.27.
 - c) The Jews also are told, that in case of any question, they exclusively have to ask the Jewish congregations secretary Kolb. Questions to the Gestapo are not permitted.

The operation on 11.27.will be as follows:

The deportation group leader has to be in the temporary camp, Lager II in Langwasser at 8:00 a.m. The group leader I will be in the office in Ludwigstrasse for orders about the rounding up of the Jews of Nuernberg. The same officers shall be used who, on 11.23, made the announcement to the Jews. The same chronological order should be applied. Cars and trucks are already readied and extra SS- commandos also should be alerted before. The rest of the SS-commandos are to be ordered to the temporary camp at 8:00 a.m. They have to be in the *Deutschhauskaserne* at 7:00 a.m. (Gestapo and police headquarters) and are brought with trucks to the camp. 15 men of a special commando are ordered for the deportation group I, to collect the Jews from Nuernberg. Trucks which would be needed for the operation should be ordered in advance and should be given to the officers at 7:00 a.m.at the *Deutschhauskaserne* by crim. ass. R R o e d e r

(phone: 8374). In case of not foreseen important trips, there are three cars which can be requested, of which one is stationed at the Deutschhauskaserne during the 27th and 11.28. 41, the other two cars are at the temporary camp. Only crim. comm. Woesch is in charge of it.

The to-be-deported, arrested Jews should, as soon as the truck is filled, be brought to the temporary camp as quickly as possible.

The directions for the temporary camp are as follows: The pol.secr. Boehm with the leader of the SS-security detachment has to police the camp and isolate it. 25 SS-men are necessary, and they have to insure the isolation of the camp from 8:00 a.m. on the 11.27, so that no unauthorized person who was not directly involved with the deportation would be permitted. Photos are completely forbidden, so long as there was not a special permit issued by the Gestapo for a special agent. Visits from relatives of the Jews or of curiosity seekers as well as from any and all officers are forbidden.

Also, none of the Jews who were brought to the camp are permitted to leave the camp without guards. (Check the identification cards.)

There must be special ID-cards prepared for the recruited SS-guards. (P.S. Boehm). Other members of the SS, even in uniform, are not permitted in. Besides guarding the camp on the outside, 2 continuous patrols are necessary on the inside of the camp. In addition, the barracks have to be guarded in which are the Jews,. (...SS-men). The reserve has to help with the organization and with the searches and examinations. All the SS-men should be at the ready, in case more would be needed.

To handle the Jews received at the camp, the following has to be prepared:

The sluicing of the Jews of any deportation group is always handled the same way:

The Jews, who are now delivered should be brought into room 1. (with) their suitcases, which have been brought into the room by the Jewish labor force. (2 trucks, 6 SS-guards for surveillance). The Ghetto packages weighing not more than 100 lb. will be searched by officers according to the guidelines. Non-permissible items (devices, jewelry etc.) are to be taken out. If possible, the deportation number has to be written on and it should be put on a side. The suitcase will be locked and the Jew will not get it into his hands again. It will be brought to the collection center for Ghetto packages to be loaded onto a cattle car. Also, the rest of the hand packages have to be searched.

In the next room (room II) the Jew has his list of his wealth already given to the officer when he was picked up, now has to submit all his bonds, stocks, identification cards and not-permitted jewelry. From the Jews not from Nuernberg the 60.--RM travel cost has to be taken. From the Jews from Nuernberg the collection of these transport costs has been done by the Jewish congregation.

The only thing they can keep is their *Kennkarte*, one regular watch and a wedding ring.

After that the Jews will be bodily searched in room III for bonds or securities, etc., they might be smuggling. (Women are undressed in a separate room).

After the Jew (or the Jewess) is dressed again, they will be told in room IV about the seizure of all their wealth and a document from the bailiff about it will be given to them. Their *Kennkarte* will be rubber stamped *Evakuiert* (deported). They are now given to the SS-guard who brings him (her) into the actual camp. Leaving that camp or any contact with not yet frisked Jews is to be prevented by all means. He (she) is permitted to take the hand package, eating pot, etc. with him (her).

On 11.29.41, at 8:00 a.m. the Jewish labor force has to load the Ghetto packages and Ghetto tools into cattle cars. (Pol. secr. Boehm)

The accommodation of the Jews and Jewesses in the temporary camp are done this way; the Jewish supervisor, determined beforehand, has to have the deportation numbers together by location. These supervisors are responsible to the SS-guards and officers for any kind of orders given, and about quiet in the barracks. It is forbidden to have any light on after dark.

The responsibility is with (PS Boehm) for light in the guard rooms, offices and in the hallways. By all means the black-out has to be followed, in the living quarters of the SS-guards as well as in the main guard room. Because of air raids, the SS-men, at times they are off duty, have to prepare a ditch. (Dug by the Jews). The Jews at a time of raid stay in their barracks. The communication of the Jews from different barracks has to be forbidden. Steps have to be taken beforehand for the food for the SS-commandos. (Stapo I).

At the loading of the Jews on 11.29.41 probably at 12:00 noon, the Jewish supervisors have to make sure to have their group together by numbers. The numbering of the wagons has to be done by the organization leader (take chalk along!)

One hour before the train leaves on 11.29.41, the transport officer will formerly be given the command. Besides the commandos who travel with the train, two Gestapo officers will accompany them. They are to be helpful to the transport leader.

After the train leaves, the SS-guards will be released. Pol. secr. Boehm
Has to make the Jewish labor force clean the barracks and hand over the camp.
Besides the already named officers, the following people are to be requested:

for 11.23.41 20 Criminal officers

27.-11.29.41 15 Gestapo officers

also from 11.27. until the Jews will be delivered

as on 11.23.41 20 Criminal officers (the same)

From the 27th until 11.29.41 all together 55 SS-men. Of these probably 18 will be needed to accompany the transport from the 29th, until about 12.4.41.

The officers going along with the transport are KOA Gundelach and KOA Fluhrer.

It is possible that in the afternoon of 11.26.41 a small unit of guards, about 3 men, will be needed.

Nuernberg, November 11, 1941

Gestapo

Gestapo headquarters Nuernberg-Fuerth II/2

(signed) Dr. Grafenberger

SS-Stubaf. (*Sturmbannfuehrer*). Krim.Rat (*Kriminal Rat*)

Around November 20th, 512 persons were selected, and each received the notice for deportation. They were given a list on which it was written which items were allowed to be taken along, and what was forbidden. Each person received a label with his number, and was told to attach it with a string to the outer clothes. They were also notified about the time they would be picked up by a Gestapo officer.

November 25th and 26th, the people were collected with police trucks, by officers from the Gestapo, and driven to the newly erected barracks, in *Langwasser*, in the east of the city, which were originally built for the Nazi party congress (The *Parteitag 1939*). The Gestapo man Fichtner, who was one of the officers picking up the Jews, had to prove his heroic Teutonic upbringing by especially brutal treatment of the deportees, mainly by roughing up or beating old and handicapped people.

There was no furniture in these wooden barracks in Langwasser, the people had to sit and sleep on the wooden floor. An amount of 50.00 Marks per person had to be paid to the Gestapo through the Jewish congregation. This money, the Gestapo announced, was supposed to be equally distributed at the destination. One knows from the handful of survivors that not one Pfennig was given to them and the Gestapo officers of Nuremberg stole it. Another 10.00 Marks was collected for expenses. Besides, which ever cash anybody had at home when they were picked up, had to be surrendered to the officers of the Gestapo. That also went into their own pockets.

A very thorough search of everything in the suitcases or backpacks of the deportees was done by the agents of the Gestapo and most of the time, also a bodily search, as soon as they arrived in that temporary camp. Anything these gangsters could use was confiscated. The congregational office was told that the destination was a new camp and certain items had to be brought along. It was arranged that hundreds of square meters of glass, all cut to specified sizes was bought. Iron stoves, all kinds of tools, farming equipment and even barbed wire for the enclosure had been sent along.

The last 72 hours before the deportation there was no rest for the Jewish people of Nuremberg. Either they were busy with preparing clothing etc., and what to take along, or for the ones who were spared at that time, to help the selected ones with fixing and packing. A couple of hours after the first police trucks arrived in the camp, the Jewish congregation had supplied hot food for the deportees.

Fichtner was prominent again in terrorizing and beating mainly old Jewish people.

Around noon on the 29th of November, after three days in the camp, the people had to walk in rows of ten, for about one kilometer to the waiting train, carrying their hand baggage. Luckily the weather was good. SS-men were standing all along the road, jeering the unfortunate people. Movie cameras were recording the "Exodus of the Jews". The whole area, for a couple of kilometers around, was closed for civilians. Concentration camp methods had started. In front of the train, the people were counted and directed to the particular compartments. At a signal everybody had to climb on to the train. As the train was standing on an open area not in a railroad station, there was no platform. Women, children and older people had to be lifted up. Anybody not being fast enough was mistreated. After three days of riding in the train, this transport arrived in *Jungfernhof* near Riga.

This deportation included most of the people who worked in the bookbinding factory. The operations in the Jewish department came to an almost complete stop.

My father heard from the Gestapo inspector Christian Woesch, who was the only decent guy, that there was a telephone conversation from the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland* (the central organization of the Jews of Germany) to the Jewish congregation in Breslau, where it was said: "The Kolb from Nuremberg manages to get everything his way with the Gestapo Nuremberg." Not a very good kind of a statement for my father.

Around February 1942, came the order that Jews had to surrender all fur coats, skis and other sport articles, typewriters, bicycles, binoculars, cameras, record players including the records, and all electrical household equipment. At that time there were still about 1,200 Jews living in Nuremberg.

In March 1942 the lists for the second transport were being prepared by the Gestapo. This time all people below the age of 65 were included. My father was supposed to be kept back as the Gestapo needed him for the liquidation of the congregation. Erna and I were included on the transport list. Only after my father announced that he would volunteer for the transport, were we taken off the list. While in other cities, people were just picked up any place, on the street or at the place where they worked and put on transport, Nuremberg did not separate families. A couple of employees of the congregation were also permitted to stay back, as my father said he would be unable to do all the work alone. Five of these people, who were already in the camp in *Langwasser*, decided to go along with the transport, as all their relatives and friends were being deported.

As on the first deportation, everybody could take along only one suitcase and a back-pack. Each person had to submit 50.00 Marks plus 10.00 Marks for expenses. Gestapo officers again came to the apartments to pick up the people and transported them with police vans to the camp in *Langwasser*.

All the other formalities like frisking for contraband, the lodging in the barracks, and the food, was the same as on the first transport. Again the Gestapo officers requisitioned everything they personally liked, jewelry which people still had, alcoholic beverages, hard salamis, etc. The people again were held for three days in that camp in *Langwasser*. Besides the four hundred and twenty six people from

Nuremberg the transport included Jewish people from Fuerth, Wuerzburg, Kitzingen and Bamberg. My father had to pay from the accounts of the Jewish congregation 60.00 Marks for each of the 1,000 people in the transport. This amounted to 60,000.00 Marks in cash that he paid to the Gestapo Nuremberg. It was promised that the deportees get 50.00 Marks each, to be paid at the destination. 10.00 Marks again were for the fare. Not one Pfennig was given to anybody at the arrival and as usual the money was pocketed by the Nazi crooks.

The rest of the younger men who were not in the transport all of them besides myself were *Mischlinge* (children where one parent was not Jewish). We were recruited to help in the camp in Langwasser, with repacking suitcases which were opened and in complete disorder, after the Gestapo agents searched them. Also we helped carrying baggage for the unfortunate ones. I was picked by the SA Nazi commander of the camp in Langwasser to paint signs to indicate alphabetically where the people have to go, where the kitchens was, etc. This I had to do in that Nazi's office. Surprisingly, this man was not tormenting me, but started talking to me about politics. He asked all kinds of questions about the war, etc., but I did not trust him, as the statement the man made convinced me that he was a very enthusiastic follower of the party-line. He told me that I do not have to worry about my relatives; they just would be resettled in the east. Probably he really believed it. As he was one of the super-race he did not think there was anything wrong to order one of the Jewish girls to clean his room. It just happened that when I was painting signs, again he had picked Hella. He did not know she was my cousin.

When this SA officer walked outside, Hella told me that her family was short of one set of flatware and if I would ask the Nazi if I could bring one to her the next day. I was not sure whether the super-man would let me bring anything into that camp. I promised Hella that when the SA-commander comes back, I will ask him. Knowing that one never knew in what mood these people would be

I gathered all of my courage and asked. Surprising enough, it was permitted. That man must have had still a little human feeling left. The next day, when I was again in that office, and had brought a set of flatware from home, the SA officer called Hella again to clean his room and the transfer was achieved. On that day I saw Fanny as well as all my other friends and relatives, for the last time. After this SA-officer was in a prisoner of war camp. He found out that I had survived. He now remembered his noble human deed and just wanted from me to write him a letter, telling how nice he was to me and my cousin. I just ignored him.

In the afternoon of the third day all the helpers, including me, were suddenly ordered to get on the back of a police truck. We were driven back to the city, and the truck stopped in front of the police headquarters. "Everybody off", somebody commanded, "follow that officer and carry the rifles to the truck"

Everybody except me went inside. "What about you?" one of the officers asked. Without thinking of the consequences of what could happen if I refused to do anything I was ordered by the hated bastards, I answered:

"I refuse to carry rifles which are used for guarding my people!" Nothing happened. I had reacted without thinking. I almost could not believe my luck.

Later on that day, back at the camp, one of the SS-guards, with a rifle slung over his shoulder, proved his valiant courage when he chased one of the Jewish girls, 17 year old Gerta Inge Fass, around

the periphery of the camp. A couple of his comrades watched the show and, laughing, called out encouragement to him who, for them, was symbolizing German chivalry. It just so happened, that Gerta was well trained in the Jewish sport club and had no trouble outrunning the panting brute. He was trying to show off the masculinity of the supermen. Armed with a rifle against a defenseless girl, he believed himself a megalomaniac hero like Hagen in the Nibelungen who killed Siegfried, spearing him in the back. After all, the Nibelungen were glorified by Hitler's favorite composer, Richard Wagner.

All our relatives, uncles, aunts and cousins were in this transport. Hugo Kolb was made one of the three transport leaders. The Gestapo officer, Gottfried Fluhrer, one of the worst anti-Semitic Nazi officers of the Nuremberg police department, was leading the transport. The deportees had to march about a kilometer, with their hand package, to a siding where a train was standing. The people from Wuerzburg and Kitzingen were already in the wagons. In the afternoon or early evening of March 25th, 1942 the train started to move towards the east.

A couple of times postcards came from Izbica in the district of Krasnistov, near Lublin in Poland. The people asked for food or money. Everybody tried to send packages, even out of the meager rations we Jews got on our ration cards, which were marked with the letter "J".

It was very difficult for non-Jews to send anything, as their dear *Volksgenossen* (countrymen) would not hesitate one moment to denounce them, and the Gestapo kept listing the names of the senders. It is possible that all the people who were shipped to Izbica were sometimes in the fall transported to the liquidation camps of Belzec or Sobibor. There, in one camp alone, the Germans gassed more than six hundred thousand Jews in one year. Not one of these people shipped to Izbica survived.

On March 24th, 1942, the remark in the Inhabitants Registration Office, where everybody had to be listed said on the name of each one of the deportees: **"Emigrated, unknown to where!"** The bastards did not even wait for the transport to leave.

On April 8th, 1942, 11 days after the deportation, the official remark on the registration list was: **"Person taken off the register!"** The vacant apartments of the Jews were sealed and as the Gestapo had the keys, they were able to go into these apartments and help themselves to anything they wanted. Sometime later the city auctioned the booty that fell to them to the German mob. For a fraction of the value, they could now own the almost new furniture, bed linen, etc. which many of the Jewish people had to buy after the November 1938 pogrom, when the brown hordes broke into the houses and destroyed everything. In most cases they could only enjoy their newly acquired loot for a short time, as the effective bombing by the RAF and the US air force brought the destruction back to the German cities, just as their heroic Luftwaffe meted out to Poland, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Greece and others, as well as France, England and Russia.

On April 23rd, 1942 my father was ordered by the Gestapo in Nuremberg, to accompany 23 Jewish people from Nuremberg to Bamberg for deportation to be able to help them if it should become necessary. These were people who for one reason or another were not deported on March 25th. Gestapo officer Fichtner was again ordered to escort the people. The officers were surprised when they searched the deportees, as only 7 Pfennig were found on them. Already at the last two deportations only a very small amount of cash was found on the people. At the last two deportation transports the Gestapo officers were surprised that almost nobody had any money at all, or in a few cases very small amounts. A couple of hours after arriving in Bamberg, my father was arrested by Fichtner and accused of having

the cash taken from the people or being responsible for the disappearance of the money. Fichtner screamed at my father: "The Germans have a *Rundfunk* (radio), and the Jews have a *Mundfunk* (relaying news by mouth) and you are the sender!" My father was rigorously searched from head to toes and by going through his pockets one of the officers found a photograph of a girl.

"Look here", the finder said to his accomplices, "there we have it, this Jew is a *Rassenschaender*. (Since 1935, it was a capital offense by German law, for a Jew to have any contact with an Aryan woman.) Look at the picture a typical young Aryan girl!" All the hangmen looked, including Fichtner. "Forget it", the Gestapo scoundrel Fichtner said, "This is his daughter!" Under guard, they brought my father back to Nuremberg and released him later on that day.

On April 25th, 1942, the Gestapo Nuernberg - Fuerth wrote a *Marchbefehl*, (A travel order) signed by the *Obersturmbannfuehrer* (major) Dr. Grafenberger, the head of the Nuernberg Gestapo. The order was for the *SS-Hauptscharfuehrer* (sergeant) Oswald Gundelach to accompany the transport of 955 Jews from Wuerzburg, Bamberg and Nuernberg to Lublin.

On April 28th, 1942, a telegram was sent to the Gestapo office in Wuerzburg that the deportation transport arrived in Krasnystav at 8:45 a.m. This was signed by the commander of the transport, Werner. There were no survivors of all the people of this transport.

In the meantime, in Nuernberg, on April 25th, 1942, a large contingent of Gestapo officers came to the office of the Jewish congregation. Everybody who was by chance in the office as well as all who worked there, were locked into one room and guarded by the police. The prisoners were forbidden to talk. The officials of the congregation were forced to stand, facing the wall and then were interrogated one by one. The rooms were diligently searched and the business books looked over. In one of the typewriters was a letter from Mr. Fechheimer, the president of the Jewish congregation. This letter was partly typed and Mr. Fechheimer mentioned the general circumstances. One of the sentences said: "It was a race between might and time!" This letter was taken along by the officers. On that same day a letter had arrived from my uncle Hugo Kolb from Izbica. As he was made one of the transport leaders during the deportation, he also seemed to be in a leading position in Izbica. His letter too was taken by the Gestapo. Nothing discriminatory could be found, but even so, my father and Mr. Fechheimer were taken along to the police department. After a couple of hours of interrogation, both of them were released again.

The letter from Izbica was returned a couple of days later and afterwards sent to Berlin from the congregation in Nuremberg to the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland*, (The organization of all the Jews of Germany), who never had any message from any of the deportees. This very interesting letter was never returned and got lost.

As I said before, my uncle was one of the members of the *Judenrat* in Izbica and he wrote very explicitly about the Ghetto there. The village was completely neglected. There was absolutely nothing besides rats, mice and very healthy fleas and bedbugs. There was no sewage system, the mud was knee-deep on all roads. There was no food. The 50.000 Reichsmark which the officers of the Gestapo gave to the SS camp commander, was never given, as promised, to the Jews. Therefore it was an extreme predicament. Also, they did not get their baggage. Therefore they also were in great need of clothing. Everybody able to work was recruited to help to remedy some of the horrible situation. People who could not work got even less than the 50 grams of bread a day which the workers got.

Around the same time a letter came to the Jewish congregation of Wuerzburg, from the *Judenrat*, (the head of the Jews) of Izbica. It read as follows:

The Judenrat
Izbica n/W
County of Krasnystaw
District Lublin
General-Government

Izbica, March 29, 1942

To the honorable Jewish Congregation of Wuerzburg

2000 more Jews have arrived , this time mostly from Wuerzburg, Kitzingen, Nuremberg-Fuerth, Aachen, Dueren and Coblenz.

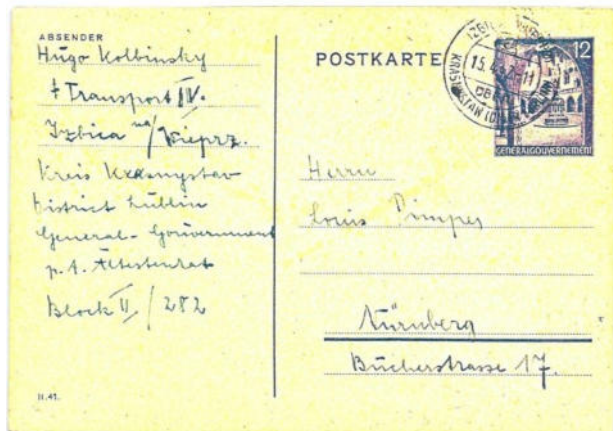
The German authorities are very helpful and will arrange that all able to work will be put to work. For the livelihood of those people who are not able to work, mainly the sick, old women and men, we would urgently need help. We therefore ask you politely to send us, as soon as possible, as much money as possible. Also, we need clothes, underwear, and permissible food items. The *Juden-Aelteste*. (The head of the Jews) guarantees the correct distribution of these items. A committee was formed, made up of the new arrivals of Jews from the *Reich* (Germany) and the *Protectorate* (Czechoslovakia). We urgently ask you to heed our request and thank you in advance for everything you do for us.

For the Judenrat:
Dr. Ali Lob Pauner

Heads of the Transports
of German Jews
Dipl. Merchant Ludwig Israel Weinheber
Dr. Nathan Rosenthal
Hugo Israel Kolb

Not only is there not one survivor of more than 50,000 Jews who were deported to Izbica, it is almost certain, that this letter was dictated by the SS, so they could steal whatever was sent, a common practice by the Germans.

April 4th, 1942 Hella wrote a postcard to a friend of her father:



Dear Mr. Pimper!

Because my dear father is too tired today, I want to take his place to give you a sign of life from us. We are well. We would be very appreciative if you could send us food items. Mainly bread, noodles and something to make soups from. Maybe you could find out if it is permissible to send parcels weighing 2 kg. Please also *Liso!* (disinfectant) and toilet paper. We are here 32 people in three rooms, and living with common interest in a large

community, this is worth a lot. I just remember, crackers, etc. or anything that is not perishable, and you could spare, would be of great value for us. Until now we are cooking from the reserves we brought along. So far we do not earn anything yet. Dry alcohol for cooking is also very important. Please send as soon as possible, we are very thankful. For today just best regards to all acquaintances, your *Hella*

Next time I write myself. Best regards to all of you, your *Hugo*

The return address on this and the following cards:

Hugo Kolbinsky, Transport IV, Izbica n/ Wieprz. County Krasnystav, District, Lublin General-Government, p.A. Aeltestenrat, Block II/282 .

(It was never explained why he had to sign with the name Kolbinsky, presumably, one of the Nazis there had the name Kolb and did not like to have a Jew with the same name. In a report from a Ms. Lea Reisner-Bialowitz, she writes about a very brutal SS-officer with the name Kolb. She was deported from Zamosc to Izbica.)

June 12th, 1942, SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Dr.Grafenberger wrote a letter to SS-Sturmbannfuehrer Gramowski:

Dear comrade Gramowski!

I just received the nice surprise from the lady-comrades and comrades from Wuerzburg. Many thanks to all of you. Not only was I surprised but really happy to be reminded of the busy and rewarding days in Wuerzburg. Such mutual collaboration brings us closer together as comrades in the service.

I don't have to mention again, that the way everything went without any friction was proof of the enthusiasm of the lady-comrades and comrades from Wuerzburg. After all I know how much annoyance, excitement, as well as enthusiasm about the work there is, from my experience in two previous actions.

The comrades from Nuernberg still talk happily about the collaboration with the Wuerzburgers. Overshadowing the operational readiness of the Wuerzburgers, is the memory of the beautiful harmonic evening with all the comrades.

Wuerzburg proved by their collaboration during the work, as well as afterwards, that we all are one, the way it should be in the security force of the Nazi state. The artful etching, you gave me will be a steady reminder.

Heil Hitler signed

Dr. Grafenberger

It is absolutely unbelievable that these Nazi criminals had the nerve of asking my father after the war for a letter for the Denazification court, proclaiming how nice they were. I have different letters, very often their wives wrote like the following ones of Mrs. Grafengerger and Mrs. Fluhrer.They not only ask for it but almost demanded it. These criminals, who treated the Jews as less than animals were too

cowardly to accept their fate, which was in no way to be compared with the one they dealt out to innocent men, women and children.

Mrs Grafenbereger writes:

Unterwolkersdorf, am 7. Juli 1947
Sehr geehrter Herr Kolb!
Zum ich endlich Ihre anernte. Anschrift
abfassen habe, bitte ich Sie freundlichst,
für meinen Mann, Dr. Theodor Grafenberger,
seinezeit. Kriminalrat, doch auch ein
mundszeugnis, ausstellen zu wollen.
Bei unserer persönlichen Aussprache hier
in Nürnberg, konnten, bzw. durfte Sie
es ja nicht tun, obwohl eine Kollegin Frau
es doch fertig gebracht hatte.
Mein Mann befindet sich z. Zt. in Regensburg.
Er läßt Sie den besten Grüßen & erinnert
sich noch oft an die letzten Worte beim Ab-
schied, die er zu Ihnen sagte: das auch Sie
ihm helfen sollen, wenn es mal anders
geht. Schließlich hat mein Mann seine
Aufgabe gelöst als Beamter, genau so wie
Sie beide in gutem Verständnis auseinander
gegangen sind.
Voriges Jahr sprachen Sie sich in freund-
lichster Weise über meinen Mann, beglück-
wünschte mich aus.

Ich hoffe daher, meine Fühlbittte gelan-
gen zu haben & grüße Sie bestens
Frau Hildegard Grafenberger
Unterwolkersdorf 114 b. Schaad
Nürnberg 34, Bayern, Germany
Sprachschreiber
USA Zone

Unterwolkersdorf, July 7, 1947

Dear very honored Mr. Kolb!

Now I finally have found out about your address in America, I most friendly also request you write up a character deposition for my husband, Dr. Theodor Grafenberger, former criminal council. At our personal meeting in Nuremberg you could not, actually were not permitted to do it, even though the wife of a colleague was successful and managed to get one.

My husband is at this time in Regensburg. He sends you best regards. He thinks often on the farewell and remembers the last words he said to you: "in case it happened to come once differently at some time, you should help him!" Ultimately my husband did his duty as an official, the same as you. You both parted in friendly understanding.

Last year you spoke to me, and in a friendly way you spoke about my husband in spite of everything.

I therefore hope not to have done anything wrong with this request and greet you friendly,

Mrs. Hildegard Grefenberger

Unterwolkersdorf 114 near Schaad
Nuremberg 34, Bavaria, Germany
Written in German USA occupation zone

Here is one more, the first one also from the wife and than the criminal wrote himself. He is mentioned a couple of times in my story the last time mentioned at their orgy on page 138.

Mrs. Fluhrer writes:

Dear honored Mr. Kolb!

As I could not talk to you in Nuremberg any more, there is no other way than to beg you this way. As you probably know, my husband is in an internment camp since April 1945. I myself was as an evacuee in Burgbernheim at the end of the war. I brought my furniture there. At the occupation of the (American) troops my apartment in Burgbernheim was confiscated. Also with the American unit was the German Hans Leipold from Thuringia. After the American unit left, Mr. Leipold stayed back and took part of my furniture and all the civil items of my husband. Among others were the furniture which my husband bought in March 1942 from Mr. Kraemer and Mrs. Haeusinger. Lenbachstr. As I heard from my husband the sales contracts were at that time submitted by you, Mr. Kolb. I am sorry to say, but the sales contracts got lost and it is hard to prove it. I also can not exactly remember what the amount was, approximately between 500 and 700 marks. The money was paid into a locked account. Leipold accused me of having the furniture unlawfully; I am unable to prove it differently as I have nothing in my hand. As this is not the truth and you Mr. Kolb know about it, I ask you to send me certificates about it. The furniture was bought from the people mentioned above with the intention in no way to harm the sellers.

Dear honored Mr. Kolb, if it would it be possible to give further an explanation about my husband, I would be very thankful to you,

Should you have any expenses I ask you to put it on my bill.

With exquisite admiration
Betty Fluhrer
Nuremberg, Laufamholzstr.30

After my father did not even answer the letter, Mr. Gottfried Fluhrer, the supernazi, wrote himself. My father said that Fluhrer and Albert Fichtner were the worst of the Gestapo agents. They beat men as well as women and enriched themselves with stolen Jewish goods:

Regensburg, 6, 21, 1947

Dear honored Mr. Kolb!

Naturally you will be very surprised to hear from one you knew at his work in Nuremberg and receive mail from him. First of all I permit myself the question, how are you and I hope and believe that you are feeling very well. Through my wife I tried to get in contact with you, but regretfully around that time it was already too late, as you were on the voyage to America. Regretfully I was not able to find your address before the spring of 1947. When my wife got your address I instructed her to write to you at once. I have no knowledge if you received this letter. Mr. Kolb I come with a large request; a declaration about my behavior towards you. I believe I can assume not to have to open old wounds and you know the answer as to why I need such a declaration. As I don't know any of the other gentlemen better and also could not find their addresses, I am sorry that I must bother you this way. Mr. Kolb, I believe you do not have a bad memory of me and therefore I hope I can expect the above mentioned declaration from you.

But besides, I have an additional request from you. This is about a certificate which only you can give. It was at that time from me on one side realized negotiation of the selling of furniture from Mr. Kraemer and Mrs. Haeusinger, Nuremberg Lembacherstr. 4 or 6. As I remember the sales contract went through your hands as the executive director at that time. How you formulate this certificate I leave up to you. I believe Mr. Kolb I do not have to add any further words now. Until today I could not find Mr. Kraemer and Mrs. Haeusinger. I only know that Mr. Kraemer has left for the U.S.A.

As time is of the essence for me, I beg you once more to send the both declarations. It gives me a lot of headaches for reimbursement of the expenses you have. I ask you to mail it to me, there certainly will be a way found.

Mr. Kolb in great hope to hear from you very soon, I greet you and thank you very much.

With exquisite admiration

Yours

Fluhrer Gottfried.

PS. Please send the declarations to my wife, Betty Fluhrer Nuremberg –O-Laufamholzstr. 300

There is also a little newspaper clipping with the headline.

Correct Gestapo Official.

The former Gestapo man, Albert Fichtner, 37 years old Nazi party member, acted, according to him, completely correct when, during the deportation of Jews, he sometimes confiscated a suitcase for his files and at the same time bought all kinds of goods very cheap. Witnesses testified that F. was particularly feared by Jewish people. He even used the club law once in awhile against Arians during interrogations. But other witnesses thanked Fichtner for not having been sent to concentration camps. In consideration of these moments the high court Nuremberg sentenced him to 3 years labor camp, which he already served. As an activist he was served with 2000 Mark fine, possibly in compensation for items.

Grafenberger's reference to the beautiful evening in the circle of his brotherly thieves is that after each deportation, the robbing bastards had a Roman orgy with all the loot they stole from the suitcases

of the unfortunate Jews. Not only did they steal all the money, they collected the last bit of jewelry these people had but also stole any of the food they felt like, which these unfortunate people had been told to pack for the trip.

A postcard from Izbica to Mr. Louis Pimper:, dated August 1st, 42,

We are well. Thank you very much for the packages.

Paula, Hugo, Hella, Ernst

There was another very short postcard from August 15th, 42, to Mr. Louis Pimper. (Canceled 19.8.42)

We are well. Heartiest thanks for all of your packages.

Hugo, Paula, Hella, Ernst

This was the last message from Izbica.

On March 27th, 1942, the following entry was in the diary of Joseph Goebbels, the German Minister of Propaganda:

“Beginning with Lublin, the Jews are being deported from the *Generalgouvernement* to the east. Here a somewhat barbaric procedure is employed, not to be described in detail, and there is not much left of the Jews themselves. Generally speaking, it may be said that 60 per cent of them must be liquidated, while only 40 per cent can be utilized as labor. The former *Gauleiter* of Vienna (Globocnik), who is carrying out this Action, is doing so with considerable circumspection, using a procedure that is not too conspicuous... As the ghettos in the towns of the *Generalgouvernement* became vacant, they are filled with Jews deported from the *Reich*, and here, after a certain lapse of time, the process shall be repeated.” End of quote.

There were transports of 5,000 people in October from the 22nd until 30th. (Probably 5 trains filled with 1,000 people each), and another transport with 1,750 people on November 2nd, 1942 going to Sobibor. It is very possible that all the people of the transport of March 25th, 1942 were in these transports. In Sobibor the trains were stopped outside the camp and always 20 wagons were brought into the camp at one time. After everybody was on the platform, the men were separated from the women and children. The people were told they had arrived at a *Durchgangslager* (transfer station) and they would be shipped to an *Arbeitslager* (labor camp) farther east or to the Ukraine. They would now have to be disinfected against any epidemic.



The Jewish ID of Stephan Fleischmaann

They should leave their valuables with the cashier and their cloths bundled, so they could find them again. Even in some instances they were given receipts for their valuables. After they were undressed they were directed to the "shower". Men first, women and children afterwards. The women's hair was first cut. It was bundled and shipped back to the Reich where it was manufactured into felt to be used as slippers on submarines and for railroad men. When the room was filled the door was locked and the motor was started which filled the room with gas. After 20 minutes everybody was dead, and after

cleaning the room it was refilled again with the next group. From the district of Lublin between 130,000 and 140,000 people were murdered in Sobibor alone.

On June 6th, 1942 the people from Krasnycyn were transported to Sobibor and one can presume that the 23 Jews from Nuremberg were in that transport. There were no survivors of the transport to Krasnycyn.

Stephan Fleischmann, a good friend, was badly wounded as an 18 year old and lost his right leg, which was amputated above the knee. Ever since that time he wore prosthesis and was limping on a cane. One time after Jews had to wear the yellow star, he went to a drugstore to buy a special kind of tea. There were more people in the store and when his turn came, the druggist asked what he, the Jew wants during this time. It seems it was at an hour when Jews were not permitted to go shopping. Mr. Fleischmann told him and the druggist threw him out without giving him the tea.

A strange lady who was also present in the store and heard what Stephan asked for bought the tea afterwards and followed the slow walking invalid. She just handed him the tea and I believe quickly asked him for his address.

After that time the lady, who's name I do not know, went at night sometimes to the apartment where the Fleischmanns lived and brought them some food which was not on the Jewish ration card.



My job after the deportation on
March 25th, 1942

All the Jewish people up to the age of 65 years had been deported and I and an elderly man, Mr. Siegfried Regensburger who was married to a Christian wife, were the only Jews working in the bookbindery Popp. As it was impossible to have a separate Jewish department just for the two, we were now ordered to do transport work. We moved papers or finished books on bridge wagons to and from the workers. We also had to operate the freight elevator. Mr. Regensburger was a 61 year old man, and physically not able to do heavy work. All of the pulling of the heavy wagon was now on me.

In general, most of the German coworkers were not unfriendly to me, but as the following episode shows, as a Jew one could not trust any of them.

At one time I was told to carry some rolls of book binding linen, which was used for the cover of books, to the elevator, and bring them down to the basement, as they were finished using this particular color. On the way to the elevator I had to pass a group of women who were sitting alongside a conveyor belt. There was no collating machine in the factory, therefore the women had to position sheets of a magazine on the belt, and after the last one put the outside cover on, the machine stapled the magazine.

As I passed these women several times, always with one or two large rolls of linen, one of the "ladies" asked me, what I am going to do with them. It just had a large roll of maroon bookbinder linen on my shoulder and answered: "I am going to have a suit made out of it, so that one could see my Jewish star better!"

Immediately this fat German superwoman reported this fresh answer of me, the Jew, to the foreman. She said he should report this incident to the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (German labor organization). I was lucky again, as the foreman, who actually was an old Nazi party member. He had the golden party symbol on his lapel, but was fair and not unfriendly to me. He took me to a side at the end of the day, when all the German workers had left, and told me I should not make such stupid remarks. He said: "You know, I would have to report you, and you know what would happen!" I knew; probably instant arrest and deportation to a concentration camp.

But as I said before, not everybody was like that. One lady gave me orange peels after she got oranges on the German ration card, which we did not get. Also the foreman whom I described before taught me how to bind real books after all the workers had gone home. The ones we were working on were just cheap children's books.

Even the teenagers were not bad and I could not complain about any of these young apprentices. There was, for instance, a young boy whose name I also don't remember, who had only one eye. At one time we were ordered to go together with the handtruck somewhere, either to bring, or to pick up something. This was actually forbidden, but I am sure it was not general knowledge.

As we pulled the wagon through the streets of Nuremberg the German pedestrians, who were not used to seeing Jews any more, obviously stopped and gaped at us. The boy who talked to me, became annoyed at all these people and he suddenly called out to them: "Why are you looking so stupidly at us, I am Jewish too!". Actually this was the worst, most dangerous thing he could have said.

There was also a pretty young girl about 16 years old. I remember her name was Lotte. Somehow I knew she was interested in calligraphy. I sometimes wrote an alphabet in a particular font for her to take home and gave it to her when I saw her alone.

During the night of August 29, 1942 was an airraid from the RAF. We all went downstairs and staid in the entrance hall of the building. One was forced to go downstairs at the sound of the airraid warning. This was not only for the security of the people, the German government were afraid that somebody would find a leaflet which the planes threw down.

The two large doors in front and one the in the back of that hall were wide enough for a wagon to drive through, as the back of the building had been a warehouse. Above these two front doors was a half-round window at least 12 feet from side to side, through which one could see the flashes of the bomb explosions. There were very heavy explosions right nearby, usually two explosions almost simultaneously. I told my parents I was going to look out of the front door, to see if the house across the street was hit. They tried to stop me, but I already walked towards the door. As I said before, it was total darkness in the entrance hall. As I neared the door there was a tremendous crash right in front of me. I was stunned, and did not move forward any more, all I could think was that a bomb had fallen right in front of me. Actually, through the constant vibration, the half round window came loose and fell down, not even a foot away from me. Had I made this last step one fraction of a second earlier, the window would have been right on my head.

Also on August 29th, 1942; a note from the Gestapo office in Wuerzburg:

- 1.) In reference to the meeting about the deportation of 170 Jews from the area of the district commander of Wuerzburg, *Kriminalrat* (head of the Gestapo) from Nuremberg, ordered for the deportation of Jews

4 passenger wagons with 200 seats and
1 freight car

has to be at our disposal for the Ghetto packages. The train for this transport of Jews from Wuerzburg will arrive at 0:39 (probably should say 8:39) in Wuerzburg and punctually, as scheduled, leave from Wuerzburg at 11:13 for Nuremberg. The arrival in Nuremberg is scheduled for 16:04. The train will leave Nuremberg at 18:00 o'clock.

- 2.) File this under: Deportation to Theresienstadt

signed *Dr. Grafenberger*

233

Heimeinkaufvertrag H

Zwischen der
~~Jüdischen Gemeinde~~
Bezirksstelle Bayern der Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland
und
Herrn/Frau/Fräulein/die Eheleute Abraham Israel Krümer geb. 18.9.94
Martha Sara Krümer " 30.3.00
gesetzlich vertreten durch

wird folgender Heimeinkaufvertrag geschlossen.

1.
a) Herr/Frau/Fräulein/Die Eheleute **Krümer**
erkennt/erkennen folgendes an:
Die Jüdischen Alters- und Siedenheime haben eine große Zahl von Insassen, deren Unterhalt ganz oder teilweise aus jüdischen Wohlfahrtsmitteln bestritten wird. Es liegt im Zuge der Entwicklung, daß ihr Anteil an der Gesamtzahl der Heimeinsassen steigt. Um zu ermöglichen, daß auch künftig Minderbemittelte und Hilfsbedürftige in den Heimen verbleiben bzw. in sie aufgenommen werden können, ist es Pflicht aller derjenigen Heimeinsassen, die noch über hinreichende Mittel verfügen, durch ihre Pflegegelder nicht nur die Kosten ihres eigenen Heimaufenthalts zu decken, sondern darüber hinaus zu dem Unterhalt ihrer bedürftigen Mitinsassen beizutragen.

b) Herr/Frau/Fräulein/Die Eheleute **Krümer**
kauft/kaufen sich vom 1.9.42 ab in das Heim d.R.V.d.J.I.D. mit einem Betrag von 38 000,- RM (in Worten achtunddreißigtausend - RM) ein.

2.
a) Der Einkaufsbetrag wird wie folgt bezahlt:
sofort durch Überweisung v. RM. 28000,- Effekten durch DrednerB
Barüberweisung v. 10000,- nach Eintreffen des Rück-
kaufpreises der Lebensversicherung abz. des Kriegszuschlages
b) Der Einkaufsbetrag wird aus eigenen Mitteln gezahlt.
Der Einkaufsbetrag wird von dritter Seite, nämlich von Herrn/Frau/Fräulein
gezahlt. Durch Mitunterzeichnung dieses Vertrags erkennt Herr/Frau/Fräulein
seine Bestimmungen, insbesondere auch Ziffer 7, als verbindlich an.

3.
In das Heim können nur Gegenstände nach Maßgabe behördlicher Weisung eingebracht werden.

4.
a) Die Reichsvereinigung verpflichtet sich, dem/den Insassen auf Lebenszeit Heimunterkunft und Verpflegung zu gewähren, die Wäsche waschen zu lassen, ihn/sie erforderlichenfalls ärztlich und mit Arzneimitteln zu betreuen und für notwendigen Krankenhausaufenthalt zu sorgen.
b) Die Reichsvereinigung behält sich das Recht der Unterbringung in einem anderen Heim bzw. in einer sonstigen Gemeinschaftswohnung auch außerhalb des Altreichs vor.
c) Aus einer Veränderung der gegenwärtigen Unterbringungsform kann der Insasse/können die Insassen keine Ansprüche herleiten.

5.
Bei Eintritt einer körperlichen oder geistigen Erkrankung des/der Insassen sowie eines sonstigen Zustandes, der das dauernde Verbleiben in dem Heim ausschließt und seine/ihre Unterbringung in einem Sieden- oder Sonderheim oder in einer Pflegestelle geboten erscheinen läßt, ist die Reichsvereinigung berechtigt, die entsprechende Maßnahme zu treffen.

6.
Die Reichsvereinigung ist berechtigt, den Einkaufsvertrag aus wichtigen Gründen zu kündigen. Als solche gelten insbesondere:
a) wiederholter grober Verstoß gegen die Hausordnung trotz schriftlicher Abmahnung.
b) eine Weigerung des/der Insassen, sich der Bestimmung des Aufenthalts in einem anderen Heim der Reichsvereinigung zu fügen.

7.
a) Der Einkaufsbetrag geht mit der Leistung in das Eigentum der Reichsvereinigung über.
b) Ein Rechtsanspruch auf Rückzahlung dieses Betrages besteht, auch beim Tode des Insassen oder bei Aufhebung des Vertrages aus sonstigen Gründen, nicht.

8.
Die Urkundensteuer dieses Vertrags trägt/tragen Herr/Frau/Fräulein/die Eheleute

Nürnberg den 1. September 1942

W. Grafenberger
Dr. Anna Sara Krümer

September 10th, 1942, all the Jewish people who were still living in Nuremberg, and these were mostly old people over 65 and a handful of World War I invalids, were now being deported to Theresienstadt. Again, everybody who was not marked for deportation helped the unfortunate ones to pack and to get ready. This time it was even more pathetic than the previous times. Many of the very old did not understand what was happening. This did not affect the officers who frisked through their meager belongings. Should they find even the smallest piece of chocolate in their luggage, with German brutal

efficiency they took it and put it either into a box or directly into their mouths. They were convinced that what they were doing was proof of their patriotic vigor. Should they find money or even a piece of jewelry they cruelly would hit the owner in the face, no matter if the person was an old woman or man of 90. This was Germanic culture. Photos or prayer books were just ruthlessly thrown on a pile. As the worst mockery, every one of these people was forced to sign a so called "contract" for an old people's home in Theresienstadt. Every Pfennig of their account had to be paid in. Earlier they were told that what was not included, would be confiscated anyway. In this way, from about 265 people from Nuremberg alone, 6.000.000 Marks were transferred to a special account for Theresienstadt to the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland* (The top organization of all Jews in Germany). Eight months later, the organization was dissolved and all the money confiscated by the Nazi government. Not one Pfennig was used for the welfare of the Jews.

Each one of the deportees had to sign the above purchasing contract. Most of them were old people and also a couple of wounded from World War I like Mr. Stefan Fleischmann and Mr. Adolf Kraemer. Both of these men lost a leg during the war. Mr. Adolf Kraemer was forced to change his first name to Abraham. He was at that time not quite 48 years old and his wife Mrs. Martha Kraemer was 42 years old when they were forced to sign the purchasing contract to an old-people's home in Theresienstadt.

Purchasing Contract to a Home H

Between the Organization of the Jews in Germany
District office Bavaria
and
the married couple of Abraham Israel Kraemer born 9, 28, 94
Martha Sara Kraemer born 3, 30, 00
Legally represented by:

The following purchase contract was agreed on:

1.

a) Mr. and Mrs. Kraemer

accept the following:

The Jewish old age and home of the infirm people has a large number of inhabitants whose maintenance is paid for by Jewish welfare, fully or partially. Therefore it was decided that the share paid by the inhabitants of the home would increase, for the purpose of allowing future poorer people and people who need help to be absorbed and be able to stay in the homes. Therefore it is the duty of these inhabitants of the home who still have sufficient means to provide not only the money for their own care and costs during the length of their stay in the home, but even more for the maintenance of their poorer co-inhabitants

b) Mr. and Mrs. Kraemer

buy themselves into the home of the R.V.d.J.i.D. (Organization of the Jews of Germany) with an amount of 38,000 RM (in words thirty eight thousand Reichsmark)

2.

a) the purchasing contract will be paid:

at once through transfer of RM 28,000 by securities at the Dresdner Bank

through cash transfer of 10,000 after the arrival of the back-buying value of the life insurance less the war surcharge.

3.

Objects can be brought into the home only by approval of the authority

4.

a) The Reichsvereinigung promises to give to the inhabitants lodging and board for life. To have the laundry washed and to provide them with necessary medicaments and if necessary to provide hospitalization.

b) The Reichsvereinigung has the privilege to arrange a new home for you in another home, in a communion apartment even outside Germany.

c) Because of changes in the lodging the inhabitant can't complain.

5.

If a physical or mental sickness of the inhabitant occur or the condition of a continuation in the home becomes impossible and his condition be such that he should be transferred to a hospital or special home or nursing home, the Reichsvereinigung has the right to make the particular arrangement.

6.

The Reichsvereinigung has the right to terminate the purchasing contact for important reason, such as:

- a) repeated gross violations of the house order after written warnings
- b) the refuse of an inmate to yield to the orders of the domicile in another home of the Reichsvereinigung.

7.

- a) The purchasing amount becomes the property of the Reichsvereinigung with the payment.
- b) The legal claim for re-imbursement of the amount does not exist, even after death of the inmate or by termination of the contract, or other reason.

8.

The documentary tax of this contract is paid by

Nuremberg, September 1, 1942

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Wilhelm Brandt', is written over a horizontal line.

At that deportation the Gestapo had a new trick up their sleeve. One day before the transport left, a special permission was given to the banks that everyone of the deportees could draw an extra monthly free amount of their money from the bank. This meant they could get between 150.00 and 250.00 Marks each. The people were very happy, as they were told that they were permitted to take this amount along.

On the day of the deportation a lot of Gestapo officers led by Gestapo agent Kainz, came to the three deportation centers for a final luggage search. At that time, besides confiscating whatever they felt like, they took all the money which they now knew the people had with them. The amount just

disappeared and it was never registered any place. It was between 75,000.00 and 100,000.00 Reichsmark that these thieves stole as booty.

There were three deportation places assigned in Nuremberg. One was in our building, as the apartments were empty since March when the people living there were taken. The old people not living in the old people's home had to bring their belongings to these assigned places. I even believe that the night before they were picked up and then had to sleep there on the bare floor. As in all the other deportations, the people were transported in furniture moving vans.

My mother helped the old people get into the van. Fichtner, one of the worst Gestapo men, said to my mother who just was in one of the vans: "Mrs. Kolb get out of the truck or you will be taken along too!"

My mother answered: "What is the difference, a couple of weeks earlier or later."

Fichtner answering: "The Kolb we shoot here and have him stuffed!"

Like in any of the previous deportations, the Teutonic heroes had an orgy with all the conquered booty of whisky and wine that they cold bloodedly looted from the Jews. Beside the already named Gestapo officers Fichtner and Fluhrer, there were the officers Klenk, Boehm, Johann Mayer and others celebrating. The cleaning women from the police headquarters, who had to do the bodily search on the old Jewish women, were also invited to the feast. These women too, did not want to stand back in the robbing campaign of the Nazi males. They also helped themselves to the property of the unfortunate Jewish women. Another glorious chapter in the history of German chivalry.

On October 5th October 1942, the last Jews who lived in Nuremberg where forced to move to Julienstrasse 2 in Fuerth. Two of them, Hedwig and Benno Gutmann, were our last relatives and lived in Nuremberg since 1938 when the Nazi mob chased all the Jews out of Leutershausen; Mr. and Mrs. Muehlhauser and their daughter Fraenzi and one or two others. The four of us and Mrs. Neuberger and her son Julius were now the only six Jews living in Nuremberg. The Germans happily announced: "*Nuernberg ist judenrein!*"

On Tuesday, October 20th, 1942, Erna and Julius Neuberger got married in a room of the former Jewish school in the *Kanal Strasse*, which was then the office of the congregation and the synagogue of the few Jewish people. Besides those mentioned, there were only mixed marriage Jews left in Nuremberg. The day before, Erna and Julius went to the *Standesamt* (the marriage office of the city. This was the last Jewish wedding in Nuremberg. Erna was only 19 years old and needed permission from her parents to get married. It was not much of a



wedding feast, Jews did not get most of the groceries on their ration card. The young couple moved, together with the mother of Julius, into the apartment next to us in Knauerstrasse 27. (I don't remember why Julius and his mother were not deported before.)

Even though Jews were forbidden to have radios and were not allowed to have newspapers we sometimes got papers. Anny Petschenik, the child of a mixed marriage, drove on her bicycle to bring papers to us and gave us some news. This way we heard that a German army was encircled in Stalingrad. The Nazis never admitted it, but through people who listened to forbidden English radio stations we heard that 250,000 German soldiers had capitulated to the Russians at Stalingrad. Our hopes were high that the war would be over soon. I remember the poster the Germans had pasted all over town that proclaimed: "One day, the swastika flag will be flying over Stalingrad!"

On January 1943, an anonymous letter to the Gestapo was read to my father accusing him of having forbidden correspondence with inmates in concentration camps, illicit transfer of money and objects of art to foreign countries, steady contact in Aryan apartments, sabotage of control of food items and lots more. A week later the same anonymous letter writer wrote again with more and worse accusations. The Gestapo did not do anything, because they knew that it was not true. A short time later a letter arrived from the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (The office which Eichmann headed) from Berlin with the same accusation. In addition it had the remark that the Gestapo Nuremberg was working together with the scoundrel Kolb. Now the Gestapo had to vindicate itself and find out about the letter writer. It was a Jewish woman converted to Christianity, who, after she was deported, died in a concentration camp. (I believe it was Henriette Bauer who was deported together with us to Theresienstadt and from there, in May 1944, to Auschwitz; she did not survive.)

In Nuremberg on February 1943, for the first time high school students born in 1926 and 1927 were recruited to be helpers for the German air force. The tremendous losses the Germans had on the Russian front might have been the reason. The so called *Luftwaffenhelfer* did not have to wait long to play war. There was another air raid of British planes during the night of February 25th, to 26th, 1943 but the damage was not as severe as from the raid of the previous August. This time the planes mainly bombed the northern part of the city.

As for Jews it was forbidden to be in the same airraid shelter as the Germans my parents, Julius and his mother went downstairs into the entrance hall of the building which was supposed to be the place for Jews. I staid upstairs in bed like I usually did id during the many airraids in Berlin. Also because my sister staid as she had pains in the lower abdomen.

Like usual I slept threw the bombardment until my mother came up and woke me. She said you have to come down, everywhere is already fire. I said I will stay, because Erna can not walk down. Both of you can not stay up here, my mother said. I believe Erna as well as I was at least partly dressed. I got up, went over to the next apartment were Erna was in bed. I pickd her carefully up, put her over my shoulder and walked downstairs.

During the night of March 8th to 9th, 1943, 335 British bombers raided the city again. The attack was the strongest on Nuremberg until that date. Besides high explosives the planes dropped thousands of incendiary bombs. Erna was in the hospital in Fuerth where she had been operated on for appendicitis the previous day. During the raid, Julius and I went up to the attic to check if any of the incendiary bombs had started a fire. If one notices it early enough, one could throw the bomb out of a window and could save the house. Not one of the German inhabitants, not even the air raid warden of

the house, who were huddled in the air raid shelter were brave enough to stick his head out of the shelter before the all clear signal. The attic was undamaged when we came up. We went to one of the small windows and gloated over the sight of fire in all directions.

My father was the only Jew who still had a telephone, as the Gestapo wanted to be able to reach him day or night. After the raid one could not get through to the Jewish hospital in Fuerth where Erna was, and this was our only concern.

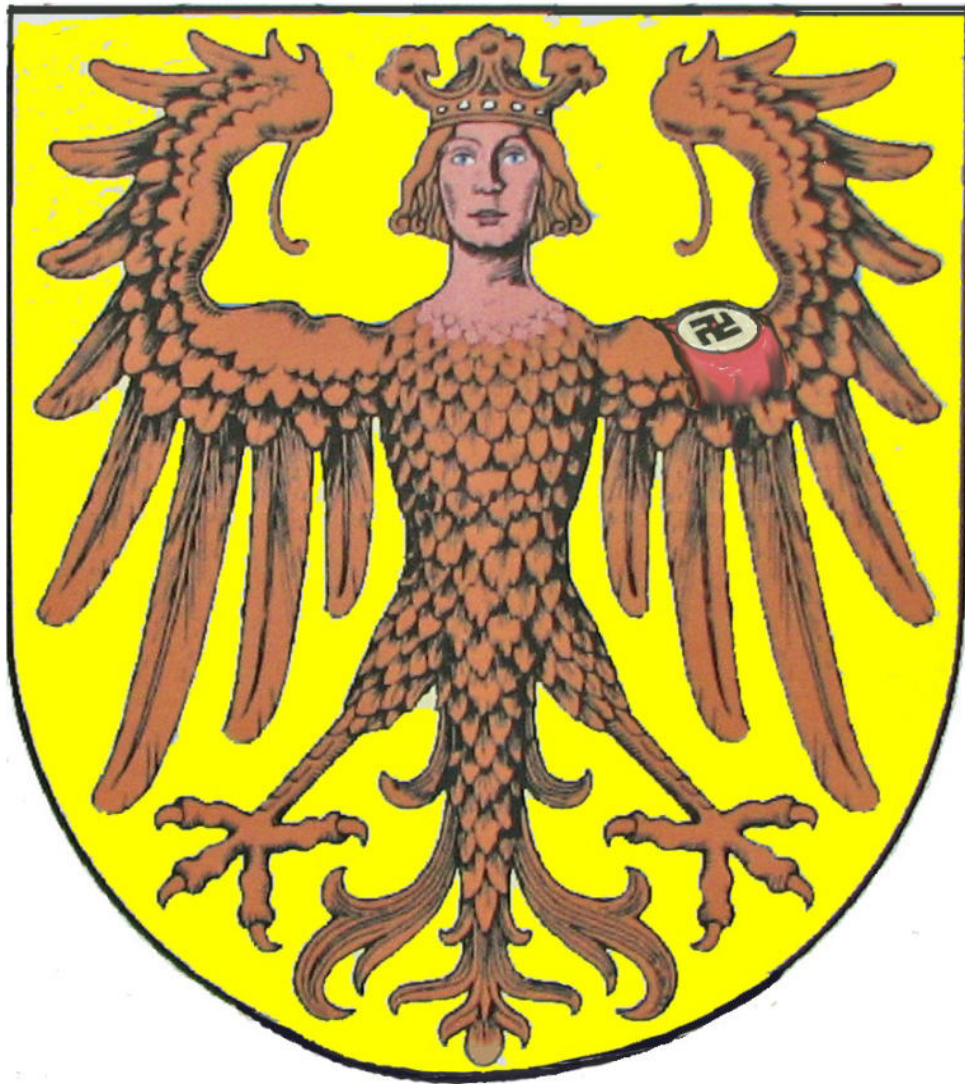
After the air raid the Nazis claimed former Jews from Nuremberg pointed out the best targets to the raiding allied planes. With unbelievable insolence they even mentioned the names of the particular Jewish emigrants who did it. Also they proclaimed that the Jews had given secret messages on the tombstones in Hebrew letters.

This was an excuse for the German mob to damage the tombstones in the cemeteries. A couple of years earlier some of the Jewish people, including my parents and all our relatives, had the tombstones of their deceased parents laid down, so that they could not be thrown over.

June 10th, 1943, it was the second day of Shavuot, two Gestapo agents came to our make shift synagogue in the second floor office of the former school building in Kanalstrasse 25. It was just during the Mussaf service. They asked my father out into the hall, and told him that the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland* (The organization of all Jewish congregations in Germany) was dissolved, that all the money of all the congregations was confiscated, and all the presidents and business agents of the congregations were under arrest. My father had to make a list for the inventory, therefore his jailing was only a house arrest for the 10th and 11th of June.

This was the conclusion of our life in Nuremberg and also the end of Jewish life in this city. We were deported on June 17, 1943 and from this day on everything changed.

Now Nuremberg is free of Jews.
(Nürnberg ist judenrein)



Thursday, June 10th, 1943, was the second day of Shavuot; we went to the synagogue which was on the second floor, just in the office room of my father, in Kanalstrasse 25, where the Jewish elementary school used to be. The congregation office was now there. Since 1941 schools had been forbidden for Jewish children.

I don't remember, but I as well as Erna and Julius and some of the men there might have gotten the day off. I worked as a labor slave in the bookbinding factory Popp and Erna and Julius worked in the fountain pen repair factory of Putz, also receiving only the very low wages of unskilled workers. There was a Jewish department as there had been at Popp, before the deportations. There were more half-Jews or mix-married people still working there and Julius was the foreman.

Not too many people were there during the service, I don't believe there was a minyan. Some of the Jewish partners of a mixed marriage like Mr. Paul Baruch, who also worked at Putz and Mr. Adolf Hamburger, were present.

The torah reading was just finished and the Mussaf just started, when suddenly a very loud knocking on the door startled everyone in the room. Two Gestapo agents came into the room. Everything stopped and all the eyes were turned to the door where the two men in trench coat were standing. Everyone knew they were Gestapo agents.

They asked my father out into the hall. In the room was complete silence. People just made motions to each other, but not a word was spoken.

The officers now told my father that the *Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland* (The organization of all Jewish congregations in Germany) was dissolved, that all the money of all the congregations was confiscated, and all the presidents and business agents of the congregations were under arrest and had to be jailed.

But they told my father he now had to make a complete inventory of the finances of the Jewish Congregation and they would not take him to jail at this time, but was only at house arrest.

On June 10th and 11th, my father was at home with some of the business books and writing up numbers.

On Sunday, June 12th : during the early afternoon the bell rang and my father went to the door. The same two Gestapo agents came back and they did not wait to be invited but just came into the apartment. My father opened the living room door for them but came ahead of them into the room, where two non-Jewish women, Mrs. Hamburger and Ms. Turn were sitting. With one hand behind his back he gave them a signal to disappear into the adjoining room, my parent's bedroom. They understood and closed the door behind them.

My mother and I stayed in the living room and one of the two officers announced that they had a strict order from the *Reichsicherheitshauptamt* (The headquarters of the Nazi hierarchy, responsible for the Jews) that everybody in the capacity of business executive, had to be arrested and they will take him to the jail.

They told my father he can pack a small suitcase with things he would need at the jail. My mother now brought a toothbrush, washcloth, towel, soap and his slippers. While my father was packing these items he asked the officers who did not leave the room, if it is permitted that I, his son, carry the suitcase for him.

They permitted it and the four of us left.

As the officers had to deliver him to the jail, I walked with my father about 50 steps ahead of them to the jail in Baerenschanzstrasse. There I was told that it was permissible to bring food from home to him. I don't remember if I was given a specific time to bring it.

In jail my father found the president of the Jewish congregation of Fuerth, Mr. Frueh, who already was there.

Monday June 13th, 1943; I brought warm food to my father in a large thermos bottle and left it at the guard's room. I was told to wait for the thermos and in the meantime if I want I could buy a bottle of beer, which they will send down to the prison. I bought two bottles although I did not know that Mr. Frueh was jailed together with my father.

June 14th; like the day before, I brought the food in a briefcase to the jail. I was again permitted to buy two bottles of beer in a nearby inn for the prisoner. Just like before, everything had to be deposited with the guards.

The name of the prisoner was written on a label which was tied to the briefcase. The guards had to search everything, so that nothing would be smuggled into the jail. I was again told to wait and take the thermos back after my father had finished.

The two men in jail had been notified that by June 17th, every Jew who was still in Germany would be deported. Nobody on the outside knew about it yet.

Since there was nothing that could be smuggled out of the jail, the guards gave me briefcase back without searching it again. My father had written on the back of the attached label, which just had his name on: "Get ready, pack, we get deported on the 17th."

Tuesday the 15th, I told the foreman in the bookbindery Popp, that I will not come any more as we would be deported. I am sure I was not paid any more, but this did not matter, as it was very little and we were not permitted to take any money with us. I had just made a chessboard for myself. With the permission of the foreman I had pressed The veneer in one of the bookbinder presses, as I had no clamps at home. The only real Nazi in the place, Mr. Lange, got hold of the board after he heard that I was getting deported. It never took these Nazis long to steal something. I don't remember, but the foreman probably told me about it and I managed to tell him that he should take the chessboard for himself.



At home everybody got busy with packing the most imperative items like clothes and underwear and as much food as possible, whatever we had that would not spoil in the summer heat. One still believed the Germans who announced that the Jews would just be resettled somewhere in the east, and whatever one took along, one could keep. One knew from previous announcements that it was forbidden to take any money or jewelry, gold or silver items were anyway impossible, as the government had already taken all these items from the Jews. The only jewelry that a person still had was, as in the earlier transports, the wedding ring and one set of silver flatware. Anybody who still had forbidden items hidden, had to get rid of it very quickly, giving it to trust worthy Germans for safe keeping. My mother probably gave some of the items to Mrs. Stroessenreuther who was a completely trustworthy lady. She for many years came on Fridays to help my mother with cleaning, baking and cooking. It is also possible that my parents gave items like my grandfather's beer mug and Erna's dowry, the linens etc. with her initials on it, to the lady. It was impossible for the couple of well meaning Germans to come to the apartment, as we were the only Jewish family in Nuremberg at that time, and it was quite easy for the Gestapo to watch over the house. Besides the German neighbors were very willing to denounce anybody.

The same had to be done with money. One had to be sure not to give all the money away, as the Gestapo would have been suspicious. That night we worked until 3:00 a.m. Erna, Julius and his mother were packing just as well.

June 16th, 1943; the imprisoned men were released and my father could now help with the packing. The deportation order which was delivered listed in detail everything that was not permitted to be taken along. We all had seen this before from the people who were deported previously. The orders included that the apartment had to be swept clean and the key given to the Gestapo officer who came to pick us up.

Friday morning June 17; at 8:30 in the morning the same two officers came and led us six people to the street, where a large furniture moving truck was parked. The German supermen did not help the elderly lady, Julius's mother, to carry anything downstairs.

Everybody had to carry his own trunk and backpack down the stairs and then climb into the hold of the large truck. Besides the Kolbs and the Neuberger, there were two more people being deported from Nuremberg; partners of mixed marriages where the Aryan partner had died. They also had to be picked up with the trucks. Obviously one could not see where the truck brought us, as this was just a windowless furniture truck.

They drove us to the former Jewish orphanage in Fuerth. All of the Fuerther Jews were already assembled there. At least half of these people were formerly from Nuremberg, but almost a year before were forced to move to Fuerth so that Nuremberg was made *Judenfrei*, (clean of Jews).

All the people, we were 30. were now assembled in the *Blumenstrasse* in Fuerth. As on all the deportations the Gestapo officers searched each one of the suitcases and backpacks and again took out whatever they considered to be contraband, or as usual, what they could use themselves. They did not find any money, as everybody knew that not only was it forbidden to take money along, but the German hyenas would pocket it. Everybody was called by name and was given a sheet of paper which one was forced to sign. With German bureaucracy everything had to be done the German legal way. It read as follows:

Geheime Staatspolizei
Staatspolizeistelle
Nürnberg - Fürth.

Nürnberg, 17.6. 1943

Bv. Nr. 1513

Abschrift!

Verfügung

Auf Grund des § 1 des Gesetzes über die Einziehung kommunistischen Vermögens vom 26. Mai 1933 - RGBI. I S. 293 - in Verbindung mit dem Gesetz über die Einziehung selbst- und fremdeinbildenden Vermögens vom 14. Juli 1933 - RGBI. I S. 479 -, der Verordnung über die Einziehung selbst- und fremdeinbildenden Vermögens im ersten Abschnitt vom 18.11.1938 - RGBI. I S. 1620 -, der Verordnung über die Einziehung selbst- und fremdeinbildenden Vermögens in den schutzberechtigten Gebieten vom 12.5.1939 - RGBI. I S. 911 - und der Verordnung über die Einziehung von Vermögen im Deutschen Reich vom 4. Oktober 1939 - RGBI. I S. 1998 - wird in Verbindung mit dem Gesetz des Führers und Reichskanzlers über die Durchführung des eingezogenen Vermögens von Volkseigenen vom 28. Mai 1941 - RGBI. I S. 323 -

das gesamte Vermögen des - HEZ. Kolb, Herbert, Innesl.

geboren am 27.2.22
in Nürnberg,
jetzt wohnhaft in Nürnberg,
Kraus- straße 27

gegenstands des Deutschen Reiches eingezogen.

Im Auftrage
des. Dr. Kuderndorf

Gestapo, State Police Office
Staatspolizeistelle
Nuernberg - Fuerth

Nuremberg, 6, 17. 1943

Ev. Nr. 1513

Decree

Paragraph 1 of the law about the confiscation of communist capital from May 26, 1933 -RGBI. I page 293- in connection with the law about the confiscation of capital of anti-social and subversive public enemies, from July 14, 1933 - RGBI. I page 479 - the decree about confiscation of the capital and assets of anti-social and subversive public enemies in the country of Austria from 11.18.1938 - RGBI. I page 1620 -, the decree about confiscation of the capital and assets of anti-social and subversive public enemies of the Sudeten-German district from 5.12.1939 RGBI. I page 911- and the decree about confiscation of the capital and assets in Bohemia and Moravia from October 4, 1939 - RGBI. I page 1998 - joining the edict of the Fuehrer and Chancellor of the Reich about utilization of the confiscated assets of enemies of the Reich from May 29, 1941 - RGBI. I page 303 -

This is a copy which was filed in the police presidium of the decree we had to sign

all the assets of the.....*K o l b Israel Herbert*
néé.....born on.....2.27.22
in..... *Nuremberg*,.....
residence.....*Nuremberg*.....
last residence.....*Knauer Strasse No. 27*.....
are confiscated in favor of the German Reich.
By order of Dr. Rudersdorf

They did not leave one enough time to read everything, but one could make out that everything was confiscated by the Reich, because of the communist affiliation and hostility to the state of the undersigned. It had several numbers of the particular laws. Even the one for Austria and Czechoslovakia. It did not matter whether the signer was a child, who had no capital what so ever, or a decorated veteran of World War I: *German might, is German's right*.

A little incident happened, too, when the name of Dr. Daniel and his nurse, Sister Ester, were called and they were not there. They had sent their suitcases to the address of *Blumenstrasse*, but both of these people had disappeared. The Gestapo sent officers to their apartments, but they were gone. The officers opened the suitcases but there was nothing in them but medical books.

At 2:19 p.m. the train from Wuerzburg arrived in Nuremberg - Fuerth, with 7 Jewish deportees on board. They were guarded by one Gestapo officer who delivered his prisoners to the Gestapo officer of Nuremberg. At 8:00 p.m., in the evening, first the suitcases and backpacks were driven to the train, and afterwards everybody was transported again in furniture vans to a railroad siding, where the railroad cars were standing in wait.

There the people were separated into two groups and had to board separate railroad cars. At that point the three cars were still standing next to each other. Our family was ordered in one of the cars, where the 7 people from Wuerzburg already were. Now with the 14 Jews from Nuremberg, and 15 from Fuerth, we were 36 in the car. In the other two cars were the rest of the people. Nobody knew to where the particular cars would be shipped. My father was told by the Gestapo that he and his family were being transported to Theresienstadt, but everybody knew how much one could trust statements from the Germans and the Gestapo in particular. The other wagon had 15 people from Fuerth and maybe some from Wuerzburg. Both of these wagons were now moved to the main railroad station in Nuremberg, and left there under guard until the next morning.

I don't remember how well we slept on the hard benches of the 3rd class passenger cars, but I believed after the stressful, dramatic experience of the past days, we did sleep.

June 18th; at 7:00 in the morning, our wagon was attached to the regular train to Eger. Three Gestapo men were guarding us. These were, KS. (criminal secretary) Klenk, Kom. (commissar) Meier and KS. Keil. In Marktredwitz there was a half hour delay. In Eger our wagon was switched to another train going towards Prague. We past Karlsbad, Komotan, Teplitz-Schoenau, Aussig, and Lobowitz and our wagon was unhitched in the railroad station of Bauschowitz.

After a short wait we were hooked up to a little engine which pulled us to Theresienstadt. Later on we found out that the railroad link Bauschowitz - Theresienstadt was finished a very short time before by Jewish labor slaves from Theresienstadt. We might have been the first ones

who did not have to walk from Bauschowitz to Theresienstadt. The old people who were deported on September 1942 had to hike the 2 kilometer. They had to carry their hand packages, which many of them already lost at that time. Their suitcases had to be left in the wagons and were supposed to be brought afterwards. Most of the people never got them and they were stolen by the Nazis. They ended up in the Kleiderkammer a warehouse where the Germans kept their loot. I will talk about this later on.

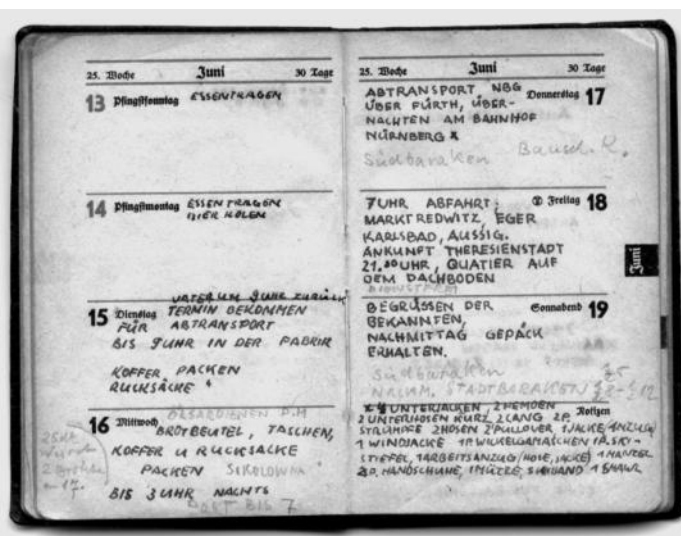
In Bauschowitz, the transport was taken over by the camp commander, Dr. Siegfried Seidl, a hand-picked Austrian Nazi, from the top echelon, who probably got his commission and Dr. title for cruelty and perversity. The train arrived in Theresienstadt, around 9:30 p.m. In Theresienstadt there is no railroad station and the train was just pulled between the city houses. We could not see anything, as it was night and besides black out.

One of the SS scoundrels, it might have been Seidl, screamed: "Nobody gets out of the train until you are told to do so!"

After a while we were ordered to get out. All the suitcases and handbags. had to be left on the train. We were marched to one of the old fortress's underground fortifications, the so called *Jaegerkaserne*. This barrack was the *Schleuse*. A *Schleuse* or sluice is actually the lock in a canal. Ships go in on one side, and after the water is raised or lowered, they go out on the opposite side. In the case of the Jaeger barrack, one had to enter on one side. Inside, everything was searched and the guards again took everything that was contraband there, or again whatever they wanted to steal. On the other side one went out, relieved of some of one's goods. The word *schleusen*, sluice gating, an adjective, became a word in Theresienstadter jargon and meant pilfering, but had a different meaning than stealing itself. Stealing from another prisoner was considered a crime, while stealing, *schleusen*, from the Germans was an honorable deed.

Everybody was warned by the SS men, that one had better hand over any jewelry, money or smoking material voluntarily, because if one is caught with these articles the punishment would be severe. One had to hand over the keys for the suitcases.

Everything in the handbags was again thoroughly searched and thrown on a pile. Soap, candles, flashlights, etc. were taken away. My father's pocket knife was taken by one of the crooks. After that was a body search. I wore 4 undershirts, 2 shirts, 2 short underpants, 2 long underpants, 2 pair of socks, 2 slacks, 2 sweaters, 1 suit jacket, 1 wind jacket, 1 pair of work pants with a work jacket, 1 overcoat, 1 pair of puttees, 1 cap, 1 ski band, 1 scarf, 2 pair of gloves and pair of ski boots. Even though this was middle of June, one thought that at least what one carries on the body would be safe. Nobody really knew the German mentality. Even the Czechoslovakian policeman, who was under the control of the SS guards and watched me undress, was surprised and called out: "Seven shirts!" When they searched Hedwig



Neuberger the mother-in-law of Erna, who was 65 years old, they tore off the heels of her shoes to see if she did not have diamonds hidden in them. Then everybody was searched for lice and at that time we all were vaccinated for different diseases.

I had taken along a little pocket calendar which I used as a diary. Everything in there for 1943 is written with ink and as I did not have another for 1944, I wrote everything on the same page on the date of the former year with a pencil.

As there was not enough room, I just wrote one or two words for what ever happened. Most of it I could remember and it is the basis for the descriptions in this memoir.

Shortly afterwards we got some warm potato soup, the first warm food since we left home. On the train we only ate bread which we brought along. Everybody was now registered, and again and again registered, and many more times. Not only the name and age, but what profession, schooling one had and any sickness one ever had, etc. Finally at 11:30 p.m. we were led by some young people to the outside, into the pitch black night. These guides were also prisoners, who were to bring us to our designated living quarters.

We now were inhabitants of Theresienstadt. As we found out sometime later, Theresienstadt was built during the time of Emperor Josef II of Austria. He named it after his mother Maria Theresa, who was responsible for the expulsion of Jews from Prague, in 1744. The cornerstone of Theresienstadt was laid on October 10th, 1780.

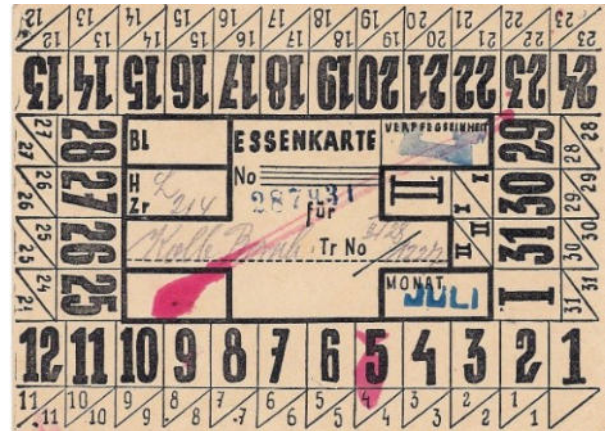
As we walked through the dark street, one only could see that there were houses on both sides and there were no lights in these buildings anywhere. We were not permitted to take our luggage along, it had to be searched first, only our handbags. Walking with our guides in these dark streets, we were not sure who these young people really were, and, being new in that surrounding, we did not trust them. Nobody else was on the street, and we could not understand why these guides could walk around.

After walking for about 5 minutes, we came to what seemed to be a two-story house and were led up to the attic. There, we were told we would stay for the night. This attic, we later found out, was in house number Q 308. It was about 24 feet from eave to eave and probably less than 40 feet long. Part of it was the staircase. It had three 25 watt light bulbs and there were no windows besides a couple of little attic windows about 10 inches by 16 inches. There was no glass in these windows. A couple of so called "mattresses", the outside made out of paper and filled with excelsior were lying on the brick floor. On these we were told we could sleep, and in the morning we might find some more mattresses. We divided the space and the mattresses, between the newcomers who came with us. The sick people were taken to some infirmary, some of them to rooms downstairs in the same house. After the disturbing experiences of the last couple of days, and the previous sleepless night, it was not surprising that everybody slept, even though not very comfortably.

The next morning, June 19th, everybody had to go to the kitchen in the Hanover barrack for coffee. We did not have our ration cards yet, but the coffee was given to us even without them. It was not coffee at all, but a liquid made with "Savarka" a dark brown chicory. No sugar or milk. The coffee was not very warm and by the time one got to the attic it was cold. It just tasted bitter. One got so little, even a small container would not have been filled up with what

we got for six people. After “breakfast”, all of us newcomers were busy, trying to make our quarters a little more livable. We managed to find a couple of old mattresses.

During the morning our eating cards for a particular kitchen were delivered. These cards had the name of the owner as well as an emblem of the kitchen where we had to go. The numbers from 1 to 31, for the day and the month was printed on it. Each number appeared three times, once in large for lunch and twice in a small triangle for breakfast and supper. When one got the food somebody there cut off the specific number.



That day for lunch one got something that was called pea soup, made from powdered peas, and was just salt and water. No taste of peas at all. Besides everybody got one potato with some kind of a sauce. It was good tasting but much too little

In the afternoon, the suitcases and backpacks were brought to the house by messengers whose job this was. Later on, manly old people, Jews formerly from Nuernberg, came to visit us. These were the people who were deported to Theresienstadt on September 10th, 1942. Every one of them expected that we brought food along for them. This was impossible, as we did not get much more in Nuernberg then they got in Theresienstadt. But that they already had forgotten.

They also wanted to know how the war had progressed and if the war would be finished soon. We told them that the last we heard was that the Allies ,shortly before our deportation, had landed on the Pantelleria Island which is about half way between Africa and Sicily. What we did not know was that the Italian or Germans there, had already surrendered on June 11th ,but they knew it much better.

Even though they were already half a year in Theresienstadt, did not get any newspaper or hear any radio, they knew that the Allies had landed on the Italian mainland and were already half way up to Rome, or, even better, Italy was already half conquered by the allied forces. This kind of news was called a *bonke*. (Not really a lie, but certainly not true, just wishful thinking.) This optimistic attitude was the one reason that everybody’s hopes kept high.

The night of June 19th – 20th; Julius and I got the orders to report the following morning at 7:15 a.m., in the Hanover barracks to a so called *Hundertschaft* (a unit of unprofessional workers). There, we were recruited for carrying big bags of potatoes to the kitchen. This was a very smart move by the interior Jewish administration. We newcomers, who had just arrived were not as hungry as the older inmates, and besides, we had not yet learned to steal. Potatoes were a very important food, and worth their weight in gold.

Of the 533 older men and women previously deported from Nuernberg, only 160 were still alive, or at least in Theresienstadt. Seventy of them, mostly very old ones, were shipped to Auschwitz two weeks after their arrival in Theresienstadt. The irony of it is that the Gestapo, with typical German bureaucracy that everything had to be documented, made everyone sign a documents at the time of their deportation to Theresienstadt, that they voluntarily bought

themselves into an old people's home. Should the person have had even more money in the bank than was demanded, then the rest was confiscated by the government for the so called purpose, to provide for people who could not pay their amount. To deceive the world about their inhuman policies the Germans used any kind of lie, and the world believed it. Even their thefts and murders were masked by official documentation.

A lot of the men had already died of diarrhea, dysentery, typhus, other diseases, but most of them, of starvation. We now got a couple of boards about 12 to 14 inches wide and about 5 ½ feet long which somebody brought up to the attic. These were put on the floor and with the mattresses on top, became our beds for sleeping. As there were not enough mattresses to go around for everybody, only the old people got them. We had brought a couple of tools, nails and hooks and used them for hanging some of our things up. We also brought an old hammock along which was mounted from rafter to rafter. My father slept in it. Two of the suitcases we stood on end and laid one of the sleeping boards across during the day; that made a table. An old and primitive folding chair, which used to be standing on our balcony, became very useful.



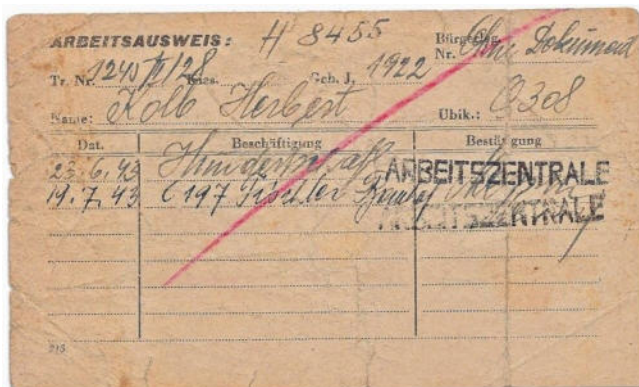
For supper, this day we got another spoonful of the same pea soup as lunch time, a couple of noodles, and a little bit of sugar. The portions were so small, it would have been too little for a three year old child.

June 22nd, 1943; both of us younger men had to carry potatoes again, and later on we had to drive these bags to their assigned kitchens. This was the first time we saw a little more of Theresienstadt. Our first impression was that this place was crowded with people.

The town did not seem very large and all the streets were completely straight, but ended in almost every direction either in an army barrack or a high brick wall. In the middle of the town on the former market place was a very large tent, it almost looked like a circus tent. We were told that there war production was made. Also surprising was that there were very many old people all over, but no children. All the people wore the yellow stars and that made gave to us a certain calming impression. It seemed like a good thing to be separated from the Germans. We did not even notice that mainly the older



people were very thin and look more like living corpses. My father breathed with relief these first days, finally he would be left alone and could relax a little, after years of constant tense daily sessions with the Gestapo.



On June 23rd, Julius and I got our *Arbeitsausweis* (a working identification card). It indicates that I worked until June 23rd in the *Hundertschaft* carrying potatoes and worked on July 19 as a cabinetmaker on the *Bauhof* which was the area where most of the workshops were. It was stamped by the labor organization.

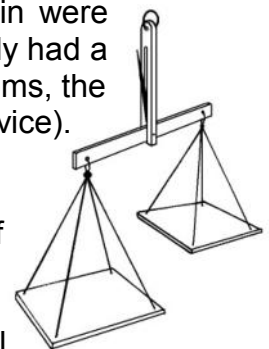
Erna was ordered to report to the *Putzkolonne* (cleaning detail). Also a *Hundertschaft* of women and girls. She worked with them a couple of days until she was transferred to different group of young women, also called flying column.

These young women were used for all kind of jobs, where ever needed. They were just the horses pulling and pushing wagons with all kinds of food or building items. Their vehicle was an old, formerly horse drawn hearse of which the upper structure was removed. Everything from bread to lumber was carried on these wagons and only women were loading, unloading and pulling them. Sometimes, not very often, this group had to help out in the bakery. There they got some extra little pieces of bread and if they were lucky, they could *schleus* a little for their relatives. Erna was pretty good at that, in case she was working a day in the bakery, she came home with some little pieces of bread. She had made the pockets of her light blue overalls deeper, they almost went down to her ankle. There she carried the *schleused* bread out of the bakery. **The overalls of the girls were made out of bed sheets and dyed blue.**

Hedwig Neuberger, Julius's mother, volunteered to peel potatoes for four hours a day. This was called "light labor". She now could get a small piece of bread more. Sometimes she managed to take a couple of the heavier potato skins home and brought them to our family kitchen.

Each house had what was called a *Hausaelteste* (Elder of the house). This did not mean that the person was the oldest one in that house, he just was the superintendent of the building. The *Hausaelteste* was responsible for the cleaning of the rooms and distribution of bread, sugar, margarine, etc. in his building. To help him each room had a so called *Zimmeraeltesten* (Elders of the room). These people were elected for each room. They again were responsible for the distribution in their rooms. Besides the *Hausaelteste* usually had a couple of older women or men to be responsible for cleaning the toilet, the rooms, the courtyard and the sidewalk. These people were called *Hausdienst* (house service). My father was made the *Zimmeraelteste* up in the attic.

He now was in charge of the distribution of bread. The three day portions of bread were completely insufficient and people were afraid of getting short changed and obviously always believed the others got more. My father asked me to make him a wooden scale. I took a thin lath, glued another small piece, which was shaped to a point right-angular in the middle of the 12 inches long lath. It now



had a T shape. A piece of wood about 1 by 1 inches in width and about 6 to 8 inches long was cut to fit loosely over the pointed part of the T-shaped piece and riveted loosely to the middle of the long bar. Towards the end of the long piece I made a hole, through which 4 little strings were threaded and on the end of these on each side were square piece of thin plywood attached. It worked like an apothecary's scale.

Somebody had a hundred gram weight. Borrowing this my father whittled away on block of wood until it weighed the same as the hundred gram piece. He now had a wooden 100 gram weight. With two other smaller pieces of wood, which weighed both the same and together as much as the 100 gram piece, he now had made 50 gram pieces. With doubling the weight or halving it he produced a whole set of different weights, all out of wood. After a while he had a set of weights up to a pound. These were really never for any use, as the bread was never the announced weight. He just weighted out each quarter of bread against the others. Sugar, which he also had to distribute, came prepackaged in 10 grams and margarine just by a spoon full.



On April 21, 1943, two month before we were deported to Theresienstadt, a bank was opened and new printed money was brought to the bank. Everybody in the Ghetto got payed a certain amount for whatever they were doing. Every month art of his or her salary was credited to a saving account. But the money was completely worthless. One could not buy anything with it and was only a propaganda item for the Nazis. It was just like playmoney. Nobody bothered picking it up if one saw it on the street. The same was also with the so called saving account. Every month a certain ammount was booked as being deposited in the deposit book. My so called free account was 135 cronas, while my locked account on August 23. 1944 was listed as 3080 cronas. I never was in the so called Bank and I am sure noboby else went either. I believe the one illustrated is already my second saving book, as the address on it is Bahnhofstrasse 14 where I only lived in 1944.

I, like all the cabinet makers got a special fire wood card. With showing it to the guards we were permitted to take about one pound of little pieces of scrap wood home. This card had to be punched or marked by the Ghetto policeman on the gate of the Bauhof, each time one took wood out. Should there be not enough waste pieces of wood around, we did not hesitate to make scraps out of a good pieces.

Julius was still carrying potatoes. But he had learned in the meantime, that one has to *schleus* a little to survive. Once in a while he brought one or two potatoes home.

My father got his work orders in the night of June 21st. too. He was ordered to report to the *Hundertschaft* on the morning of June 22nd. There, he and two other men, were told to pick up writing materials from the central warehouse, with a two wheeled carriage. He was happy to have been ordered to do this kind of work, as most of the men who were more than 60 years old were recruited to some cleaning outfit. They had to sweep the streets, the courtyards, or clean the toilets which were in general, just outhouses. This was usually the work of the *Hausdienst*. The work my father did he considered was generally very easy, only 2 to 3 hours daily. He still was in physical pretty good condition.

Around noon of that day, he was asked if he would like to become a night watchman at one of the house doors. He would have to man his post sometime between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The duration of his watch would be two hours, but it would be counted as four hours of work. He liked that idea and accepted the job. Therefore he was free during the whole day, and could occupy himself with making our living quarters a little more livable. With this job came the benefit of L-bread. He even was promised that he might get N-bread.

In Theresienstadt there were different categories of rations: There was S-bread, which was given to the three top categories of laborers. Heaviest manual laborer, hard manual labor and half-hard labor. This was the largest amount one could get. It amounted to 500 grams. The next was N-bread, normal bread, people who were considered normal laborers, they got 375 grams. The L-bread, 333 grams, was given to short-time workers and light workers. These rations were always for three days.

His duties as a watchman were, to stand on the door to the street, (each block of houses had one door which was open during the night and was guarded by one of these watchmen. At 9:00 p.m. in summer and at 8:00 p.m. in winter, was curfew hour. Nobody, without a special pass, was allowed out of the house. These watchmen had to ask each person who wanted to get in or out for their pass. As they had no way to enforce their duty, the whole idea was just a farce.

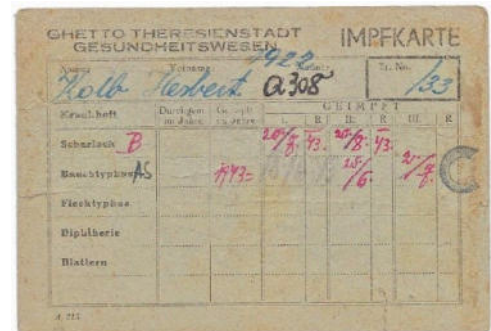
Every morning, around 11:00 a.m. my father went to the kitchen and after standing there in line for a while, picked up the food for all six of us.

All the kitchens were outdoors. Most people, and mainly the older ones, ate their food right at the kitchen. They wolfed it down and then stood around begging for the nutrition less, watery soup. Mainly old women, they asked: "Does the gentleman take the soup?" Should this person say he does not, than the beggar would ask that person to get it for her. This was one of the most pathetic sights, as these poor people kept filling themselves up with this worthless brew,

they helped with their own destruction. They kept the capacity of their stomachs enlarged, and therefore were always hungry. They died like flies, sometimes almost a hundred a day.

I worked every day now as a cabinet maker. In Berlin I only learned how to do everything by hand, as at that time I was only 17 years old, I was not allowed on any machine. Now there were no restrictions about age also I was already 21. I worked on the machines like everybody else.

On June 25th, 1943 I was vaccinated for the second time and on the next day had to go for reexamination back to the doctor. The vaccination was against scarlet fever and typhoid. I was again vaccinated on July 28, August 20, and March 1, 1944. In the back of this vaccination card are 4 rubber stamps of the Block head doctor



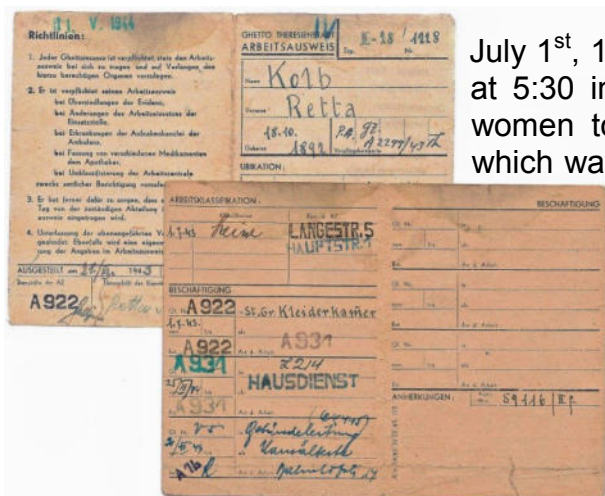
After my father had picked up the lunch, he took the little stove he had made out of a large can and some of the fire wood I. had brought and went down into the courtyard. He lit his stove. If Hedwig came home early she helped him with the cooking. As the combined portions were not very much everything easily fitted on top of this little stove. Shortly after 12:00 noon my mother came home. I also had about one hour lunch break. Erna and Julius who did not have to stand in line for their food, also came home and this way our whole family could at least eat our meager meal together.

On that Saturday, June 26th, 1943 we got for the first time meat for lunch. Actually it was just hash. The portions for the six of us was so little that it covered just about 1/2 inch of the bottom of a 5 inch pot. My father as usual had it warmed up and he was starting to dish it out. The first one of us, who started eating said that this was so bad tasting, he could not eat it. Mother Neuberger and my mother tried it and said they too could not eat it. Then each one of us tried it, nipped a little and came to the same conclusion, my father also tried it.

"I cannot find anything wrong with it", he said, " you are all still too spoiled. This is goat meat and there is nothing wrong with it!" The rest of us decided that if Papa Kolb can eat it, he should eat it all. As I said before, the portions were so small, that even the six of us were only a fraction of what a grown man would have in normal times. My father ate it with some satisfaction. After all it never happened in Theresienstadt that he could get six portions for himself. There was no reason to take it out of this pot and dirty another container, so he spooned it out of the little pot.

But what a surprise. It did not take long till he got to the bottom and there was a piece of soap lying. At first nobody could understand how this soap got into the pot, but slowly it made sense. The day after we arrived in the attic, when the former Nurembergers came to visit, they told us, if we have anything left like soap or candles, hide these items, as the Nazis might come and search us once more. The SS believe, that by now you have what you brought unpacked and you are sure nobody will look through your things any more, that is when the bastards come again and take what they can find.

In an attic are lots of rafters and these are supported with diagonal braces all over. Into these angles we hid these couple of soaps and other things which were missed in the *Schleuse*. One of these pieces what was hidden there and we had forgotten to recover later, must have fallen into the pot.



July 1st, 1943 my mother got her work notice. She had to report at 5:30 in the morning to be marched with a larger group of women to one of the barracks, the Aussiger barrack (J IV), which was the *Kleiderkammer* (The warehouse, where the Nazis had put all the garments they had stolen from the Jews and in the *Schleuse*). Even so it was part of Theresienstadt it was not part of the ghetto. This barrack was filled with clothing, linens and underwear. These articles, if they were not in perfect condition had to be fixed by these women and then it was sent back to the Reich for distribution to the super race, in case they lost their garments through air raids.

My mother found once in while some stinging nettles, dandelions, or other edible weeds, when she and her group were standing in line to be marched back. These were the only green vegetable we ever had. As Theresienstadt was very overcrowded, one could hardly find a green blade of weed any place.

Once in a while we the cabinet makers got a special heavy labor eating card. As we were probably more than 15 men in the workshop and this special card had was for all the cabinet makers one got it only about every two to three weeks for one meal. On that day I got this special card once again. This entitled you for one half of a portion of the lunch. As we were 6 people and always divided everything evenly this was almost nothing, probably less than half a teaspoon for each.



July 3rd, 1943, I told the doctor who had to check about my vaccination that I had pains in my arm. I also had my hair cut for the first time. As there was only one haircutter, everybody had to go to the same place; I had to wait for two and a half hours.



July 5th, 1943. There were lots of professional musician in Theresienstadt. In the evening after working in all kinds of places, these people came together and performed mostly in an attic of one or the buildings. Actually this was only some of the music from the Operetta. These performances were free, as nobody had money anyway and one could also not afford to pay with food items. There was a performance of the music from the *Fledermaus* in the attic of Q 219. I went alone to this performance alone. When one found out about such a performance one had to get a ticket, as there was not enough room in the small attic. The tickets were just handwritten on a piece of paper.

July 9th, 1943, Julius wrote curriculum vitae. He mentioned that he was born on May 18, 1905 in Muehlfeld, was married and his profession was teacher. He had made the state examination, 4 semesters of High school. As the higher studies were forbidden, in 1933 he became a teacher of religion in Massbach, Niederwren and Ansbach from 1934 until 1938. In 1937 and 1938 he was officiating as the rabbi in Ansbach. After that he was teaching in the

Lebenslauf.

Spitzer Julius, 1/18 1232, B 308, geboren 18.5.05 in Muhlfeld (Mainfranken); verheiratet.

Erster Beruf: Lehrer

Schulbildung: Lehrerbildungsanstalt, Kempten, 4 Semester Hochschule. - das Hochschulstudium 1933 abgebrochen.

Fähigkeit: Religionslehrer in d. jüd. Gemeinden Kempten, Friedersheim u. Buxbach 1934-1938. Versetzen des Rabbinates Buxbach 1937/38.

1938 - 30.6.1942 Lehrer an der Volks- u. Berufsschule der jüd. Gemeinde Nürnberg und zuletzt Leiter dieser Schule. 1941-1943 nebenamtlich Kantor u. Prediger der Kultusgemeinde Nürnberg.

Ausstellung: Galathen- u. Füllhalterfabrik in einer Füllhalter- u. Dreibleistiftfabrik 1942 - 15.6.1943. Ausführen von Reparaturen an Füllhaltern; seit Januar 1943 Leiter des Betriebs III der Fe Emil Putz, Nürnberg. Hierbei mußten die Arbeiter der jüdischen Belegschaft überwachet werden und neu eingetrennte Arbeiter angeleitet werden.

Angehörige in Theresienstadt: Frau Spitzer, 1/18 1233 (Chepan) Hedwig Spitzer, 1/18 1231 (Mutter); Bernhard Kolb, 1/18 1222, (Schwiegermutter); Rella Kolb, 1/18 1223 (Schwiegermutter); Herbert Kolb, 1/18 1245 (Schwager).

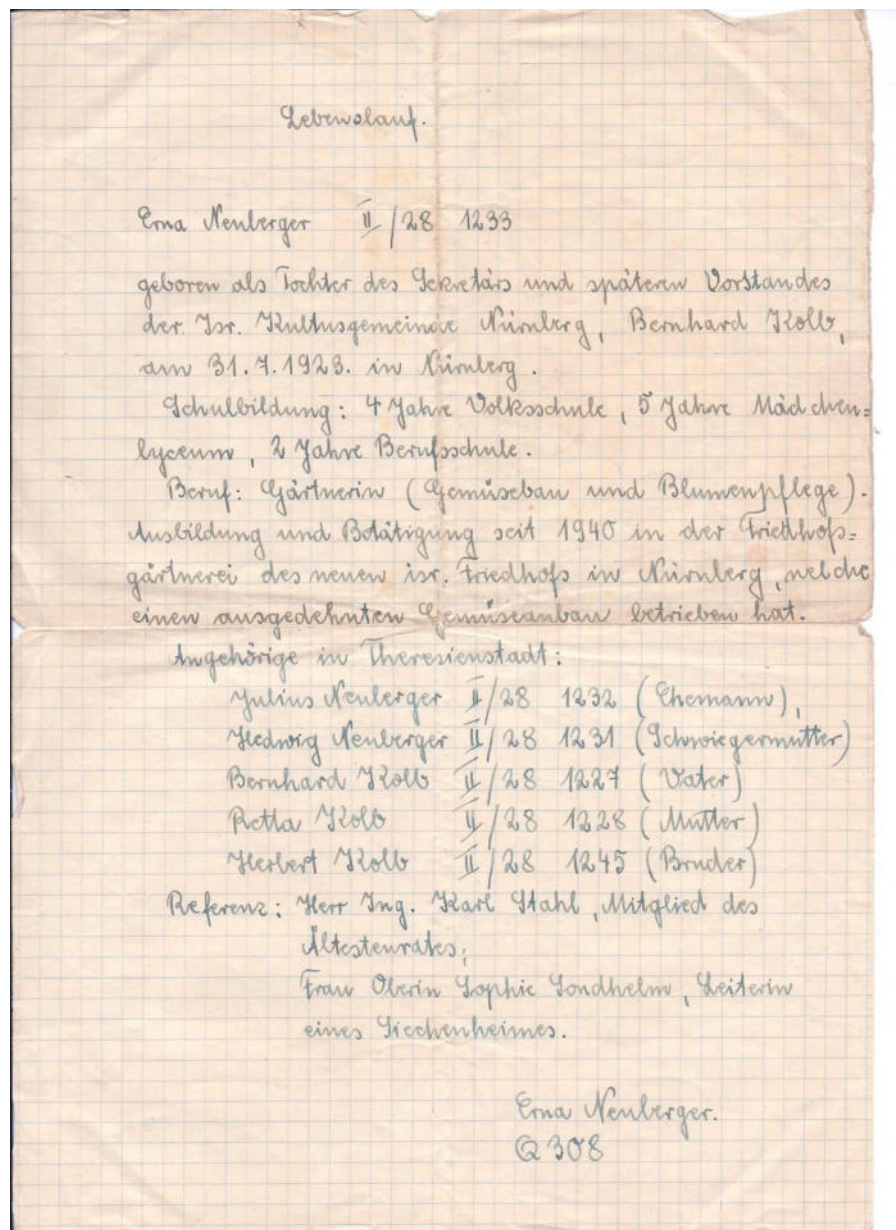
Referenz: Herr Ing. Karl Stahl, Mitglied des Arbeitsrates. Frau Ob. Sophie Lindhelm, Leiterin eines Lärchenheimes

9.7.1943

Julius Spitzer

Jewish public school in Nuremberg from 1938 until June 30th, 1942. He was the head of that school from 1941 until 1943 and besides that, functioned as cantor and rabbi in Nuremberg. (After the schools were forbidden) He was re-trained (as a labor slave) in a factory producing automatic pencils and fountain pens, where he worked from 1942 until June 15th, 1943, to repair and manufacture these items. Since January 1943 he was foreman of the factory III of Emil Putz in Nuernberg. He had to supervise the work of the Jewish workers and teach the new employees.

In Theresienstadt he managed to get the job as a guardian of children. Being a guardian he had to sleep with a group of eight year old boys in the children home of EVb at L 414. Even though schooling was strictly forbidden by the German SS-commandant of Theresienstadt, the interior administration of the camp got around this and installed former teachers as guardians. This way it looked like the children were just being observed by an adult, but really they were taught all day long.



Erna also wrote a curriculum vitae. She wrote she is the daughter of the head of the Jewish congregation of Nuremberg and that she was born on 7, 31,1923. Her schooling was four years of public school, 5 years of a girl's high school and two years extended public school. She learned to be a gardener in vegetables and flowers and worked on the new Jewish cemetery since 1940.

On that night there was a recital of Emmerich Kallmann in the attic Q 209. This was the first time I went with the rest of my family to a performance.

July 10th, 1943, it was a Saturday and I did not have to work. I went to the library where I took out a book about Latin and German. Afterwards I went to the Dresdner barrack. In the courtyard there were three soccer games in the courtyard of the barrack.

July 11th, 1943, I was told, that I can't get a double food card any more before I am legally accepted as a member of the cabinet makers. Finally at July 19th, 1943 I was cleared and became an official member of the group.

July 15th, 1943, in that night there was a concert of scores from Lehar, Kallmann and Puccini.

July 21st, 1943, for the first time I again got the supplementary ration card.

July 22nd, 1943, for the first time I painted in the evening, in the courtyard.

July 24th, 1943, I watched soccer games again in the Dresdner barrack on the evening after work.

July 29th, 1943, I had to work until 10:00 p.m. The Sudeten barrack where Jewish men lived until that day, had to be emptied. The Nazis needed it for offices. The cabinet makers as a group had to help these men to clear everything out. I also received the written permission to write a postcard on the 30th.

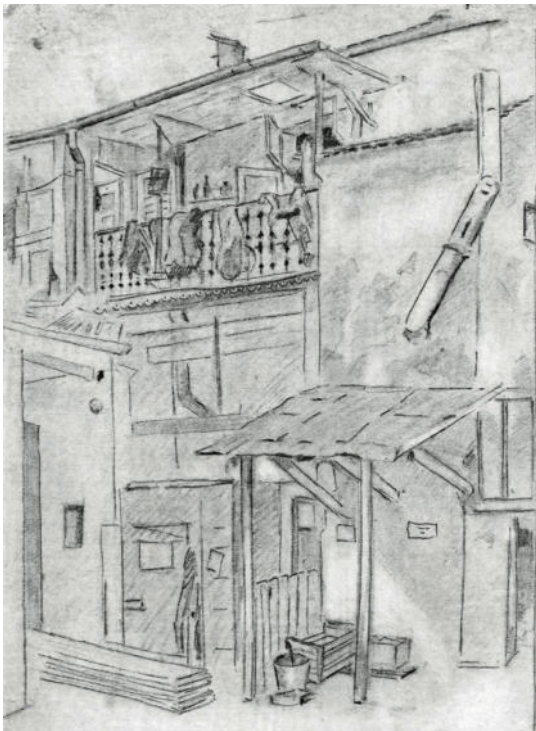
July 30th, 1943, I made a pair of wooden shoes for Erna's 20th birthday on July 31st. in the shop This obviously was not permitted by the Nazis, but as long as none of them came onto the workshop all of us did things like that.

July 31st, 1943, there was a sport festival on the bastion. I had to work at night from 10:00 p.m. until 12:00 midnight as a watchman. (I do not remember what I was watching.)

August 1st, 1943, I had to work in the Bodenbacher barrack , which also had to be emptied, and was getting prepared for the Nazis. We worked day and night shift for 24 hours. For this I got a quarter of a bread and coffee. The brown brew.

August 2nd, 1943, I had to work until 8:00 p.m. and got another quarter of a bread and one half of a pate.

August 3rd, 1943, The Bodenbacher barrack was now cleared of Jews. It got now occupied by the Germans.



August 5th, 1943, I worked in the afternoon in the Bauhof in the wood working shop again.

August 6th, 1943, again I worked until 9:00 p.m. and got one eighth bread and a quarter of a pate.

August 7th, 1943, I did not have to work. I met my former art teacher from Berlin, Mr. Hans Proskauer. Both of us were drawing with pencils, as this was the only item we had. We were in one court yard, somewhere in the south-eastern part of Theresienstadt.

August 8th, 1943, in the morning I had to work in the Bodenbacher barrack again and in the afternoon had to get registered. I don't remember for what.

August 9th, 1943, I got half a bread, as I did not get the extra supplementary ration card, when I worked from August 1st, until August 6th.

August 10th, 1943, I met Mr. Proskauer and we went to the *Bastei* (bastion).

August 11th, 1943, I again got one half bread instead of the supplementary card.

August 16th, 1943, I met Mr. Proskauer again and both of us were drawing in the park. My father was always trying to improve the living quarters in the attic. On that day, there were some old furniture standing in one of the courtyards. Anybody could take what he wanted. Most people did neither have room for it nor any desire to use this old junk. Papa had an idea. If he could get that three door closet up to the attic, he could put a lot of stuff inside and one would not have to keep everything in the suitcases. First he went home and got the tools he needed. Then he went to the courtyard, armed with a screwdriver, a hammer and a saw, which we luckily had brought along.



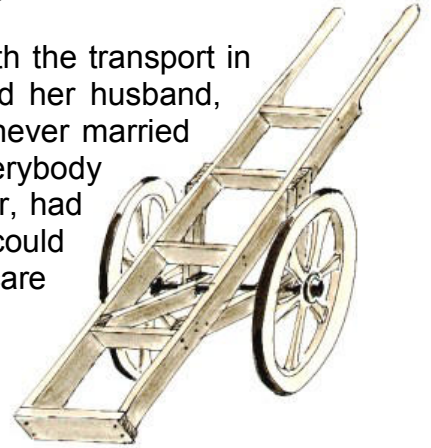
He thought the best thing is to take the three doors off first. He laid the closet on its back and started to unscrew the hinges. Finally he had all three doors off. He carried them upstairs. But how was he going to carry that big closet up. At that time of the day only the very old people of the *Hausdienst* were around. It did not take long to find a solution. This closet was just for storage and he was not interested in the aesthetic beauty of it. He always was for the practical and beauty was just secondary. Besides in Theresienstadt, who looked on a beautiful piece of furniture. He cut off the one section of the closet and now everything became more manageable. Each of this section was also not too heavy and in two more trips he had it all upstairs in our attic. Now he had the job to build it all together again. With two pieces of wood he connected the severed parts. Luckily he had nails which we brought from home too. To put the doors on was easy. In a short time that closet stood on top of one of the rafters of the floor. This closet is on the picture on page 7, I painted later after I got a aquarelle set/

First of all he took the three doors off. He laid the closet on its back and started to unscrew the hinges. Finally he had the three doors off. He carried them upstairs. But how was he going to carry that big closet up. At that time of the day only the very old people of the *Hausdienst* (old men and women who did little jobs like cleaning the toilets etc.) were around. It did not take long to find a solution. This closet was just for storage and he was not interested in the aesthetic beauty of it. He always was for the practical and beauty was just secondary. Besides in Theresienstadt, who looked on a beautiful piece of furniture. He cut off the one section of the closet and now everything became more manageable. Each of this section was also not too heavy and in two more trips he had it all upstairs in our attic. Now he had the job to build it all together again. With two pieces of wood he connected the severed parts. Luckily he had brought nails from home too. To put the doors on was easy. In a short time that closet stood on top of one of the rafters on the floor.

August 20th, 1943, there was another piece of furniture in the court yards. Papa thought, that this might be good to have too. It was a red painted buffet. That piece was only about 30 inches high and about 55 inches long, it was like the closet only pine, it could not be so heavy. Down he went again and alone he carried it up on his back. My father was ,at 62, a very strong man.

As he tried to lifted the piece on his back, an accident happened. One of the doors closed on his hand and ripped off two of his finger nails from their sockets. This hurt a lot, but he was not going to give up now. He tied a handkerchief around the bleeding fingers and carried the furniture up the steps to the attic. By the time the rest of the family came from work everything was standing up. It took quite a while for his nails to grow back as everything took a very long time to heal in Theresienstadt. One had to be very careful not to get an infection.

In Theresienstadt were a couple of our relatives. They came with the transport in September 1942. There was Sofie, a cousin of my mother and her husband, Nathan Jochsberger. Frieda Ellinger, another cousin, she was never married was quite small, and looked a lot like my grandmother; everybody called her Friedlein. Frieda's brother Max was deported with her, had died on January 26th, 1943. Like a lot of the older man, he too could not be saved. Throughout her whole life Friedlein always took care of him and she did everything she could to get him well again.



When somebody died, the person was just covered with a blanket and the men responsible for the burial had to be notified by the *Hausaeltesten*. Even though there were lots of old hearses to be seen in Theresienstadt from former Jewish congregations in Czechoslovakia, these wagons were never used for funerals. Two men of the burial society came with a small two wheel hand truck on which they transported the dead body to the arched vaults where they prepared the deceased for burial.



Elisabeth Alsberg

The old hearses were just the transport vehicle of the Ghetto, always pulled and pushed by men or women, not by horses. I believe, there were only two horses in Theresienstadt and these worked at in the agricultural department. I remember only seeing them once. The camp commander had a horse and we the cabinet makers, had to

work on a little wagon and a horse drawn sled for him. As there was always something to be fixed on the wagon we had it in the shop on and off a good deal of the time.

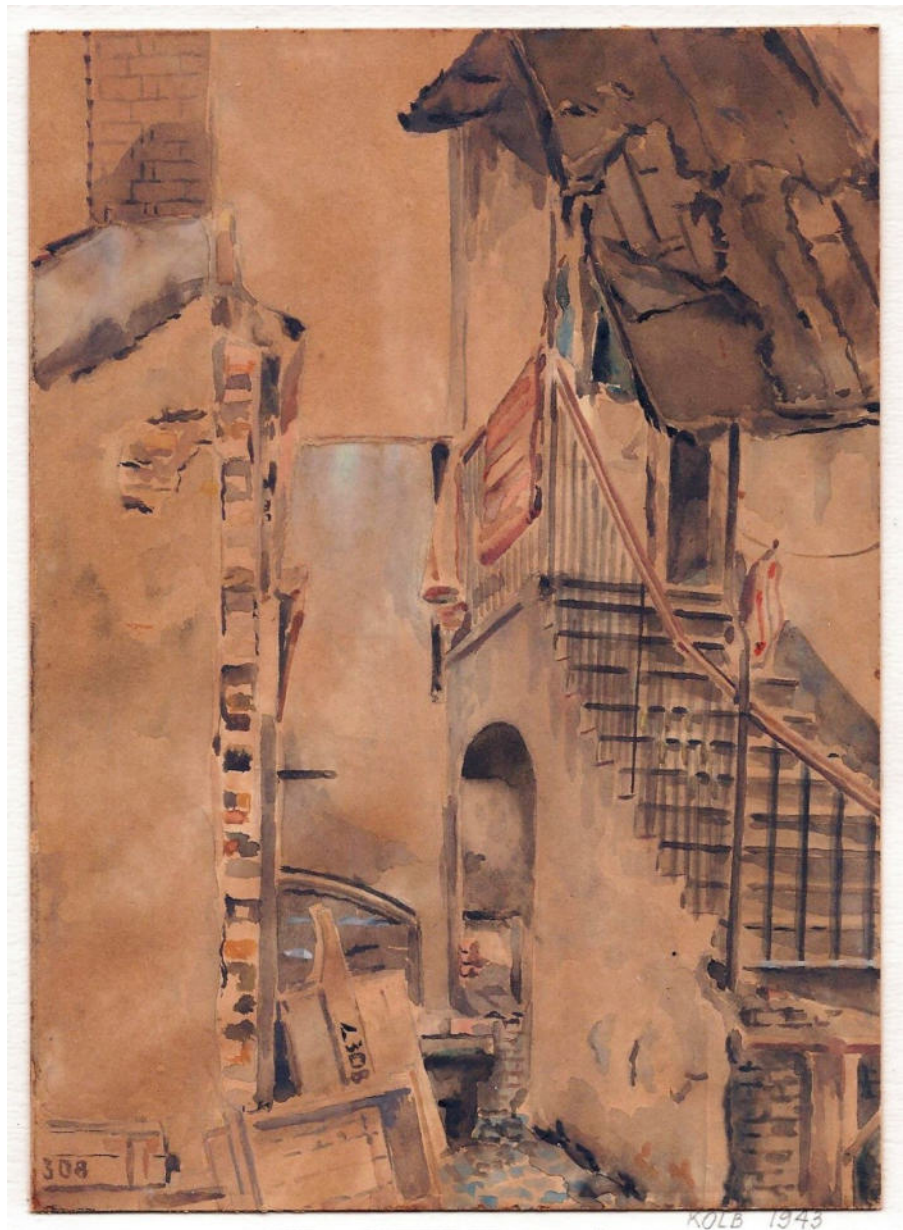


Ruth Pontow

Once every second month everybody was permitted to write a postcard. As all Jews had been deported by that time, and most people had no contact with half or non-Jews, it was difficult to know to whom to write. One could not write to a well meaning German, because that person only would get into trouble with the Gestapo for still having contact with Jews. The only one, one could write to were friends living in mixed marriages. One would tell these people that it was permitted to send 2 pound packages to Theresienstadt. I wrote to two of my friends in Berlin, Elisabeth Alsberg and Ruth Pontow. These people, having also just Jewish ration cards therefore very was a little better off, as she was only $\frac{1}{4}$ Jewish. She was a child of a half-Jewish mother and an Aryan father. Her parents were divorced. Ruth's grandmother was Jewish like her daughter, Ruth's mother. Ruth was brought up Jewish. Therefore Ruth went to the Jewish school and had only Jewish friends. What I did not know was that Ruth's mother shortly before had remarried, this time to a Jew; with that she lost her protection of being half Aryan. When this couple was supposed to be deported, they left their apartment in the middle of the night and went and hide in the apartment of her parents.

They never left the house and everything seemed to be pretty safe for them. Through an unlucky coincidence, the Gestapo had a hint that these two people were hiding out in that apartment, picked them up and transported them to Theresienstadt. I met them there later on, and they told me the story. I made them a tray for carrying their pots from the food distributing place and a toilet board, which will be explained later.

August 21st, 1943, I painted in the court yard of Q 308 after coming home from work. But I could not finish it that day and still worked on the painting the next day August 22nd, 1943. I remember I got the water color ser lend from a child,





While I was painting, a young girl stood behind me watching me. She asked where I learned to paint and I told her in Berlin and to which school I went. She said she was from Bremen but also was in 1938 – 39 in school in Berlin. We talked a while and when I asked her where she lived, I found out she had a room one floor above where I had mine in Dortmunder street. We never met there.

These wooden boxes standing on the side of my painting were standing all over in court yards and were just for the purpose of garbage. They were carried by two men and emptied into a hand drawn wagon. As there was very little food, there was almost no garbage either.

August 24th, 1943, I made a picture frame in the shop. One always had to watch out that none of the Nazis walked in. Besides it was difficult to smuggle anything out of the Bauhof. Therefore I did not glue or nail the frame together, but took the finished pieces unassembled inside once clothing by on the guards.



August 28th, 1943, Erna got the first little package from the Baruchs and I painted up in the attic. This was quite complicated, as the only light came through the little attic windows which were about 10" X 20". This watercolor is on page 7.

August 26th, 1943, I painted another watercolor of the gate leading out of the ghetto near the Kavalier barrack and also traded one little stool I made, for a water pail.



August

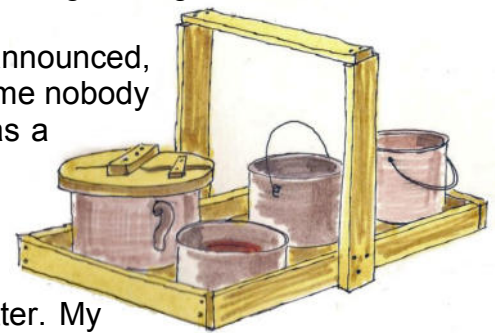
August 29th, 1943, I made a little box where we could keep our wash utensils. In each case when one made something like that one had to carefully hide the pieces of precut wood on one's body and smuggle them out of the gate of the Bauhof. At home I nailed it together. In the evening I went to one of the attics where somebody was reading the first part of Goethe's Faust.

August 31st, 1943, again I went in the evening after work, to the same attic for the second part of Faust.

September 1st, 1943, the cooks forgot to cut off the coupons on all of our eating cards. One of us went to the kitchen a second time and got the same six portions once more. This was dishonest, but when you are hungry this was something anybody who had the opportunity would have done. If you were caught, you would be jailed.

September 4th, 1943, I painted pretty late in the afternoon the home of teenagers, L 216. This was the next house down the street. Some of the boys had to sit guarding the entrance.

September 5th, 1943, a transport of 5.000 people was announced, which left on September 6th, and went to Birkenau. At that time nobody knew where or what Birkenau was and one presumed it was a camp similar to Theresienstadt.

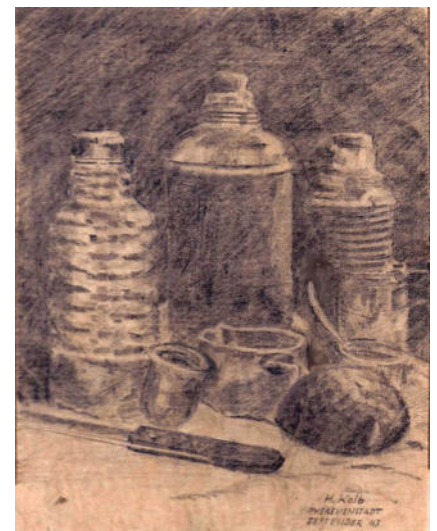


In general, people were disciplined, and even though the nerves were on edge, and everybody was hungry, there was always one who believed himself to be something better. My father was standing in line to get the food for our family. A man, about his age had just gotten his food, but was in such a hurry that instead of walking back between the rows of the people standing in lines, pushed himself crosswise through. With that, he spilled some of his food on a lady standing in front of my father.



"You are a fine gentleman!" my father said. The stranger turned around and grabbed my father on the necktie, choking him. With his free hand, as in one hand, he was holding the little food carrier and the ration cards, my father punched the man on the nose. Now there was a commotion and the ghetto policeman standing on a side came over and arrested them both. They were brought to the *Ghettowache* (guard's house). When my father was interrogated he said:

"If anybody puts his hand on my throat, my first automatically goes into his face!" This incident was



fortunately not reported to the Nazis, as it was supposed to. It is almost unbelievable that men, in the generation of my father, felt they had to put a necktie on to be dressed, even in the ghetto.

September 7th, 1943, I had to work without a pause from 7:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. In the afternoon I painted a watercolor of the *Reitschule* (this used to be the riding school for the military in the fortress but was now the woodworking shop of the *Montage Gruppe Reimann*) with the church in the background. I could not finish it that day.

September 8th, 1943; a wagon ran over my left foot. I was in pain and was off work for the day.

September 9th, 1943; I was still on sick leave. As I could not walk anyway I made a pencil drawing up in the attic of our breakfast table. Later on in the afternoon I went out and worked on the watercolor of the church and then finished the one of doorway of L 216.

September 10th; 1943 My foot was better and I could go back to work starting at 7:30 a.m.

September 11th, 1943; a Saturday. Usually this was my day off. I worked the other six days of the week. I had no trouble sleeping on the floor on a board. Even the fleas did not bother me. I remember that I only felt them when I was painting. After washing in a basin, of the water had which had to be brought up in a pail from a pump or the only facet in the house. The beds, or better the blankets had to be aired out. We hung them over a string we had stretched across our part of the attic. Everybody was hunting for fleas. This was a daily occurrence. Besides starvation and sicknesses these varmints were the worst plague in the ghetto. Bedbugs, lice and fleas were probably here since before Theresienstadt was made a ghetto. They too were trying to get their share of Jewish blood from us lean, starving inmates. Bedbugs were very difficult to find, as they hid during the day in cracks of the wood and only came out during the night. One was told, that they

crawl up to the ceiling or in our case to the inside of the roof, and drop down on the sleeping person. Lice were less of a problem. Fleas were everywhere. They are so small that if there was not enough light, one could not see them at all. Everybody developed a different hunting technical.

As soon as these pests were aware that they are being hunted they jumped. As their back legs are very strong these little parasites can jump very high. It looks as if these little black dots always appear on a different spot and one has a hard time finally catching one. It did not help to squeeze them between your fingers, as the body is very strong and it did not bother them. One had to crush them between the fingernails of the two thumbs. Even that was not a fool proof method. My mother's technique was to have a bowl of water next to her in which she put the crushed flea. Each night before going to sleep everybody went on another hunting trip.



After dressing I went to the *Hausaeltesten* and got the bread rations for all the occupants of the attic, for my father to distribute. On the wooden scale my father would now weigh out each portion.

We toasted one slice of bread for each, and with the coffee that somebody had gotten, the whole family now ate breakfast. From 9:00 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. I walked through L 3 to L 315. There I painted the house, an old peoples dwelling, while they were sitting around and eating their meager meal. This house was right next to the *Ghettowache*.

The Jewish policemen the *Ghettowache* were most of the time veterans from WWI. They were not uniformed; all they had was a cap with a yellow ribbon and attached to the belt a shoulder strap on. They were not armed and were standing on every kitchen to see that there was nobody pushing or fighting.

I went back home, got the *Essenskarten* and went to the kitchen where we were assigned to. After bringing the ration home, it was warmed up a little. Everybody ate, and as there was not much food this, lunch was over very quickly. At 2:00 p.m. I went back to L 315, to finish my watercolor. At 5:45 p.m.

September 12th, 1943; I sold my first painting, the one I made on September 7th, for ½ bread. The customer could not pay for it all at once and only gave me a quarter of a loaf. The rest payable later. A little while later I went back to the Reitschule and painted it once more.

September 14th, 1943; I had to work until 7:00 p.m., because some high ranking Nazis were inspecting Theresienstadt.

September 17th, 1943; I felt sick with pains in the stomach and headache and went back home at 10:00 a.m.

September 19th, 1943; I was still sick, but in the evening after feeling a little better went to a performance in an attic. There was singing of arias of the operas *Aida* and *Cavaleria Rusticana*. Even though there was no stage and the performers did not have costumes, it was beautiful.

September 20th, 1943; my sickness was diagnosed, colitis. I was sick until September 22nd, and started working again on the 23rd.

September 25th, 1943; again I was off work, it was Saturday. On this day I had to give the aquarelle paint set back to the child who lent it to me.



I went to L 306 through opening which was cut into the wall. This was done in every block. People who lived in this block could get together without entering the street and everybody in this block C IV, was able to use the latrine in the courtyard of L 306. At night after curfew, all the front doors of the houses had to be locked and in each block only one door was left open.

I painted that latrine with blue fountain pen ink after first sketching it with a pen. I had made a little wooden foldable stool, which I usually carried with me when I painted.

After finishing there I walked through Q 3 to the corner house L 206, sat down and started with the same media to paint the fountain in the courtyard there. This painting does not exist anymore. My father sold it for a handful of cooked potato skins.

Nobody was around in that courtyard when I entered the area. A little while later when I had just started sketching, I suddenly was aware somebody was walking back and forth behind me. I did not even look up.



Leni Markus

"Aren't you Herbert Kolb?" The person asked. I looked and saw Leni Markus, a friend and fellow student from Berlin.

"I looked at your painting", she said, "and I recognized your style." Both of us were happy to see each other and we had a lot to talk about.

Leni told me that she got married in November, 1941, to Hans Faibis and was deported to Theresienstadt on August 4th, 1943. Her husband lived in the house, L 206 and worked for the bakery, delivering bread. She lived a couple of blocks away, in the corner house of L 408 and was part of the *Putzkollone*). Leni looked very thin. "Let's sit down and talk." I said.

"What did you do since the *Modeschule* was closed." I asked.

Leni said: "Shortly after the school was closed, still in May 1941, I was recruited as a labor slave to the Siemens Schuckert-Kleinbauwerke in the Siemensstadt-Berlin. I worked there stamping out insulation material for lightning fixtures. Some of the things were used for planes, but I don't know for what. Sometimes I also had to work on a drill press in a department where people were welding.

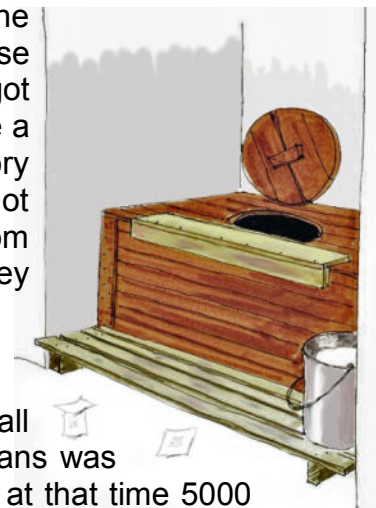
In November 1942. Friends, who worked at the Jewish congregation in Berlin, saw my name on the deportation list for November 30th, 1942 and warned me about it. I as well as my husband and my mother went underground. We could not be hidden together. I lived illegally, most of the time in Berlin, sometimes in the vicinity where I worked as a seamstress for a woman, who used to be my mother's dress maker. There were about four or five other employees working there who had no idea that I was Jewish. When the weather was bad, like in winter when it was snowing my employer very often suggested that I should stay over. This seemed quite normal to the other women, and everything worked out fine. I stayed in different places, but most of the time with that lady, where I slept four or five times a week, on the couch. My mother stayed there occasionally too.

On June 6th, 1943, it was a Sunday, we, my husband and I, were arrested just as I was bringing food to him. He lived in *Hangelsberg* near Fuerstenwalde, east of Berlin. I am sure we were denounced by a woman in that house.

In the night from 6th to the 7th they brought us to the jail in Fuerstenwalde. On June 7th, we were brought and imprisoned in the Gestapo jail in Frankfurt on the Oder. We were there for about four weeks. I don't remember the exact day we were brought to the jail on the *Alexanderplatz* for one day. It's called the "Alex" in Berlin. Afterwards they brought me to the women's-Gestapo jail in the *Bessemer Strasse* in Berlin-Schoeneberg where I was held from the first week in July to the end of July. In the last week of July, the Gestapo brought me to the Jewish deportation collection camp in the *Grosse Hamburger Strasse* in Berlin. Hans, my husband, was there too.

August 4th, 1943, Hans and I were deported. We were a transport of 70 people and we got the transport number I - 100."

We said good-bye, and Leni went to her husband. I finished the painting. Afterwards I was sketching some old men and women whose job was to guard the toilets, or rather the outhouses. As soon As I got back to the attic I nailed two small pieces of boards together to make a toilet board for Leni. These boards fitted over the edge of the lavatory or latrine. I made these simple things for all friends. As there was a lot of typhus and diarrhea this was a very important to keep them from sitting on the common toilet. People walked around with it in case they need it. The pail that was standing next to it was filled with chlorine.



Leni's husband, Hans, was deported with one of the many fall transports to Auschwitz. Leni never saw him again. It seems, that Hans was deported on October 1st, 1944, as my father writes in his diary, that at that time 5000 men from 16 to 55 years were deported. There were three transports, the first one on September 28th, one on September 29th, and one on October 1st. Leni believed, like most of the people, that these transports were going somewhere to start a new camp, and therefore volunteered for the next transport on October 6th, 1944. (It might be the one after.) She hoped to get to the same camp and would meet Hans again. She went to the Hamburger barrack and asked to be put on the transport list, but was rejected, as she was working in the war production, splitting mica. Leni escaped through a window and went to one of the SS guards, telling him that she wanted to join the transport. He told her all right, but then another person would have to get off. The transport got the designation Eo and there were 1,150 people of all ages.

As soon as she got into the passenger car, she saw pencil markings on the wall. Somebody of an earlier transport wrote, "This train goes to Auschwitz." Leni had heard of Auschwitz before from a policeman while she was in jail in Frankfurt on the Oder, where she had been in charge of a group of women who were marched to the police barrack to clean. Now she realized where and what this transport was heading for, and regretted her decision, but there was nothing to be done any more.

She arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau probably the next day, October 7th. The men were separated from the women. All the prisoners who looked to be over 45 years old, and all the

children were taken from the railroad station to the gas chambers. 200 of the younger women were selected by Dr. Mengele and were sent to the camp B. The barrack she was in was close to the crematorium and the stench of burning flesh never left her. From there they could see the nude corpses piled up like logs in front of the crematorium. Every morning the women had to stand for hours on roll call, and every so often Dr. Mengele came to the barrack for further selection. Leni just had a piece of an old blanket and a man's pajama top to wear. During the selection, the women had to walk completely naked by that monster of a doctor. Some of the unfortunate women were again separated from the rest of them and brought to the gas chambers. Leni stayed there for about three weeks together with the 100 women who were, for now, selected to live. With that same group was a very young girl, Irene Silberstein, who also came originally from Berlin and also been in Theresienstadt.

One day, during the summer of 1943, when it was raining in Theresienstadt, my father could not go down into the courtyard to warm up the food, he put the stove on the low furniture and started cooking. To get rid of the smoke, he lifted a couple of the roof tiles stuck a couple of little pieces of wood underneath, and this way the smoke could escape. It did not take long until somebody noticed the smoke coming out of the attic and called the fire department. They came a short time later and surprised my father with his little stove. Luckily this incident had no repercussion.



September 29th, 1943; was Erev Rosh Hashanah 5704. I worked until 4:45 p.m. and afterwards went with the rest of my family to services to the *Prominentenhaus*, L 124. (house for prominent people, like the chief Rabbi of Germany, Rabbi Leo Beck), This was the private synagogue of Rabbi Leo Baeck. He was giving a sermon on that evening.

September 30th; 1943, our family went from 8:30 a.m. until 10:45 a.m. and on the 1st of October from 7:45 am until 10:45 a.m. to services. Julius my brother-in-law was honored to do the cantorial part, and my father blew the shofar there.



October 1st, 1943; Ella Baruch wrote a card to Erna and told her she also mailed a parcel. She managed to write some things in code:

She wrote: "Denny (her baby son) is without his Lulu, but will probably get one back very soon." (The child called Julius, Lulu) With this little remark, she was telling Erna and us that she believed, the war will be over soon. She also wished Erna a happy first anniversary. The only one they ever had.

October 2nd, 1943: I painted an ink, aquarelle in blue ink in the courtyard of L 421, with the view of the breakthrough of the wall separating it from Q 707.



October 3rd, 1943: I got up at 5:00 a.m. and painted from 7:00 until 7:30 a.m. on the corner of Q 5 and L 3. These streets were now called *Turmstrasse* (Tower Street) and *Lange Gasse* (Long Lane). The renaming of the streets was ordered because of the foreign commission which was expected. Theresienstadt was to be a propaganda showplace of how good the Nazis treat the Jews.

I painted, again with ink, the old *Kommandantur* (SS headquarters), which used to be the town hall, and the wooden fence dividing the Jewish part from the German. In the evening from 6:00 to 7:00 I continued on the painting.

October 4th, 1943: I finally finished that painting.

October 6th, 1943, I painted another aquarelle, of the food distribution place or kitchen of the former blacksmith house in the *Rathausgasse*. For some reason I could not finish it and went back on October 24th where I finished the painting.



October 9th, 1943: Yom Kippur, Julius was again doing the service at Rabbi Baeck's synagogue and we were all there. My father finished the holiday with the shofar blast.

October 10th, 1943: My mother received a 1 kg. package from Mr. and Mrs. Lamael.

October 11th, 1943: My father started a new job in the administration building of the Magdeburger barrack. He was hired to operate the multiplication machine. Every order that came from the SS headquarters as well every report from the ghetto's interior Jewish administration had to be sent to them copied on the machine. Also all the regulations, orders and newsletters with the announcement of the daily deaths, etc.

In the evening after work I went to a performance in the attic of the children's home, L 414. The children did the drama of Maria Stuart (Mary Queen of Scots) by Friedrich

Schiller. The children, none of them older than 16 years, performed like professionals. Even though they had no costumes and there was no scenery and no particular lighting, it was a delightful performance.

October 14th, 1943: Erna got notified to pick up a little parcel which had arrived in the so called Post office. It was the announced parcel from Ella Baruch, sent on October 10th.

October 16th, 1943: Probably Erna, who lived in the Hamburger barrack, asked me to do something or fix something for her. A woman saw me and ask if I could build two little stools for her. I was lucky. I got a job. On that day I received a ticket for a shower in the *Centralbad*. These tickets one could only get from the place where one worked. As each place got only a certain amount each month, they had to be rotated.



October 17th, 1943: I first of all had to schleus some wood in the shop and cut it to the particular specification for the stools. I had to sneak at least the wood for one out of the Bauhof, hiding it on my body. Then I went from 6:30 until 8:00 over to the Hamburger and started one the stools.

October 18th, 1943: I worked again from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. in the Hamburger putting the stool together.

October 19th, 1943: again after work I went to the Hamburger from 6:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m and finally finished one of stools.

October 20th, 1943: I went again to the Hamburger after work and assembled the second stool. One day before I must have brought the wood for the second stool. (I don't have any notes in my diary) This time I got a partial payment of 350 gram of green peas, 350 gram of barley and 125 gram of noodles.

October 21st, 1943, I only worked half an hour on the second chair from 6:30 until 7:00.

October 22nd, 1943: I worked in the barrack again and finished the second stool. This time I received the rest of the payment for the stools: 250 gram of barley and 250 gram oat flakes.

October 23rd, 1943 This was another Saturday and I was off. I went back and finished the blue watercolor of the distribution kitchen in the blacksmith house, which I had started on October 6.

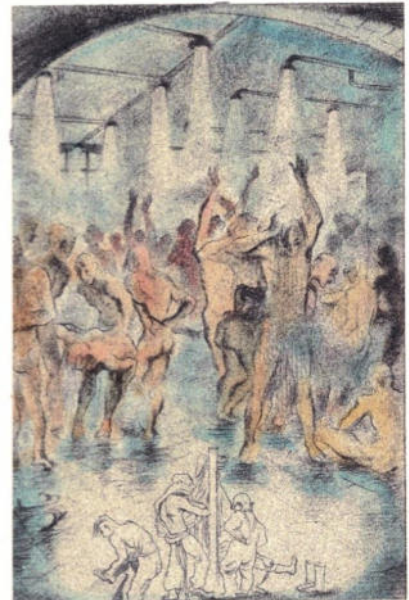
October 24th, 1943: I went back and finished the painting of the food distribution place at the smithy in the Rathausgasse. It only took me one hour. At 5:00 p.m., I went for some kind of a celebration to Q 704.

October 27th, 1943: I again got a ticket for the *Centralbad* for 12:00 o'clock noon. This was very unusual as I had just gotten one on the 16th.



This is a replica made after the war

I found this little illustration on the right in Theresienstadt and do not know who the artist was, but by the style I am sure it was done by one who had to make the illustrations for the Nazis.



October 30th, 1943: Rosi and Paul Seeligmann, a young couple from Fuerth, and Rosi's mother, Mrs. Meta Goldmann, came with us on the same transport. They lived in the same attic. Paul was carrying potatoes with Julius in the beginning. Rosi was a trained nurse, and very soon after our arrival she was ordered to the *Saeuglingsheim* (a house where young mothers with their infants lived). Rosi was the first one who got me an order to build a toy horse for a child. People from Czechoslovakia had a little more food than we from Germany, as they could receive packages from Prague which could be larger than the ones from Germany. The senders could get certain permission stamp in Prague with which they could send packages. Therefore the young women could pay for the toy with bread. Bread was the currency in Theresienstadt and everything was based on the value of one loaf of bread, which was equal to 60.00 Marks. The price for the little wooden horse which I would make, was agreed on to be one quarter of a loaf of bread.

All the different parts for this horse were produced in the workshop, disassembled and then were smuggled out. I put it together in our attic. It also had to be painted. I begged a little bit of powdered paint from the painters in the shop near the woodworking shop. For a paint brush I used a curl of my mother's hair. To make a brush I tied it to a little stick with a string. Even though the hair did not straighten out, it worked. The tail, too, was made of another curl. After that I got several orders, two more horses, one large and one small and two little dolls. I do not

remember these and have no records who ordered them. This little bit of extra of food was a welcome addition to our family's kitchen.

October 31st, 1943: the larger horse was finished and painted and as I delivered it I received the promised, payment of half a loaf of bread. This was a pretty good payment. It seems that I painted the horse with tempera paint, but do not remember where I might have gotten it.

November 1st, 1943: I now was in the toy manufacturing business. I n the evening I started on little houses, a replica of the old city of Nuremberg. Of these also I only recorded that I made them, but do not know for whom. It is possible that I had no order, just made them hoping I would sell them.

November 2nd, 1943: I still made a lot of little houses. All these items had to be made besides the regular work in the workshop, sometimes after hours.

November 3rd, 1943: the only thing my diary mentions is "John Cabaret". I do not remember where it was and what it was about. Probably I went to one of the attics where there was some kind of a performance.

November 5th: a little parcel arrived for my mother from Mr. and Mrs. Lamel. We wrote a postcard to Mr. Rummel. I also have in my diary an indication of Oplatek, but don't remember what that means. Now my father also did some handy work too. He worked for somebody in the Hamburger barrack. I do not know what he did , but it must have been quite a lot, as he got a very substantial payment. He got 530 gram barley, 160 gram sugar and dry vegetable. As usual the clients were younger people and always from Czechoslovakia. German Jews were in general much older and had nothing to give you for your work. My father as well as I did whatever we could for some of these old people for nothing.

November 6th, 1943, I made some more little buildings. My mother was now permitted to send a postcard to the Lamels. The postcard was also a farce as everything was printed on this card and it was just permitted to sign your name under the printed announcement that their parcel had arrived.

My diary also mentions something about a car. It is possible, that I got an order to make one for a woman who worked in the agricultural department probably in one of the gardens outside the fortress wall. At 5:30 p.m. I had a ticket for the shower.



November 7th, 1943, I got another quarter bread as the additional payment, which was still owed, for the horse. At the same time I got an order to make a wagon. I guess that was a wagon for the horse. Very often I did not specify in my diary what the particular item was.

November 8th, 1943, I was still working on the wagon.

November 9th, 1943, I made a railroad engine, about 8 inches long and 4 inches high. This was a fairly large toy. It was painted in different colors.

November 10th, 1943, I produced three little wagons to be hooked up to the railroad engine. These too all were painted in different colors. I do not remember the price I asked for, but I know, I never sold them. They were always standing in the closet t up in the attic even after he had to move and I am sure, they were still there after we were liberated.

I received a little parcel from Ruth Ponto. Somebody of my family, traded a little loaf of bread for five apples. This shows that our family was doing pretty good with the extra income with the toys I made. My father had to work a late shift until 3:30 a.m. the next morning.

On November 10th, everybody was notified the next day would be a census taken of the Jewish population of the ghetto. This was a completely ridiculous command, as nowhere in the world was the population recorded daily like in a ghetto. Every *Hausaelteste* had to report daily how many people in his dwelling had died, how many were taken to a hospitals, and how many were still living there. It would have taken no time at all to get a detailed report. But the order was that everybody had to be ready outside the building at 5:30 in the morning. One should take food along for the day, because the cooks and bakers had to line up as well. Everybody got one sixth of a bread, one half of a pate, 100 grams of sugar and 40 grams of marmalade. The sick or old people who were not able to walk would be moved early in the morning to one particular place into one of the barracks.

November 11th, 1943, everybody assembled on the streets and at 6:30 a.m. we were commanded to walk in the direction of the only exit out of town. In Theresienstadt were only two regular fortress gates which were guarded and not permitted to get out there. We had to march through an opening in the wall which was cut through as they brought the railroad to Theresienstadt.

The fortification wall was four meters thick and was cut through in early 1943 by manual labor with hammer and chisel. Through this which was just as wide that a train could pass through it almost 60,000 people had to walk to the flat area outside the ghetto called *Bauschowitz* *Kessel* (kettle).

This open flat area was surrounded with barbed wire. On an embankment, all around us were SS soldiers standing with machine guns. These were special troops that had been called out not the regular guards of Theresienstadt.

The SS guards from the camp were racing around the Jewish people, like dogs around a herd of sheep, making them stand in rows of 10 and arbitrarily hitting ,kicking and pushing people. Between these rows the Nazi officers walked and acted as if they would actually count the rows. This counting and recounting was going on all morning until 1:00 p.m.. It was one of the Germans favorite games of mass torture. Afterwards one just had to stand there and waited for something to happen.

It was a cold November day and once in a while there was slight snow falling. We were just standing and freezing. One could not get out of the ten men lines as one did not know when the bastards are coming back. I was together with my parents, Hedwig Neuberger and the people who lived in the same house, but we did not know where Erna or Julius were.

After the war I heard, that in November, 1943, many camps, including Poniatova, Trawniki and Majdanek, were liquidated at that time and hundred-thousands of people killed. This was shortly after the uprising of the camp Sobibore on October 14th, 1943. Himmler ordered the

liquidation of all the camps simultaneously, to prevent the news spreading from one to other camps. The Nazis called this action *Erntefest* (Harvest Festival). Probably the same thing was planned for us on this particular day. What other reason would it have been for the hundreds of men from the Waffen SS surrounding us with mashineguns on the ready. Nobody knows why it did not happen.

It was cold, but not unbearable. Even though, I did get frostbite on my toes. Erna was with her work group. Old and sick people were taken to the Hamburger barrack and put into the beds of women who where now in the Bauschowitz Kessel. Erna found out that in her bed somebody died during the day.

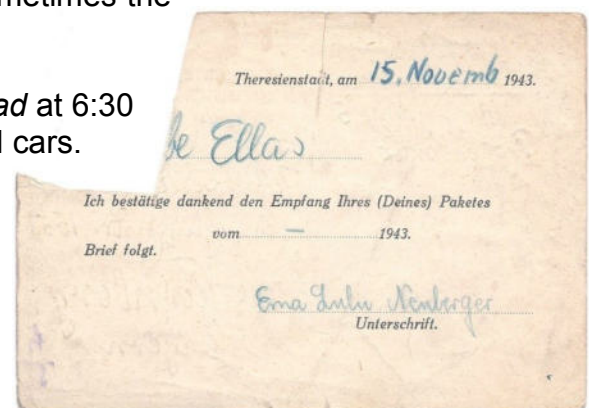
At 6 o'clock it got dark. Everybody was still standing and stamping their feet to get them warm. Again it started to snow. It got 7 o'clock. everybody was still standing there not knowing what was going on. It now was 8, it was so dark one could hardly see each other at all. At 9 o'clock somebody noticed that the SS on the periphery was gone. Nobody told us the inmates, The people now tried to go back to their miserable quarters. Even that little opening where we came out in the morning was closed with barbed wire now.

Somebody managed to opened the barbed wire a little and now through that opening, everybody us too went carefully through the opening and slowly back to our houses. After all in the town was no light either. It took a good part of the night, until everybody was back in town. I and my family arrived back at Q 308, which was pretty close to the opening in the wall at 10:30 p.m.. Many of the old people had to be helped, as not only the dark, but also because of the unusual area. The Bauschowitz Kessel used to be a meadow and one can understand, after all these people were standing there for hours, everything was just deep mud. This was another feather to German humanity. Probably some of the Nazi organizers received medals for a dangerous job well done.

On that day I wore following items because we were not sure if we ever were getting back to the ghetto: 1 undershirt, 1 shirt, 1 body belt, 2 underpants, 2 pair of socks, some rags around my feet, 2 pair of slacks , 1 pair of jeans, 1 sleeveless sweater, 2 sweaters with sleeves, 1 vest, 1 jacket, 1 work jacket, 2 shawls, 1 coat, 2 pair of gloves, 1 pair of boots, 1 cap, 1 ski band, 1 woolen cap, 1 pair of pulse warmer and 1 pair of puttees. It is unbelievable, after the traumatic experience the day before, everything went back to normality the next day. We did not see or hear anything from Julius and Erna until sometimes the next day.

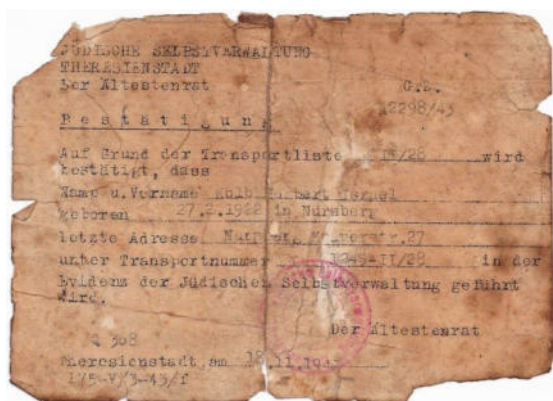
November 13th, 1943, after the shower in the *Centralbad* at 6:30 and after work I fiddled around on the wooden railroad cars.

November 14th, 1943, was no work for one day, because of an electrical black out. It was impossible to work without light, the shop was under one of the fortification ramparts and the only window faced the deep ditches of the moat. I worked on the little railroad again. Sometimes later I made another railroad engine.

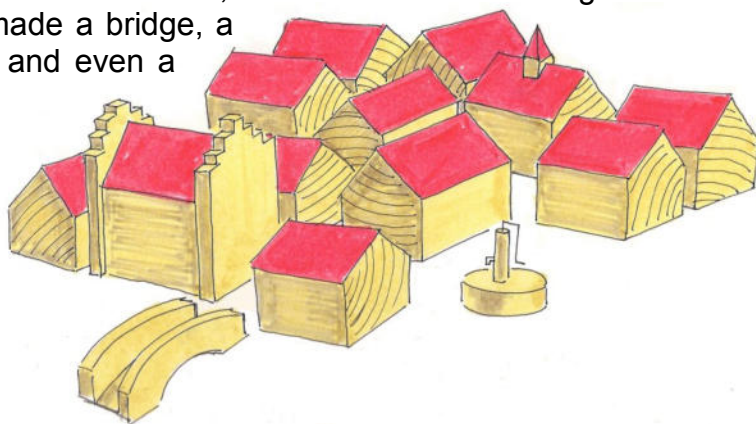


November 15th, and 16th,. Erna was permitted to send a card to the Baruchs announcing that she received the package. Erna had gotten a small package a couple of days earlier. Even when one did not receive a package but had permission to mail a card it was at least possible to give a sign of live. On these cards one could only write thank you and the address of the recipient and his or her name. It was forbidden to write two names on the postcard, but Erna managed to mention she as well as her husband were still there. Baruch's little boy Denny, called Julius "Lulu". Erna signed her name as Erna Lulu Neuberger. I worked on my order of the wooden duck.

November 16th, 1943, my mother got a permission ticket to go to the shower.



November 17th, 1943, I was still busy with the duck, but also started to make a little village out of small pieces of wood. I do not remember the duck and I only have a note, that I worked on it, but I remember the village. I even made a bridge, a fountain and even a church.



November 18th, 1943, I still made more houses for the village.

November 19th, 1943, I received my working identification paper. As one had to have this ID always on the person, It got quite worn and almost unreadable.

November 20th, 1943, for the missed time on the November 14th, we had to make up in the shop.

There was a cardboard box manufacturing shop in that same area. I as well a couple of other cabinet makers were ordered to help out in one of the neighboring cardboard box shop to make toys for Nazi children for Christmas. We did not volunteer for it, we were ordered.

November 21st, 1943, a postcard was send to the Lamels. There was a censor taking in the children's home of L 414. For what, I don't know.

November 22nd, 1943, Ella Baruch wrote a postcard to Julius in which she wrote that she received the acknowledgement from Erna about receiving the package with the apples. She also announces another package, which she mailed two weeks earlier. I don't know if she got them.



November 23rd, 1943, again I was ordered to the toy manufacturing place. I do not remember what we made, but these were simple wooden toys,

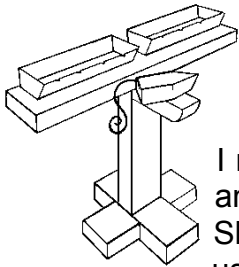
November 24th, 1943, my father received a little parcel from Mr. and Ms. Dingfelder.

November 25th, 1943, Erna received a postcard from the Baruchs and we mailed one, announcing that a package arrived from the Dingfelders.

November 26th, 1943, Hedwig Neuberger received a postcard from her daughter through Switzerland. I do not know how this was managed, as the daughter lived in England and must have gotten a Swiss postcard send from somebody in Switzerland, returned it there by mail, and the person there mailed it to Theresienstadt. She writes:

My Dear ones, Unexpected I received a sign of life from Charlottenburg on 9, 27 two days ago. I am extremely happy about it. Immediately I ordered a couple of parcels, but I am afraid, that they will take a long time until they will reach you. Do you Julius have the same address? I could send more. Ernst Reiser lives at 2 Parkstr. Maybe you could meet. Why do you only mention Fanny and not also Moses Stein. You too should write as often as you can. All the best. Greet all the acquaintances

Yours Paula

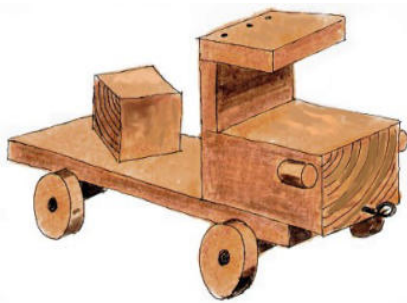


I made a menorah for Chanukah. It was for machine oil only, as we did not have any candles. On each side was a sheet metal container for four wigs. The Shames was on a little ledge in front and had a wire handle. The machine oil we used instead of candles I pegged from someone in the machine shop, That oil smoked quite a lot, and one constantly had to watch it, that the whole little dish did not get on fire..

November 27th 1943, I made a little necklace charm for Erna. I don't remember what it was like, but probably out of wood.

November 28th, 1943, a parcel arrived for me from Ruth. There was an electrical blackout again.

November 29th 1943, my mother and Hedwig Neuberger, were ordered to move to the West-barracks. These were prefabricated barracks, on the south-west side, outside the actual fortress, but still part of the ghetto. I was permitted to write on that day a preprinted postcard to Ruth, that I received her parcel.



My father and I were now the only ones living in the attic of Q 308. All of the other people not only from our family, had moved in the meantime.

November 30th, 1943, the wooden truck I had made I had sold it for 1 bread. This was very good paid, as it represented 60.00 Mark.



December 3rd, 1943, I was paid one quarter bread for the duck, and one quarter for a JA. I do not remember what the JA stood for.

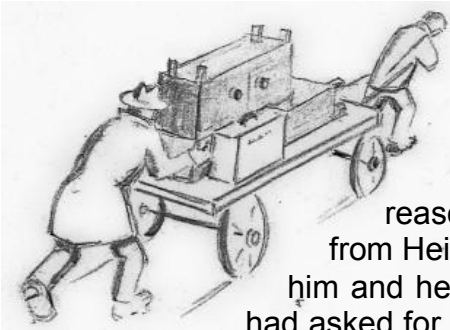
December 4th, 1943, I got a ticket for the shower in the *Centralbad* for 5:30 p.m.

December 5th, 1943, I was working on an order for a baby carriage. This carriage was completely out of wood, more like a box on wheels. I asked the man who worked on the lath in the woodworking shop, how much he wants me to pay for four turned wheels. The price was much too high, I could not afford it. I found a log and cut four slices off. Even so, they were not perfectly round, it worked, and the lady was happy to have something to put her baby in.

December 6th, 1943, I sold the duck for one eighth bread and worked on the baby carriage.

December 7th, and 8th, 1943, I was still working on the baby carriage.

December 9th, 1943, I and the group of my colleges, who had worked in the shop where we produced toys for the Nazi children got an special ration: 1/4 bread, 1 kilo potatoes, 1 kilo flower, 1/4 kilo margarine, 1/4 kilo sugar. The baby carriage got finished that day too.



December 10th, 1943, my father and I, were ordered to move, as it became forbidden to live during the winter in the unheated attic. We could not understand, that the Nazis who did everything possible to torment the Jews, are suddenly so concerned about our health. It sure must have had a different reason. There was an acquaintance of my parents, a Mr. Rothschild from Heigerloch who was the *Hausaelteste* in L 214. My father spoke to him and he had space for two men in one of the rooms in the first floor. I had asked for a day off. This was a Friday and I would have to make up for it, the next day. Somewhere on the *Bauhof* I borrowed a hand truck. We took both of our big furniture pieces carried them down and loaded it on the wagon. Then we pulled the wagon to our new address. It snowed on that day for the first time and the snow stayed on the street. It was more difficult to pull the wagon in the snow, but Theresienstadt is so small that everything was only a short distance. We did not move in yet and went back to our attic in Q 308. There was a rumor about a transport.

December 11th, 1943, I went to work, to make up for yesterday's day off. On one of the evenings, around that time of the year, when I had to work late, I made my way through the muddy road of the *Bauhof*. It was very dark as there were no outdoor lights and the mud was pretty deep. Even in that darkness I just saw something laying in the road. What is it, a large rock or maybe a potato? I picked it up, it was a potato. Now I noticed, that there were one or two of the same things laying right next to it. Luckily, I did not step on them. I picked them up, I was sure now these were potatoes too; they even were still a little warm. Somebody must have just lost them in the dark. They were cooked but very dirty, but, they still were potatoes. When I came home, I showed them to my father. We washed them, warmed them up again, and for this evening we had an extra little meal.

Around this time Hedwig Neuburger received a second postcard from her daughter Paula. Also mailed in Switzerland which was written on November 4th:

My Dears, I hope you received my card which I sent two weeks ago. Hopefully you all are well. Today I again ordered a package onto your address. Dear Julius the next one will be for you and then one for Erna. How are Nussbaums and Friedmanns? Hanna got the address of her dear ones from the Red Cross. Stay well and be heartily greeted from your
Paula

December 14th, 1943, The rumor happened to be true. 2.500 people were ordered into the *Schleuse* (Jaeger barrack A II) for a transport.

December 15th, 1943, The first transport was ordered into the train.

On December 16th, 1943, A second transport was announced and had to go to the *Schleuse*. For extra work, for JA, I received $\frac{1}{4}$ of a bread.

December 18th, 1943, I got a ticket for the shower, for 5:30 p.m.

December 19th, 1943, I got paid $\frac{1}{4}$ bread for the baby carriage. This was worth much more, but I could not charge the poor young mother more.

December 21st, 1943, I was ordered to work as a carpenter in the Reitschule and I started there.

December 23rd, 1943, I received $\frac{1}{4}$ bread again for JA.

December 24th, 1943, I made a baby rattle for 3 pieces of soaps. I do not remember this

December 25th, 1943, again I got a ticket for the shower at 6:30 p.m. I sold the little village for some boiled potatoes.

December 26th, 1943, Julius received a package from the Dingfelders.

December 27th, 1943. I requested from the *Wirtschaftsabteilung Production* (which was the tools department) 4 handles and 2 arms of a hand saw. (I don't remember if this was for me or I had to pick it up for the carpenter shop where I was working now. On the back of this request I have written the address probably of the place where the office was. Q 610 room 18, first floor Bobasch.

December 30th, 1943, My father and I finally had to move. We took the rest of our belongings and carried it over to L 214. The room we were assigned too, was one of the typical places where everybody slept on the floor and had just enough room to roll out its blanket. Each person had about 6 X 2 foot space. There was absolutely no room for the furniture. My father had an idea. He asked Mr. Rothschild if we could put the big closet up into the attic. This was permitted. Now the other piece my father said he would put in the room and as it was not even six foot long and only 16 inches wide, he would sleep on it. This too was permitted. The man in that room were all at least in the seventies. My father was the youngest. I said I am not going to sleep there, I am going up to the attic. It was not supposed to be acceptable but I finally won. I was listed as sleeping in that room but really did not. The rest of the men of that room did not mind either, they now, even got a little more room for each one. I was told, in

case a control came to the house, I would have to come down quick and act like I sleep in that room too. Nobody ever came.

I took the hammock up with me tied it to two beams and put two blankets into the hammock. Struggling a little I managed to slip in between the blankets. I had taken a couple of little belts up with me and as I laid in the hammock tied the top of the two side together. The contraption now looked like a cocoon. Together only with the closet I was the only inhabitant up there in that attic. During the whole winter of 1943-44 I was quite comfortable and warm, even thou there was absolutely no heat. The bedbugs were not afraid of the cold either, but they had trouble coming into my bed. Only once or twice did they get into my cocoon, when I was not careful in closing my hammock and a blanket was hanging down to the floor. The closet was used as a save place for the toys I had made and wanted to sell. Erna received a parcel that day from Albert Ehrhard from Nuremberg



December 31st, this was the first time we ate in the new place. In the attic it was too cold. Both of us sat on top of the red furniture and ate our meager meal. Now my father could not warm up the food any more, he was working during the day too. I don't remember how we managed. There was no New Year celebration in Theresienstadt. Everybody just hoped, that during that new year the war would end. Optimism was very strong and we all felt, that this would happen very soon now.

January 1st, 1944, I got a little parcel from Elisabeth.

January 5th, 1944, I got an order for a doll carriage. This doll carriage had to be build like a regular foldable stroller At 4:45 I had a shower ticket. On the same day I also got an order for to make a dog, which I also don't remember how it looked.

January 8th, 1944, I had finished the stroller and the dog. Erna got a parcel from Silbermanns.

January 12th, 1944, I delivered the doll carriage and the dog.

January 14th, 1944, I got paid for the doll carriage and the dog. Erna and the group she was working with had to move to the West barracks where my mother and Hedwig Neuberger already were. But definitely not in the same barrack

January 18th, 1944, My father received a 1 kg parcel from the Mr. and Ms. Dingfelders and one from Mr. and Ms. Lamels.

January 19th, 1944, Between 6:00 and 8:00. I had to repair something in the pigsty.

January 20th. 1944, My mother received a parcel from the Mr. and Ms. Laemels.

January 22nd, 1944, I was permitted to write a postcard and wrote it to Elisabeth Alsberg.

January 24th, 1944, I went to the ambulance to see a doctor as had an ingrown nail on the big toe of my left foot.

January 25th, 1944, I had the nail removed between 9:00 and 9:30. The doctor used local anesthetic, cut the nail with scalpel somewhere in the middle and pulled both halves out. I was suffering with pain from 9:30 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. the next morning.

January 26th, 1944, I was certified as ill, and did not have to go to work.

January 27th, 1944, still on sick leave. I went to the ambulance to see the doctor who looked at my foot.

January 28th, 1944, I had to go back to work.

Probably around the 1st of February 1944 it became somehow permitted that a couple of elderly people could move into the loft behind the house L 214. It was not a very large room, but 5 couples were allowed to share this room. My parents were one of the lucky ones to be picked. My mother moved back to my father. Just both of their little belongings and his red furniture had to be brought up one flight to the room. I stayed up in my attic, now at least the three of us could eat together again.

February 2nd, 1944. I had to pay 50 Theresienstadt coronas in the library for a book which was called "Latis – German". I must have kept the book too long. I believe this was the only one time I used Ghetto coronas.

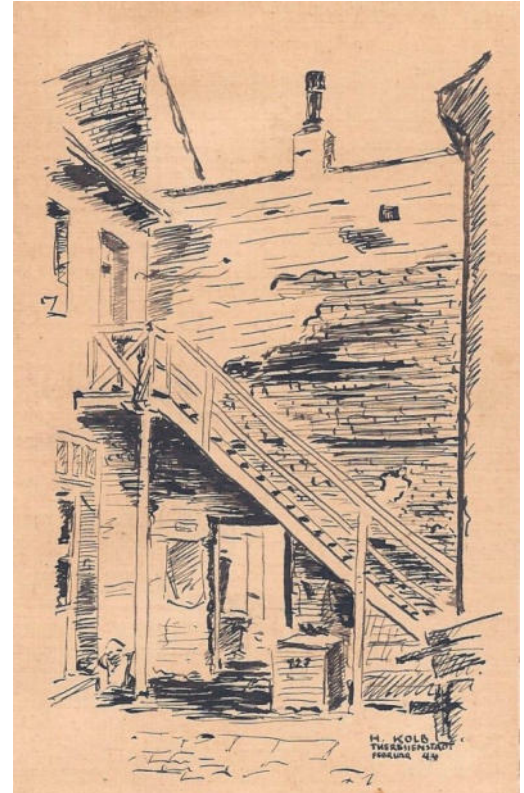
February 3rd, 1944, I received a parcel from Elisabeth and I had to work night shift until 6:00 a.m. the next morning.

February 5th, 1944, I made a pen and ink drawing of the back building of L 214 with the staircase up to the room where my parents could stay now and later on a pencil sketch inside the Magdeburger barrack. This drawing is lost.

February 9th, 1944, I got a pass to go to the shower at 5:20 p.m.

February 11th, 1944, I was transferred to the wagon shop. Mr. Winkler the master there was a learned coach builder. They used lots of the same tools like we the cabinet makers and carpenters, but everything else is quite different. I knew how to use a hatchet to shave a piece of wood to fit, but I never had used a broadax. This is a very large ax, with the handle curved a little towards the right. For righthanded only. One uses this ax with both hands. There are also two different types of these axes, one even larger than the other one.

The long shaft of a wagon, where the horses are attached to, is made out of a straight birch tree. The tree is clamped on two wooden horses. With the smaller one of two axes the tree is first trimmed. Finally with the very large broadax the whole length of it is straightened out like we did it with a plane. First along one side, and later on the others. It is not easy, as these axes are very heavy and one has to be careful, when one slips, not to hit into his own knee. I was shown how to do it, and after a while I managed it pretty good. I also had to help to put wheels together and hammer the hot iron rim on the completed one. But I never had a chance to learn



how to make a complete wagon wheel. This is very interesting and Mr. Winkler was a good teacher, but I was not assigned to this shop very often. mainly to help, when time was essential and it had to be done before the hot iron ring around the wheels cooled.

In the evening I was lucky to get, besides the usual thin pea or lintel powder soup, also a special portion of barley. For the night work on Thursday, February 3rd, 1944, I also received 100 gram salami and 100 gram sugar.

February 13th, 1944. I returned a book to the library, but as I had held it longer I had to pay 50 ghetto coronas for overtime.

February 14th, 1944, I started coughing and had severe headaches, I also run a temperature.

February 16th, 1944, I went to a presentation called: How does a painter see Theresienstadt?:

February 17th, 1944, I got two postcards from Ruth. In the evening I went once again to one of the performances in an attic. A piano quartet playing Brams in C-Minor and Dvorak in ES Major.

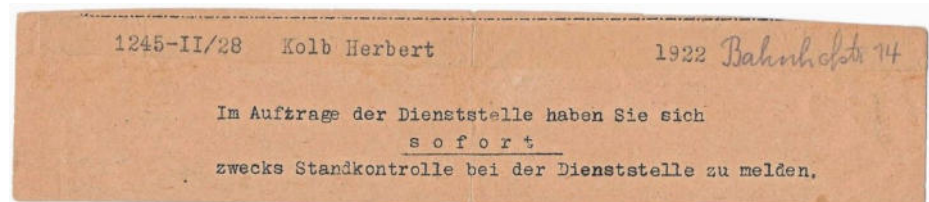
February 18th, 1944, my mother received a package from Dingfelders. In the evening was a recital of *Nathan der Weisse* from Lessing.

February 19th, 1944, there was a presentation about Jewish painters.

February 20th, 1944, it was decided, that from now one only gets every second day an extra portion of food. For a special bonus I got 100 gram sugar and a cake which I traded for ¼ kg bread.

February 22nd, 1944, I repaired a guitar for 3 bouillon cube and some flour.

February 25th, 1944, our whole group got a bonus of barley and in the evening I went to a reading of the *Talismann* by Ludwig Fulda.



February 28th, 1944, after work I went to a reading of Goethe's *Iphigenie*

February 29th, 1944, I was ordered to report at once to the German office for being presented to the *Kommandantur*. (commandants office), for a group of manual laborers were supposed to be working outside the ghetto, back in Germany. I, as well as some of the other young men thought, that might be a good chance to get more food and better treatment. I was called to appear at 7:45 p.m., at the doctors' place. I had to give information about the operation on my foot. The questioning took until 8:30 p.m. I was again summoned to the doctors' place at 3:45 p.m. the next day.



March 1st, 1944, I received a little parcel from Eba. At 3:45 p.m. I got another summon to appear back at the doctor's at 5:00 p.m., and after being looked over was told to be back at 5:30 p.m. There, I was again questioned about my health and about the operation on my left foot on January 25th, 1944.

In the night at 1:00 a.m. I was awakened by a ghetto policeman and told that I have to come along with him at once. The officer brought a *Durchlasschein* (pass). Both of us went to the doctor again. I was sent back and forth between Genie barrack, E IIIa, and the Magdeburger barrack, B V. There I was told, that the train would leave at 3:00 p.m. the next day.

Thursday, March 2nd, 1944. I had to be ready between 12:15 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. I went home now and started packing my backpack. What should one pack. We were told, that we would only be gone for six weeks. This would mean until about May or June. Should one take warm clothes? But who knows! Where is that place Zossen, where they are shipping us. Also we were told, that we would be supplied from Theresienstadt. But it is better to take a little bit of food along, after all we don't know how long this train ride is going to take. We did not have much reserve food anyway. My parents gave me a couple of the items which my father had received in a one kg package from the Dingfelders in February.

March 3rd, 1944. I was ready to go. I had to stay at home, in case one of the Ghetto policemen would come to get me. This was like sitting on needles.

I don't know why I was not picked up. The train left at 3:00 p.m., without me. This transport with a large group of manual laborers were told the same as I, that they would only go for six weeks. Nobody knew where this Zossen was and as I found out much later, this was untrue like anything the Germans ever said. The six weeks past and nobody came back. Heinz Frankenstein and Walter Grunwald were part of the 200 men in that group.

Sometimes a little later in March another 50 men were shipped to the barrack builders. As I was not taken, I went back to my normal place of work to the cabinetmaker's shop in the Bauhof. On this day a parcel for me had arrived from Elisabeth, which I picked up after work. Later on in the evening I went to a lecture about postal matters.

March 8th, 1944, like before I worked every day in the woodworking shop. On that day my mother was notified about the arrival of a little package for her. It was from Mr. and Mrs. Lamel, a mixed married couple who lived in Nuremberg in the same house as we.

March 9th, 1944, I went in the evening to "An evening of Balades."

March 10th, 1944, I was notified that from now on I had to work for the *Montage Gruppe Reimann*, (M.R.G.) (a carpenter group under Ing. Reimann). Many men from this group were in the transport on March 3rd. They were a group of carpenters building barracks and the group was now understaffed. My mother got a small parcel from Ms. Tischer.

March 11th, 1944. For the first time I got a ticket for the coffee house. This was just one of the constructions put up for propaganda purpose only, to show to the International Commissions of the Red Cross and the world, how good we live.



One had to ask at the headquarters of labor for a ticket, which cost two Theresienstadt coronas. I just wanted to see what it was all about. One had to be there at the particular time usually printed on the ticket. In my case I had it from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. One got one cup of the usual cafe and 10 grams of sugar. Old people who had nothing to do and were always hungry, tried to get these tickets and went there. They only came for that little bit of sugar. Always were some musician or singers there. That day they played the overture of Carmen and a portpory of Emerich Kallmann. In the evening I went to a recital of Austrian Rococo. In the evening I went to a lecture about Austrian Rococo.

March 12th, 1944, my day off, I was working on a doll table and two chairs, one of my free lance orders. The price agreed on was for one bread. In the evening I went to a lecture called: Animals I loved.

March 13th, 1944. This was my first day at the Reiman group. I was sent to work first in the potatoes peel drying place and later on building a ramp on the Kavalier barrack.(E VII). We got soup. The daily extra portion of food had started again.

March 14th, 1944. I was sent again to the Kavalier barrack. We got some hash there. When I came home I wrote a postcard to Heinz Jacobowitz. I did not know that Heinz, a very good friend from the school in Berlin, and a fine artist was deported to Auschwitz. Only after the war did I find out that Heinz died or was murdered in Mauthausen on April 27th, 1945, 11 days before the end of the war.

March 15th, 1944. After coming home from work, where I managed to steal a small piece of wood, I worked on a wall shelf for which I received 500 gram barley. Later on I wrote a postcard to Elisabeth.

March 16th, 1944, I worked in the Kavalier barrack again laying a floor. In the afternoon I had to go to the shop, where always things had to be prepared for the next day. At home I had to make a child's wheel barrow an order from somebody, my toy business was pretty good. To cut out



shapes could only be done in the workshop, where I could use the band-saw. The other pieces are pretty small and where no problem, but to carry the long side pieces unnoticed out of the *Bauhof*, was a problem. They were about 24 inches long. I solved the problem with putting a short nail where the axle needed a hole anyway. The nail had to stand out about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. I stuck this wooden piece into my pants and let that nail rest on the belt. After limping a little one got by the guards. These two pieces could not be taken out on the same day. If one needed other longer pieces one had to use similar tricks. I do not remember why I had to work on the Bauhof, the workshop of the RMG. was in the Reitschule, it is possible, that I was sent there, after all I used to work there before, I knew the people, and maybe the other workshop did not have a band-saw. I had to cut a piece on this saw for the next day.

March 17th, and 18th, 1944, I was still working on that floor and like usually in the afternoon there was preparation to be done in the shop in the Bauhof.

March 19, 1944, I delivered the wall shelf and received one bread. Also I made a wall shelf for Erna. She gave me 1/6 of a bread. Erna, who was working with the group of young women, were used to transport all kind of items on the formerly Jewish horse drawn hearses. This

group of women sometimes had to help out somewhere in the industrial areas of the ghetto. Whenever these women were working in the bakery, they were given a small amount of bread in the evening. If it was possible, to stack little pieces of bread into their clothing they did so. Erna as well as her colleagues wore self-made almost uniformly made overalls out of old bed sheets, which they dyed light green. The pockets went almost down to the ankles and therefore very convenient for *schleusen*. The bread, Erna gave me was not a payment for the shelf, but rather a help for me and my parents. She was one of the best supplier of little bits of extra food for us. She was very good in the art of *schleusen*, while my mother for instance could never do it at all. People who were afraid, were always the first ones to be caught.

March 20th, until 23rd, 1944. We worked laying a new floor in former gymnasium of L 417, which used to be the old schoolhouse.

March 22nd, 1944. Again I was working on the floor in L 417. After work in the evening I went to a recital of "Turandot".

March 23rd, 1944. We still were working on that floor in the gymnasium. I received a little parcel from Elisabeth, which she mailed on March 5th, 1944.

March 24th, 1944. This was a very large room and we still were not done with the floor yet.

March 25, 1944, my mother still worked in the *Kleiderkammer*. It was early spring and the temperature in the morning was bitter cold, with a steady light rain. Just as she did every morning, she had to get up early and report to the barrack where all the women who worked in the *Kleiderkammer* assembled. When she put on her coat, she realized that one of the bottoms was coming off, but there was no more time to sew it on. She quickly put a needle with a piece of thread into her eyeglass case. She figured that while they had to wait to be marched to the Aussiger barrack, which was outside the ghetto, she would have time to take care of this. As usual they had to wait a long time until finally a guard showed up. The button was secured and she put the needle back into the case, sticking it into the velvet, inside the cover.

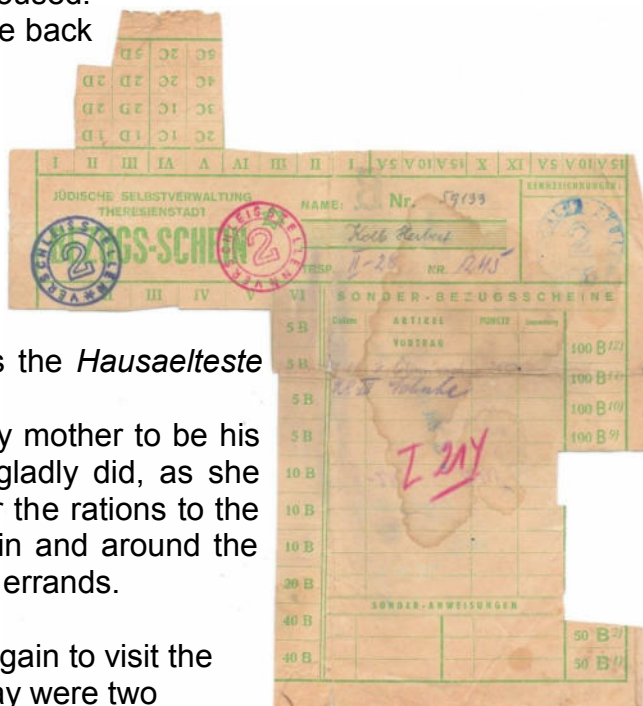
In the *Kleiderkammer* the women had to repair the articles stolen from the Jews by the Germans when the suitcases were inspected for forbidden items or the whole suitcase was stolen. None of these garments were new, since Jews had no chance to buy anything for many years because ration cards for clothing were distributed only to the Aryans.

When the workday was finished the women had to line up again to be marched back into the ghetto. Every day some of these women were randomly chosen for a body search, to ensure they could not take one of the items on which they were working. After all, to steal was just a privilege of the master race. The Jewish women were quite resourceful. Every prisoner in Theresienstadt had to have his transport number either written on every garment or on a small piece of white fabric sewn into it. As some things were washed in a central laundry by the prisoners, the owner could then be identified by the number.

When none of the guards were watching, one might quickly put a bra or another small garment under the skirt, somehow attach it so it would not fall off and then go to the latrine. There she quickly had to take the number off her particular garment and sew it on the stolen one. She also had to put the new piece on, which was in better condition than her own, and again smuggle her discarded piece back into the workroom.

The Germans were also aware of these things happening and every day a couple of women were bodily searched by a Nazi women guard. It just happened that on that day they picked on my mother. They not only frisked her but made her open her bag in which she usually carried a little bit of food and her glasses. Of course she had to open the case for the glasses and there they found the needle and the thread. An explanation as to why she had this in her eyeglass case did not help. The suspicion of the Nazi woman had been aroused. My mother was told she would not be allowed to come back any more.

In reality she was still very lucky, as this incident was not reported. Anybody having the slightest crime reported would automatically be on the next transport to an extermination camp. For a needle my mother could have been killed



Mr. Rothschild whom we knew from Heigerloch was the *Hausaelteste* (custodian and administrator of the house) in L214, which was Bahnhofstrasse 14. He asked my mother to be his lieutenant as an assistant *Hausaelteste*, what she gladly did, as she could stay right in the house. She now had to deliver the rations to the *Zimmeraeltesten* and supervise the people working in and around the house. She also had to do a lot of paperwork and run errands.

March 26th, 1944. It was my day off and I got tickets again to visit the coffee house from 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. On this day were two vocalists there. It was very strange as a young man sang soprano and a middle age woman sang tenor, the man sang the score of a woman and she sung the man's part.

March 27th, 1944, I worked on the stage in L 514. This was the house were the infants with their mothers lived.

March 28th, 1944, I worked again in L 514. A while ago I had requested to get a pair of shoes, as mine were by now almost falling apart. Finally on that day I was permitted to pick up a pair. This was recorded on the *Sonderbezugschein* (A certificate for special things, exclusively for garment, underwear or shoes. One could not buy anything with that card and needed a special permission what would take quite a while.) To make it look like a *Kleiderkarte* (Ration card for garment and shoes) the same as the Germans had, Certain points had to be cut off, for any item. On the back of this paper was the day stamped, when one was permitted to send a postcard.

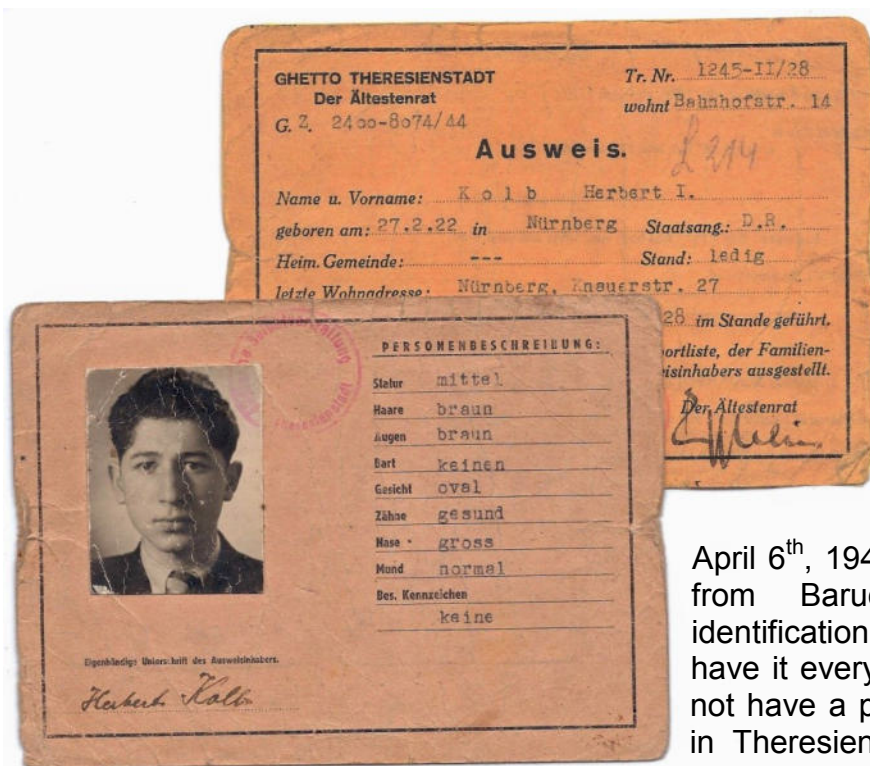
March 29th, 1944, my father received a 1 kg. parcel from Mr. and Ms. Dingfelder.

March 30th, 1944, my father got another parcel this time from Dr. Nuernberger. I repaired a closet for about 500 gram of bread. Three men from Theresienstadt were shipped to the *Aussenarbeiter Gruppe Barackenbau*.

April 1st, 1944, 35 men were shipped to the barrack builders group. I believe both groups, the one from March 30th, and the one from April 1st, were shipped together. I never knew about it and was not recruited at that time.

April 2nd, 1944. It was my day off again. I got tickets for the coffee house from 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. and at 6:00 p.m. went to a lecture, called: "The Jews in Egypt!"

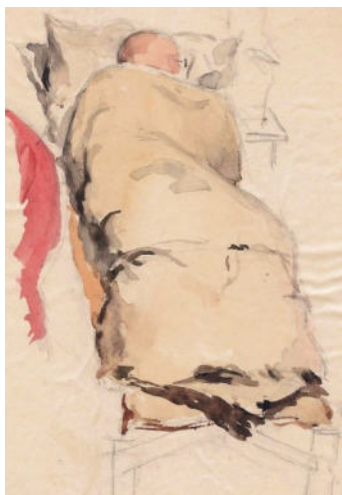
April 3rd, 1944. I worked every day in the Reimann's group. The curfew hour was extended to 9:00 p.m.



April 4th, 1944. The clock was put forward on hour and the daylight saving time started. I was working on a staircase and in the evening went to a lecture about oriental excavations. These lectures were given usually in a small circle from men or women who used to work in that field, or were experts on the subject, or, what also happened believed they were in that particular field. 38 men were on that day shipped to the barrack builders.

April 6th, 1944, my father received a 1 kg. parcel from Baruchs and everybody got new identification cards. One was told, one has to have it every day along. Most of these cards did not have a photo, as there was no photographer in Theresienstadt. I had one along therefore it was on the card.

April 7th, 1944, this was Erev Pesach, the first night of Seder. My parents and I had the Seder in the first floor room, in the back building of L 214 where my parents lived. Erna and Julius could not join, as Julius had to be with his boys in the children house, L 414.



April 8th, 1944, was the second Seder. My parents and I went to L 414, the children house for Jewish children from Germany and Austria. In the building on the east side of the church, which was also a house for children, but there were mainly children from Czechoslovakia. Erna came too for the Seder which Julius had together with his eight year old boys. It was wonderful to see the participation of these small boys.

April 9th, 1944. It was still pretty cold. I again got a ticket for the coffee house from 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Around this time I got the watercolor set back.



April 10th, 1944, I worked on a bunker at the south barracks. This was the first warm day. I probably got the watercolor set back.

April 11th, 1944, again working on a bunker in the park of the Kavalier barrack (E VII). At noon between 12:00 and 12:30 p.m. I painted an aquarelle sketch of an old man. Later on that day, I got an order for a doll carriage. In the evening I again started painting a sleeping old man, but could not finish it as the light was switched off. I did this painting in the room where my father used to sleep.



April 12th, 1944, a parcel came from Ruth Ponto. I worked on a bunker in the Magdeburger barrack. We got 5 extra portions of soup. At lunch time I sketched an old woman in the court yard of L 212.

April 13th, 1944, I had work to do in the courtyard of L 212, which was part of the bakery. I had made a rolling pin for one of the baker's

and got 1/8 of a loaf of bread. April 14th, 1944, again I worked in the bakery at L 212 and got there 1/8, and 1/4 of a bread.

April 15th, 1944, again I worked in the bakery. This time the bakers gave me 1/4 of bread.

April 16th, 1944, when I came in the afternoon to the shop, I cut out the pieces for the doll carriage. Towards the evening I went up on the bastion and made an aquarelle sketch of the gardens. It was late, when I started and therefore I got never done before everybody had to get off the bastion.



April 17th, 1944, I worked in the bakery and got 1/6 and 1/4 of bread. Later on at home after I had taken the pieces of wood home, nailed the doll carriage together.

April 18th, 1944, I worked in the bakery and they gave me 1/8th, and 1/4 of bread. When I came home from work on the Bauhof, I stained the doll carriage. Another transport of 35 men was transported on this day to the barrack builders I again was not recruited and did not even know about it. On that day I got a permission slip for a pair of work pants.

April 19th, 1944, I worked in the bakery again and got 1/6 and 1/4 of a bread. The doll carriage was finished and I delivered it. The payment was: 500 gram flower, 500 gram barley, 250 gram semolina and soup powder. A postcard to the Baruchs was also written.

April 20th, until to April 25th, 1944, I was working in the cabinet maker's shop where I used to work before I had to make doors.

April 21st, 1944, a parcel from Mrs. Tischer arrived for my mother. I worked in the cabinetmakers shop again on the doors.

April 22nd, 1944, Still working on the doors.

April 23rd, 1944, I went to a soccer match in the Dresdner barrack.

April 24th, and 25th, 1944, I was still working on the doors. I do not remember how many we had to build.

April 25th, 1944, another group of six men were send to the *Barackenbau* group. These men were Theresienstadt *Ghettowachleute* (Ghetto police). They were supposed to be used as guards on the construction site. Shortly after they arrived they had to work as laborers with the other men.

April 26th, and April 27th, 1944, we carpenters had to build street-sign-flower boxes. They looked like that. On top of a square mast, about 6 to 7 foot high was a two by two feet box, in which flowers were planted. In the middle a little higher than the flowers were designs out of wood, which were carefully cut out with a band saw and afterwards colorful painted. Besides they showed the name of the two streets which met on that particular corner and directions indicating certain places in the town. All the streets got names now instead of the numbers. The project of *Stadtverschönerung*, (beautifying the town) had started. It was ordered by the commandant for the sole purpose of impressing a foreign commission and showing them how nice the Germans are treating their Jews. Everything was put on a feverish speed to beautify the Ghetto. It was announced a commission from the International Red Cross would come to inspect the camp. To distort the real misery of Theresienstadt, every available manpower was utilized to create a Potemkin type of a town. The front facade of the houses were painted in pleasing pastel colors

The marketplace which housed a large tent in which wooden boxes for the German army were made until December 1943, and was until now surrounded with an eight feet high stockade type fence, shutting off the Jews of Theresienstadt. The fence and the tent was removed, hundreds of wagon loads of topsoil was put on top of the cobblestones. A beautiful lawn was seeded and walks were made like in an 18th century castle. 1.200 rose bushes were planted. On the south east corner was a music pavilion build like in a spa. Benches made from cement and wood were put up on the walks inside the park. Some benches were even positioned on other parts of the town.

In the building of L 417, where we, had just a short time ago put a new floor into the gymnasium was now made as a children's home with new furniture and toys.

The cabinet makers had to produce furniture, which were set up in one particular room, where the Nazi villains brought the people from the commission. This room was never occupied by any inmate. Everywhere were signs put up to direct people to the bank, the central bath, the post office, etc.

April 27th, 1944. We worked on the flowerboxes for the street signs.

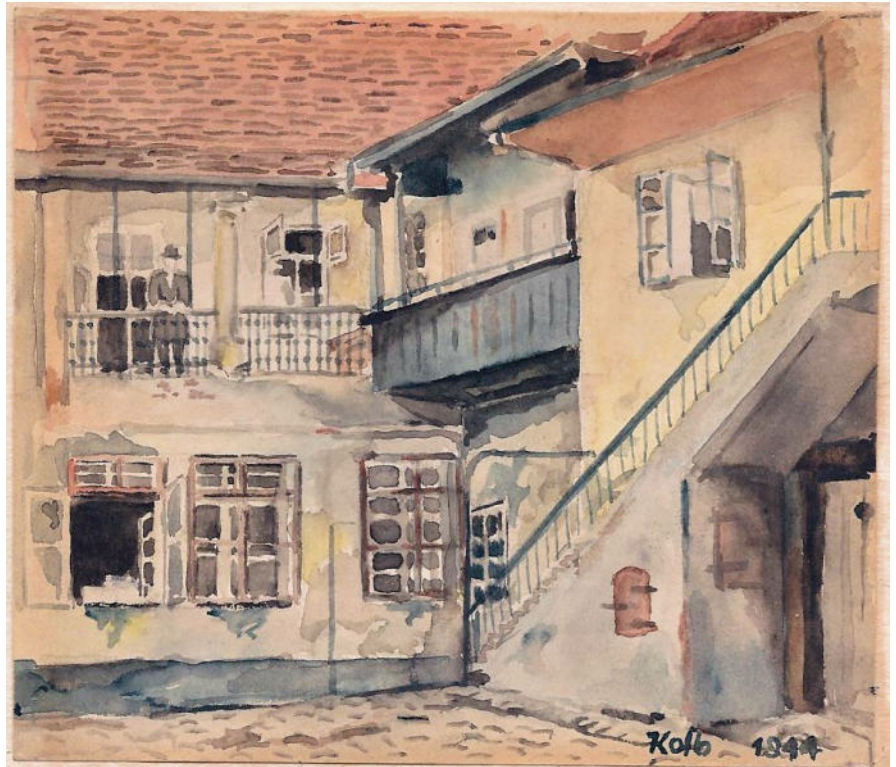
April 28th, 1944, some of the carpenters including me had to work in L 415 which used to be the movie theater. We had to remodel it as a theater, and did not know yet, that it all was just a farce. We just did, what we were told to do. I got privately another order for a doll carriage.

April 29th, 1944, when I found some time after work in L 415, I worked on the doll carriage. I also got as a special reward for the town beautification, 250 grams of salami and two rolls.

April 30th, 1944, my day off was canceled. The movie house had to be finished it was a rush job. We also had to work on one of the food distributing places.

May 1st, 1944, I again worked in that food distributing place and in the evening finished the doll carriage. Later on I went to a lecture about Goethe's letters.

May 2nd, 1944, we still had work to do on the food distributing place. In the evening I started at home to work on a foldable doll stroller for the daughter of Mr. and Ms. Otto Ungar. Their little girl was about 7 or 8 years old. Mr. Ungar was a painter and



during the painters affair in fall of 1944 he and three other painters were arrested and accused of spreading vicious anti-German propaganda. They had managed to send paintings to Switzerland. Together with the other artists he was sent to the Small Fortress, where they were cruelly beaten and then shipped to Auschwitz. Later on Mr. Ungar was shipped to Buchenwald, where he was liberated in 1945. He was very sick, had tuberculosis and died July 1945 in Blankenheim near Weimar. As far as I know, his wife and his little girl were killed in Auschwitz.

This painting is the only one I have not listed in my diary. But as it is signed 1944 I am sure I must have painted it around that time.

After the painters affair, which was sometimes in fall of 1944. Every painting which was made in Theresienstadt had to have a stamp of approval. My father showed all my paintings and only this little aquarelle was approved, the rest of my paintings would have to be destroyed. This my father did not do, therefore they are still all in existence.

Also I do not have anything written about these two sketches, but I am sure I did them sometimes in the spring of 1944.

May 3rd, 1944, again I worked in the food distributing place.

May 4th, 1944, I as well as almost all the carpenters were directed to work on the children pavilion in the so called Stadtpark between the barracks E VI and G VI. It was now a rush projects for the beautification of the town. The architects had designed a very modern building, erected completely out of wood and glass. On the outside were painting of animals done by Otto Ungar and the Dutch artist Jo Spier. On the inside was a kitchen and showers. The cabinet makers had to produce children beds and other furniture. Behind the building was a sandbox, a wading pool and other play things.

Besides on that one day when the people from the International Red Cross came, there was never a child permitted in that building. It was just locked up and stayed empty. Like everything else what the Germans did or said, it was just all done for one purpose only, to deceit the world.

Nobody of the camp inmates, was allowed to speak with these foreign people and anything the Nazis showed or told were just programmed plays. It is not understandable that these people of the International Red Cross did not see through the trickery of the Nazis, it seemed they believed the whole intrigue. As soon as the commission had left the ruthless, cold blooded, murderers readied one transport to Auschwitz.

May 5th, 1944, I worked again on the children pavilion, but in the afternoon was sent to the children home L 319 to do some work. My father got a parcel from the Dingfelders.



May 6th, 1944, again I worked at L 319. As a special bonus for working on the project of beautifying the town I received one slice of salami and 2 rolls.

May 7th, 1944. My day off was canceled again; I had to work in L 319 and also was send to the Ravelin. As a bonus for town beautifying I got 250 gram salami and 2 rolls again.

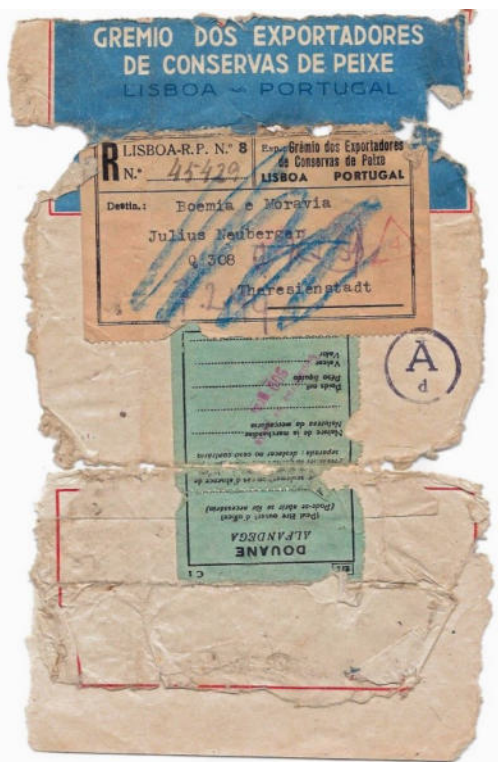
May 8th, and 9th, 1944 I was sent to the disaffection building to erect a fence. This

too just was done to impress the foreign commission of the International Red Cross.



May 10th, 1944, I had to do some work in the place where the dirty laundry was delivered to, and where one had to pick it up after it was cleaned. I sketched a couple of horses who were just standing there. I was told these horses were brought by the Nazis to Theresienstadt after they shot all the men, murdered all the women and children and burned the village of Lidice. This was a reprisal for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich on May 27th, 1942, by two Czechoslovakian patriots who were in England and parachuted into occupied Czechoslovakia.

In the afternoon I was ordered to erect a fence on the villa Kursawe. Mr. Kursawe was a Czech man, supposedly member of the NSDAP (The Nazi party). He was in charge of the agriculture. Mainly children and teenager were working for him in the moats around the fortress of Theresienstadt. I do not recall where this villa was situated.



Theresienstadt. One was notified, when once number was up for bringing a prescribed amount of laundry to be cleaned. Every piece had to be marked with the transport number which in most cases were directly marked on the garment with ink. That way one had a good chance to get his own things back. A couple of days later one again was notified to pick the cleaned laundry up. I do not remember how often we were permitted to bring laundry, but certainly not more often than every three to four months.



May 12th, 1944, I had to fix something in the pig's sty of the villa Kursawe and later on in the afternoon had to do repair something in the laundry place.

May 13th, 1944, I still had to work in the laundry place. It had something to do with the beautification, but I don't remember what; therefore I got a slice of salami and 2 rolls. My father received a parcel from Mr. Pimper. It seems I found time to sketch a young mother with her baby.

May 14th, 1944, I worked again at the laundry. My mother who had to work this day in the *Schleuse*, in the evening she got a message to come to the post office and pick up a parcel from Ms. Tischer.

May 15th, until the 18th, 1944, I again worked in the laundry. In the evening I went to the children home L 414 to visit Julius. There I sketched a couple of his small 8 year old boys fighting. I was just drawing something when I saw these two boys on the floor. I told them to stop, don't move and stay like that. They did, until I was finished with my sketch. When I told them that I was done, they continued their fight. It was not really a fight, they were just fooling around.

May 16th, 1944, I had to work in the Sokolowna, what used to be a Czechoslovakian club house. It was now used as a hospital. I managed to get to the post office yet before it closed at 7:00 p.m. and picked up a little parcel from Lisbon for me with two cans of sardines. This usually was paid for by somebody in the United States. One had no control if one got all the one who were sent, as one did not get them announced. I am quite sure that the Nazis stole first of all the one addressed to people who had died or transported, because afterwards at the time the Red Cross Commission came, Mr. Rahm distributed some to the children, to show how nice he is. The wrapper on the left is the only one I have. It came to my brother-in-law. It was wrapped around two cans on oil sardines.

Suddenly a bombshell hit. Hedwig Neuberger, Julius's mother was listed for a transport. She was deported to Birkenau with mainly other old people. As one found out after the war, that in Birkenau were the gas chambers of Auschwitz. Nothing was ever heard from her. Not, that one trusted the Germans, anything they said, where usually lies, when they announced that these people were taken to another family camp, but one did not suspect to what brutality German ingenuity was capable.

May 17th, 1944, everybody who could, helped Frieda Ellinger, the cousin of my mother, and Hedwig Neuberger packing for the transport. At night from 8:00 p.m. until 12:45 a.m., I had to work in the *Schleuse*, helping people who were on the transport.

On May 18th, both of the elderly women were shipped with the transport of 2,500 people to Auschwitz and killed in the gas chamber, probably as soon as they arrived. This transport had the number Ea.

I was still working in the laundry and later on in the evening I was notified that a parcel from Elisabeth had arrived and I should pick it up in the post office.

May 19th, 1944, I repaired a table. I just had to nail it back together again.

May 21st, 1944, my day off was canceled again. My father received a 1 kg. package from Mr. Pimper and my mother got a 1 kg package from Ms. Tischer.

May 25th, 1944, While working on the circular saw, at 10:00 a.m a small piece of metal lodged in my left eye. I went to a doctor in the Genie barrack where it was chiseled out. I got a big bandage around the head and could not go to work for the next couple of days.

May 26th, 1944, I got 100 gram sugar for fixing the table. In the evening went to a recital of Ferdinand Reimunds' Leid und Tod (harm and death).

May 30th, 1944, The men from the barrack builders were permitted to write a postcard to their families. One of them, Charlie Ponizil. This was never permitted later on any more when I was in Wulkow. These postcards were taken to Theresienstadt probably with the train which brought the food every two weeks. As they were not permitted to write a back address the recipients did not know where the sender was. Charlie writes:

"Dear parents! I have received your 3 parcels in good condition. Many thanks. Best regard and kisses yours Karle." This card, as well as the following were written to his mother Marie Ponizil in Tischnowitz near Brno in Marova and arrived on July 7th, 1944.

On May 31st, 1944, My father received a 1 kg. package from Dingfelders

The men from the barrack builders were permitted to write again around June 7th, 1944:

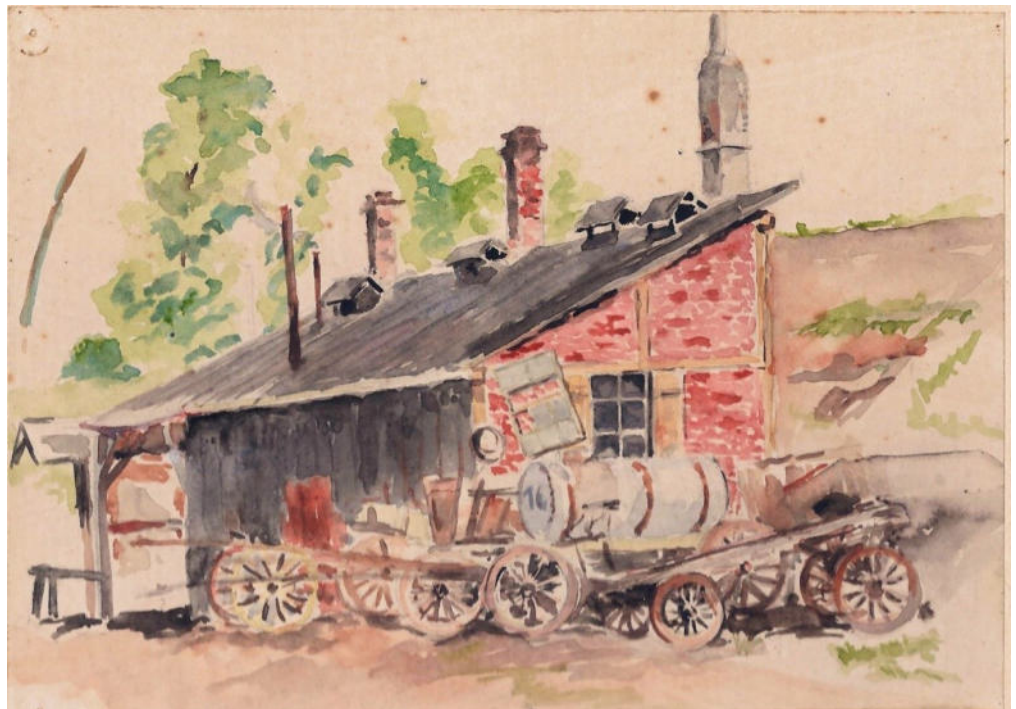
" Dear parents! On June 3rd, I received your parcels in good condition. Many thanks. I greet and kiss you . Your son Karlie".

On the same day he also mailed a postcard to his parents which was written with a typewriter, what means, that the men were given these postcards and could only fill in the top and the bottom line. In typewriter was the date June 6th, 1944. Then by handwriting: *Dear parents!* Typewriter again: As we probably will be taken back to Theresienstadt, I ask you not forward any parcels to me anymore. *Many greetings and kisses your Karlie.* Nobody had a typewriter there, these postcard were mass produced.

This card arrived on June 26th, 1944.

On June 4th, 1944, there is a postcard written from Kurt Hecht to a Therese Hecht in Brno. This card had the same day cancelation, June 23rd, 1944, as the one from Ponizil. I have no records of a Kurt Hecht, he seems to be the same one I have listed as Karl Hecht. He also thanks for the parcel and that he is well.

On June 11th, 1944 he wrote another postcard , also thanking for a parcel. This postcard arrived on July 14th, 1944.



On June 21st, 1944 Charlie writes: Dear parents! Yesterday I received two of your parcels in good condition. Many thanks for the good things you send me. I am healthy and I am well. I finish with many greetings to you and many kisses to you and Lada, your Karlie.

June 1st, 1944, I got 500 gram salami, 8 rolls and 1 kilo bread for working for one of the bakers. My father received a parcel from the Dingfelders.

June 4th, 1944, was the first time again that I had a day off. I made a watercolor painting of the little smithy on Q 1. Later on in the evening I went to a performance in the evening called "Variety".

The Allied forces occupied Rome, after almost constant fighting for almost a year during the Italian campaign. Nobody in Theresienstadt knew anything about it.

June 5th, 1944, I got a postcard from Elisabeth.

June 6th, 1944, this was a special lucky day, two little packages from Lisbon arrived with sardines, one for me and one for my father. These little packages were paid for by relatives or friends in other countries, mainly from the United States or Switzerland. The sender had to pay two dollars for the two small cans of sardines. After receiving them one was permitted to send a preprinted postcard acknowledging it. One did not know who the sender was, but with the acknowledgment these people at least knew that the recipient was still alive. That day the Allied armies landed on the beaches of Normandy. We did not know about it and only heard much later of it. It was very difficult for us in the concentration camp to find out what really happened, as the hopeful optimism of the people were always far ahead of the reality.

June 8th, 1944, a 2 kg parcel arrived from Irma Klein for my father. I was permitted to send one of the preprinted postcards to Elisabeth to tell her I got the package. I do not remember if I really got a package or not, but the recipient understood, to send one.

June 11th, 1944, this was my day off again.

June 12th, 1944, my mother received a parcel with sardines from Lisbon. I was sent to work in the post office. I have no idea what I was doing, but I am sure I met Ruth there the sister of my former teacher Ernst Nordheimer.

June 16th, 1944, both of my parents, received parcels with sardines from Lisbon. I had to work in the *Sokolovna*. (this used to be a club before Theresienstadt became a ghetto, and was now a hospital). Afterwards I worked in the post office again until 7:00 p.m. The post office was just one room where the parcels which arrived were kept. I received 250 gram salami and 2 rolls not from the post office, but probably for the beautifying of the town.

June 17th, 1944, I worked at the south barracks, which were located outside the actual town but in the meadow called the *Bauschowitz Kessel*. A large group of us carpenters were ordered there, as, we were told that there was some trouble with one of the barracks. In general these pre-fabricated buildings were designed as interlocking sections. One started to erect first one corner and continue to build as well the outside walls as the inside partitions and

finally the room-dividing walls. The building becomes self supporting. When even the roof sections are added the barrack will stand.

It seems, that one of these barracks, after it was more or less finished, had to be altered to become one large hall like a factory area. It is possible the Nazis wanted to put the mica splitters or other kinds of military industries into that building. The architects had to draw up plans to replace all the walls with columns. I was not yet in that group, when the dividing walls were all replaced by these specially build columns.

This were by no means replacing the function of the dividing walls. When we came out there in that emergency, the whole building of which I am sure was more than one hundred feet long, was leaning very severely towards the left side seeming it would collapse momentarily.

All of us had to nail supporting beams first on the left outside walls and later on also inside the building. This stopped the movement towards the one side. Slowly with a lot of muscle power we pushed the building back to a perfect 90 degree.

While all the now supporting diagonal beams were still in place, we had to add inside diagonal supports on the beams. This was work for quite a couple of days before the barrack was secure and one could take the outside supports off.

June 18th, 1944, was my day off.

June 19th, 1944, again I had to work until 4:30 p.m. on that barrack and afterwards I had to go and work in the so called, town barracks from 7:30 until 11:30 p.m.

June 20th, 1944, again after a full day work, I had to continue to work in the town barracks from 7:30 until 12:00 midnight

June 21st, 1944 I still had worked in the town barracks.

June 22nd, and June 23rd, 1944, we still were working feverish on that barrack.

On June 23rd, 1944, finally after months of preparation, to clean everything, paint the front of buildings, construct a modern children day center, build furniture to furnish one room, the foreign commission came to Theresienstadt. Dr. Maurice Rossel a delegate of the International Red Cross was heading the group of men who were supposed to check on the condition of the camp. Everything was prepared like a theatrical performance. The people of the Red Cross were lead around from the SS-commander of Theresienstadt and his entourage of other high-ranking Nazi officers. Every step of this so called inspection was a pre-arraigned show. Even the Potemkin's villages were done amateurish by comparison. Jews were forbidden to talk to anybody of these inspectors and the commission did not make any attempt, to look what was behind these painted facades.

The inspection was a great success for the Nazis as the people from the IRC. not only did not see what was going on, they seemed, they did not want to see it either. On July 1st, 1944, Dr. Rossel wrote a report to the heads of the IRC. At a visit to the foreign office in Berlin he handed a copy of this report to the head of the legation, Dr. Eberhard von Thadden. This was a glorious report for the German propaganda ministry.

June 25th, 1944, I had half a day off.

June 26th, 1944, I received a parcel with sardines from Lisbon.

June 27th, 1944. My father received a little parcel with oil sardines from Lisbon. Julius asked me to give a drawing lesson to the eight year old boys in his room. Around 1939 or 1940 when Julius was a teacher in the Jewish school in the Kanalstrasse in Nuremberg he also asked me once to give a lesson to his class of 12 or 13 year old students. I remember I showed them how to draw a matchbox. This same project we had at that time in our graphic class in Berlin

June 28, 1944, I received 3 rolls, 1 liver pate, and 40 gram margarine as a bonus for working on Sunday on beautifying the *Kameradschaftsheim* (The Nazi recreation home)

June 29, 1944, my father received a 1 kg parcel from the Dingfelders. In the evening I went to a lecture called: "The success of Columbus".

June 30, 1944, I got a bonus for working in the *Sokolovna*.

July 1st, 1944, The following report Dr. Rossel gave to Dr. von Thadden of the German government:

"We herewith give you our report about Theresienstadt, which was visited on 6.23.44. We have to especially make you aware, that this report has to be handled as a secret. Under no circumstances is it permissible to publish the included photographs. We agreed to these condition and do not want to get into any complication with the SS-police.

Also present at our visit in Theresienstadt were two Danes, which I thank for their friendliness and their active help. Mr. Frans Hvass, section chief of the Danish foreign ministry, and Dr. Eigil Juel Heningsen, inspector of the Danish department of health.

The Germans present were:

The chief of the SS-police of the Protectorate, SS-colonel of the police, Dr. Erwin Weinmann,
The chief of SS-Major Rolf Guenther, from the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, Berlin, a lieutenant of Eichmann from the *Referat* IV B 4 of the *RSHA*.

SS-captain Ernst Moehs, also a lieutenant of Eichmann

Eberhard von Thadden from the foreign office, as a liaison officer with the *RSHA*.

F. Von Heydekampf from the German Red Cross

The camp commandant SS-captain Karl Rahm

The head of the for the realization of the Jewish question SS-Major, Hans Guenther (until 1942 he was in the central office for Jewish emigration in Prague)

also his lieutenant SS-captain Gerhard Guennel.

This is the report from Dr. Rossel:

One gets to Theresienstadt on the highway which leads from Prague to Dresden. The road passes the fortress of Theresienstadt very close. On the right side is the *Kleine Festung* (the little fortress), where at this time the political prisoners are held who were arrested in the territory of the Protectorate.

On the left of the road is the ghetto. It is separated from the road by a wooden fence about two meters high. For the entire town is no fence necessary.

Theresienstadt is a fortress town build after the designs of Vauban. The moat is in front of the walls. Never was the fortress besieged, and is therefore complete and nothing is visible destroyed. There are no barbed wires. The walls have no cracks. All this is helpful to isolate the inmates. There was no barbed wire visible in the whole town.

This is how it really was in Theresienstadt:

Since June 1940, the little fortress was a police prison of the Gestapo of Prague. There were 32.000 prisoners, most of them Czech patriots and guerrillas. Most of them were tortured to death. 5.500 were liberated at the end of the war.

At the preparation for the visit of the delegates from the IRC all the barbed wire and fences were taken off besides the one close to the road. At the time of the visit was it permitted for the inmates to go on top of the walls. Up to that time only the south wall were for Jews permitted.

The fortress of Theresienstadt was build in the year 1780, after the design of Marshal J. Vauban (1633 - 1790)

We were welcomed at the only German occupied house in Theresienstadt, where also the SS guards are housed who guard the town. All together there are 12 SS-soldiers.

The delegation was welcomed by the commander of the camp and Dr. E. Weinmann made a speech. He mentioned that the headquarters building is not the only building occupied by the Germans, but the Park Hotel in Theresienstadt is the living quarters of the SS-guards. It was called *Kameradschaftsheim* (home of the comrades).

In the Ghetto of Theresienstadt were no guards at all, but there were about 25 members of the SS-staff.

After that we went to the Jewish major of the town, Mr. H. Eppstein who shortly disgust the organization of the Ghetto with us. He suggested to start immediately. with the inspection of the town. He finished with the words:” You will find a normal province town!”

There are about 35.000 people in Theresienstadt at that point, they are: 94% from Germany, Austria, and the Protectorate, 5 % from the Netherlands, and .1 % from Denmark. We were told by the *Judenaeltesten*, that besides these there are no Jews of any other nationality in Theresienstadt. The town was supposed to be exclusively used for older Jews, and therefore the inhabitants of the camp are like a reversed pyramid. Since the beginning of the Ghetto were about 400 babies born.

On July 24, 1943, the SS-commander gave the order that in 48 hours the Sudeten barrack , the Bodenbach barrack, the armory, and two close by buildings have to be vacated. Later on the term of clearing the building was shortened to 36 hours. 6.422 people had to be moved. Of these 4.807 lived in the Sudeten barrack, most of them young men. In the now empty rooms the archive of the *RSHA* was moved in from Berlin.

The parks were forbidden for the inmates, even so not during the visit of the IRC.

The report acknowledged only half of them. The Czech gendarmes were not even mentioned at all. In the little fortress were between 100 and 120 SS-men who could be used at any time in the Ghetto.

The commission went to the Magdeburger barrack, where the *Aeltestenrat*, (the Jewish administration of the camp) and the living quarters and offices of the administrators.

The number of births is inflated and there were probably not more than half as many babies being born in Theresienstadt. Most of them were from women from the Protectorate. Of these children only 17 survived the end of the war.

The average age was 69 years.

The average age of the inmates was 48 years

There are 12 - 15 deaths a day.

For instance the death toll on September 18, 1942 where I have a list was 156.

Theresienstadt is called an *Endlager* (final camp). Normally, nobody who was taken there, would be sent anywhere else.

Like everything else, this was another lie the commission was told. At that time only 20% of the people sent to Theresienstadt were still there. It was only an *Endlager* to the 32.000 people who by that time had died there already. At the same time already 68.000 were sent to their death to the liquidation camps. The first of the transport to the east was already deported on January 9, 1942.

There were no labor battalions sent out from Theresienstadt. Laborers who were during the day working on the fields, came back to the town in the evening.

Men were sent to mining in Kladno, Oslavany, Motycin and Duba, to do road construction in Budweis. Women worked in the woods of Krivoklat. A special unit was picked to work on the grounds of the castle of Linda Heydrich (the widow of the assassinated Reinhard Heydrich) in Jungfern-Breschan. They were there from February 1944 on. My friend Walter Grunwald was one of the men picked. At the time of the visit, already about 200 men were working in Wulkow.

The Ghetto exists since July 1942.

The Ghetto was established on November 24, 1941, as a transfer camp for Jews from the Protectorate.

The SS-police leaves them their freedom about administration. and organization, and everything is at that point very well organized.

Theresienstadt was called a so called Jewish -self-government. There was absolutely no freedom of governing by the Jews. The Jewish administration got there orders daily from the Nazi headquarters. The only thing the Jewish administrators were trying , was to ease the life of the inmates in some ways. They were only able to administer the fundamental necessary functions of the camp. The men and women of the administration were protected from transports to the east. This protection was also only good until the fall of 1944, when most of these people were deported to their death to Auschwitz.

The SS-police force who controls the town are just twelve men, against the *Ghettowache* (Jewish. police), who were a much larger number of men.

The *Ghettowache* was a group of young men lead by former Jewish officers. Most of the members of this group were transported to Auschwitz to their death.

The *Judenaelteste*, Mr. Eppstein has full control over all organizations of the Ghetto and only very seldom asks the Aeltestenrat for their opinion. The Aeltestenrat consists of the rest of the representatives of the Ghetto administration.

Dr. Paul Eppstein, was one of the leading members of the Jewish organization in Germany in the 1930th. He was made the Judenaelteste on January 31, 1943. He was arrested on September 27, 1943, brought to the little fortress and shot there on the same day.

The town is divided into four districts, everyone with its own major, who sits in the city council.

This was actually only the district representative, who was the head of the block representative, who again was heading the *Hausaeltesten* (house representative)

This little town, Theresienstadt , which may have had 12 to 15.000 inhabitants. It was a garrison town and two third of the inhabitants were soldiers. For that reason there are eleven, very large barracks here. This made it easy to evacuate the civil population and establish a Ghetto.

These statements are wrong too. Theresienstadt had according to the census of 1930, 7.181 inhabitants about half of them civilians and the other half soldiers. At the time of evacuation in 1942, 3.142 people were moved.

The living quarters of the people is quite different in the four districts. In one instance by barracks in another by houses.

The army barracks which are very large buildings, have communal rooms, clinics, medicines, surgical and dental facilities.

Because of the overpopulation in Theresienstadt, it became necessary to build prefabricated barracks. These are extremely large, very roomy and well lit. The people very often prefer them to the army barracks.

The one-family houses are in town and used to be from the time when civilian were living in the town. They are comfortable, even a little small, in case two or three families are housed in there.

Furniture are sufficient amount there. The cabinet makers produce a standard type, which is very practical and every family in a short time will be furnished with them.

After the town was changed to a concentration camp for Jewish prisoners the living condition between the army barracks and the civilian houses did not change very much. The walls in these houses were broken through and similar large rooms like in the army barracks were created. The three tire beds were changed to two tire ones just before the commission came. The delegation never saw were the terrible quarters on attic floors, basements, sheds and underground casemates, where in the year 1942 lots of people were housed in indescribable unhygienic condition. During the worst time of overcrowding in August 1942, each inmate was permitted to have 1.6 square meter of room.

Until the end of the year 1944, 32 pre-fabricated barracks were put up, as well as livings quarter for the prisoners as for workshops.

Men, women and children were separated. In each one of these houses. There were separate rooms for men and women. For instance in the house of L 214. at that time renamed Bahnhofstrasse 14, where I lived, 150 people lived in that one family house. Each one of the houses was terrible over crowded. The people had to sleep on the floor, very tied next to each other and every morning had to roll up their blankets, otherwise nobody could even walk through that room.

This is completely untrue, as no furniture what so ever were made for the inmates. One room, which was never occupied was furnished with nice, but primitive pine furniture. This room was shown to the commission of the IRC.

Curtains, carpets , wall papers are there plentiful to make the apartments pleasant. There are enough linens there and they can be changed periodically. Also there are enough blankets for everybody.

The children homes are furnished in a very clever way. The murals are very decorative and are extremely valuable educational

This is a complete invention. The only curtains they might have seen are theater props. The only blankets the people might have had are the one they brought with them, and were not taken by the control when they came to Theresienstadt. About changing the linens. Every three months one was permitted by transport number to bring three kilograms of laundry to the town laundry. Often the intervals was even a longer period.

The only furniture in the children homes were the two or three tire beds, maybe a primitive nailed together table and if lucky a couple of primitive stools.

The disinfection is being managed from a special unit. Every three months the buildings are inspected and disinfection is obligator, even so there are no pests at that time.

One of the worst plagues of the camp were the different pests. Lice were brought to Theresienstadt in 1942 as many transports of old people arrived. Thousands of children had lice. Everybody in the camp was plagued by millions of fleas and bedbugs. People could not sleep because of them. Infections and sicknesses were transmitted by these pests.

Since we arrived in the Ghetto we became convinced that the population of the camp was not undernourished. They are getting in Theresienstadt the same ration as in the rest of the Protectorate. The only different that the prisoners did not get eggs and cheese. Butter is substituted with margarine. We found out that outside Prague the civil population did not get these items even with ration cards. Things arrive in the Ghetto, which are almost impossible to get in Prague. We believe, that this happens, to avoid the risk to make the official of the SS mad. The hygienic-medical specialist who are in charge of the food supply have figured the daily ration as of 2.400 calories. With the extra amount for hard laborers this amount is sufficed. It can be proven by the photographs taken of the group of children.

The distribution of food was done differently for different people. The one living in single houses and had a kitchen would have the opportunity to prepare their own meals. The people who live in barracks or in the prefabricated houses usually prefer to eat in the communal kitchens. These places are really very comfortable. People who eat there are going to be served punctually from young girls in apron with starched bonnets, like in any restaurant.

The official amount of calories of each category of prisoners are as follows:

Laborers got in the summer of 1943 about 1.630 calories.

People who did not work, mainly the old people received about 1.487 calories.

Children got 1.759 calories and even the people who did the heaviest work only got 2.141 calories very much less than the given count.

In the Ghetto were seven large and five smaller kitchen. Everybody had to stand in long lines for a very long time and by the time people got that little bit of food it was completely cold. These lines were daily three times no matter if it rained, snowed or if in summer time the heat was almost unbearable. In some of the houses and wooden barracks were so called warm up kitchens, so that people could re-heat their meager food a little. The delegates of the IRC were led to the wooden prefabricated barrack which was build in the spring like a canteen. Only a selected few were permitted to eat there. The food was better, two days before, during, and two days after the commission of the IRC was in Theresienstadt. For that reason a month before and also afterwards the food was much worse.

The butcher shop is like it would be in any little town.

The butcher shop was part of the central office for food. Sometimes they got horse meat and low quality beef. These were from animals who were sick and from a close by slaughterhouse the meat not usable for human consumption.

The meat could not be used for cooking and a low grade salami was made of it.

The bakery of the Ghetto is in very good shape. There are four stoves, the last one is a very modern type, which was installed only a short time ago from the workshops in Theresienstadt.

The former military bakery of the town did not have the capacity to supply the forever increasing number of prisoners. For that reason bread had to be imported from Reichsleit on the Elbe river and other places.

The gardens are in very good condition. They are tended by Jewish teenagers and produce a lot of green vegetable. Even the potatoes at this time of year are of excellent quality.

The gardens, which were located on the edge of the town and in the moats were tended by prisoners and children from the children homes. Everything grown there had to be delivered to the SS. If anybody was caught taking anything, they were severely punished. Only at rare occasions where they permitted to take half ruined or rotten vegetable home

It seems that still not enough could be produced, therefore potatoes, flour and others had to be imported.

The condition of clothing is in general acceptable. People whom we met in the streets are correctly dressed with the different which one normally finds in a little town with more or less rich people. The fashionable dressed women all wear silk stockings, headscarves and modern handbags. The young people are also dressed well.

Only people who were especially selected were permitted to be on the street. They were trained like actors what to do. Nobody else was permitted to be seen.

The clothing stores have an ample supply. All the cloths are used items, which was repaired in tailor ateliers. These items were sold to prices between 80 and 120 Theresienstadt coronas and against coupons from their clothing ration cards.

This rationing was introduced, that everybody independent of his salary can have the same amount of cloths

The people have sufficed good shoes, but because of difficulties to obtain material, repairs are difficult. From time to time larger amount of shoes were send to the Bata shoe companies, were the shoes were repaired.

Every inmate is permitted to bring four kilogram laundry to the communal laundry, but many people do the washing of their laundry themselves.

The ability to do work is going to be checked carefully by the communal administration , and a card is filed with his or her ability.

The items in all these so called shops were in such poor condition, that the SS did not want them. The half way good things were send back to Germany Neither with ration card nor Theresienstadt coronas nor even a combination of them could anybody buy anything what so ever. One needed a special permission slip, which one could only get, when one did not have any particular item anymore, because it was too far gone. The money was just a joke, as it had absolutely no buying power at all. It could happen, that somebody could get his or her own piece of clothing which was taken from them at the time they came to the camp

This is a complete invention, and it never happened that shoes were send any place to be repaired.

Because of the long time it took until somebody was permitted to bring a small amount to the laundry, the people had to wash most of their laundry themselves, but only with cold water.

This had nothing to do with the Jewish communal administration. It was filed in the office of *Arbeitseinsatz* (labor distribution office). Besides one was listed in a directory for health, for living quarters, for mail, etc.

The labor force in Theresienstadt is naturally more than enough. It is not very important to get maximum work from each person. What is in the interest of the community to make the old people work, even so maybe only two hours a day, that way they feel of having contributed with their help for the good of the community.

Every Jew who arrived in the Ghetto had to work first in the *Hundertschaft*. Everyone had to proof his ability there. If he showed his ability and ambition, he could be made the head of this *Hundertschaft* or he could work at that branch which used to be his before the time in the Ghetto. This regulation had exemptions. Doctors and nurses were right away taken to work to hospitals.

The work was very much based on to which category each person belonged. It depended on the particular work they were doing and for how long each day, to which category of bread ration they belonged. Mainly older people wanted to work to improve their rations, but there was just not enough work around to be done

Every prisoner from the age of 16 to 60 and very often also from 12 to 65 years was assigned first to the *Hundertschaft*, which were groups of unskilled workers. Most of the men had to work on transporting all kind of items on wagons around town. The women in most cases had to work in a *Putzkolonne* (a cleaning crew).

One find in Theresienstadt all kind of trade like in any smaller town. There are members of the communal administration, the police corp., detectives, firefighters, garbage collectors, and transport personal. Young people are mostly working in agriculture. There are cabinet maker workshops, even artistic cabinet makers, and black smith shops. There are important groups of butchers and backers. Even maids can be hired.

Women are mostly working in nursing jobs, home work and laundries, but also in cabinet making places. They work in garden shops and agricultural places which is very much thought after. A large group of young girls are working in children homes and kindergartens.

There was no communal administration. It can't be compared with a normal type of a city council who had certain rights and powers. The *Aeltestenrat* had between 20 and 23 members, who were not elected but rather commanded there by the SS. The *Ghettowache* was the Jewish police force who did not have any arms, they also had no power to enforce any order etc. At all. All they could do stand for instance near the kitchens and watch that no disturbance would occur. The detectives, who were called *Kriminalwache* were supposed to investigate thefts, losses and injuries. They were guarding kitchens, storage areas and the jail of the Ghetto. An organization like a labor union of butchers and backers did not exist. The only thing what is true, people who worked in any of the places, where it had anything to do with food items were in a privileged position. They were the aristocrats of the camp. It is no question, that a lot of them took advantage of their position at the disadvantage of their fellow prisoners.

The Bank of Theresienstadt is not a independent institution, but is under the communal organization of the *Aeltestenrat*. They controlled the economy of the whole town. The bank is in reality a banknote bank. The currency are 100, 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1 Theresienstadt coronas. They are as legal tender used in the town. It is backed by the labor power. Everybody has a savings account, and everyone who wants too, can save an amount of his salary and deposit it on his account. The inhabitants of Theresienstadt are not permitted to have German Reichsmark.

Reichsmarks who come to the town are transferred to an account of the town and this money is used for purchases for the community. If one gets money send from the outside, in Reichsmark he will have the benefit of it anyway, as he can exchange it into Theresienstadt Ghetto coronas.

The daily transaction of the bank is quite high and amounts to about 100,000 Th. coronas. The bank's assets are 14 Millions. The director of the bank told us that one had to try all kind of methods to get the money back to the communal treasury. In the beginning was a fairly dangerous inflation about the Th. coronas, but it now stabilized and is now a secure currency.

As most of the things in the Ghetto are free, the salaries which are quite low should be enough for everybody. They are between 65 and 300 Th. cr. Everybody gets a minimum salary. The older people are therefore better off. Even World War I invalids who receive a pension get additional special benefits.

The bank of the so called Jewish self government was a absolute fiction and was just an imported piece, used for Nazi propaganda. On April 21, 1943, bank notes were given to the bank. These were in the amount of 53,000,000 Theresienstadt coronas. It was worth absolutely nothing, just paper, looking like money. Imaginary salaries were paid out to all people in this currency and part of these salaries were deposited on a just as fictional savings account. Part of this account was a so called a locked account. The money was until to the end of the war completely worthless, and it was used for any other purpose. One could find it thrown away on the street, and nobody would even bend down to pick it up

Another one of the Nazi lies was, that pension and other moneys were send to Theresienstadt. Whatever would have come was immediately confiscated by the Gestapo. Supposedly, the imprisoned recipients got the amount exchanged into Theresienstadt coronas, 1 Reichsmark into 10 Th. coronas.

The question of the IRC. about the distribution of the parcels send by charitable organization to inmates in Theresienstadt, we can guaranty, that the signature of the *Judenaeltesten* Eppstein is sufficient evidence, that the distribution will be done impartially and proper. We were witnessing the distribution of a large amount of those packages in the large post office and we also saw there a large quantity of sardines send from Portugal. We gave to the *Judenaeltesten* a listing of the names of people from whom never any receive came back to Geneva. He promised to look into the matter and will report back as soon as possible.

The Theresienstadt stamps were not for the purpose of mailings from Theresienstadt, but rather are these coupons for the purpose of how many packages each person is permitted to receive. Everybody gets one stamp each month, which permits him to receive a 20 kilogram parcel.

We have visited the Post office and witnessed the distribution of many packages, to people who had to sign for it. The director of the post office told us that there is no restriction of letters and postcards. Even so we know that the mail to foreign countries is very bad. The delegate from Denmark told us, that the mail from Theresienstadt is extremely bad. The director of the post office could not explain the reason. It might be a good idea to let the German Red Cross look into that matter.

The *Judenaelteste*, Mr. Eppstein, assured us, that he will answer any question send to him about any person in the Ghetto. He has no restriction to answer any and all questions.

Little packages, each with two cans of sardines arrived in Theresienstadt, which were financed partly by private people, charitable organization and the Czechoslovakian government in exile. Until to the summer of 1944, the Germans had requisitioned 55 tons of these parcels, while to Theresienstadt only 10 tons were given.

The question about the not acknowledged parcels was never answered. Probably because the recipient had died or was sent to Auschwitz.

These stamps were only given out to people who came from Czechoslovakia. They were introduced on June 10, 1943 and first only every half year. Later on every second month. I do not know if ever a package weighing 20 kg arrived in Theresienstadt most of the packages were small..

This again was a lie of the SS. The mail was very often for long periods of time forbidden. After it was permitted again one was allowed to write one postcard every month or more often every three months. For a time only 30 words clearly printed in German language were permitted on a postcard. This was later on changed. Mr. Eppstein accepted questions about people who were deported to Theresienstadt, but did not answer.

About the health situation of the prisoners in Theresienstadt, we can report, that it is excellent. At this time there is no plaque or infectious sickness in the camp.

There are 4 cases of recovering from typhus, 2 meningitis, 1 scarlet fever, 2 diphtheria, 3 brain infections of a not serious type, no syphilis, no gonorrhea, etc.

The commission send us photo copies of a letter from Theresienstadt, as they could not believe that the amount of medicaments are sufficient. We could not believe that this was really so, but the Judenaelteste volunteered to sign it a second time. The town has a central drugstore with a couple of branches in town. The medicaments can't be bought by the people, but are given away free with a prescription from the doctor. This seemed to work out with the satisfaction of everybody.

The religious services are regularly and without any interference.

There were thousands of cases of typhus, people were dying of malnutrition and starvation, of dysentery. Almost everybody had infection from flea bites, bedbugs or other pests.

The letter send in the name of the Jewish self government to the IRC was obviously dictated by the SS:

"We herewith acknowledge the receiver of the medicaments announced in your letter of 9.30.1943. Again we want to bring to your attention, that we do have sufficient medicaments for servicing the Jews here and want to tell you that the health of Jews here can be described as very satisfactory. Further shipments of medicament are not necessary.

Signed by Dr. Paul Eppstein and Dr. Benjamin Marmelstein."

In the beginning any kind of religious services was forbidden. Later on they were permitted and services were conducted in attics, basements etc. Before the commission of the IRC came a couple of special rooms for that purpose were established

It is unfortunate that because of the crowded situation in Theresienstadt many men and women have to be sleeping in separate quarters. These people certainly have the freedom of meeting each other at any time, from morning on. As these are mostly older people, there is no complaint. Younger people have small Apartments in barracks or the private houses. It can happen, that two or three families have to share one apartment.

The *Judenaelteste* has decided, and it was authorized by the SS-police, that abortion was permissible if the woman wants it. If a woman who is pregnant, wants to bare its child, there is no objection what so ever about it.

Besides there is no problem for getting anti-conception devices.

For most of the inmates the living quarters of men and women were separated only a very small of *Prominente* (prominent people) were permitted to live together. In most cases couples or families were living together in one room.

Like everything else, this again is a complete lie. It was decreed, by the threat of severe punishment, that any pregnancy has to be reported at once, and abortion was ordered and had to be performed.

Condoms, etc. were never distributed in Theresienstadt, it was the exact opposite, that any of these item found on a person arriving at the camp, was immediately confiscated

Glossary.

We asked to be forgiven, if there should be addition questions which we did not answer, some of the answers were hard to get by. We have to say, we were very surprised, to find in the Ghetto a town, which was almost normal, we feared it to be much worse. We told the SS officers who were with us, that we can't understand, why there so much difficulty to permit us to visit Theresienstadt. This Jewish town is really surprising. When one knows, that these people come from different countries, speak different languages, and come from different economical background, than it becomes almost incredible, that they formed a united congregation. The Ghetto of Theresienstadt is a communist community led by a valuable Stalin, Eppstein.

Our report will not change any opinion about the German Reich's handling of the Jewish problem, it at least might show a little bit about the secret about the Ghetto of Theresienstadt.

Signed: Dr. M. Rossell Delegate of the IRC."

It was not in the report, as it seems the official did not ask, that they did not talk to any inmate of the town. It was strictly forbidden for anybody to be on the street. Some of the people, mainly elderly were ordered and positioned on particular places. Everything Mr. Epstein said was told. We working people were ordered not to leave our place of work. It was absolutely understandable that none of these people had any idea what was happening. We did not know, why they came at all.

As soon as the commission had left everything was changed back as it used to be.

July 3rd, 1944, In the morning when I hung my blankets outside and tried to catch the fleas, there was a little old man standing next to me, doing exactly the same thing. I somehow knew, that he used to be a monk, and had no idea, about his Jewish ancestors. Because, the Nazi racial policy considered him a Jew, they deported him. I also remember, that his fleas were very big, I never saw such large ones before. The barrack in the *Bauschowitz Kessel* still was not finished. I had to work at that barracks again.

July 4th, 1944, I was working in the workshop on the *Bauhof* preparing something we needed in that barrack. As a bonus I got 200 gram salami and one roll.

July 5th, 1944, I was working in the south barracks building a floor probably in another barrack.. I indicated in my diary something about a flag, but do not remember what it was about.

July 6th, 1944. Again working in the south barracks and building a ramp. Again something about a flag.

July 8th, 1944, My father received a 2 kg parcel from the Lamels.

July 9th, 1944. All I have written in the diary "209".

July 12th, 1944, I received another bonus.

July 13th, 1944, Erna was called to the *Jugendfuersorge* (Social service for children). She had requested to be assigned as a guardian or guardian helper in the children building L 414. She now worked and slept with a group of little girls and could see her husband once in a while during the day. Everything seemed to work out a little better.

July 15th, 1944, I received 1 pound of bread for night work. In the evening at 8:20 p.m I went to a performance of Mozart's "Bastien and Bastien". in Hauptstrasse 2, L 402.

July 16th, 1944, I repaired a closet for ¼ kilogram bread. In the evening I went to a recital called: "*Der Schlachtenlenker*" (The one who directs the battle).

July 17th, 1944, For the repair of the closet I received another 30 grams of sugar.

July 18th, 1944, I received a parcel with two cans of oil sardines from Lisbon.

July 19th, 1944, My mother received 3 parcels from Lisbon. I got sick in the afternoon, I had an abscess.

July 20th, 1944, my father received a 2 kg parcel from the Baruchs. I was still sick.

July 21st, 1944, I went back to work and my mother and I received each a parcel from Lisbon. After work I watched a soccer game.

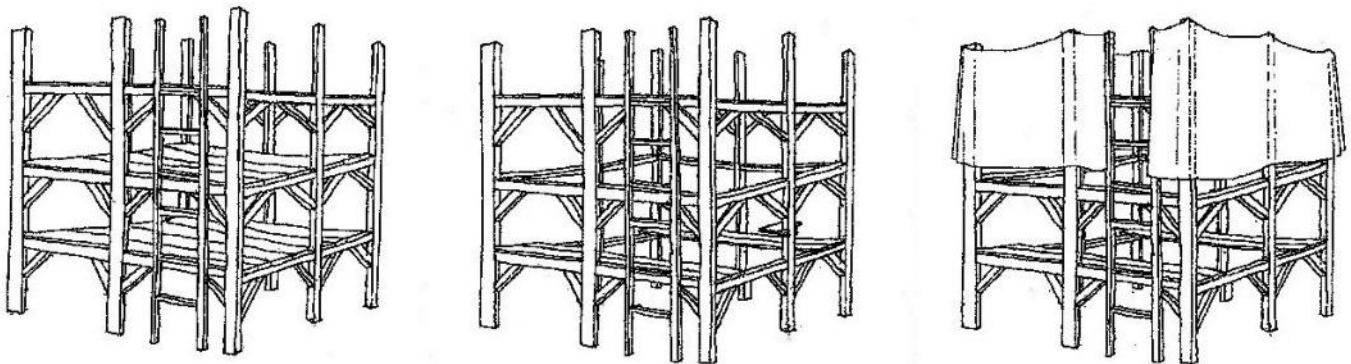
July 23rd, 1944, to celebrate the birthday of Theodor Herzl the Zionist group arraigned a celebration on the *Bastei* (bastion), on the so called Suedberg. One of the earthen works on top of the fortification.

July 26th, 1944, I had to go back to the cabinet making workshop, were I worked before, the *Bautischlerei* (buildings and construction cabinet makers). There I was gluing doors. I also had to go to the post office for some repair. Ms. Nordheimer recognized me and told me that a parcel addressed to me had arrived. I could take it with me. I was lucky, the little parcel was from Ruth Ponto.

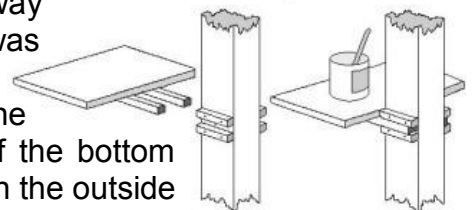
July 27th, 1944, my father received 4 parcels from Lisbon. Our transport number came up and my family was permitted to bring a small amount of dirty laundry to ghetto laundry to be washed. I had to go back to the cabinet makers shop and glue the doors.

July 30th, 1944, In the evening I worked in the *Kumpal* of Leni and Hans Faibis. People sometimes managed to close up a little part of an attic or under a staircase as a private dwelling. This "room" which in most cases is not larger than 5 X 7 foot was called a Kumpal. The walls of Leni and Hans's Kumpal was made mainly out of cardboard.

Sometimes in July or August the guardian in the children's home of E Vb got permission to move together into the attic of that building. After a year of separation, Erna and her husband Julius could be together again. They asked me if I could build them a *Kumpal*, one of these small private area. Each one of the couples had the luxury of a three tiered bed which was usually meant for six people. This by itself was already a luxury as a bed like that was usually



meant for six people Since it would be almost impossible to steal, or better *schleus*, large pieces of wood, I worked with what we had. It worked out anyway The top bunk became the bedroom. The middle of the bunk was removed and some boards used for stability. The extra boards were used for shelves in the sleeping area and in the lower level the sitting-dining area. A couple of the boards of the bottom bunk were left, creating a bench on each side. A little ladder on the outside for easier assent and descent was already there. I cut a two by one foot board as a dinner table which could be slid into a couple wooden strips attached to the center post and served as a removable dining table. After dinner the table was removed. The ladder was already up. Some bed sheets, maybe even dyed blue, were hung for privacy around the whole construction. It was not an elegant apartment but by Theresienstadt standards it was a castle. It also was the first time since our deportation that they had a private room.



Sometime in July or early August the five young couples who all worked as guardians in the children home moved up into the attic.

Erna became immediately pregnant. As soon as they found out, both of them were extremely happy and did not want to hear about an abortion, what my mother asked them to have. Their optimism was unshakable, they believed, after the Allied forces had landed in France, the Italian campaign was quite successful, and the Russian front came every day a little closer, that the Nazi would be defeated before the end of the year and the war would be over. They even had picked a name for the baby and were talking about the unborn as Arie'h.

I did not know anything about the pregnancy until February 1945, when I came back to Theresienstadt.

July 31st, 1944, This was Erna's 21st birthday. I worked for the M.G.R. again. They sent me to the butcher job to take measurements for a table. I was shown where it had to be placed and the size they wanted to be. I got very disgusted when I saw all over maggots in that shop.

August 1st, 1944, Early in the morning before I had to go to work, I went to the children house picked up the boys of Julius's class, and went with them up to the bastion for soccer training. Julius had asked me if I would like to coach his little boys. Each class had its own little soccer team. I coached them now the same way I was taught to play handball in high school. Always three boys had to run parallel with each other, not running more than three steps and kicking the ball to one of their partners. This little children were very ambitious to learn and I promised them if they play like that in their games against other classes, they will win.

Every morning for a couple of days I picked up these little boys and coached them for an hour or two. Very shortly afterwards they had their first game with a class of boys in the same age group. These boys had nobody to train them and that was not even a challenge for Julius's class.

These other children kept running after the ball like a flock of sheep, while Julius's stayed on their position and moved the ball very frequently. The children were exhilarated about their victory. Every game they played they were victorious. Then came a game against a class of 11 year old. My little boys became worried:

"These boys," they said, "are so much larger than we are!" I told them not to worry. I said, if you play like I told you, you will beat them.

"How could we, they asked, they are like giants against us!"

I said: "You all know the story about David and Goliath? David also was much smaller than Goliath, but he out smarted him, and that is exactly what you are going to do. Remember your position and play like I told you and you will see they are no challenge to you!" After the training session I went to work to the butcher shop again.

Then came the day of the contest. It was like I predicted. The 11 year old boys again like the classes before, all run after the ball and the little eight year old played circles around them. It was a great victory. The Davids won. These kids were ecstatic.

I brought the boys back to the children house, and went from there to work, starting on the table for the butchers.

August 2nd, 1944. In the morning I worked on the table, but in the afternoon I got sick again with the abscess. My father received four parcels on that day. One from the Dingfelders, one from the Petscheniks and one from the Hamburgers.

August 5th, 1944, I was back at work in cabinet making place on the Bauhof, working on the table top for the butchers. My father received a little sardine parcel from Lisbon.

August 6th, 1944, this was Sunday, and I wrote into my diary "Jom Zofim". I do not remember what it stands for, but the translation of it means "Day of the Scouts.

August 8th, 1944, a small parcel from Lisbon arrived for me and a postcard was sent to Mr. Ernst Rummel. Mr. Rummel was a non-Jewish gentleman who as a Quaker was completely anti-Nazi. While we were still in Nuremberg, he visited us without the slightest kind of fear. He was told from my father, that he is endangering his life coming to them, but nothing helped.

Ernst Rummel was about the same age as my father. I met him for the first time during the deportation of friends in March 1942. He came to these people and helped them materially and psychological, and after these people were deported he came to us

Way back in 1942, when it became forbidden for Jews to have religious services, the Gestapo in Nuremberg permitted the Jews to have services in one of the two rooms which were still used for the congregational offices. Mr. Rummel asked my father to give him one of the yellow stars, he wants to come to our Friday evening service. He said, he can't go to the church any more, as they pray there for Hitler and the war.

My father said, it is impossible to give you a star, as you would be arrested the first time you wear it. Don't worry, he said I can take care of it. My father said, I will not give you a star, first of all, each person has only two, and secondly I will not be responsible for you being arrested.

Mr. Rummel bought a yellow handkerchief, stuck into the top left jacket pocket, let it hang out and every Friday night came to the service. He was never arrested during the entire Nazi years. He was the only German I knew, who was completely fearless about the Nazis.

August 10th, 1944, I still had something to do on the table for the butchers. Later on I was permitted to mail a postcard to Elisabeth.

August 11th, 1944, The top was finished and I installed it in the butcher shop. The butchers gave me a couple of little salami ends. I got 1/3 of bread. This seems to be the last payment for something I did. I got a ticket for the shower in the afternoon, which was located in the Berggasse Q 7. The butchers probably told me to come back the next day. Afterwards I was beating a carpet to clean it. (I have no idea for whom as we did not have a carpet.)

August 12th, 1944, I worked in the carpenter shop on the *Bauhof* to produce sections for barracks. In the afternoon I was off. At home I made a little foot stool. Later on I went back to the butchers and they gave me some soup which they had cooked.

August 13th, 1944, I went after work to the children home of E Vb and was drawing with the children in Julius's classroom. Later on I went to see the final soccer game of the team of the electrician against the *Jugendfuersorge* (Social service for children and youth.)

August 14th, 1944, I worked first in the *Landhaus*, which was probably the so called villa Kursawe. I don't remember what I had to do there. Afterwards I had to go back to the shop on the *Bauhof*.

August 15th, 1944, I again worked on that *Landhouse*. Binder. I also don't know what Binder stood for. My father received a parcel from the Pimpers. Also I have the name Jutta written down but do not remember anything about anybody with that name.

August 17th, 1944, There again is Binder mentioned? I mailed a postcard to Ruth and went afterwards to a soccer game. These games were always in the courtyard of the Dresdner barrack and as there was not enough room, each team had only 8 men.

August 19th, 1944, on that day was the soccer final game. I went there after work.

August 20th, and 21st, 1944, I again had to work in or on the *Landhaus*.

August 22nd, 1944. My father hurt is left hand, but I don't remember how. I worked at the *M.G.R. (Montage Gruppe Reimann.)*

At 2:30 in the afternoon I was summoned to the Magdeburger barrack for a roll call at 3:30 p.m. I went to the place and there we were told I, as well as well as the other people there would be sent on a transport as a labor group. All during the day and also any time during the night, messengers came to bring orders, which had to be immediately delivered. Their job was a 24 hours job. There was no interior mail in Theresienstadt.

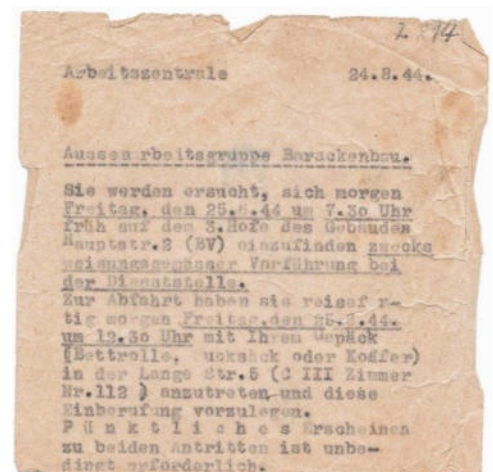
August 23rd, 1944, I received a *Sonderbezugschein*, a special coupon for articles I would need for outfitting for the transport. At the same day I also received a notice from the so-called post office, that a package had arrived for me. I went to pick it up. It was a small parcel with two cans of oil sardines. This was the sixth time I had gotten such a gift package. My father received a 2 kg. package from Dr Baer and a 1 kg parcel from Dingfelder as well as from Dr. Nuernberger.

Arbeitszentrale

8. 24. 44

Detail for group of workers to build barracks outside the Ghetto.

You are going to be asked, to be in the third courtyard of the building *Hauptstrasse 2*, (B V) tomorrow Friday, the 25th of August '44 at 7:30 a.m., for the purpose of being shown to the *Dienststelle* (SS headquarter). You have to be ready for departure on Friday at 12:30 p.m. with your packages (Rolled up blanket, backpack or suitcase) in the *Lange Strasse 5* (C III room No.112) and stand in line. This notification has to be submitted.

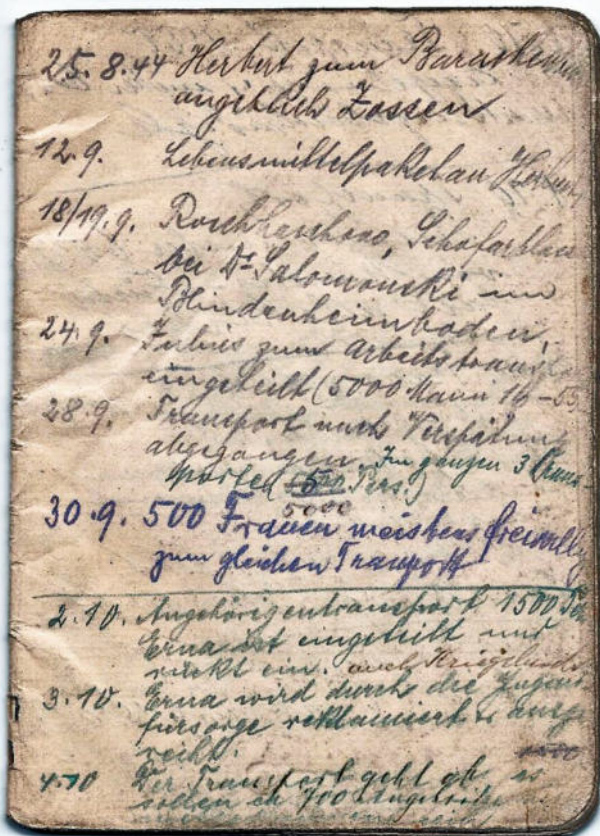


P u n c t u a l l y to both dates is demanded.

August 24, 1944, I received the equipment for the transport, was packing my backpack and a suitcase with my cloths. During the night following order was brought to the office of the *Hausaeltesten*, to be at once delivered to me:

August 25th, 1944. We were fifteen men and twenty-five women, presented to the SS commandant at 8:30 a.m. After that each one of us got a ticket for taking a shower at 10:00 a.m. At 1:30 p.m. I as well as the rest of the selected people had to be in the Hamburger barrack. We were standing there from 2:30 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. and then had to board the train. I knew two of the men, one of them a cabinetmaker and the other a carpenter.

We went into the 3rd class passenger car. This did not seem to be too bad, after all we were not shipped in cattle cars. A railroad engine came, our passenger car was hooked up to it and off we went. A couple of minutes we were standing at the railroad station in Bauschowitz. Very soon our wagon was connected to a train coming from Prague and the train went north. We were told and everybody believed it, that we were going to Zossen and were in pretty good spirits as we thought we were going into Germany, would be working like any other laborers and that could not be too bad. If they expected us to do professional work, we figured they would also have to treat and feed us accordingly.



25. 8. 44 Herbert zum Barackenbau
umgeklebt Zossen
12. 9. Lebensmittelpaket an Herbert
18/19. 9. Durchhausen, Schafhausen
bei St. Salomauke in
Blindenheimbach
24. 9. Fahrt zum Arbeitsraum
eingeklebt (500 Mann 16-55)
28. 9. Transport nach Tübingen
abgegangen, im ganzen 3 Mann
später (500 Pers.)
30. 9. 500 Frauen meistens freiwillig
zum gleichen Transport
2. 10. Angehörigentransport 1500 Pers.
Gina ist eingeklebt und
nicht ein. auch Krügelmann
3. 10. Gina wird durch die Jugend
fürsorge verblauert & bringt
nicht
4. 10. Der Transport geht ab
sollen die 100 Angehörigen

Everybody in Theresienstadt knew that the barrack builders were sent to Zossen and we were convinced we were going to that place.

My father wrote on the 25th of August 1944 into his diary, that I was sent presumably to Zossen. He only mentioned in this small diary only certain dates mainly those which seemed important to him. Like the deportation of my brother-in-law and of my sister.

But what happened to them about later.

This was the end for a while about Theresienstadt.

The next chapter of my life was quite different from what I expected.

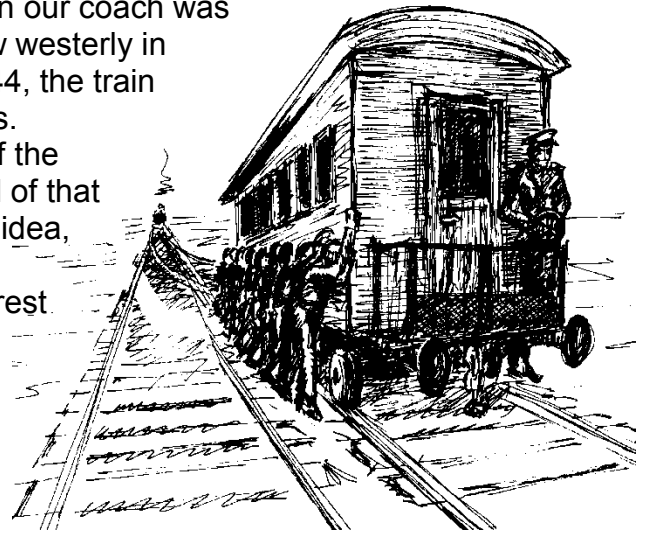
The beautiful Czech countryside flew by outside the window, and this was another soothing image, as we were traveling in a regular passenger car and not in the cattle car where the people on transport usually were shipped in. At 11:00 p.m. we passed Bodenbach and at 2:00 a.m., Saturday August 26th, the train was in Dresden.

It was not too comfortable sleeping on the wooden benches of the 3. class coaches, but we were mostly young people and that really did not matter for one night. We did not get any food on the trip, but we had some along.

The train continued, passing Cottbus, Frankfurt on the Oder and Kuestrin. Everybody wondered where that place Zossen was. In Kuestrin our coach was connected to a different train, and the trip went now westerly in direction of Berlin. At 1:30 p.m. on August 26th, 1944, the train stopped what seemed like an open stretch of tracks. Somehow one saw written Trebnitz, and as most of the men were from Czechoslovakia nobody ever heard of that place either. Neither did I. At least, I had a general idea, we were east of Berlin. Our passenger car was conveniently the last one. It got unhitched and the rest of the train drove off towards the west.

All the men were commanded out and we had to push the wagon on a siding. - - -

The next chapter of my life was quite different from what I expected.





The Barrack Builders

To make the following part understandable I have to repeat some of the story of the last chapter. February 29th, 1944. A messenger came from the office of labor and ordered me to report at once to the commandant's office in the Magdeburger barrack, where I and many others were presented to the *Kommandantur*. We believed they were a group of manual laborers who were supposed to be working outside the ghetto, someplace back in Germany. I as well as some of the other young men thought that

1245-II/28 Kolb Herbert 1922 Bahnhofstr 74

Im Auftrage der Dienststelle haben Sie sich
s o f o r t
 zwecks Standkontrolle bei der Dienststelle zu melden.

might be a good chance to get more food and better treatment. I was ordered to appear at 7:45 p.m. at the doctors' place in the Genie barrack, where I had to give information about the operation on my foot. The questioning took until 8:30. I was summoned again to the doctor the next day at 3:45 p. m.

March 1st, 1944 I got another summons to appear again at the doctor's at 5:00 p.m., and after being looked over once more I was told to be back at 5:30 p.m. There I was again questioned about my health and about the operation on my left foot on January 25th, 1944.

I was awakened by a ghetto policeman at 1:00 a.m. and told that I had to come with him immediately. The officer brought a *Durchlassschein* (pass) for me. We both went to the doctor again. I was sent back and forth between Genie barrack, E IIIa, and the Magdeburger barrack, B V. Then I was finally told that the train would leave at 3:00 p.m. the next day and I had to be ready to go.

Thursday, March 2nd between 12:15 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. there was another roll-call and all of us who were selected were told to go home and start packing. What should one pack? We were told that we

JUDISCHE SELBSTVERWALTUNG THERESIENSTADT

DURCHLASSSCHEIN Nr. 7883

gültig nach 22 Uhr

für Kolb Herbert

Trsp. Nr. II/28 1245

Adresse Bahnhofstr 74

Grund Meldding

Ziel

am-von 1. III. 1944 bis 6

DER JUDENALTESTE

Dr. Paul Israel Epstein

AT 1874 2-6 AN - 3 m - 215

would only be gone for six weeks, which would mean until about May or June. Should one take warm clothes? All we heard was that the place where we would be shipped was called Zossen. But who knows where this place Zossen is? We were also told that we would be supplied from Theresienstadt. It would be better to take a little bit of food along; after all we didn't know how long this train ride was going to take. Nobody had much reserve of food anyway. My parents gave me a couple of the items from the one kg package my father had just received on February.

March 3rd, 1944. We were ready to go. Everyone was told to stay at home, in case Ghetto policemen would come to pick us up. This was like sitting on pins and needles. For a reason I don't know, I was not picked up. The train left at 3:00 p.m. without me. This transport was made up of a large group of trained workers like electricians and carpenters and even more unskilled laborers. Nobody knew where this Zossen was. As I found out later this, like anything else the Germans ever said, was a lie. Zossen was not the place where they were to be sent.

Sometime a little later in March, another 50 men were also shipped to the barrack builders, supposedly also to Zossen. The six weeks past and nobody came back. As I was not taken, I went back to my normal place of work in the cabinetmaker's shop in the Bauhof.

All we made there were windows and doors probably for the Ghetto and most of the time we had to do special things for the Nazis. We made tables and chairs for their dining room. I remember a lamp, an old wagon wheel with heads of horses which held the lamps. We worked on a little horse wagon for the camp commander and also a horse drawn sled. I remember bending the runners for this sled. The wood had to be steamed for hours maybe for days, in order to make it pliable. Then there was a special rig constructed which held the one part of the runners and all of us cabinet makers had to push on the other side to bend it. Since none of us had actually done this before, naturally the wood broke several times and everything had to be started again.

On June 6, 1944 I got my new identification card. As there was no photographer in Theresienstadt most of these cards did not have a photograph. I had an older photo with me, which was probably a picture taken for the Kennkarte.

VORLADUNG

Name: *Kolb Herbert* *A 931*

Trsp. Nr. *Tr. 1245* Ubi. *L 274*

Beitrag: *Belmetom 100*

Stellen Sie sich am *31/5* um *9* Uhr

im *BT* Gebäude, Zim. Nr. *AT3* ein und melden Sie sich

bei *Mrs. Vordiche*

Arbeitszentrale

PERSONENBESCHREIBUNG:

Statur: *mittel*

Haare: *braun*

Augen: *braun*

Earl: *keinen*

Gesicht: *oval*

Fähne: *gesund*

Nase: *gross*

Mund: *normal*

Bez. Kennzeichen: *keine*

GHETTO THERESIENSTADT

Der Ältestenrat

G. Z. *2400-6074/44*

Tr. Nr. *1245-II/28*

wohnt *Bahnhofstr. 14*

Ausweis.

Name u. Vorname: *Kolb Herbert I.*

geboren am: *27.2.22* in *Nürnberg* Staatsang.: *D.R.*

Heim. Gemeinde: *---* Stand: *ledig*

letzte Wohnadresse: *Nürnberg, Kneuerstr. 27*

wird in Theresienstadt unter Tr. Nr. *1245-II/28* im Stande geführt.

Dieser Ausweis wurde auf Grund der Transportliste, der Familienkartei und der eidesstattlichen Erklärung des Ausweisinhabers ausgestellt.

Theresienstadt, am *6.4.44.*

Der Ältestenrat

This is the summons

A little later, I don't remember the day, I was ordered to the carpenter group of Montage Gruppe Reimann, called MGR. This was probably because a lot of the men who worked in this group had been shipped off with the transport on March 3rd. I now worked as a carpenter. It was not much different from the cabinet making. Most of the time it was just outdoor work mostly using the axe. Very seldom did one use a plane or any other cabinet making tools. It was now getting warmer every day and the outdoor work

was not unpleasant. As most of the carpenters were not trained woodworkers, I frequently was ordered to the carpenter's workshop to prepare or build certain pieces.

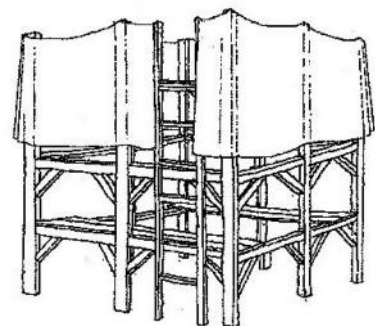
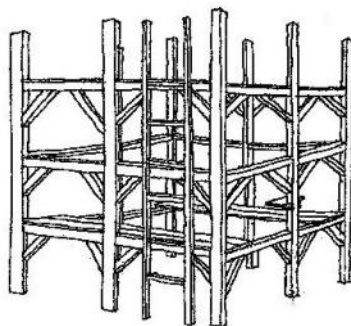
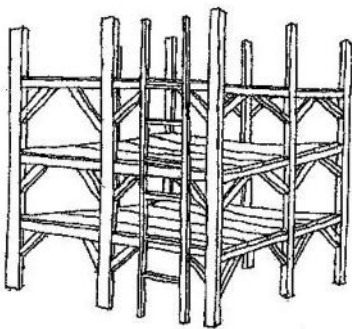
Sometime in August, Erna was accepted to also be one of the guardians of children in the children house. She now could at least see her husband a little more often. She was in a room with little girls while Julius had a room with 8 year old boys.

The two boys on the right side were just wrestling when I came into the room to visit Julius. I told them to stop and hold the pose. They did. After I was finished with the sketch and told them so, they continued their wrestling match.

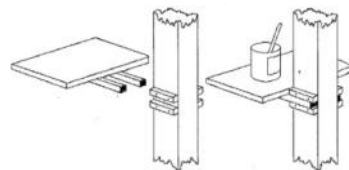
There were a couple of more young women in that place where their husbands also were working. Soon five of these young couples were permitted to sleep together up in the attic.

Erna asked me if I could build a little private place for them. Each of these couples was permitted to use one of the three tier beds as their living quarters. Obviously I did not have any extra wood therefore I just used the boards from the beds.

First I took out the lumber of the middle section and the central ones from the lower section. This way I now had two benches and enough headroom to sit in the lower section. One still had to crawl in. On top was the bedroom. We covered it with some old sheets. This became a very small living area for two people, but for Theresienstadt it was like a luxury apartment.



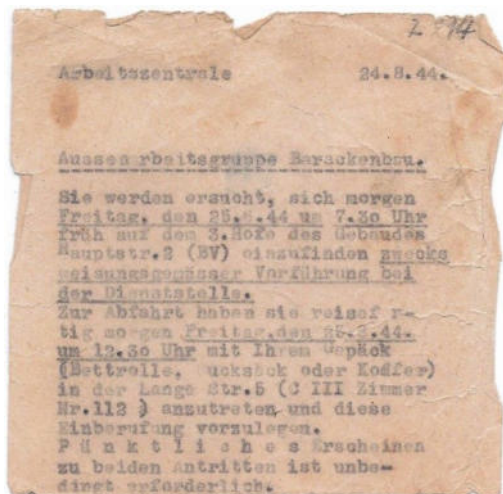
To make a dining table I used one of the boards from the central section. Put on each side of one of the upright studs two small strips of wood, also cut from a board, where one could slide a piece of board in and now had a removable table. With some of the other saved boards I made shelves in the dining and in the eating and sleeping areas.



At 2:30 in the afternoon of August 22, 1944 I was summoned to the Magdeburger barrack again for a roll call at 3:30 p.m. There, I was told I would be sent on a new transport to the barrack builders in Zossen.

August 23rd, 1944, I received a special coupon for articles I would need to be outfitted for the transport.

August 24, 1944, I received the equipment and again I was packing my backpack and a small suitcase with my clothes. During the night the following order was brought to the office of the *Hausaeltesten*, to be delivered to me at once:



Arbeitszentrale

8. 24. 44

Detail for group of workers to build barracks outside the Ghetto.

You are going to be asked to be in the third courtyard of the building Hauptstrasse 2, (B V) tomorrow Friday, the 25th of August '44 at 7:30 a.m., for the purpose of being shown to the Dienststelle (SS headquarter).

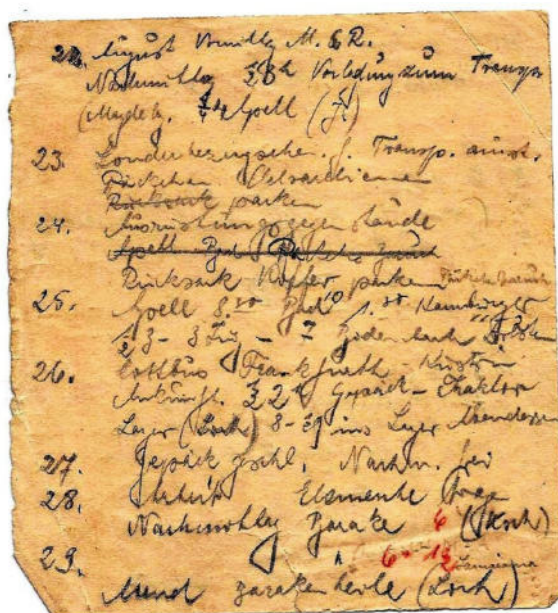
You have to be ready for departure on Friday at 12:30 p.m. with your packages (Rolled up blanket, backpack or suitcase) in the Lange Strasse 5 (C III room No.112) and stand in line. This notification has to be submitted.

Punctuality to both dates is demanded.

August 25th, 1944. We fifty-five men and fourteen women were presented to the SS commandant at 8:30 in the morning. After that each one of us got a ticket for the shower at 10:00 o'clock and at 1:30 p.m. all of us selected people had to be in the Hamburger barrack. We were standing around from 2:30 until 3:00 p.m. and then marched over to the train and were told to board it. I knew two of the men, one of them a cabinetmaker and the other a carpenter.

We were now in a 3rd class passenger car. This did not seem to be too bad; after all we were not being shipped in cattle cars. A railroad engine came, the passenger car was hooked up to it and off we went. Just a couple of minutes later our wagon was standing at the railroad station in Bauschowitz. Very soon our car was connected to a train coming from Prague and the train left, going north.

We were again told we were going to Zossen and everybody believed it. We were in pretty good spirits as we thought we were going into Germany, would be working like any other laborers and that could not be too bad. If they expected us to do professional work, we figured they would also have to treat and feed us accordingly. We also were promised to be able to families in Theresienstadt. Little did we know what was in store for us..



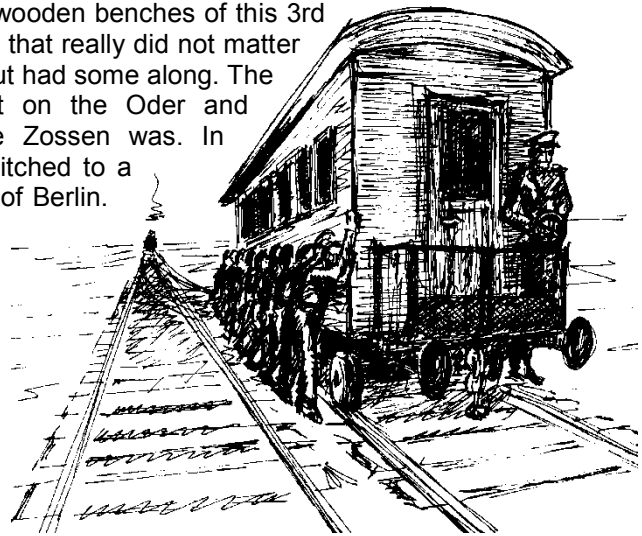
The beautiful Czech countryside flew by outside the window, and it was another soothing image, traveling in a regular passenger car and not in the cattle car, which was how the transports usually were shipped.

At 11:00 p.m. on Saturday August 26th, we passed Bodenbach at 7 p.m. From 11:00 pm until 2:00 a.m. the train was standing in Dresden.

I had little pieces of paper and wrote every town we passed on it. Later on I used it as a diary.

It was not too comfortable to sleep on the wooden benches of this 3rd class coach, but we were mostly young people and that really did not matter for one night. We did not get any food on the trip, but had some along. The train now continued, passing Cottbus, Frankfurt on the Oder and Kuestrin. We were wondering where that place Zossen was. In Kuestrin our wagon was disconnected and then hitched to a different train which went westerly, in the direction of Berlin.

At 1:30 p.m. the train stopped at what seemed like an open stretch of tracks. Somewhere one saw written Trebnitz, and as most of the people were from Czechoslovakia nobody ever heard of that place either. At least I had a general idea, we were east of Berlin. The coach was conveniently the last one on the train and got unhitched. The train drove off towards the west.



The SS trouper, a sergeant, who guarded us on the train, traveled in the same wagon but in a separate compartment. He came into our part of the wagon now and said all men must get off, but leave the bags in the wagon and the women should stay on. Also, this was by no means an unfriendly command. We then had to push that railroad car to a siding and the sergeant, using the hand lever to move the switch, then went onto the wagon to control the brake.

Everybody was told to take their packages off the train now. After sitting near the tracks for a while a tractor came with an open wagon in tow. Driving up the slight incline on the road it stopped next to us. We all had to put our bundles on the wagon. All the girls were helped on the wagon. After that some of the men had to climb on top. More and more of us had to climb up there until everybody was on board. There was absolutely no spare room; we were standing very tight together. With that SS sergeant standing on the back of the tractor, it looked more like a circus performance. Finally it started moving. The atmosphere was good, just like a hay ride. When the road went uphill the tractor did not have enough power to pull the load of all the people and could not move anymore. The wheels turned but the wagon did not move. He tried again and again, but nothing happened. Some of us men had to jump off and helped push. It did not move before all fifteen of us were off again and pushed. The 25 girls could stay on.

After about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour of slow ride, we arrived at what seemed to be just a thick forest. The ride was probably not more than 5 miles. On a small road the tractor drove into the woods and now we saw two deserted prefabricated barracks standing in the middle of large sand dunes. We wondered where the people who were supposed to be there since spring. It looked like nobody had lived in these barracks for a while.

It was late afternoon. We were told we have to stay here until the next morning. Everybody was now looking to find a place to sleep inside the little wooden barrack. Later on we found out why the first group, who were mainly Czechs called this place: "*Sama jama!*" (Nothing but a hole). It took only a minute and we were covered with fleas which seemed to be starved for blood which they did not have for a while. Everybody got very active hunting these pests. As there was nobody there, we still did not get any food, and by now we had exhausted our little supply from Theresienstadt.

Suddenly a command:

"Everybody line up, we are marching off!"

It was now 8:00 o'clock, still daylight. We grabbed our belongings as fast as we could, lined up and off we marched. It was just a pass through the forest going up the hill. Only a short distance away we came to a clearing. There we saw three fences of barbed wire around a small area right next to the woods. Inside were some barracks and from where we stood, we saw people rushing back and forth

inside the encampment. One couldn't see any details or recognize anyone, as we were still too far away. There was a little house outside the fence and there we stopped.

A tall thin SS officer came out of that house and screamed:

"Still gestanden!" (Don't move). *"Anybody who speaks one word will be shot!"* He now went along the line, randomly hitting some of the men for absolutely no reason what so ever.

"You are here in Germany; anybody speaking Czech will be severely punished!" From his accent one could hear the brute was an Austrian, probably a Viennese. In Theresienstadt we all had experience with some Austrian Nazis as all the SS men there, including the head officer, came from Austria. These crooks had to prove to their German counterparts that they could be just as brutal, or maybe even more so.

"None of you Jewish Schweinehunde (Jewish pigs) sits down or speaks one word, you just stand there until I call each one of you in!"

This was quite a different reception from what we had hoped for. He must have had a list and one after the other we were called in. Whatever we had in our backpacks was thrown on a table and searched. Then he commanded us to take everything out of our pockets and turn the pockets inside out. One can imagine how much valuables we could have, coming from one concentration camp. When I was searched and had to turn my pockets inside out a piece of paper fell to the floor. Luckily the brute did not notice it. While on the train I had asked one of the Czech fellows to write me the words of the Czech song: "Ty muj svaty' Antonicku" on this piece of paper.

After my examination the contents of my back pack on the table was just swept off of the table onto the floor. I had to hurry to pick it up and get out of a second door, before this devil in uniform would kick me with his leather boots. I did not dare to pick up that little piece of paper any more.

I do not know what he did to the girls, but one can imagine what this super-Nazi was able to do. Hitting or kicking them was the least. After the examination, one by one we were directed through a large gate into the enclosure to the actual camp together with the old-timers. They helped us to get settled as quickly as possible in one of the two barracks. Briefly they gave us some information about what kind of a place this was and warned us about the bestial Obersturmfuehrer.

At about 9:00 p.m. we got something to eat. We asked them: "Is this Zossen?" "No", they said, "this is Wulkow. We have no idea where Zossen is!" Wulkow, they knew, was located somewhere west of Kuestrin and north-west of Frankfurt on the Oder.

The old-timers told us that the officer, an *Obersturmfuehrer* (The military rank of a first lieutenant) is a perverse, cruel specimen of an Austrian Nazi. His name was Franz Stuschka and they heard he was one of the murderers of the Austrian socialist Prime Minister Dollfuss. (This by the way might not have been true.) There were also two *SS-Oberscharfuehrers* (sergeants), Hanke and Stiasny, the one who had brought us there, and the other one *SS-Scharfuehre*, Proschek. We were told they are not too bad, but don't trust them either. All three of them were Austrian Nazis.

The work week consisted of six and one half days starting from sunrise until sunset. Sunday was supposed to be half day, with the afternoon off for special exercise, as he called it. The comrades loathed that afternoon, as that Nazi usually used that half day to torture the people.

Everybody finally found a place to sleep. There were two continuous rows of two tier beds. For a mattress there was just a thin bag of straw. I found a place all the way in the back left corner. Next to me was Heinrich Wurm, a cabinetmaker, and Pavel Weiss a carpenter, both fellows I knew; they also came on the same transport as I. Heinrich was a married man of about 40 years and Pavel, single but almost 32 years old. Both were from Czechoslovakia.

Before we went to sleep Heinrich, who was sleeping between the two of us, told us he wants to warn us, that he might scream at night. I answered him not to worry; it won't bother me, as I can sleep through anything and did through air raids with bombs falling.

Little did I know: in the middle of the night, everything was pitch black, I suddenly was awakened by somebody screaming out at the top of his lungs:

"Pozor!"

I did not know very many Czech words but *pozor* I knew. It meant: "Watch out, danger, be careful!" It would be called out like that only in a real emergency. We, who were Heinrich's neighbors were in shock. Our hearts almost stopped and he did not even wake up.

The next day, Pavel and I found another place to sleep, as far away from Heinrich as possible. We still were good friends, but it was impossible to sleep next to him.

At 5:30 in the morning the camp was awakened. As quick as possible one had to wash outside on a long half round metal basin with a couple of faucets, than one had to stand in line for coffee next to the kitchen barrack, which was just a little shack. It was the same brew as in Theresienstadt, just a black brew from turnips. It was at least warm, most of the time we did not drink it but used it to shave with. After all we had no shaving cream, either. At 6:00 o'clock was roll call. One had to run to the open area in front of the barracks and line up in rows of three, men and women alike, but standing separately. Any talk was strictly forbidden.

The *Oberscharfuehrer* went up and down the row of men while we had to count as fast as possible. This little game went on for hours, no matter whether it rained or snowed. Finally, whenever he felt like, the *Obersturmfuehrer* came out of his house on top of the hill.

Slowly he walked down, usually one leather glove off. The counting game started new again for quite a while, this time interrupted by the brute hitting one or the other in the face with the loose glove. He looked for some men he knew by name, called them and it appeared to give him a special pleasure to torment them. One could see how sadistically he enjoyed this, by looking at the perverse smile on the face.

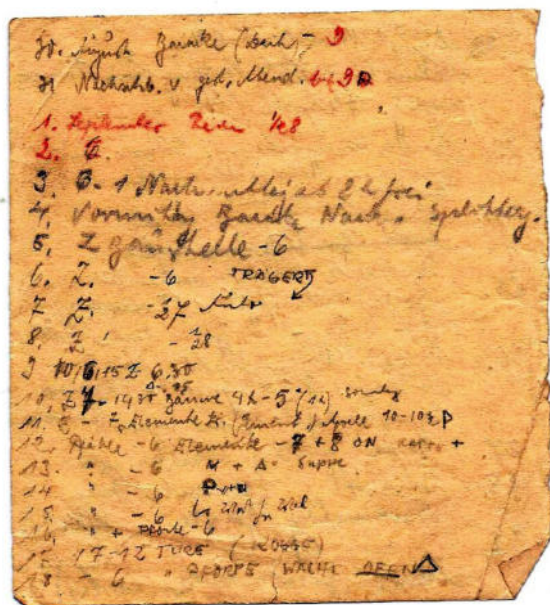
I immediately decided the best way to live would be not to stand out in any way, good or bad, so the tyrant would not notice me.

Sunday, August 27th, our suitcases were frisked, which we had to leave at Stuschka's house and some of the men brought them back,

Guarded by an SS-guard, after roll call each of us marched to the particular workplace with our assigned group. Being a carpenter, I was with a group of carpenters, erecting prefabricated barracks. As the rest of the carpenters did not know us and what we knew about barracks, we were at first assigned to just carry wall sections to the building site.



It was Sunday, supposedly the afternoon was off. But we had heard that this was the worst time of the week when the *Obersturmfuehrer* used the rest of the day tormenting us. For the cretin this was the game he enjoyed. Playing with us like a cat with mice. I do not particularly remember what happened on this afternoon, but I am sure we first had to stand for a long time on roll call, counting and recounting. There was no food at lunchtime.



While standing there he usually tortured some of the men again, making them do some absolutely unnecessary work like carrying heavy rocks from one place to another and back again. There was no food until the OSF was tired of us. These little games very often went on and on until night.

August 30th, 1944. Like on the last couple of days Pavel and I were only told to carry barrack sections to the building site. Today for the first time I worked with the carpenters on a barrack, putting ceiling and roof sections in place. I had worked on barracks before in Theresienstadt and knew how to do this. We were working until 9:00 p.m., as long as one could see. I got for the first time in the evening *Nachschub*, some of the extra food.

August 31st, 1944. We worked again until 9:00 p.m. I worked on the roof of a new barrack. After the roll call we got supper. We all were a good congenial group, who helped each other wherever we could. There was

one exception, Paul Raphaelsohn. Paul was a 38 year old man. He was from the Rhineland, about six foot two inches tall with a fairly heavy build. He was one of the old timers of the Wulkow group. We were told Paul volunteered his services to Stuschka and was therefore made the Jewish headman or capo. He took it as his right to hit people too, and one had to be very careful with him. He was a typical Quisling, who denounces anybody to the Nazi officer as he thought this way he could save his own skin. He believed himself to be the Jewish superman who also had the right to punish or reward whomever he felt like. Raphaelsohn, we called him Rafke, thought to make me one of his stoolpigeons, after all I was from Germany too.

He was a miserable guy and a typical Nazi collaborator. He was married to a Christian in a mixed marriage and believed himself more German than the Nazis, and was intent on proving it every day. He was sorry not to be one of them and volunteered his services to the OSF. I was warned about him the first day.

Out of the blue, one evening he dictated that I should get *Nachshub*. (A little additional food which was still left after everybody had his small portion.) I took it. With this and other preferential treatment he hoped to bribe me to collaborate with him. He hated the Czechs like his master Stuschka. The carpenters, who were almost all Czech, were a thorn in his eye. He tried to have a spy in that group. It did not take him long to realize I not only did not cow-tow to him, but besides was in very good terms with all my Czech colleagues. This one time was the only time I ever got extra food because of him. Once more Raphaelsohn tried to intimidate me but now he tried it with other means. He made me move to the penalty barrack which housed a group of fellows who had previously beaten him up. After he denounced them to the OST these fellows were put into that barrack. It was worse than the regular barrack. Luckily I was housed in there only for a short time.

Knowing Raphaelsohn, obviously the Czech carpenters did not trust people from Germany. Only after I proved I was not a collaborator with the help of Pavel, who knew me, was I told all the little secrets about what to do and of what to be aware. The fellows had worked out a system that some of the men could always rest or sleep a while, as our working day was very long and the food completely insufficient. It worked like this.

One or the other of our group was told that he could climb on top of the ceiling section, in that little crawlspace under the roof. There was just enough room to lie down. One took his hammer or hatchet along. Should the Obersturmfuehrer come to the site, the comrades would wake the sleeper up and he

would just use his hammer or hatchet to make noises. This would sound as if one nails something on. This system worked beautifully and once in a while I also got the turn to rest a couple of minutes.

I also was told that the cursed Nazi would never enter any of the barracks before they were completed, because of a certain accident which had happened a short time ago. Two brothers, Eduard and Georg Fried, both carpenters, looked so much alike one thought they were twins. There is an old carpenter rule never to lay your ax down on the roof, but instead secure it by hitting it into the wood so that it sticks there. One man forgot this rule and while working on the roof, the hatchet slid off and fell down, the moment one of the brothers walked out of the door. The falling axe hit him on the tip of his nose. When I came to Wulkow, one could still see the scar, and now the brothers were easier to identify. But Stuschka heard about it and thought this could happen to him and not by accident.

Sunday, September 3rd, 1944. We were working from 6:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. and then were marched back to the camp. Without lunch, during the roll call, the tormenting started. The beast of an SS-*Obersturmfuehrer* had all kinds of ideas on how to impose German cruelties on defenseless people. He probably got tired at 6:00 p.m. and then, after finally getting our lunch, we were given the rest of the day off. I did not indicate in my diary what in particular he did to us.

On September 4th, 1944. I worked in the morning in a barrack and in the afternoon in one of *Splittergraben*, the air raid ditches. I don't remember what I had to do.

September 5th, until the 9th, 1944. I worked in the Z-construction site on a barrack. This place was across the main road. We were not permitted to go there unescorted and had to have an SS-soldier with us. We worked there until 6:30 p.m.

September 10th, 1944 was another Sunday. My group had worked every day at the construction site "Z". The *Obersturmfuehrer* came around noon time by bicycle. The men already expected some kind of trouble. We would rather have continued working. At 1:00 p.m. our group was ordered to assemble for the march back to the camp. We probably were not more than twenty men. After crossing the road we hiked up through the woods and as we passed a pile of cut trees, probably laying there for years the commander shouted:

"Who put these trees there?"

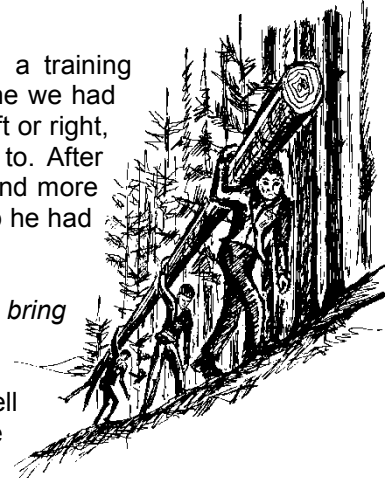
Nobody answered. Obviously nobody knew. We continued up to the camp. The SS officer now thought of a new kind of torture for his Sunday entertainment

As usual, everybody had to stand on the roll call until all the different groups had arrived back. Then came the counting and recounting which might have taken hours. The beast played this counting game with us for a while like that, intermittently hitting some of the men while he was walking up and down the rows of three. After that came his special Sunday favor.

He started a selection. The bastards must have learned it in a training camp. Like in Auschwitz, he positioned himself in front of us. One by one we had to walk by in front of him. He now motioned, using his thumb, pointing left or right, directing us to go either here or there. Nobody knew what he was up to. After having everybody in two groups, he started again making more groups and more groups. Finally he seemed to be satisfied with his selection. In one group he had chosen nine men. I was one of them.

"*You Saujuden*", he screamed to the nine of us, "*go down and bring those trees up here but, no more than three man on one tree!*"

While our small group left, the rest of the people, women as well as men were ordered to stay there on the roll call place and were forbidden to talk. He shouted:



"There will be no food until all the trees are up here!"

The nine of us were ordered to leave with a guard armed with a rifle, as this was outside the actual camp. As ordered, we formed three groups, of three men each, and lifted the very long, quite heavy oak trees on our shoulders and started the hike up on a curving, rutted dirt road through the woods. It was not the easiest thing, because of the unevenness of the terrain.

Sometimes the middle man had almost the whole weight on his shoulder, bent far down, and then again because of the unevenness of the ground, the entire weight was on the front and back men, while the one in the center could hardly reach it. Huffing and puffing, the three teams finally came up to the camp. We were told where to put the trees.

The same teams were sent down again and again until every tree was brought up in the camp. We had to make at least four trips, each one taking more than 15 minutes to go down and even longer to get to the top. The rest of our comrades still stood at the roll call place. At 5:00 pm, after counting once more and yet another recounting, to ensure that none of his slaves was missing, we finally were permitted to get lunch. Lunch every day was just a thin watery soup made with some powdered peas and if we were lucky and had saved a little piece from our $\frac{1}{4}$ of bread which had to last for three days, we could eat it too.

September 11th, 1944, from 7:00 o'clock in the morning I had to carry barrack sections to the building area in the building site Z. I wrote we had roll call from 10:00 until 10:30, probably at night.

September 12th, 1944, I was assigned to a group of pile drivers. I had done it before in Theresienstadt. The piles were round poles pointed on one end and had to be driven into the ground as the building's foundation. These wooden piles were pounded into the ground by a team of four men with heavy sledge hammers. It had to be timed right so the hammer was out of the way when the next hammer came down. This was a physically pretty hard work, but we were young men and did not mind, since afterwards we got a couple of slices of salt meat extra. From hitting the top of these piles it got so hot, one could not touch it. With a level and a long board the piles were checked to be perfectly even with each other. I worked the next four days on the pile driving team. In the evening we had to carry barrack sections from 7:00 until 8:00 p.m.

As I was part of the pile drivers we got soup afterwards. On the 14th I worked together with Pavel.

On September 15th, 1944, we, the pile drivers, got ten grams of Margarine, Sugar and Marmalade.

It was Sunday again. September 17th, 1944. Most of the trees in the forest were pines, but on a couple of places were some acacia trees. In fall these trees have some bean like fruits. The food which we got was always much too little and everybody was always hungry. Somebody had the idea; one could probably eat the beans. Everybody did, I did too. They did not taste bad, but we got stomach aches from it, as we did not know that they are slightly poisonous. We worked from 7:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

Suddenly the pervert came to the site and indiscriminately beat people with his fists or with all kinds of objects he just found. Berthold Hornung, a carpenter was one of the youngest fellows. He was 19 years old and could not speak German very well. There was no reason; maybe the boy was just in his way. The officer punched him to the ground and then kicked him mercilessly many times. That got the monster exited now and he screamed in rage:

"Where is the foreman?"

Anybody around was hit or kicked. Nobody knew why.

Somebody must have answered him Karel Rutar, our foreman works on the construction site Z. He turned towards me as I must have been just standing close to him and screamed:

“Get him!”

I turned to run, after a couple of steps I remembered, it was forbidden to leave the compound without a guard. It also was forbidden for only one of us to request a guard to escort us. This was the ruling of Stuschka. I turned around to tell that to the brute. Before I could get two words out he hit me in the face and screamed:

“Get that Saujud on the double!”

I ran down the hill to the guards barrack and requested from the SS-sergeant a guard to accompany me to the Z-site. He was in no hurry at all. It took them a while until the sergeant ordered one to come with me. The man first had to find his rifle and then slowly followed me. It did not help to tell him to go faster, as all the guards were Romanians and did not understand one German word. We had to go all the way down to the road, cross it and then find Karel. The construction sites were quite large, and I had no idea where this group was working.

Finally I found him. I told Karel that Stuschka wants him and we made our way back. Again that guard went as slow as he could. We crossed the road again and up the mountain through the forest. After we came to the guard house and the guard left, I told Karel that the beast was raging again. At last we could run. The maniac was still screaming, we heard him from quite a distance. As soon as we arrived he started hitting Karel. Nobody knew why, but we were used to that. He hit and boxed and kicked him again and again. For this Nazi, there did not have to be a reason. The result was that both eardrums of Karel got broken.

[illegible]

September 16th, 1944. I was still working with the pile drivers and afterwards had to do some repair on the gate of the fence around the house of the SS-guards.

September 17th, 1944. I had to fix something on the door of our kitchen shed.

September 18th, 1944. Until 6:00 p.m. I had to finish the repair on the gate of the SS-guard house.

September 19th, 1944. Until 7:30 p.m. we were piling up barrack sections next to the guard house. I do not remember why.

September 20th, 1944. We were working on number 6, 7 and 8 of the Offenbeck barracks.

All the barracks had to be put up in the middle of the woods to camouflage them from enemy planes. After the piles were in place and were leveled, one team of carpenters began putting the floor down. A couple of men from another group of carpenters started with the wall sections on one corner while a third team was working on the second corner. After the corners were secured the wall sections were put into place. Each barrack had a center hall with small rooms off this. On these two inside walls another two teams were working. Each team usually had two men. One had to secure these sections and erect them straight with a couple of diagonal beams. They were tacked temporarily with one nail. As soon as a couple of wall units were standing securely, another group was putting the A-roof sections on top. This was a little more tricky part, as one had to climb a ladder with the triangular roof section on his shoulder. Climbing the ladder holding on with one hand while the other one held the section, lifting that rather heavy part. One of the men was steadying the ladder and some others the walls as much as possible. On top of the wall unit were two little cleats and the roof

section had to be eased between them. These cleats were called *Zimmermann's Pfloেকে*. (Carpenter's plugs) They had to be cut square, which was my job at this time. They had to be nailed on top beforehand. I did this also on September 21, 22, and 23rd.

September 23rd, 1944, the work on one of the buildings was proceeding very nicely. The first two corners and a couple of outside section as well as the inside walls were already in place. The construction of the buildings went fairly fast. On top of each outer wall one man was usually sitting to help to position the A-roof section, to ease it into the cleats. Like a tight rope walker he walked from one side to the other on top of these very shaky beams. Philipp Mandelbaum was one of the fellows who could do it. He was standing on the ridge of the roof while he tacked up temporary boards to hold the roof sections in the right position.

We needed special permission from Stuschka to cut a tree, for, as I said before they were to hide the existence of the barracks from the air. Once in a while one tree had to be removed because it just could not be avoided. Men were beaten for cutting branches off trees which stood in the way of the construction. In lots of places the heavy branches were pulled aside, away from the building, usually with block-and-tackle. Than Stuschka screamed:

"That whole forest is held together with wires!" He might have beaten some people because of it, but it just could not be helped, as a forest is lots of trees and not all of them grow exactly like the Nazi wanted.

We had temporarily nailed supporting braces diagonal all along both long outsides the building, which were holding the building straight. Because of this it was quite difficult to bring the needed barrack sections to the construction site. This was usually done by two of the unskilled men. As soon as one who was in charge felt that enough units were up and the pieces were interlocking each other securely, one could remove the braces on the outside. Now the building was more easily accessible, although the men still had enough trouble to bring the pretty large section through the woods.

At one time something went wrong. I don't remember who, probably the foreman commanded:

"Take all the outside braces off!"

Everyone followed the order. Carpenters and helpers who were on the outside took the beams off. At this moment the left as well as the right walls moved and the whole construction collapsed. The roof section came crashing down in the center. As all these buildings were very close to the trees, most of the wall sections could not fall to the ground, but just moved on top hitting the trees. I was removing one of the braces and remember suddenly seeing one of these wall sections just above my head. I probably moved fast between the trees away from the building. The pine trees held these collapsing wall sections and none of us got hurt.

But then we remembered Philipp! He must have come down with the roof. We rushed back into the collapsed building to dig out Philipp. He came down with the roof and like a miracle just walked out without a scratch like nothing had happened.

Philipp Mandelbaum was a remarkable guy. He was 24 years old and besides me, the only carpenter born in Germany. Philipp felt himself physically stronger than most of the other fellows, which he probably was. Whenever it was asked for volunteers, he always deliberately offered himself to give the rest of us a chance to rest. Philipp died in a freak accident one month after the liberation in June 1945.

September 24th, 1944, until 7:00 p.m. I had to prepare something in the air raid ditch, but don't remember what. Also the same on the 25th.

September 26th, 1944 was a nice sunny day. I remember we were working outside, probably sorting and piling barrack sections. While working there, a fairly large log rolled on my left shin. It hurt, and I limped for a while, but did not think anything about it.

Around 5:15 p.m. I felt sick. After roll call I went to the sickroom which was called *Marodenstube*. This "hospital room" was just a small room in one of the little flimsily built French barracks which really looked more like a shack. There were large spaces between each board where one could see through. Our dentist, Dr. Georg Minc who came to Wulkow with the same transport as I, had his so called practice in this room as well as the general practitioner, Dr. Erick Knoepfelmacher. Both doctors were working during the day as unskilled helpers and only in the evening they could attend to the sick. When we were shipped to Wulkow we brought with us a foot operated dental drill, the only dental equipment the doctors had. This "hospital room" was not much larger than 10 by 12 feet. It was the operating and examination room of the two doctors, as well as the ward for the sick people.

I was told to get into bed. The only thing the doctors could do was take the temperature. I don't remember what my temperature was but after a while my fever went down at 7:00 p.m. to 37.9, than to 37.8 and finally 37.4. There were no pills or any other medicine.

The rule by Stuschka was that sick people did not get any food. He decreed that for the person to get well faster all they got was a thin soup once a day. Only in case of a work accident one gets the same food as the rest. I was lucky that my sickness was considered a work accident. That evening was Erev Yom Kippur.

I got the evening food, but saved most of it because of Yom Kippur and fasted the next day. The following evening I ate all of it. It was in general so little, one had no problem eating a whole day's amount at one time.

September 27th, 1944. During the night another of our men, threw a blanket over the barbed-wire fence and fled. He too was a Berliner and tried to make it to the apartment of his Arian mother. This was a very bad idea, as the Nazis figured this out too. A couple of Gestapo agents went there the next day and caught him. He was brought back to Wulkow in handcuffs and the grinning Stuschka presented him to us.

I went back to work on September 28th and worked from 6:30 a.m. until 7:45 p.m. in the air raid ditch again.

September 29, 1944. Until 7:00 p.m. I worked together with one comrade, digging and putting posts for a fence in the ground in the middle of the woods. We planted 11 posts and had to stretch barbed wire across. On the next day, the 30th, we had to do the same until 6:45 p.m.. After that we had to carry barrack sections until 7:30 p.m..

October 1st, 1944, a Sunday. With a group of four people I worked on the fence again until 2:00 p.m. At roll call Stuschka had thought of something new again:

"The trees, and in general the whole woods are very dirty, everybody goes up into the woods and cleans and dusts them!"

That meant we had to pick up any twig or other item which was lying on the ground. One can imagine what sense this cleaning process had. We had to work until deep into the night.

After the usual long roll call of many hours, that evening mail was distributed from Theresienstadt. I got a small package from my parents, but don't remember what they sent. This was not the package my father described in his diary. On the little parcel, which I am quite sure was not more than two pounds, was my name. But what surprised me was also the name of my brother-in-law was but crossed out. The only thing I could guess was that my father who wrote the address but was not permitted to send a letter along, wanted me to figure that my brother-in-law was somehow sent away from Theresienstadt too. I

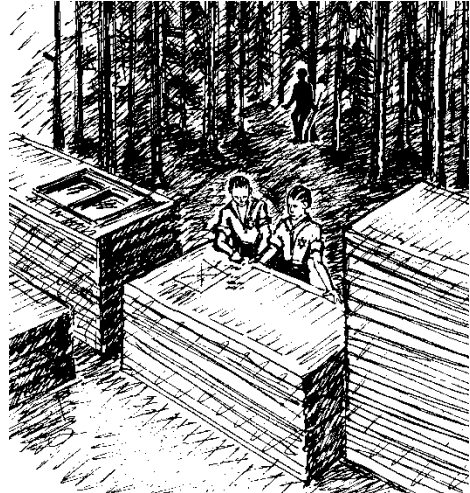
figured he was shipped like me, to a construction site. My father had no idea that Julius had been shipped to Auschwitz. As the diary of my father said, he sent a package to me on September 9. At that time he could not have known that my brother-in law was deported on September 24 in the night after Yom Kippur.

Every two weeks my parents sent a small package with the train which brought food and other supplies to Wulkow. This was the only time I received it. Neither I nor anybody else ever got mail again. My father had noted in his diary that this little package was sent. He wrote that he sent one with food to me on September 12th, 1944.

October 2nd, 1944, daylight time ended. I was told to build a double gate out of logs. We started working and worked from 6:30 a.m. of the new normal time.

October 3rd, 1944, I worked on the gates together with Peter Weis, a young boy just 18 years old from 6:00 a.m. in the morning until 6:30 p.m. in the evening. Afterwards we still had to carry barrack sections until 8:00 p.m.

Sometimes with a little luck things worked out. The gates had to be made out of logs. The workbench was just a couple of rough horses. These gates were not very big and needed just one diagonal. We tried to figure out what length to cut each piece. We did not have any extra pieces of wood and therefore were very careful not to cut anything wrong. Peter said that one could figure the length of the diagonal out with square root. I had never learned this, so I asked him if he could teach me. We did not have any paper and went to a pile of barrack sections nearby. Peter wrote figures there, which had really nothing to do with the gates, just to explain me. We spent a while, talking about it. Peter showed me how. We did not notice that one of the SS guards was sitting in the back and watching us.



Suddenly I saw the guard and told Peter quietly about it. When we were going back to our work the guard noticed something and called us over to him:

"What were you both doing there?" he asked.

"We were just figuring out how to cut the wood". He came to look at the numbers, which had nothing to do with the measurements.

Being a superman does not mean he has to be very smart. That SS guard was not and had no idea what all these numbers meant. So he let us both go back to our work.

October 4th, 1944. Besides working in the Offenbeck barrack we had to carry sections.

October 5th, 1944. I had to install doors in the barrack. It seems they did not fit too well and I had to plane to fit them. We worked until 6:00 p.m.

October 6th and 7th, 1944. I had to nail laths around the doors and windows. Also until 6:00 p.m.

We had only very fundamental tools and everything had to be done by hand. There were no machines at all. To make these parts square was not easy, after all the wood we used were just logs which were planed on two opposite sides, but still untouched on the other sides. Later on that day we installed the gates after covering them with barbed wire. That night after roll call, we still had to carry barrack sections until 8:00 p.m.

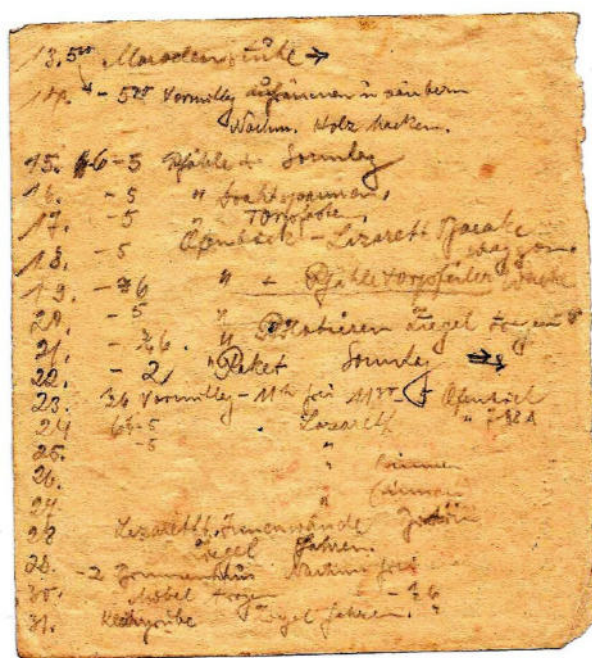
October 8th, 1944, Sunday. We had to work in the morning to hit posts in the ground also from 2:00 until 3:30. I am sure after that Stuschka found some way to torture us.

October 9th, 1944. I had to put laths on the walls, in and outside the barracks where two sections meet. I had very strong pains in my leg.

October 10th, 1944, after nailing laths I also worked putting up fences. I had an abscess on my leg for a couple of days and now it was swollen.

October 11th, 1944. During the night the pains in my left leg were very strong and the next morning after roll call I reported sick in the infirmary. Because of the laceration my leg had become infected. My temperature was 38 degree Celsius.

The doctor, Erich Knoepfelmacher only came in the evening. When he looked at my leg he told me it had to be cut open to get the puss out. We had no nurses or anybody else who could help. I was told I have to hold a basin under my leg. There was no anesthetic and I was just sitting there on a stool, having my leg on the doctor's lap, holding the basin under my leg, while Knoepfelmacher cut with some kind of a knife into my shin. A lot of puss came out of the wound dripping into the basin. It might have been a unique sight for an operation, with the patient assisting the operating doctor. The doctor was surprised that I was able to work these last two weeks without much discomfort. He now wrapped rags around my leg. This was the only thing he had, as there were no bandages either.



I was now officially admitted to the infirmary and stayed there until October 13th, 1944. During the night of October 12th, another one of our men, Hermann Proskauer, threw a blanket over the barbed-wire fence and fled. He also was a Berliner and tried to make it to the apartment of his Arian mother.

October 14th, 1944, during the morning we had to clean everything in the camp and in the afternoon I had to chop wood. I believe the wood was for a little stove we had in the barrack. It was not to keep us warm, but near the built-in bathroom, which we were not permitted to use, just to keep the toilet from freezing.

October 15th, 1944, was a Sunday. We were happy that we could continue to work on the fence until 5:00 p.m. In the meantime the perverse Nazi had picked ten of our men as hostages for the escaping Proskauer. This was a punishment and a warning for all of us as to what would happen if one tried to escape. Many would have suffer. He imprisoned

the men together with Proskauer for a couple of days in his underground dungeon, tortured them daily and shipped them out a couple of days later with the instruction not to send them back any more. After the war, I found out that they were shipped first to Berlin and from there to the concentration camps Buchenwald or Oranienburg. Most of them died or were killed there.

October 16th, and 17th, 1944. Quite a couple of us worked on the fence, putting posts in the ground and tying probably four or five lines of barbed from post to post. I also worked on posts for a gate.

October 18th, 1944, after working from 6:00 o'clock in the morning in one of the barracks and on the sick room barrack came the command for everybody to fall in. We were marched off somewhere in the woods. There was very large truck standing filled with red bricklike cinder blocks. The men were positioned about 6 feet apart. The truck had to be emptied and the blocks piled up somewhere nearby. Always two blocks had to be thrown to the next person, almost immediately one had to catch two from the man ahead and throw them to the next man. These blocks were very rough and the hands got very sore. When the truck was empty, all of us had to push that big vehicle out of the woods.

October 19, 1944. I was working in one of the Offenbeck barracks and later, on putting up posts for gates until it got dark at 6:00 o'clock.

October 20th, 1944. We only worked until 5:00 p.m., in the same places as the day before.

October 21st, 1944. Working until 5:30 First I worked as a pile driver and afterwards we had to steal bricks from another building area with our little two wheel trailer.

October 22nd, a Sunday, we were working from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on barracks. As we were still part of the Theresienstadt administration, every two weeks the regular delivery of food and packages came by train. Packages from our families in Theresienstadt were also in it. These packages were stored in one of the empty barracks which was locked up by the *Obersturmfuehrer*. These and other packages which came at later dates were never distributed and one could smell the rotting food inside when one past that barrack. The food in these packages was what our parents had saved for us, from their own meager rations, not even having enough to eat themselves.

During the night two men went over the barbed wire and fled. They again threw blankets over the wire to make good their flight. Both of them were from Berlin, and they hoped to be able to hide there until the end of the war. This was very difficult, as they did not have any money and Berlin was still quite a distance away.

October 23rd, 1944, at 6:00 a.m., during the roll call it was found out that the two were missing. Everybody was standing there until 11:00 a.m. suddenly we were dismissed. Each one of us was worried now what was going to happen to us. We knew Stuschka would not just let this go by. At 11:30 a.m. we were ordered to go to our workplaces. I worked until 5:00 p.m. in one of the barracks. I have no records about the outcome, but I am sure Stuschka again was taking hostages for the escaped men, tortured them a couple of days in his dungeon and then had them transported to one of the concentration camps. I am sure the escapees were captured and handled the same way.

From October 24th, until October 27th, 1944, I had to work, changing walls in the Nazis infirmary barrack. In the evening Stuschka made two groups again from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. He ordered us, a group of about 20 men, to take the little two wheel trailer and sneak to another construction site of a group of prisoners from a different concentration camp, and steal bricks. This crook made us steal from one of the other Super Germans, just to show off to his superiors how economically he can build on his construction site. I also was with that group of brick thieves, and we had to be very quiet so the SS-guards there would not notice us and start shooting.

On October 28th, 1944, I had to install walls in the Nazi hospital barrack and in the evening we had to go with the little two wheel trailer stealing bricks.

October 29th, 1944, I worked from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. in the pump house. The afternoon was supposed to be off as it was Sunday. We thought, perhaps Stuschka forgot to torment us. But we would not be that lucky. He seemed suddenly to remember. He called Ludwig Breier, one of the fellows he knew by name. We who came with the August transport had no idea what the bastard had in mind, but he had already done this a couple of times before.

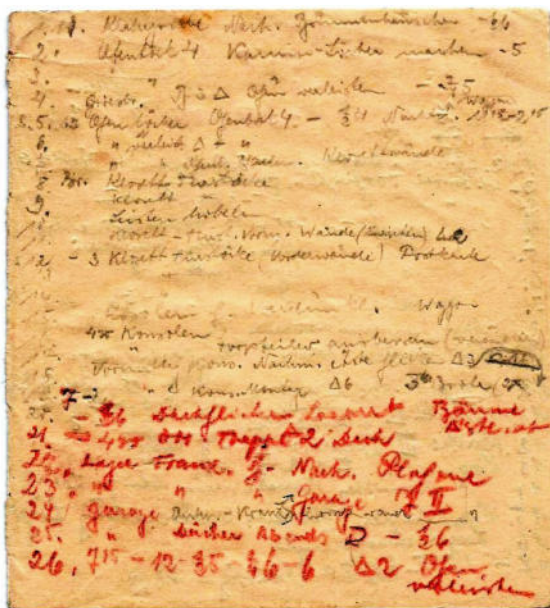
In spring, 1944, when I was not yet in Wulkow, a detail of men had to cut down trees, when a nest with birds like baby blue jays fell to the ground. The men picked up the baby birds and carried them back to the camp. They asked Stuschka and got the permission to keep them. But he said a cage had to be built for them. Besides one, all the little birds died very soon, but the survivor grew up into adulthood. Ludwig Breier, a Viennese, was ordered to build a cage. Ludwig was 36 years old. He was told not to make it too small and had to show a plan for it first to the OSF. It was about 30 inches high and 24 X 24 inches wide and deep. When it was finished it had to be shown to the *Obersturmfuhrer*. He looked at it, asked who made it and as Breier stepped forward, the pervert said:

"Go ahead and sit in it!"

On that day in October the Nazi forced Ludwig to sit in that cage again. He left him in there for the whole day in that cramped position. Every once in a while at roll calls, when he thought about it, he forced Breier to spent another day in that cage.

On October 30th, 1944, we had to carry furniture for the Nazis to one of the finished barracks until 5:30 p.m.

October 31st, 1944, I had to work in the sewage ditch and in the evening I was forced to join a group of men again stealing bricks with our two-wheel trailer.



November 1st, 1944. I don't remember what I had to do in the morning in a sewage ditch. In the afternoon until 5:30 I worked in the little pump house.

November 2nd, 1944, I worked all day on one of the barracks until 4:00 p.m., afterwards until 5:00 I had to cut holes into the roofs for chimneys, which the masons had to erect later on.

On November 3rd, 4th, and 5th, I again had to cut holes for chimneys and put laths around it.

The 5th of November was a Sunday and I worked until 4:30. This was still before lunch. As we were standing at the roll call, Stuschka had to prove to himself the worth of his German super-manliness. He and his kind loved to pick on the weak and powerless. Lothar Schustermann was a skinny nineteen year old fellow. Very timid. He never did anything that could have aroused the Nazi. As usual, for no particular reason, maybe Lothar was just standing in the front row at roll

call, Stuschka, himself a physical weakling, picked him and told him to step forward. Lothar did. He ordered him to pick up a very large rock. Lothar could not even lift it off the ground. Stuschka now made two men put it on Lothar's shoulder. As expected, the boy collapsed after a couple of steps, to the amusement of the Nazi.

November 6th, and 7th, 1944 I was nailing strips of lath around the chimneys in many barracks.

November 8th and 9th, 1944, I had to do something on the toilet walls of the barracks.

November 10th, 1944. I had to plane laths for closing the separation between the barrack sections.

November 11th, 1944. I worked again on the wall sections in toilets.

November 12th, 1944. I framed three doors on front wall sections of a barrack and again on walls in the toilets. In the evening after work everybody got a postcard and we were permitted to write to our families in Theresienstadt. It was forbidden to name the place where we were. I had worked out a code with my father before I left Theresienstadt in August. It was as follows: I would write in Latin script. Any letter in German script which seemed accidentally put in there, he has to copy them and after he has them all, it would read from back to the front my secret message. It took me a good part of the night to figure out what to write in a short hidden message in code.

My father never got the postcard. Nobody got any. They were collected, brought to the OSF but never mailed. Our fellows made the joke, Stuschka probably had nothing to read and therefore let us write the cards. The bastard just wanted to torture us and never had any intention of sending these cards back.

November 13th to 15th, 1944, my diary is unreadable.

November 16th, 1944. I worked on brackets.

November 17th, 1944. For a couple of days I had to work making brackets for the windows for black-out curtains. In the afternoon I had to fill knot holes in the walls of barrack No. 3 in the Delta site.

I do not remember on which day this happened. We were standing, as usual on the roll call place. Stuschka walked up and down the rows of men. We knew he was looking for somebody. He just looked and we did not know what he had in mind today. Finally he found the one he was looking for.

"Come here in front, Frankenstein !" He said.

Heinz came forward. Heinz Frankenstein had only one tooth in the front of his mouth left. Expecting the worst, Heinz stood at attention. All of us worried as well.

"Here, I have brought you something!"

With this Stuschka took a set of dentures out of his pocket. Obviously they were not made for Frankenstein.

Heinz said: *"Thank you, Herr Obersturmfuehrer"* as he put it in his back pocket and went back to his row.

Heinz, a Berliner, had not only a very strong Berliner accent, but he also had a big mouth and the nerve to answer back to that Nazi. Even so Heinz was one of the Glatzkoepfe, one of the men who were in the punishment barrack, who once before my time in Wulkow, beat up Raphaelsohn who denounced them to Stuschka. These Glatzkoepfe (bald-headed ones) were, as often as Stuschka remembered, shaved again.

The roll call continued as we had to count, and count again. Suddenly, there was a loud scream.

"Who screamed!" shouted the Nazi.

"I did Herr Obersturmfuehrer!" Heinz Frankenstein said.

Stuschka called him out again and asked him why he screamed. He came forward, holding the denture in his hand and in his Berlin slang said:

Obasturmfuehra, det Ding hat mia in Arsch jebissen! (Obersturmfuehrer, that thing bit me in the arse!) We could not help ourselves, everybody laughed Even the brute could not stay serious.

Frankenstein never lost his humor, and was somebody who kept our spirit up in Wulkow. As one almost can say Stuschka enjoyed him, Heinz got away with things nobody else would have dared to do. For a long time I did not trust Frankenstein and stayed away from him. He was definitely no collaborator and a very decent guy. As he was one of the fountain diggers, I had no work contact and nothing to do with him.

On another occasion he said to Stuschka: "*Obasturmfoehra, miar koenn'se tot schlagen, aba meine Schnauze muessen se extra totschiagen!*" (Obersturmfoehrer, you can slay me, but my snout you have to slay separately!)

Another time Stuschka stuck his pistol into Heinz's side. Heinz said:

"*Obasturmfoehra, ik bin sehr kitzi!*" (Obersturmfoehrer, I am very ticklish!)

It is unbelievable, but he did not lose his humor even in the worst situation. Once in a while that Nazi beast ordered the Glatzkoepfe shaved again. I remember on one of the coldest days of the winter 44/45. Heinz was just standing there and shivering after he was shaved. As we all were forbidden to wear hats or caps, the bald ones suffered much more than the rest of us. Heinz said:

"*Frisch rasiert, jut jelaunt!*" (Freshly shaved, one is in good spirit!) This was an advertising slogan for a shaving cream company.

This is another anecdote about Frankenstein, which happened before I came to Wulkow. Everybody was in the camp and it probably was in the evening. Heinz was always kidding. There was a pail and Heinz picked it up and screamed into the pail, acting like Hitler. He also acted the screaming applause of the German masses, who yelled "heil, heil, heil!" As he did it inside the barrack, nobody did realize that Stuschka was walking through the camp with the three sergeants. When they heard this noise, which sounded like their beloved Fuehrer, the Nazis drew their pistols and stormed into the barrack.

"*Everybody out!*" screamed the OSF. "*Where is the radio?!*" (Radios were not only forbidden, there was a death penalty just for listening to one.)

"*There is no radio.*" One of the men said. Stuschka hit him. He asked another. He got the same answer and also hit the man.

"*I heard the radio, where is it?*" Stuschka sent the sergeants into the barrack to search for it. They came out after a while and reported that there was no radio.

"*Now what was that noise I heard?*" Heinz went forward and told the Obersturmfoehrer that it was him and not a radio. Stuschka hit him and then he had to perform once more to show how he did it. Heinz as well as all the other fellows did not know that on that same day Hitler really was speaking.

November 19, 1944. It was Sunday again we were supposed to be off in the afternoon. Four of our telephone-electricians were working down on the main road. It was a bitter cold day. A telephone pole had to be put up. They were digging a hole for the pole, which already was quite difficult as the ground was frozen. But after a while they had dug the hole. By orders of the OSF they were not allowed to lay the pole across the highway to lift it up from there to put into the hole. There was no other way as there was not enough room on the side and trees all over. Stuschka had given the order to carry the pole vertically to the hole. Obviously this was completely impossible. These poor men were trying and trying. One of the SS-guards was guarding them at the road. They did not dare, with one of these crooks watching, to go against the rules of the officer. There was just not enough room on the pole that four men could get their hands on it and lift it up vertically.

The rest of us, men and also women, just had to stand on the roll call place freezing and not being permitted to speak, silently waiting for the group of men to come up. After an hour or so, Stuschka ordered one man to run down and report back to him in double time about the progress the men down there are making. The messenger came back, that there was no progress; it just could not be done.

The mind of this Nazi was figuring now a new way how to torment some of his slaves.

"Run down again!" he screamed: "those lazy dogs are just not trying, get their jackets and shirts and bring them up here! They probably can work a little faster when they are not so comfortable!"

The man came back with the clothes. It just was impossible to be done that way. After a couple more hours of stalemate, everybody still freezing on the roll call place, that bloodthirsty brute sent down a group of men to help. It was done finally with bringing the pole horizontally across the road. By the time the men came up it was night and we were still standing on the roll call place. Now as everyone was there, the counting and recounting could start. Later on we got three slices of bread.

November 20th, 1944. I had to fix holes in the roof of one of the barracks. Afterwards we all had to pick up fallen branches in the woods and dust the trees. Another one of Stuschka's favorite hobbies.

November 22nd, 1944. During the night another one of our fellows went over the barbed wire and fled. He, too, was very soon apprehended and they also brought him back to us. This time Stuschka picked at least 20 men and two of our girls as hostages and locked them underground. Again after beating them for days he sent them away on November 28th. The men were shipped to Oranienburg and the girls to Ravensbrueck. Nothing was ever heard from most of them. Hans Edel and Albert Jungmann were the only ones who survived the ordeal. I have nothing written about this, but Albert Jungmann told me about it at a reunion I arranged in 1997.

November 24th, 1944. It was getting very cold now. Most of the time we had to work outside but were forbidden to wear gloves, probably we did not even have any. Somewhere I found an old brown woolen sock and soon afterwards a grey SS sock hanging on the barbed wire. In both cases I unraveled the soles which were full of holes anyway and made myself a small ball of wool. To stop the sock from unraveling any further I sewed and knotted it. I don't remember, but my mother had probably given me one sewing needle along. Now I sewed the ends that I could put it over my wrist and have the thumb separated. This way, nobody could see that I wore anything. The rest of the wool was very usable for mending my socks which I did almost every night. I probably had only one pair left.

Sunday, November 26th, 1944, I had worked from 7:15 a.m. until 12:00 noon, and again until 6:00 p.m. We did not get any lunch, as usual. It was a miserable, cold day and it had rained for days. The place where we had to assemble three times every day for roll calls, was just a sea of deep puddles and mud. With each roll call the mud was getting deeper. We had to stand in there while it rained or snowed. Stuschka had a new torture idea. This time it was the girls who got his special attention. The girls were in Wulkow for washing some of our underwear as well as for helping the cook in the kitchen. Just like we, they had to line up on the roll-call place.

He forced all the girls to sit or lay down in the wet mess and push the mud with their bare arms and their breasts to the side. He stepped on one of the girls to push her deeper into the dirt. Everybody knew that this task too was absolutely impossible, as more and more water assembled in the low part of that field. But that did not bother the tyrant. The torture went on for hours. We had to stand there, had to take our jackets and shirts off, not to get too comfortable and wait, supposedly until the field was cleaned. Nobody got any food before sometime after dusk.

Inge Nattmann (Kantor), one of the younger girls, she was just 20, remembered some other incidents: One of the first jobs the girls had to do after coming to Wulkow, was stuffing pine needles from the woods into a sack with bare hands. She says, that this is easier said than done. For what purpose nobody knew, probably just one of the chicaneries Stuschka had planned in his sick mind.

In the beginning of their time in Wulkow, Inge remembers too, in the middle of the night Stuschka suddenly stormed into the girls barrack, which was separate from the men's. He made all of them in their nightgowns or pajamas get out into the night. He took them into the woods behind our barrack and had them do calisthenics.

Once, Traute Goldschmied one of the girls and Inge were detailed to clean Stuschka's house. The girls noticed that on the desk was an open newspaper laying. All of us were hungry for some news about the progress of the war. Traute, already a little older, she was 24, got the courage and went over to the desk to have a look, any news about the German retreat would have been a morale lifter for everybody in the camp. Even wearing his jackboots, the monster could sneak as quietly as a thief. Stuschka came into the room and caught Traute standing at the desk, reading the paper. He punished her, by having her imprisoned in his dungeon for three days without food or water.

While we were at work we had no idea what was going on in the camp and besides there was almost no time to talk to the girls. The girls had to wash our clothes by hand, or help in the kitchen. At some occasions Stuschka made them carry stones or bricks, and Inge writes, even tree trunks. Once or twice a couple of the girls were detailed to work in a nearby police station. There they were treated fairly well, perhaps because the girls were from Berlin. They were given bread and were permitted to rest a while.

Almost two years after the end of the war, while Stuschka was in a prisoner of war camp, he had the nerve to write the following letter to the engineer, Erwin Kosiner, who was the Jewish construction engineer in Wulkow:

Stuschka Franz, Camp Markus W. Orr VII/51 Salzburg, Austria

February 27, 1947

Very honored Mr. Engineer!

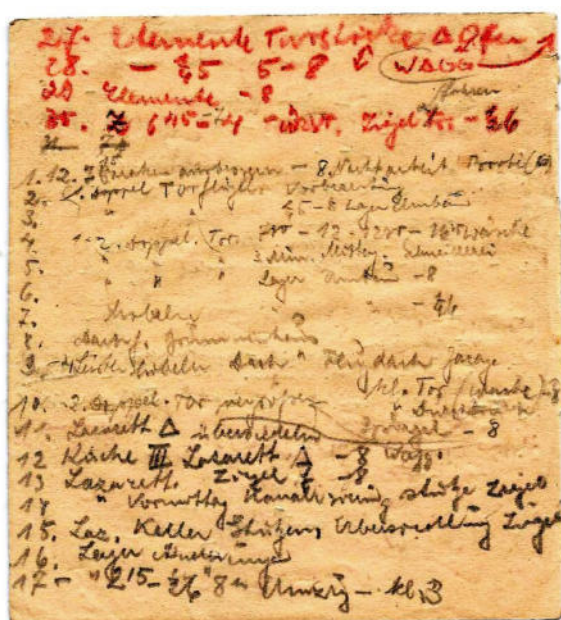
You will be surprised to hear from me. It is now almost two years since our paths separated and we both were heading for an unknown future. I hope I am right to assume that thanks to your outstanding knowledge and your tireless energy, you have found a gratifying job, and you are able to achieve your destiny. I also hope that you and your family are well. I would love to hear about it, your time permitting, as I am always thinking about you. The reason for this, is that one could say we have changed our rolls. I have the opportunity to now see from the other side, what it is like to live in a camp and build barracks. As I was lucky enough, with the blessing of god, to have survived the end of the war in a fairly healthy state, my situation is neither unusual nor surprising. I also know that I can not change this, just as I could not have changed the situation during the war. I had to do what I was ordered. Now the fate of my family forces me to trouble you for a favor. My old mother has survived the war with a dreadful experience. She has completely lost our modest possession and is now "living" with my sister and her children – their father is missing in action. Compared with her situation, even a life in a barrack would be a complete relief. Naturally, I am yearning to see my mother again, as soon as possible. She never had any interest in politics and I, after all, am her only support. I believe there is a chance of an early release of the detained, and I would be in need of a competent deposition of my activity in Wulkow. (This, by the way, is the reason for me being here.) The question is, whether I had any influence on the concentration camp prisoners who were put to work there. It was said that some were shot. It would also be very important to mention that all the laborers working for me were brought back, and nobody lost his life either on the construction site or on the transport; how was the food (the quality and quantity), medical care, etc.. Please describe how I lived, as an officer and in private, if one could talk to me about personal matters, for instance grievances and other complains; maybe even about the new living quarters with the community room; the heating, infirmary, and excellent kitchen etc. which I had built from French barrack parts, without direct orders; then about the receipt of letters and packages as well as the provision for medication, special food allowance and dental care. Also tell about the difficult transport back with the

train, even though I was ordered to march the men back by foot; my strict orders to the guards, not to have anything to do with the work and my quick interference when Raphaelsohn was hit by one of the guards; if there were ever any unfounded disciplinary measure against any one; describe my behavior towards the heads of the buildings supervisors and my superiors; did I have friends in the SS. In case it does not give you too much trouble, I would be thankful if, perhaps, you could get the signatures of some of your former comrades. But this is not absolutely necessary.

I thank you in advance for your trouble, with fondest greetings to you and your family! Your little daughter must have become a real lady already?

Yours respectfully,

Franz Smolke



From November 27th until the 30th, 1944 I wrote in my diary with a red pencil, probably the only one I could find. It is very blurred and not readable.

December 1st, 1944, I had to repair some of the walls in a couple of barracks and had to work from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

December 2nd, 1944. I became the specialist of building gates and had to start preparing wood for one of the double gates.

December 3rd, 1944. Together with Pavel Weiss I started working on one of the two sets of double gates. One of them was very large, each door about 8 by 8 foot. The only wood we were permitted to use were again logs. Pavel and I worked on the first set, the larger one. From 4:30 until 6:00 was a reconstruction of our camp.

December 4th, 1944. We finished the first two doors and started on the second ones. We worked from 7:30 in the morning until 12:00 noon and from 12:30 p.m. until 6:15 p.m. We could not work any later, as it was much too dark outside and in the barracks there were no lights either. In the evening I got my laundry back which was washed by the girls.

December 5th, and 6th, 1944. We were working on the second sets of doors. These were also large, but not as large as the first set. It was very difficult to work on these, as the trunks which we had to use were only planed on two sides and the other two were round and still had the bark on. We only had 30 minutes of lunch break. In the evening until 5:15 p.m. we were helping with the rearrangement in our barrack. Afterwards I had to go to the girls barrack where several were working as seamstresses fixing some of the boy's things. There was still the reconstructing of the camp in progress.

It got very cold and it was impossible to do any kind of carpentry work outdoors. We moved into one of the finished barracks and used a couple of the rooms as workshops. The rooms were not large about 10 by 10 feet and only two men could work in each room. There were sections of barracks piled on the floor about table high, which we could use as a workbench. Each barrack had one center hall with small rooms on both sides. Each room had one window and the door which opened towards the hallway had a small window on top. We had our axes along, some of which were even self made, like mine, but there were not many other woodworking tools. No machines at all. They would not have helped much anyway, as there was still no electricity in these barracks. Therefore there was also no electric light. We

worked on the gates. After the wooden construction of the frame was done, the gates were covered with a grid of barbed wire.

Whenever one needed a special tool, and there were very few around, one had to get it from whoever was using it before. I needed a plane. We had only one in Wulkow. I was going to the next room where two other fellows were working. Out in the hall watching through the window in the door stood Stuschka. He had sneaked in again and nobody had noticed him. He was standing in the dark hall, nobody in the room could see him. I went out into the hall, not knowing he was there. He let me go by. We had a certain warning signal, each of us knew it. I walked into the room next door and said to Honso Steindler:

"Give me the plane please *Woko!*" The second man in the room as well as Honso immediately understood that the hated Nazi was nearby. *Woko* is the Czech word for 21 in poker. The fellows used to call him first *Jednadvacet*, which also meant 21, but after a while Stuschka had figured it out. I went back to our room and managed to alarm Pavel Weiss. For once everybody was safe.

December 7th, 1944. Almost all day until 5:15 I had planed these big gates, as they were not square and one could not tongue and groove them together easy.

December 8th. 1944. I had something to do in the little well house

Every day a couple of carpenters worked in the barrack on different items. Pavel Weiss, and I were working on another two very large log-wood gates. Everything had to be fitted perfectly. They could not be put together inside, as they would not fit through the doors.

This was close to the middle of December and the ground was covered with a thin layer of snow. It was bitter cold. Obviously the rooms were not heated, there was not even a stove around, but indoors one was still a little bit protected from the wind. Stuschka suddenly burst into the room next to ours. We heard the screaming and noise and knew that the bastard was hitting the fellows. We had no idea what could have been the matter, but we knew he did not need any reason. This screaming went on for a while. Both of us knew there was no way we could help our comrades and also there was no escape for us either. We just kept on working like nothing happened. As soon as the noise in the next door room stopped, the savage stormed into our room in a rage.

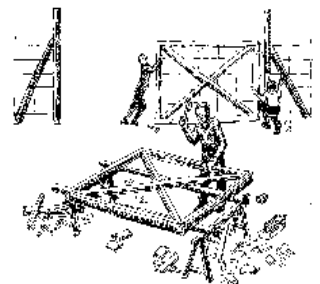
"*Who told you lazy Jewish pigs that you can work in this barrack?*" He screamed. No one answered, after all nobody told us. It seemed natural to work inside, when it was too cold outside. With that he grabbed my bow saw and beat Pavel. Luckily after a couple of hits the saw which was tied with a string, fell apart. Annoyed about that he threw the piece which was still in his hand at Pavel.

As we were working on these very large gates and the logs were laying around. These pieces were between 5 and 6 feet long and about 6 X 4 inches thick. Stuschka tried to grab one of the larger pieces now to beat me. That wood was positioned over the corner of the makeshift workbench. As he tried to grab the log, it fell on the floor, almost falling on the bastard's foot. To my luck he did not use one of the axes lying around but he decided to beat me just with his fists.

"*From now on*", he hollered, "*you dammed dogs work outside. The fresh air will make you work a little faster. And don't dare to put gloves on!*"

All of us had to go outside, and try to do the job there but it was impossible it was just too cold; we could not do a thing. A day or so later, everybody was permitted to work inside again.

When we were working on one of the large doors, we suddenly remembered that we were told to use the beams 6 inches vertical and 4 inches horizontal, and by accident we had cut and prepared it the other way



around. There was no extra wood that we could do it over. What should we do with the second gate? If we would prepare the other one, the right way now, one would really see that the first one was wrong. After a little consultation we decided to make the second one the wrong way too. Luckily, the beast did not notice it. He also might have not remembered which way he ordered it first. We both sighed in relief.

December 9th, 1944. I was planning laths for roofs as well as for the roof of the garage.

December 10th, 1944, the two sets of doors were finished and the two of us had to mount them on the gateposts. When that was done, barbed wire was stretched across them in two directions.

December 12th, 1944, Honso Steindler and I were sent down to the SS kitchen III, in the Delta barrack building site which was an SS *Lazarett* (infirmary), to see what could be done to build a baffle into the roof ventilator. We took measurements, sketched it and went back to the camp. On our way we passed one of the barracks, where a family of *Volksdeutsche* who had fled from the advancing Russian was living. (These were Germans who were living in Russia and had collaborated with the Nazis). We found a half rotten cucumber laying there. A good part of it still looked edible. We took it along. For years, we never had any fresh vegetable. Next to our kitchen stood a large barrel with a mixture of mustard like relish. One was allowed to take as much as one wanted. Generally nobody took it, as it was just sharp and did not do anything for the hunger. Into some of that mixture we cut the good part of our cucumber. Even though it was very little, the two of us had at least a taste of it. We worked until 8:00 o'clock.



December 13th, 1944. In our improvised workshop in one of the barracks we started to make the baffle.

December 14th, 1944, in the morning Honso Steindler and I went back to the SS kitchen with the baffle and some tools to install it. This kitchen was a very large room with huge cooking kettles. The ventilator was high up in the gable of the roof, right above one of the kettles. We had brought a long ladder and put it against the inside of the ventilation shaft. I was the smaller one, and since there was not much room up there, I went up. This baffle had to be made in a way that it could be tied closed as well as used open. Honso was holding the ladder, which was standing at a precarious angle to bypass the big kettle. I took the prepared piece with me up the ladder. Now I needed the hammer and asked Honso to hand it up to me. The tool was lying on the floor, just far enough away that Honso could not reach it without taking his hand off the ladder. He had no other way but taking his hand

off the ladder. The moment he let go, the ladder slipped. I could just quickly grab hold of the rafters. Should I have missed I would have fallen into the spinach cooking in the kettle.

The SS cook must have had a little feeling left and asked us if we were hungry. Not trusting any of these guys and besides we were forbidden to talk to the Germans we did not answer. He asked again, but still no answer. Honso and I were sure this was just a trick and if we say anything this German just tells it to the *Obersturmfuehrer*. Besides we could not tell him that we were hungry.

Maybe the soldier had an idea that the Jews were not allowed to talk. He put two slices of bread with lard on a table which was standing nearby and said: "If you want it take it, if not, just leave it there!" With this he went out of the room. We were now alone in the kitchen and discussed this very serious problem. Sure, we were hungry, we were always hungry, but maybe this was just a trap. Maybe that guy comes in a minute later and says the two Jews stole his slices of bread. What shall we do? This was a very serious question. After discussing this for a while, we decided to eat the bread and hoped for the best. Lucky for us that SS-cook still must have had a touch of humanity left, he did not denounce us.

Honso Sternlicht, a good friend and one of the carpenters, got sick one day and as it was not a work accident, he did not get anything but the thin soup, by decree of the OSF. Raphaelsohn made sure that this order was followed to the T. Somebody in our group had the idea, that each of us would save one slice of bread and bring it to Honso. As we were a fairly large group Honso probably got more than his usual share. All the other groups might have done the same thing if one of their comrades would have gotten sick.

December 15th, 1944, Honso Steindler and I were sent to a barrack which was already occupied by some SS-officers. We felt very uncomfortable in the presence of all these uniformed supermen. We had to go to one particular office where one of the officers needed a reinforcement of the floor in the corner of his room, because a safe had to be put there. Each one of these small rooms was the officer's office and his sleeping quarters. Besides a desk, there was only a bed in the room.

We had to cut out the floor first and then hit more pilings into the ground and in the end put the floor back again. It was at least two days work. Nobody was in the office, we liked that, as the less we saw the Germans, the better it was and we could work undisturbed. If we talked we just whispered to each other. In general we tried to make as little noise as possible. This was not so easy, as we had to hit a couple of big pilings into the frozen ground with a sledge hammer.

Just before we finished on the second day, a tall Prussian Nazi officer a Berliner came in to inspect our work. We again felt very uncomfortable. The man checked the solidity of the floor and was satisfied. Whatever that officer asked we did not answer. We remembered very well that it was forbidden for us to talk to them and besides we did not know if these bastards are just trying to bate us and then denounce us to Stuschka. The Nazi officer went to his closet, took out a loaf of *Kommisbrot* (army bread) and said:

"I have this bread left over and am going home for Christmas soon, if you guys want it you can have it."

We did not answer.

"All right", he said, "I leave it here, when you go back take it." With that he left the room.

Another one of this serious discussion like a couple of days ago between us. It was better if these Nazi officers did not say anything to us. They only could get us in a lot of trouble. One never knew what their aim was and anything could be used to trap us. Again we had the same problem as in the SS kitchen. Obviously we both would like to take that bread, but was it worth to risk our life? We whispered to each other and again did not know what we should do. It again was a matter of life or death.

"Do you believe it's one of their tricks?"

"Do you think we should trust him and take the bread?"

We kept on asking each other these questions. We knew we were together in that. We would live and die together. Finally we gathered the courage and decided to take it.

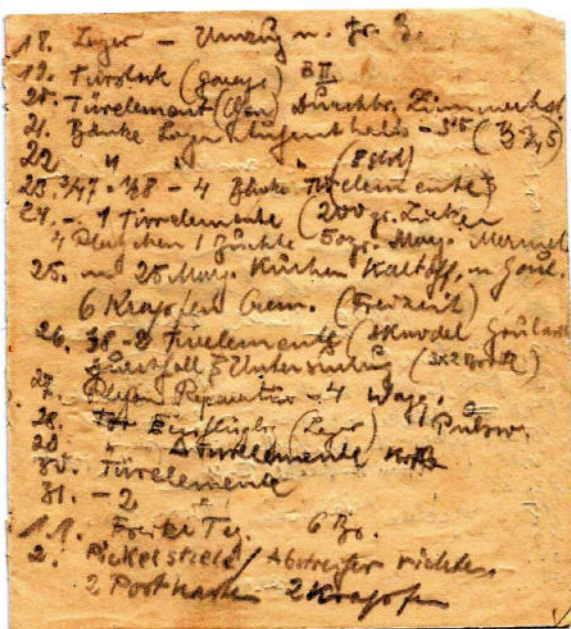
"How are we going to get it into the camp?"

That was another important question which had to be figured out beforehand. One of us had the idea to put it under the tools into the wooden toolbox. This was almost too much luck to expect to be ours twice. Could we come in contact with another German and an SS-officer with a touch of humanity? According to his accent he was a Prussian, but this did not mean a thing as, in general, they were not any better than the Austrians. Maybe he already could imagine the twilight of the thousand years Reich. At that time the Russians were coming close to the Oder River. He probably knew this, even though we did not.

Everything worked out for the best. We got into the camp without being searched. Back in the barrack we divided the bread up between our carpenter colleagues. Each one of them had an extra slice of bread that night. Each one got the slice of bread back which he had donated for Honso Sternlicht a couple of days before.

December 16th, 1944, we were told, that the whole camp was being changed.

December 17th, 1944. We were working in the afternoon from 2:15 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. After that everything had to be moved from one barrack into another. At 8:00 p.m. We all had to move the little bits we each owned.



December 18th, 1944. Everybody was now moved to a French barrack. These barracks were very primitive and the walls not at all air tight. The draft came through the walls. Why we had to move, nobody knew. This was just Stuschka's idea because this barrack was worse.

December 19th, 1944. I had to make a door frame for the garage in B II.

On December 20th, 1944. I had the door section for the garage made and probably installed.

December 21st, 1944, I had to build benches for the prisoner's so called dining room and worked there until 3:15 and then again from 4:30 p.m. until 4:45 p.m.

December 22nd, 1944, I made 8 benches. They were only very primitive, nailed together.

December 23rd, 1944. Between 6:45 and 7:30 I produced another 4 benches. Afterwards I worked again on door sections.

December 24th, 1944. I was working on one of the door sections. We got 200 grams sugar, 4 cookies 50 grams margarine and about the same amount of marmalade. In the evening we all were sitting in the barrack the dining room. In general it was not used much as there was no time to sit down to eat. This evening we were all in that room and a couple of the Czech fellows were singing Christmas songs in Czech, the language which was really forbidden. Stuschka came into the barrack too, and even though we expected some kind of trouble from him, he acted surprisingly human. Around midnight the party broke up and everybody went back to his bunk.

We were just asleep, when the door of the barrack was pushed open, the light put on and Stuschka was standing there with a pistol in his hand and screaming like a madman:

"Get out, everybody out on the double!"

We jumped out of bed if we could we put something on, got into our shoes and ran to the roll call place. Some of the fellows were in their nightgown and bare feet. I don't remember what I wore.

Everybody had to line up in three rows as usual. The temperature outside was way below zero. Stuschka walked up and down the rows, looking at each one of us. As usual we had no idea what he was looking for now. He ordered a former ghetto policeman Sigmund Einstein, a 44 year old man, one of our older

comrades, to follow him. They both disappeared into the night. Very shortly after that one could hear somebody being beaten, as well as the wretched moans of the pitiful victim. Then Stuschka came back without Einstein. He told two of our carpenters, our Forman, Karel Rutar and the second in command Feuerstein to follow him. He led both of them to the water pump and made them throw the ice cold water at each other. This went on, maybe for 20 minutes or a half an hour. Around 4:00 a.m. this ghastly, gruesome game was ended. We were ordered back into our barracks. This was the Christmas spirit of the bastard.

While we were all in the dining barrack, Stuschka went through our barracks and found a toolbox with carpenter tools under one of the beds. He asserted, one of us had planned to kill him with an ax. It was against orders having tools in the barrack. Every night they had to be deposited in the tool shed, Karel and the other fellows had to pay the penalty for it. I remember both of them saying afterwards, that the water felt warm, compared to the air.

December 25th, 1944. We got 25 gram margarine, cake, potatoes and with some meat, 6 donuts and cream and afterwards we did not have to work.

December 26th, 1944. I worked again on two door sections. On this day we got noodles again with some meat. As a result of suddenly getting considerably richer food, we all had diarrhea. The doctor had no way of treating this. Three times we also got two rolls. All this was planned to get us sick, as our stomachs could not digest this rich food.

December 27th, 1944. We had to repair 4 wagons.

December 28th, 1944, and the next two days I built a one door gate for our camp

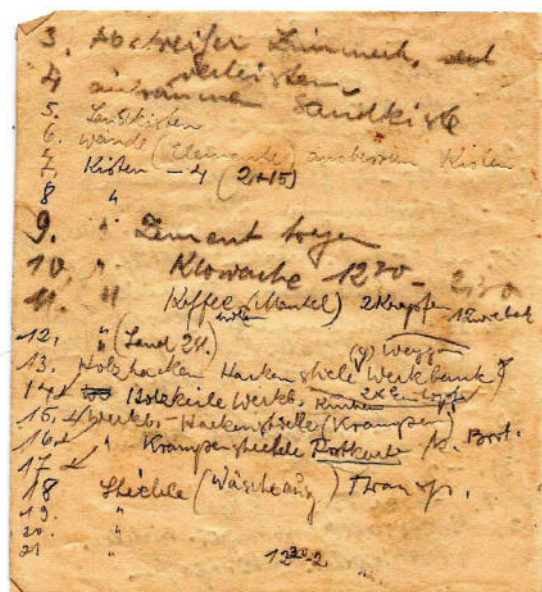
December 29th, 1944. I worked on the door and in one of the Delta-barracks.

December 30th, 1944. I did work on some door sections

December 31st, 1944. I worked on two door sections.

January 1st, 1945. A free day?

January 2nd and 3rd, 1945. I had to put handles on pickaxes and make shoe scrapers out of strips of wood and again we got two donuts.



January 3rd, 1945. Besides making door shoe scrapers and had to nail laths in some of the rooms.

January 4th, and 5th, 1945, we had to produce wooden boxes. These were put inside the barracks filled with sand, to be used in case of fire.

On January 9th, 1945 we had to carry cement. I don't remember where,

In the night of January 10th, 1945, I had *Klowache* (guarding the toilet duty) from 12:30 a.m. until 2:30 a.m. One man had to sit near the barrack door and write up each person who went to the latrine. He was responsible if somebody fled. This reason alone was enough that people hesitated. In the barrack where we slept were three toilets. But it was forbidden for any of the prisoners to use them. There was also a little wood stove, which as I said before was not to keep the men warm, just to

January 30th, 1945. I had to make more chairs. We got half a bread.

Approximately our camp and the particular building sites in Wulkow, not by scale.



The Final Act of Wulkow

January 31st, 1945. I was working all day long on putting new handles on tools in the construction site "Z". In the evening our small group was being marched back to the camp. From a little knoll, just outside the camp enclosure, as I just happened to look back, down to the Bad Freienwalde-Frankfurt on the Oder, Cottbus, Dresden road. One could just see the road from this one spot in the woods. Usually there was not much traffic, and lately with the winter snow, almost none. But this evening I noticed that the road was very congested with all kinds of vehicles. I saw horse drawn carriages cars, trucks and lots of people on foot with bicycles, with wheelbarrows and other vehicles. It was pretty far away and one could not make out who they were in the dim light of late afternoon. I could not see if the people were soldiers or civilians. I made one of my comrade's who was next to me aware of it. We both stopped a second and looked: "What do you think that means?" The fellow asked me:



"I believe the Russians have broken through in Silesia and the people are fleeing!"

"Finally the shoe is on the other foot! What the Germans did to all the other countries at last they get a taste of it. Maybe the war will be over soon!"

I was wrong, The Red Army of Marshal Zhukov was not in Silesia, but they were actually much closer to us. They were on the eastern shore of the Oder River near Kuestrin. The refugees were not coming from the south, but from the north. Kuestrin was not even 18 miles from us.

Back in the camp we spoke about our discovery. A couple of the men also had seen the traffic jam. Now we had a very lively discussion. I thought that the refugees came from the south, heading north, while others thought that they were going south coming from the north. Some said, they heard artillery fire, and saw the sky red towards the north-east. Everybody had different ideas, all very optimistic.

"What is going to happen to us?" somebody asked, but nobody really could answer. In the evening we got sweet barley with a little bit of meat and a small amount of sugar, soup and bread crumbs.

Erwin Pick was one of the carpenters. He was already 29 years old, a small fellow we called Picheck. He was one of my special friends. Sometimes in the evening he taught me a little Hebrew, as he thought that after the war we all would go to Palestine. I remember that on that night he was sitting up on his bed in the second tier. I was whispering to him:

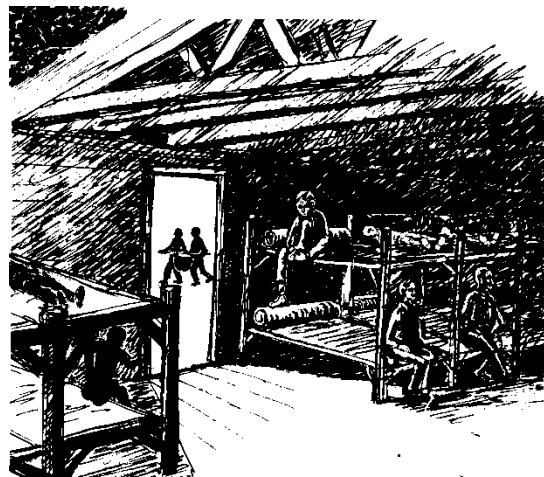
"One never knows what that perverse dog, Stuschka, has on his mind. I believe as we are actually the only ones who have at least something like a weapon, our axes, maybe we should try to hide them somewhere! I know, our tools had to be deposited every night in a special tool shed and one man was responsible for the tools. If the number of axes was not correct he had to report it. How can we get around that? Let's just be sure, that everyone takes his axe along every day whether he needs it on the job or not!"

I did not know the other groups had similar ideas. Walter Grunwald remembers that they too were thinking about arming themselves with makeshift weapons. Our electricians made truncheons for some of the men. A piece of ground cable was dipped into hot lead until it had a nice size glob on one end which formed a club. When they tried it out, they realized that it could sever a tree branch three inches thick with one hit. They carried the weapon inside their sleeves. In case we had to, we wanted to take as many of these hated Germans with us as we could.

Their group kept it a secret from the rest of us, the same way that we too did not spread the word beyond our carpenters. One had to be very careful so nothing would leak through to Raphaelsohn, or one or the other of the men one was not sure of.

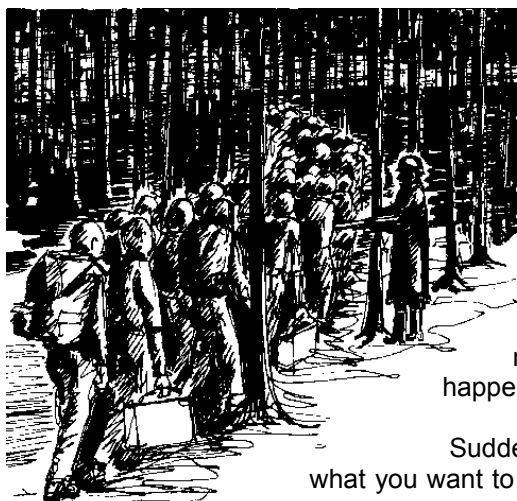
In the evening we again got sweet barley, sugar and some meat.

February 1st, 1945, the next morning, when we exited the barrack for roll call, we were chased back in by SS guards. Our conspiracy of the night before was already too late. Raphaelsohn came into the barrack and brought the orders of the *Obersturmfuehrer*.



"Nobody is allowed out of the barrack, anybody seen outside will be shot." He commanded two men to go to the kitchen and get the coffee. They came back with the big kettle. We asked them if they saw anything, but they did not. At lunch the same thing. It seemed the cook was allowed to prepare food. Raphaelsohn came again. He was told that we will be shipped to another building site for a couple of days and afterwards come back here again. By now nobody believed him. He also said to take only the most necessary items along, we would come back. As soon as he left everybody started packing his little belongings. Most of the people had just a backpack anyway. I had made a little diary, and as I had learned bookbinding in Nuremberg, I made the cover out of two thin slices of locust wood. The design on the cover was a barrack behind barbed wire. This was now too dangerous to have on me. I tore the cover off and just saved the sheets. Actually, I did not even remember that I saved these sheets. Only many years later did I found them again. We were debating about where they were going to send us. Nobody had any idea. If somebody had to go to the latrine he had to ask one of the guards who was standing outside for escort. Everything was very confusing and tense.

It was the same situation all day long. We were just sitting on our bunks and discussing the situation. The food was brought in by two men who were assigned by Rafelsohn. Frequently we heard explosions but somehow it did not sound like artillery fire. Later on we found out, the Nazis were blowing up the underground, bomb secure dugouts that our masons had been working on until yesterday. Some of them were not even finished yet. They were constructed for storing important files.



In the evening everybody got *Savarka* (a brand name of chicory). It tasted bitter and had a consistency like sawdust, but everybody liked it as it took away the feeling of hunger. When one mixed it with a little bit of margarine and a little sugar it was not bad at all. Also, sugar, yeast and margarine were distributed, and barley soup with bread. We slept on our bunks fully dressed.

Between 9:45 and 10:45 p.m. they gave us two donuts, sugar, margarine, Einbrenn, 3 potato dumplings, three cans of liver pate, *Savarka* and bread cubes. But we only got one meal all day long. We were sure something was about to happen; we were not going to sleep; everybody stayed dressed.

Suddenly at 12:00 midnight the command: "Everybody out! Take what you want to take and get on the roll call place!" The 198 men and the 17 women were lining up. This time roll call did not take as long as usual. Just one count and we marched off into the night. It was 12:45. There were a lot of SS guards around.

For a long time we marched through the woods. We did not see one house. Nobody knew where we were heading. Finally, still in complete darkness, we arrived at rails of a railroad. It is possible that this was the same place, Trebnitz, where last August we left the train. It now was 2:00 a.m. A couple of cattle cars were standing there:

"Everybody in!" It was 2:15 a.m. There were 74 people and our hand truck in the cattle car where I was. There was not enough room for everybody to sit down. Two armed SS guards were positioned at the open door. After a while the wagons were hooked up to a train and we moved.

Again everybody started speculating about where they might be bringing us. It was pretty sure that the train was going westerly from the direction we saw. It went very



slowly. Usually the stations we passed were completely dark, only just for a second the lights were turned on, probably for the engineer to see. It was not only difficult to see anything at all, through the one little window on top, but it was night and nobody recognized the stations. Slowly it was getting lighter and somehow we realized we are going towards Berlin.

The train was not going very fast to begin with, and then it stopped all together somewhere out in the fields. It was 9:00 a.m. From a distance one heard air raid sirens wailing. One of the SS soldiers came along the train, and said something to the two guards on our door. They jumped off, and went into one of these ditches that were dug next to the tracks as an air raid shelter. They left the door standing open. A moment later, one already heard the first bombs falling in the distance.

This was February 3rd, 1945, and the American planes were raiding the capital. The train was just somewhere pretty near, but still east of Berlin. Almost none of the fellows in the wagon ever were in an air raid, as almost all of them were from Czechoslovakia. They now enjoyed the show through the open door. Before the two SS men jumped off, they warned that anybody getting out of the train would be shot.

It was a little hazy, but one could see thin aluminum strips like Christmas tinsels flying all over the place. The planes had jettisoned them to confuse the German antiaircraft batteries. The noise now came much closer. Through the open door I noticed one plane coming directly towards us, and bombs exploding in the field one after the other, closer and closer towards the train. After all a railroad was a prime target. I was quite convinced that the next bomb either hits us or at least comes very close. I was just waiting under extreme tension, as the plane flew over the train. When will the bomb hit? -That next bomb never came. We were safe.

At 11:00 a.m. the air raid was over and the SS heroes came back into the wagon and a short while later the train started moving again. Slowly and with many stops we were going around the south side of Berlin. At 3:00 p.m. the train still was somewhere south of the capital.

February 4th, 1944. Between 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. the train had stopped at Grossbeeren. By evening we passed Zossen. Finally we found out where the place was, which they told us we would be shipped to. Now the train kept going almost completely south. I recognized the stations; it was the same route I always went to and from Berlin to Nuremberg. Like the night before, the stations were lit up a very short time. Anybody standing near that little window was telling me the stations. Lukenwalde, Jueterbog, Wittenberg, Bitterfeld. Every couple of minutes, all night long a lot of trains loaded with tanks, trucks and canons were passing us in the opposite direction.

February 5th, 1945, at 6:30 a.m. the train stopped in Halle. More and more trains rolled north with equipment. "Probably against the Russians, maybe they are attacking Berlin now", somebody said. The train moved farther and farther south. Naumburg, Jena, Saalfeld, Kronach, Lichtenfels. No one in my wagon had any idea of the area we were traveling through. I told my friends that we are going south and it is possible they will bring us to Theresienstadt. We still were traveling exactly the stretch I knew. This is not the shortest way, but maybe the Russians are already in Silesia and therefore the train has to make a detour.

It was night again. Some of the men as well as the women could sit down a little and sleep. There was not enough room for everybody to sit at one time. I was getting tired, standing at this little window opening. It was so high that I had to stand on my toes. I had a chance now that I could sit down a little and I told one of the fellows to keep on watching when the light goes on, while passing one of the stations, tell me the name of the town. I told him the next one should be Bamberg. If not he should wake me right away.

Even in this crowded place, I was asleep in a second. After all, this was the fourth night without sleep. After a short rest, only a little while later the fellow woke me and said: "Bamberg never came, is it possible we did not reach it yet?"

"What was the last one you saw?" I asked.

"It was something like Steinbach and Zeil."

"I have no idea where that is", I said, *"keep on watching and tell me as soon as you see another station."* The next one was Augsburg, and then came Hassfurt.

"I don't understand it", I said, *"as far as I know, Hassfurt is on the Main river, why are we going straight West now? Maybe there is another Hassfurt, let me know what the next one is called."* Again there came a couple of small station I never heard of before. Somebody now came with the announcement:

"We just passed a place called Schweinfurt." I got up and went to the window.

"If this was really Schweinfurt, they are bringing us west, maybe to the western front, to France to dig trenches." We did not know that by that time the Allied forces were already well on German soil. The train now went southward again.

At 7:30 a.m. on February 6th, the train arrived on the railroad station in Wuerzburg.

"Everybody off the train!"

The SS men screamed. Everybody took his bag and jumped down from the wagon.

"Now line up!" We were standing on one of the platforms on the railroad station in Wuerzburg. For the first time now after about 82 hours we were allowed to urinate onto the rails. There was no food since we left Wulkow. The little we had saved from what was given to us in Wulkow was gone now. Only if anybody had saved a crust of bread he had anything to eat. There was nothing to drink since we left the camp either.

From where we were standing one could see the upper part of the city and the low mountains of the Main valley and it looked like nothing was destroyed. The hills in the background had a slight dusting of snow, but in general everything looked pretty peaceful.

After standing there for quite some time we heard a noise which gradually got louder and louder. A railroad engine was driving up and down the station just producing a lot of steam, to cover the railroad station with a smoke-screen. The noise now reached a crescendo. About 50 American bombers flew quite low over the railroad station. That smoke-screen did not help, we saw them very clearly. When I saw all those planes I said to the fellow next to me:

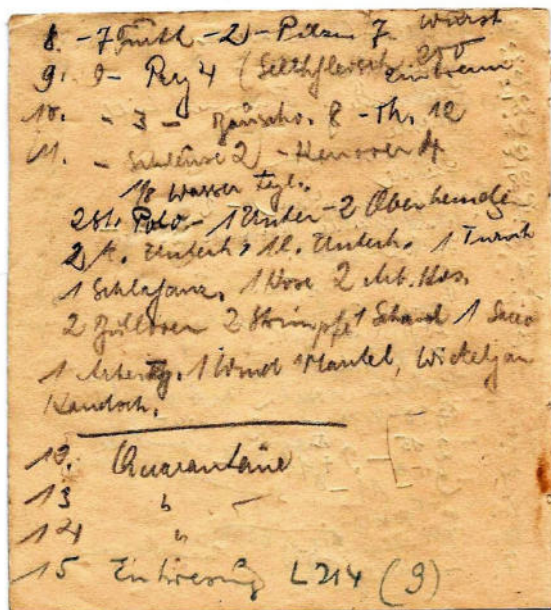
"You better take your backpack off!" I believed in the next second or so, bombs would be raining down on us and we just have to throw ourselves somewhere for cover. This very important railroad junction was not touched yet. I could not believe it, but absolutely nothing happened. A heavy anti-aircraft canon mounted on a railroad flatcar was just about 100 feet from where we were standing. They were fully manned, but not a shot was fired. That was our luck, as it only would have drawn fire from the planes. The whole city of Wuerzburg seemed like it never had been bombed. Why, I don't know.

A couple of hours later, we were still standing on the same place. Again this roaring of engines was heard. I thought that the planes were returning now, but it was another flight of perhaps 200 planes, flying in the same direction as the first ones. Again nothing happened. Everybody was wondering where these planes were coming from, and where they were flying to. Are they going to go on a bombing run or are they just coming from one?

In the evening a train with cattle cars pulled in from the west. We were ordered to board them. It was now 8:00 p.m. There was not any more room than in the first one. It still was almost impossible to sleep for the couple of men who were selected to sit down for a short time. The train now went eastward. Are they bringing us back again? There was no water and no food. The good thing was that this was in

mid winter and therefore the wagon was not getting too hot with all these people in it. If somebody had to go to the toilet, which did not happen too often as when there is no food, there is no bowel movement either, two men were holding the one, on one arm each, on the open door.

All through the night the train went very slow and very often not at all, just standing around for hours. At 8:30 a.m. on February 7th, 1945, we arrived on the freight station in Nuremberg I was looking out, but could not see any familiar sight, not even any bombed out houses. For hours we were standing there and hoped that they would bring us to Theresienstadt.



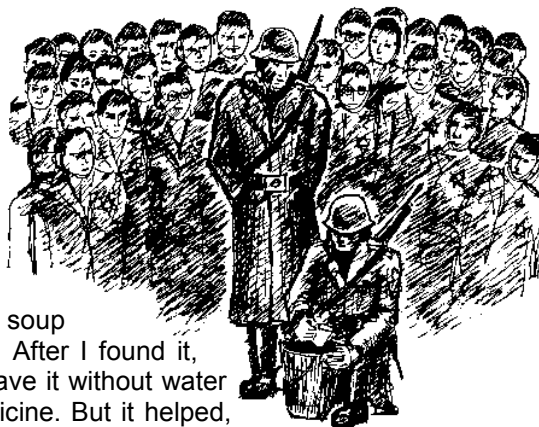

During the night the train left again and arrived at 7:00 a.m. on February 8th, 1945, in Furth im Wald. Ever so slowly, the train went eastward. One of our Czech comrades looking out now saw Boehmisch Kubitzén written on one of the buildings. He knew that was Ceska Kubice, the old Czechoslovakian border. First very low he started singing: *"Kde domov muji!"* (Where is my homeland), the old Czechoslovakian national anthem. And now the rest of our Czech friends joined in too. It got louder and louder. Even we, the ones from Germany and Austria who did not know the words, hummed along. This was an uplifting experience for everybody.

Suddenly we were not slaves anymore. This felt just like a revolution, everybody was caught up in it. The guards screamed: "Quiet, quiet!"

But instead the song got louder and louder and in a crescendo we passed Domazlice, the first Czechoslovakian town. One of the fellows, a known

pessimist was saying: "What are you so happy about? The Nazis are just sending us to our death!" But he could not discourage this sudden enthusiasm. Even though we all were hungry, thirsty and tired, now there was no more stopping. The singing went on and on. They sang "*Praha je krasna* and *Koline, Koline*", and who knows how many other Czech songs. It was wonderful.

We arrived in Pilsen at 2:00 p.m. on February 9th, 1945, and now the train was standing still again. At night at 7:00 p.m., each one got one slice of salami. The thirst now became stronger. Berthold Hornung suddenly was doubled over in pain and moaning. This little piece of salami on an empty stomach was too much to digest. Everybody tried to help, but nobody had any water, or anything else. Somebody thought that any item of food might help. But who still had food? We had been in the trains already for seven days. I had still a couple of cubes of sugar, my iron ration; my mother gave me along and one or two bouillon cubes. Somebody probably had sent them in one of the small packages to my parents. I never used it, I always thought, a day would come when I would need it more desperately.



I asked somebody who seemed to know; maybe it was the doctor, how about a sugar cube. No, I was told no sugar. How about the soup cube? All right, let's try the soup cube. I opened my backpack and searched for the cube. After I found it, somebody broke it up and ground it completely fine and gave it without water to Berthold. Nobody ever heard of a soup cube as a medicine. But it helped, his colic stopped.

February 9th, 1945. At 9:00 a.m. the train arrived in Prague. It went around the city, from one railroad station to another. At 4:00 p.m. we were still around Prague. While the train was standing again for awhile at one of the stations, we got 200 grams of salt meat and some *Einbrenn* (this is translated as brown sauce, which it was not. I believe it was just a thick paste of flour, a little oil and maybe water, cooked together.)

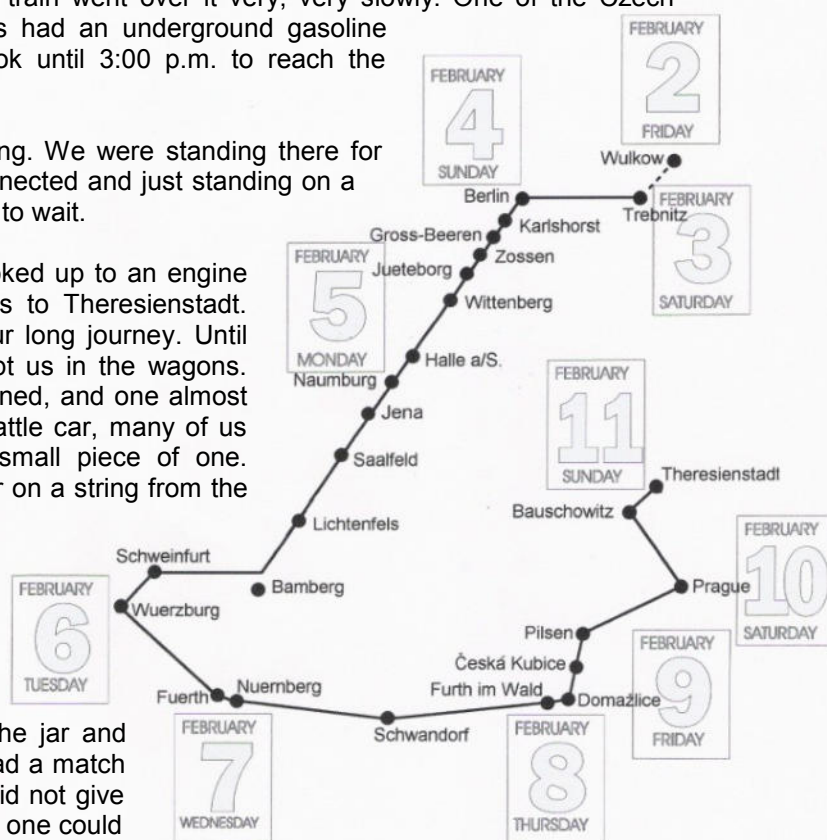
It was night again and we were still standing in one of the peripheral stations of Prague. The guards were always changed. Somebody asked one of the guards, or better made them understand, as they were Hungarian, if they would get us some water. These men were humane enough to take the pail and left and came back a couple of minutes later with water. How can we now distribute it equally?

It just happened, that I had a little one quarter liter aluminum cup, my only drinking vessel, which was marked at the one eighth levels. With this cup, one of the SS guards handed out 1/8 liter of water to each of the 75 men. As before, most of the time the train was just standing somewhere. It probably did not leave before sometime during the night.

By now it was February 10th, 1945. During the morning we came by a railroad station, where there must have been an air raid shortly before. I believe this was Roudnice. The buildings were completely demolished and even the rails in some cases were reaching vertically into the air. Only one rail had been repaired and the train went over it very, very slowly. One of the Czech fellows knew that the Germans had an underground gasoline storage facility there. It still took until 3:00 p.m. to reach the railroad station of Bauschowitz.

Again waiting and waiting. We were standing there for hours. Our wagons were disconnected and just standing on a siding. So close, but still we had to wait.

8:00 p.m., we were hooked up to an engine and shuttled the two kilometers to Theresienstadt. This still was not the end of our long journey. Until 12:00 o'clock midnight they kept us in the wagons. Something very amazing happened, and one almost could call it a miracle. In our cattle car, many of us had a candle or just a very small piece of one. Somebody hung a little glass jar on a string from the ceiling and in there he put a lighted candle. We were for eight nights in these wagons, and as soon one candle had burned out, somebody else came up with a piece of candle which he somehow had saved. Always somebody put one in the jar and lighted it. Even that someone had a match was very unusual. The candle did not give much light, but it was enough so one could see, not to step on a comrade. As we were standing in Bauschowitz, the last little candle anybody in the wagon had was placed into the jar and lighted. We knew that there was no more and after that one was finished we will be in the dark. The candle light died as we stopped in Theresienstadt.



Finally we could get off, stiff, tired and hungry. We were marched under guards to the *Schleuse* and from there to the Jaeger barrack. Nobody could get away to his family. Everyone was frisked again. The Nazis were sure that after all the time in Wulkow we must have gotten a lot of valuables. I as well as lots of others had to take all our clothes off.

As one was not sure if one ever gets his backpack on the end of the trip, people wore as much as possible. I wore: 2 tee-shirts, 1 undershirt, 2 regular top shirts, 2 short underpants, 1 long underpants, 1 gymnastic shorts, 1 pajama, 1 pair of slacks, 2 work pants, 2 sweaters, 2 pair of socks, 1 jacket, 1 work jacket, 1 wind jacket, 1 coat, 1 pair of *Wickelgamaschen* (puttees), 1 pair of gloves and 1 pair of shoes.

At 2:00 a.m., on February 11th, 1945, we were marched over to the Hanover barrack, which was just one block from the Jaeger barrack, where we were to be held under quarantine. Nobody was allowed in or out. We were directed up to the third floor of the building. There was water and every one kept drinking and drinking again and again. Also there were beds in the rooms, two or three tiers high. Most of us just lay down any place we found.

I too crawled in someplace. Nobody got undressed; we were much too tired to care. I said to one of my colleagues: *"If there is any food, wake me."* I fell asleep at once.

After I woke up a couple of hours later, it was daylight already, I said to the same fellows: "I am really hungry, how come they don't bring us something?"

"What do you mean? There was some bread and jam a while ago, didn't you get anything?"

"No, I just woke up!" The first food after nine days, and I had overslept.

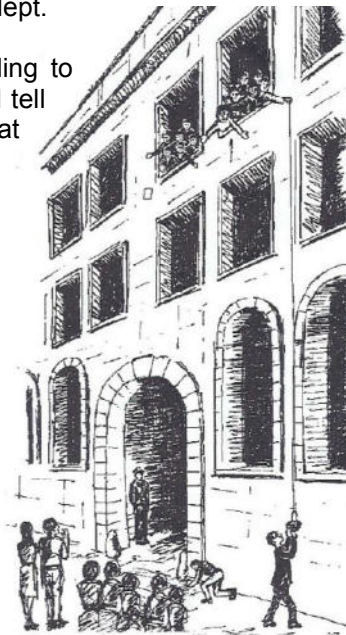
Some of the fellows looked out of the window and kept on calling to people down on the street. They begged them to go to their relatives and tell them that we the people from the *Barackenbau* were back. News like that went like a grass fire through Theresienstadt. Relatives, friends and everybody who had next of kin in the group came, that means everyone who was still in Theresienstadt. After a short while my father came too. The ones on the outside were not permitted in, and we could not get out. Now everyone was at the windows and because all of us shouting excitedly to each other, one could not understand anybody.

Shortly afterwards somebody in the street came with a long thin rope and after a couple of tries, someone in a window caught it. Now we were connected. Another one of the people on the street brought a little basket and we on top could now get some food from the people. All were yelling and nobody could understand a word, so we wrote messages on little pieces of paper. On our improvised elevator the papers went up and down in the basket.

Besides being at the windows and getting news about what had happened in the meantime in Theresienstadt, I believe we did a lot of sleeping to make up for all the time in the train.

For the next three days we were held in quarantine. Now we got food like the rest of the people, but we wanted to get out to our families.

February 15th, 1945. All our backpacks were taken to the disinfecting station by special helpers. The quarantine was lifted but we were not free yet. We too had to go to the *Entwesung* (the disinfection station) to be disinfected. In my back-bag I still had the seven sugar cubs my mother gave me when I left in August. I had saved them, because I realized that if I would start eating one, I probably could not stop and would eat them all. Psychologically they still helped me to overcome the hunger, as I knew I had them. When I got my pack back from the disinfecting and I took the sugar out, they looked like glass, and were not edible any more.



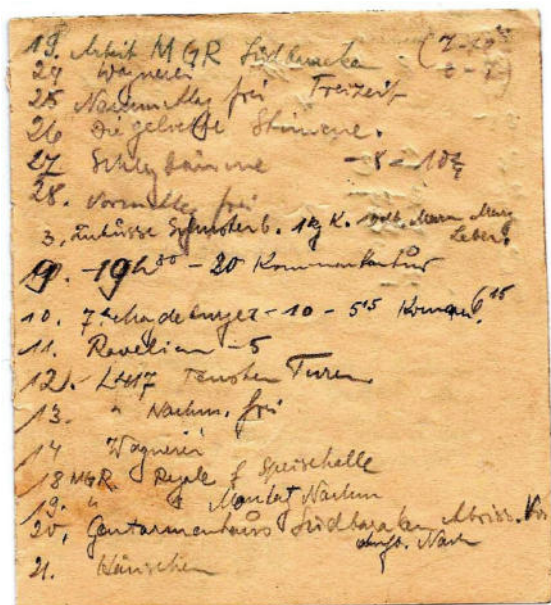
At 9:00 p.m. finally everybody was permitted to go to their families, if they were still in Theresienstadt. I went to my parents in L 214. The guaranty the Germans had given, that none of our family would be sent away while we were gone, was just another of the German's deceptions. A lot of the men never saw their loved ones again. I was one of the luckier ones; at least my parents were still in Theresienstadt. For the first time I heard that not only Julius, but Erna was also deported, but they did not know to where. One hoped Erna came to the same place as Julius. She even took some of his clothes along.

My parents also told me that on January 17th, the infamous Nazi sergeant Heindel came to the house, searched in every room, even ripped a couple of floorboards off. Nobody knew what he was looking for. When he found a couple of cigarettes, he arrested Mr. and Mrs. Engelstein. Both of these elderly people were taken to the *Kleine Festung* (the little fortress), on the opposite side of the Eger river. Mr. Engelstein a man in his seventies, was beaten to death, his wife survived and came back to Theresienstadt after the liberation.

My father told me that a couple of days before we came back, on February 5th, 1945, there was a transport of 1,200 people to Switzerland. But nobody really knew if that was true or if these people might have been shipped to their death. In this case it happened to be true, and the people arrived in Switzerland. I also did not know that my mother became the *Hausaelteste* on November 31st, 1944 of the building L 214 which was now called *Bahnhof Strasse 14*. Mr. Rothschild the former *Hausaelteste* whom my parents knew from Haigerloch and his wife, were in a transport and were deported to Auschwitz from where they did not return.

My father writes that on November 29th, 1944 my mother and he moved into the small room which used to be the kitchen of the house which was now the office *as well as* the sleeping quarters of the *Hausaeltesten*. Besides a bed there was some kind of a table and one chair. The stove as well as anything else that belonged to a kitchen, was taken out. The table was filled up with boxes full of lists and index cards. The house, which was a small one family house, now was occupied by 150 people. Some of the rooms were filled with women and others with men usually old ones. Everybody was listed in dozens of different lists, as each one of the distributions had to be registered each day.

Every day, a report had to be filed and handed in to the *Evidenz* (the central inhabitant register office). Sick people had to be filed in a different category, if they were put to a hospital. They still had to be listed as living in that house, but temporarily hospitalized. Anybody who died had to be listed and removed from the inventory. This was a full time job. My father, as an old bureaucrat, not only helped my mother, but after coming home from his work, did most of the writing. This had to be done by the *Hausaeltesten*. Woe, if there would be a check and the count was not right. Each *Hausaelteste* had to go daily to a special meeting to hear particular orders of the day and in some cases to also receive written instructions.



I did not have to go up to my attic for sleeping any more. In the back of the building was a tiny room a couple of stairs below the level of the courtyard. I was allowed to move in there and shared the room with middle age man.

On February 16th, and 17th, was nothing special, I have no indication of what I did.

February 18th, 1945, I got a permission slip from the *Arbeitszentrale, Arbeiterbetreuung* (Central Labor office for laborer's welfare) that I can pick up a pair of working slacks and a jacket. The following order was delivered for me to the office of the *Hausaeltesten*, my mother:

From February 19th, 1945 on, you will be included to work in the assigned group of professionals. You have to report tomorrow morning the 2. 19. 1945 to engineer Reimann punctually at 6:45 a.m. at the south barracks.
Labor department

Name Herbert Kolb
I.D. No. II/28-1245

Address L 214

February 19th, 1945. I started working at 7:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon and after a lunch break from 2:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. This was the group where I had worked before being sent to Wulkow. This assignment did not last very long.

February 24th, 1945. I got new orders. I had to report to the *Wagenbauer* (wheel and coach builder) on the *Bauhof*. Before Wulkow, I had to help out a couple of times in that shop. The master coach builder, Mr. Winkler, was one of the lucky ones in the 1,200 people who were transported on February 5th, 1945 to Switzerland. I did not know what was expected from me, as I really did not have the slightest idea of what it was all about. All I did a couple of times before was to help out, for instance, to hammer a hot iron ring around a wheel. Now I just had to repair horse drawn wagons.

February 25th, 1945. I had the afternoon off.

February 26th, 1945. It seems I went to a recital of: "*Die geliebte Stimme.*" (The beloved voice). But I do not remember what this was all about.

February 27th, 1945. This was my 23rd birthday. From 8:00 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. I had to work on *Schlagbaeume*. (Toll-bars like on borders). I do not remember what I had to do on them and where they were. I also have not written down what I was working on in the afternoon.

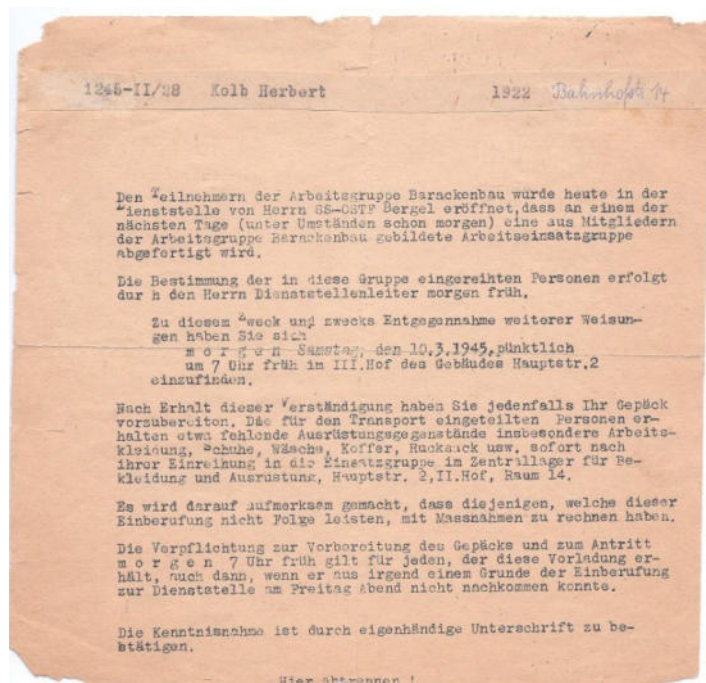
February 28th, 1945. I was off in the morning. Afterwards I got *Zubusse*. (extra food ration). 1 kilo K. (probably meaning potatoes), 10 deci-grams (100 grams) margarine and marmalade and a liver pate. I worked in the shoemaker barrack.

March 8th, 1945, 1,076 Hungarian Jews arrived by train in Theresienstadt. These were families who were deported from Vienna and never were in a camp before. They were shipped around the country for quite a while and besides having for days not gotten any food, they were completely demoralized.

During the night on March 8th, the following order was delivered. It read:

1245-II/28 Kolb Herbert 1922
Bahnhofstrasse 14

At the commander's headquarters the participants of the work group barrack builders were told today by Mr. *Obersturmfuhrer* Bergel, that in the next few days, (possibly already tomorrow) a working group will be selected out of the members of the labor group barrack builders. The selection of the ones who will have to join this group will be handled by the gentleman of the headquarters tomorrow morning.



For this reason and for the purpose of receiving further instruction, you have to be in the 3rd. courtyard of the building *Hauptstrasse 2* , tomorrow, Saturday 3. 10. 1945 punctually at 7:00 a.m.

After being confirmed you have to pack your baggage. People being selected for the transport will immediately receive missing equipment; especially work clothes, shoes, underwear, suitcase, backpack etc. in the central storeroom for clothing and equipment. *Hauptstrasse 2*, 2nd court, room 14.

You are warned that the ones who do not appear to this recruitment will be punished.

It is the duty for everybody who has gotten this conscription, to take the necessary steps with your baggage tomorrow morning at 7:00 a.m., even if he could not appear at the headquarters on Friday night.

Acknowledgment of this has to be signed with your own signature.

Cut off here

March 9th, 1945, I had to report to the commandant's office and was there from 7:30 until 8:00 p.m.

We were not yet back for a month and already it was happening again. All of us formerly in Wulkow got this order delivered and we met each other again standing in line in the courtyard of the Magdeburger barrack. *Obersturmfuehrer* Stuschka, the devil of Wulkow, appeared together with the commander of Theresienstadt *Obersturmfuehrer* Bergel.

We all were in shock. The beast of Wulkow was standing in front of us again. With that well known, sickly smile on his face. He started picking the men he wanted. About 50 of them were selected. When he saw Heinz Frankenstein he motioned him over to his chosen victims. Heinz who was never at a loss for words said: "Obersturmfuehrer, I have rheumatism in my shoulders!"

Stuschka answered: "*The sun will be good for you where we are going!*"

I was lucky. My policy of not being too conspicuous in Wulkow paid off. The monster seemed not to remember me and he picked mainly people he knew. Heinz Frankenstein and Walter Grunwald were two out of the fifty who were picked. Most of the following information is from these two men.

The group was told that this time they would be sent to Austria. Another German lie. On March 13th, 1945, they were taken by train to Hof in Bavaria. After about an hour on the railroad station, two trucks came and they had to load the material and tools that were brought along. Some of the men were taken along on each trip. These trucks were shuttling the material from the railroad station to Schnarchenreuth which is a small village about 18 kilometers north-west of Hof. It took many hours until everything was shipped. Walter Grunwald writes that he was on the last trip getting there and by that time it was 1:00 a.m. He came together with the SS-*Oberscharfuehrer* Hanke. Hanke, who was not too bad in Wulkow, was very decent with the men in Schnarchenreuth. He probably saw the writing on the wall that the war would be over soon.

They were brought to what was just a large isolated farm estate. Temporarily the men were housed in the stable. At seven o'clock the next morning, when they were woken up, Walter saw what the estate looked like. There was a very large four story house which might have been old castle. At roll call Stuschka told them that their job was to renovate the building, which was partly in ruin. Also, to build offices for bombed out Nazi officials from Berlin who should continue their work for the "Thousand-Year-Reich" from there. As in Wulkow, new barracks also had to be erected.

It did not work out quite like that, as the military situation in Germany was already getting very catastrophic. The communications network was all in shambles and material like cement, bricks, sand and barrack sections never came. They started with preparatory work for building barracks. The masons erected foundations with slats instead of blocks or rocks. Mortar was mixed with mud, which by the way was the only thing they had plenty off. The rest of the men had to go into the forest and fell trees. They

had to transport these by man power on wagons to the village of Berg, which had a saw mill. After the wood was cut into beams and boards they again had to haul it back to the construction site.

The building of the barracks did not progress at all, and the only thing they could do was piling the material somewhere. Nobody, neither the labor slaves nor the Germans showed any kind of interest in the work, as finally the supermen started to realize that this too was in vain and the war was lost.

Stuschka got a motorcycle from somewhere and most of the time was not even around. As the American forces came closer every day the situation for the Germans became very precarious and troublesome. They made the decision to return the Jews to Theresienstadt.

It was now April 22nd, 1945; the men were awakened very early in the morning and had only ten minutes time to get ready for roll call. Again, they had to leave most of the things. Everything in Germany was collapsing. It was impossible to find any transportation either with trains or otherwise. The only way out was by walking.

Two wagons loaded with the gear of the SS guards were standing around in the court yard. These wagons had a long wooden shaft where usually the horses were supposed to be hitched. But there were no horses either. The men had to tie ropes to the wagons and a lot of men had to pull each of these wagons.

They started out pulling this heavy load, and as the terrain was very mountainous this was a special torture for the human horses. First they passed through Hof, which was only 18 kilometers south. Then it went easterly through Aldorf, and on to Klingenthal. It became harder and harder to pull the heavy loaded vehicles up the mountains, and even worse was the descending on these small roads in the *Erzgebirge* (ore-mountains) and later in the Bohemian mountains as it was almost impossible to hold back the wagons from running away from them.

At Kraslice, the Germans called it Graslitz, they passed the former Czechoslovak border. There a mob of Sudeten-German women attacked them. Spitting at them and throwing stones at the men. They continued to pass Sokolov (Falkenau), Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad), Kadan, Kostelec n/Ohri, Chomutov, Most, Bilina Kostomlaty. They were getting exhausted on their long march and also getting less and less to eat. Most of the time they had slept in farmers' barns or under the sky and were half frozen the next morning. The worst of the trip was yet to come, crossing the mountain between Miletice and Lovosice, straining their last bit of strength. In the evening of the eighth day of their tormented march they reached Lovosice. It was another seven kilometers to Theresienstadt.

Shortly before the town, suddenly Stuschka and all the SS guards were gone. It was still light enough to examine the contents of the wagons. On top was a canvas with a large Star of David painted on it. When they pulled the canvas back they found that the wagons were filled with ammunition and arms. They believe that the allied planes must have seen the stars, and therefore never attacked them, because during their long march they saw lots of them flying overhead.

On April 29th, 1945, in the evening of the eighth day of their wearying journey, they arrived in Theresienstadt completely fatigued. They had jettisoned their cursed vehicles which for almost 200 kilometers they had dragged since they left Schnarchenreuth.

March 11th, 1945, back in Theresienstadt, I was working for M.G.R., and was ordered to go to one particular *Ravelin* number XVIII. This was one of the outer works of the old fortress, being accessible only through a long underground passage below the moat. This *Ravelin* started in the *Bauhof*. There was a heavy door at the entrance, which was locked with a horizontal heavy beam. I was told to repair something on the door on the other end. Light bulbs were at certain intervals in these long halls and I found the switches. But these passages did not go straight and once in a while there was another passage branching off the first one. In the Ravelin again was a little light coming in through the embrasures, those are the narrow vertical slots in the brick wall, through which the soldiers in the eighteenth and nineteenth century could shoot.

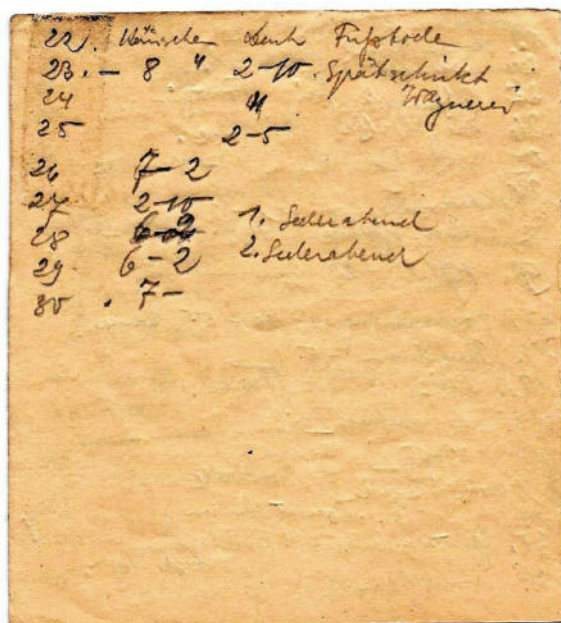
These little slots were now being closed up with bricks by masons. I was told that this was supposed to become a secure storage area for food against a gas attack. It was not hard to figure that again was one of the typical German deceiving lies. One really did not know anything yet about gas chambers, but one heard sometimes some rumors. This story about food storage did not make any sense at all, as these passages were not more than 5 or 6 feet wide, and if one would stack up anything at all, one could not walk through any more. I was thinking about this rumor about gassing people. This would be the perfect place for it, as there was only one door on each end. These could be very easily locked and if people would be forced into these small halls, nobody could survive.

What I did not know was that the two engineers, Erich Kohn and Kolisch, who were the engineers in charge of the redesigning of these long halls for the so called storage area, had similar fears. They had secretly created areas where the wall could be broken through, had made 40 especially strong chisels, which they had hidden on some places in these long halls. The SS commandant Rahm, after hearing about the rumors, ordered Mr. Kohn to him, hit him in the face and threatened to have him shot if he would spread these rumors. He also now ordered shelves to be built to make this storage fairy-tail more believable.

On my way back at 5:00 p.m., I made in eye level heights, with a pencil little arrows on the wall pointing the direction of the *Bauhof*. Later on when, I thought about it, that even this would have been no help at all, as surely in a case when they would push people into these halls, not only would there be no light, but nobody could move towards that end any more. I told some of my colleagues about it. Luckily the war ended before the construction was finished.

March 12th, and 13th, 1945. I had to install doors and windows in the house L 417. This was the home for older boys from Czechoslovakia. On the 13th, I was off in the afternoon.

March 14th, 1945. I had to work again in the coachbuilders' workshop on the Bauhof. I also had an appointment for treatment for rheumatism in both of my shoulders. As shown on the slips I went there ten times.



March 16th, 1945. I went for treatment again to the Genie barrack.

March 18th, 1945. I was back at M.G.R. again and had to build shelves for the SS dining room. This was in the western part of Theresienstadt, which was occupied by the Germans. It is unbelievable that at that late time the Nazis still believed they would win the war and were interested in beautifying their dining room.

March 19th, 1945. Again I had to go to the Nazi dining room, in a building called the Victoria which was probably the L 324. In the afternoon I was back at the workshop of the M.G.R. I also went for treatment of my rheumatism.

March 20th, 1945. In the morning we, the carpenters of the M.G.R group, had to tear down the little house of the Czechoslovakian gendarmes at the south barracks. In the afternoon we had to start erecting it new again.

March 21st, and 22nd, 1945. I was working on the floor as well as on the roof of that little guardhouse. On March 21st I went for treatment again.

March 23rd, 1945. I worked with the M.G.R. group from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on the little guardhouse. At 2:00 p.m. I was ordered back to the wagon shop in the Bauhof and worked there until 10:00 p.m., repairing horse drawn wagons and other carriages. These had to be readied for the Nazis, when they would suddenly have to flee. Again I went for treatment.

March 24th, 1945. When we left Wulkow we did not take our tools along, therefore it seems I used a briefcase as a toolbox. As the one we had was in pretty bad shape, I had it repaired. I had to explain that I worked for M.G.R. and needed it to carry my tools. It was finished that day and I probably picked it up in the morning. Afterwards I again I was fixing wagons from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

March 25th, 1945. I was working with the M.G.R. from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and again in the early afternoon. Later in the afternoon until 5:00 p.m. I worked in the wagon shop.

March 26th, 1945, from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at M.G.R. then, after treatment for rheumatism, again I went to the wagon shop.

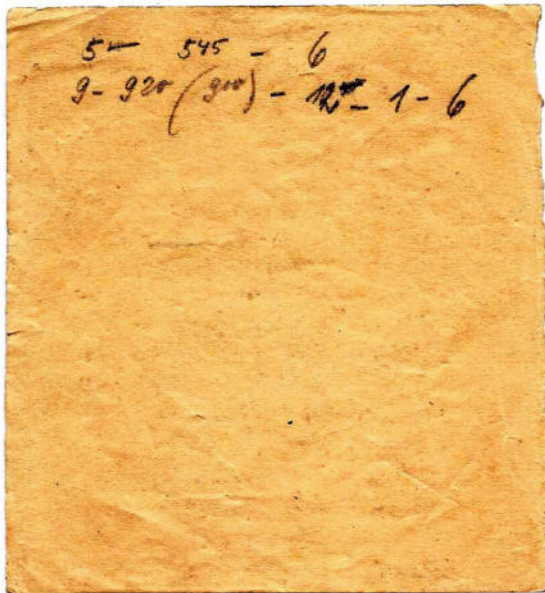
March 27th, 1945, in the wagon shop again from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. This was Erev Pesach. My parents waited for me to come home and then began the Seder in my mother's office. My parents were very upset, as we did not know where Erna and Julius were. My father said that he hoped that they too were together and were also able to have a Seder.

March 28th, 1945, I worked from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. then went for treatment. This was the second Seder night and I wanted to invite a friend, but my mother was against it. My father was absolutely for a guest and had a completely different opinion. He was saying that he hoped that someone would ask my sister, if she is not with her husband, to join them and the woman of the house would not have the same opinion as my mother. They argued a while, but I did not invite a friend.

March 29th, 1945, I worked again from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

March 30th, 1945, I started working at 7:00 a.m.

From March 31st, until April 9th, I was working most of the time with the M.G.R., but I have no records of that time.



April 1st, 1945. My father got a permit to be able to go to his office in the Magdeburg barrack. I do not know why he needed a special permit at that time. It was effective until July 1st, 1945.

On April 2nd and 6th I went again to the Genie barrack for treatment.

April 7th, 1945. Somehow we got a sewing machine and brought it up to my parent's room on the first floor of the house. I do not remember where we got it from, but I remember having it. At that time the doctor prescribed another 10 treatments for me. I could not get them, as on the 9th I was listed for another transport.

April 8th, 1945, I received a summons at 12:30 at night to be at the Nazi headquarters at 8:30 a.m.

Office of Labor
Labor Recruitment of Men

Kolb Herbert
II/28-1245

Railroad street 14

Exterior Work Force

ARBEITSZENTRALE
Männereinsatz

An Kolb Herbert
II/28-1245

Dat. _____ Ustik. Bahnhofstr. 14 ES

Betreff: Ausnahmeseinsatz

Beschuld: Sie haben sich morgen am 9. 9. 1945 um 7.30 Uhr in Hauptstrasse 2, Zimmer A 13, zwecks Vorführung bei der Dienststelle einzufinden.

Arbeitszentrale
Männereinsatz

You are ordered to report tomorrow at 4. 9. 1945 at 7:30 am at the Hauptstrasse 2 room A 13 to be shown to the SS-headquarters.

That same evening another summons

ARBEITSZENTRALE An Kolb Herbert Dat. 9. 9. 45
WY/Deb.BV-A14 I/28-1245 L 214

Betreff: AUSNAHMESEINSAZ.

Sie werden aufgefordert, sich mit Ihrem Gepäck abfahrtsbereit am 10. IV. 45 um 10 Uhr in A II (Jaegerkaserne) einzufinden. Wir bitten, den festgesetzten Termin, der der Aussererte ist, unbedingt pünktlich einzuhalten.

Sachgebiet Arbeitsseinsatz
Männereinsatz

AZ Nr. _____
Exp. _____

Central Labor Office
For Herbert Kolb Date 4.9.45

WY/Deb.BV-A14 II/28-1245 L 214

About Labor Recruitment

You are told to be ready to be transported with your baggage on 4. 10. 45 at 10:00 o'clock in A II (Jaeger barrack). We ask you kindly to be punctual, as the time is very important.

Recruitment Office

Recruitment for Men

At 10:00 a.m. I and 39 men were mustered by some SS officers, and ordered to be at 2:00 p.m. in the courtyard of the Magdeburger barrack for further instructions. After another roll call and being this time looked over by Obersturmfuehrer Rahm, the camp commander, we were instructed to start packing and appear at 10:00 a.m. the following morning, Tuesday April 10, 1945 in the *Jaeger Kaserne* (barrack). Following order was brought to the house.

Again a roll call and again we were looked over and instructed to report at 11:00 a.m. back to the Magdeburger barrack, to get supplied for the trip. After that, report fully packed at 6:00 p.m. to the Jaeger barrack.

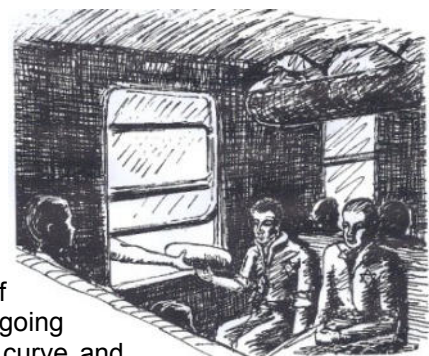
| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| From the main supply depot in the Magdeburger barrack, each of us got: | oil sardines |
| | 3 onions |
| | 6 cans of liver pate |
| | 1/4 kg margarine |
| | 600 gram toasted wheat bread |
| 1 can of condensed milk | 200 gram marmalade |
| 1 box of biscuit | 120 gram dry milk |
| 1/4 kg fat | 3 cheeses |
| 400 grams of semolina | 300 gram sugar |
| 800 grams of margarine | 3 toasted loafs of S-bread |
| 1/4 kg sugar | 500 gram sugar in cubes |
| 2 pieces, 1/4 kg of bacon | 1/2 loaf of bread |
| 2 small cans of | 1 loaf of bread |

Of the 40 men being recruited only three of us were carpenters, Pavel Weis, Jirko Pollak and I. The rest of the Wulkow carpenters were already shipped in March. The rest of the men were just helpers. All of us believed we were going to be shipped to the same place where in March the earlier transport of the former Wulkowers were brought. We were sure it was not going to be Wulkow, as by that time the Red Army had already occupied that area.

Punctually we came to the Jaeger barrack and were marched over to the train. It was already fully loaded. There were a lot of freight cars loaded with barrack sections, the same kind we had used in Wulkow and two local passenger cars. At 8:30 p.m. we had to board the train. One of the passenger cars were for the SS-guards and for supplies. The second one was for us. Shortly afterwards the train was towed to the main railroad line in Bauschowitz. There we were attached to a train going south, direction Prague. We left the Bauschowitz station at 8:45 p.m. Nobody could figure out where they were taking us. The officer in charge was an SS *Untersturmfuehrer* (second lieutenant) and only two SS-guards were sent along. Now even the stupidest German finally must have realized that the war was lost. They now became a little more human and treated us not like animals. Nobody was beaten. They hoped to save their skins, if now, in the last minutes, they acted correctly.

April 11th, 1945. The train started going south. At 5:00 a.m. we arrived in Prague. It had taken a very long time for the distance of about 40 kilometers. In one of the suburban railroad stations of Prague, while the train was standing there for a while, a woman walked by and quickly reached two loaves of bread through our window. I was sitting right next to the window and took the loaves. We divided them later. Nobody could figure out how she knew that there were prisoners in that wagon, after all, in the second one were the Nazi guards.

April 12th, 1945. It took a whole day to go from Prague to Pilsen. The train finally arrived at 2:00 a.m. on April 13th, 1945. The ride continued towards Klatovy and then into the Bohemian mountains.



The freight cars were very heavily loaded with the sections of three large barracks, when the train got into the mountains it kept on going slower and slower and finally stopped all together. It was just in a curve and when we looked out of the window we could see the wheels of the engine turning, but nothing moved. Once in a while there was a sudden jerk then our knapsacks, which we had in the package nets above the seats, kept falling on our heads.

We were stopped in the mountains in the middle of the woods. The engineer kept on trying again and again to move, but, besides the wheels making sparks on the rail, nothing happened. We thought we might be sitting there in the Bohemian mountains until the end of the war. We did not get any news about the war, but we knew the war was finally lost, and it could not go on very long any more. But the Germans still hoped for their Fuehrer's secret weapon with which they would win the war.

BMB
 Eig und Nr des Wagens _____
 Eigengewicht des Wagens _____ t
 Gewicht der Ladung _____ t
 Gesamtgewicht _____ t

Wagenladung
 THERESIENSTADT-BAUSCHOWITZ

Von _____
 nach _____
 über _____

Fahrt Nr _____
 Leistungszeit oder
 Anschrift des Empfängers _____

Aufgegeben am _____ 194 _____

Kenn 405-a (10/36-4) (Rev. 2. 4. 41) - 372
 Bezeichnung für gewöhnliche Frachtwagen-
 ladungen der Eisenbahn

BMB
 Eig und Nr des Wagens _____
 Eigengewicht des Wagens _____ t
 Gewicht der Ladung _____ t
 Gesamtgewicht _____ t

Wagenladung Nr _____
 THERESIENSTADT-BAUSCHOWITZ

Von _____
 nach _____
 über _____

Fahrt Nr _____
 Leistungszeit oder
 Anschrift des Empfängers _____

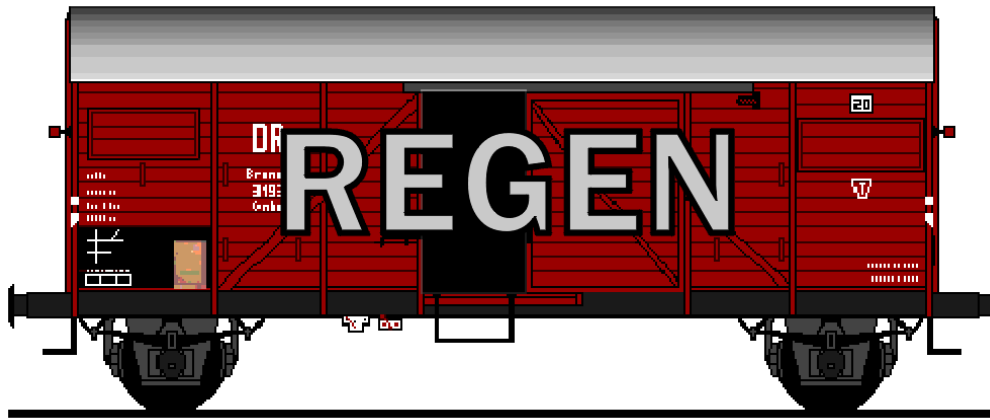
Aufgegeben am _____ 194 _____

Kenn 405-a (10/36-4) (Rev. 2. 4. 41) - 372
 Bezeichnung für gewöhnliche Frachtwagen-
 ladungen der Eisenbahn

After about half an hour, The Untersturmfuehrer commanded everybody to get out of the train. There were piles of logs, about six feet long, laying there on the side of the rails. We were ordered to put these logs now behind the wheels of some of the wagons that the whole train would not roll back down the mountain.

The engine was now unhitched and took off. We were permitted to sit outside next to the train. It took a couple of hours, then two engines came and were hitched to the front of the train. All the logs had to be taken off again and we had to get back into the train. Slowly these two engines pulled the train up the hill.

In Bayerisch-Eisenstein It drove over the old German border. It was now 11:00 a.m. Once in a while we saw steam engines and noticed they were covered with holes. They were just standing on a siding. Fright cars were thrown over, lying on the side of the tracks. We all knew that planes must have strafed them. These were encouraging signs of the German defeat. We were not hiding our joy about these sights. The Nazis finally were running out of rolling stock. It is amazing, that even at that time, their priority was to ship concentration camp slaves around in trains. We went farther south over Zwiesel to Regen. That seemed to be our destination. There was no camp, no barbed wire, just a smaller railroad station. I wondered who the German genius was who figured out that the Allied armies are going to be halted in that God forsaken place in the Bavarian woods.



By the time we arrived it was already night. All the loaded wagons were pushed onto a siding. As well as we could, we made ourselves comfortable in the coach for another night. As we had gotten provisions in Theresienstadt, at least we had something to eat.

April 14th 1945. Saturday morning. Everybody could wash up a little, after two men were sent for water along with one of the guards, to the first farm up on the hill. Then the officer sent some more men for a couple of bundles of straw. There was an empty cattle car standing, but the straw was spread on the floor and everybody was told to move their baggage into that wagon. We slept in there for the duration of our stay in Regen.

At that time, when we moved our gear to the cattle car, I noticed on the wagons where the barrack sections were transported, that there were wagon-load slips attached. Quickly when nobody was watching I took two of them off. I do not remember how I hid them but I managed to keep them unfolded and undamaged.

On the bottom of the left loading form is written: "The label for general goods are for the *Wehrmacht*. (The German military forces). It is written that the freight is going from Theresienstadt-Bauschowitz to Regen by way of Prague and Pilsen. It is stamped April 10, 1945. The sender was the Reichssicherheitshauptamt. The organization which has all the concentration camps under its umbrella.

It was now 12:00 o'clock noon, everybody was ordered to unload the barrack parts from the open freight cars. and pile them up right in next to the railroad station. This was a lot of material and I don't remember how many cars were filled with these sections. I am sure it was more than 15 open freight cars. It took us until 7:00 p.m.

A lot of things were forgotten to be packed, as because of the German secrecy everyone was under the impression, that we would come to an already established camp, where the group who was shipped in March had gone. As we were only three carpenters, we just had a couple of our tools, an ax, a handsaw and perhaps a pair of pliers along; the rest had nothing.

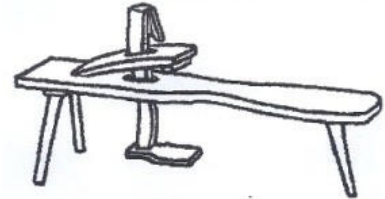
Manfred Heiser said he knew how to cook and was made our cook by the officer. The nearest thing to experience he had in cooking, was that his father worked in a kitchen in Theresienstadt. But Fredy did all right. All he had to cook for the couple of days was soup. . Luckily we had a pot along, but no spoon. How is he going to stir it? I was ordered to whittle a large cooking spoon out of a piece of pine. With stones Fredy built some kind of a temporary fireplace and cooked over an open fire

Sunday, April 15th, 1945, we had slept the first time on the floor of the cattle car, which was a little better to stretch out then sleeping in a sitting position in the railroad car. Nobody got undressed as it was still pretty cold up there in the mountains.

The barracks had to be built right next to the rails. That was the decision of the officer, who had absolutely no idea of construction of the barracks or the terrain where it had to be erected. He did not know that like on all the other barracks one first had to put pilings into the ground for a foundation. That was

when we found out that nobody provided us with big mallets, ladders or sawhorses. I was sent up the hill to the farmer to ask for a mallet. Obviously he did not have one. Actually we would need at least four of them.

At that time I noticed that the farmer had a *Schnitzelbank*, (like a shoe maker bench) in the stable. A three legged bench, which the farmer used when he had to attach handles on his tools. I asked if I would be allowed to use it. He did not object. Now I had to ask the Untersturmfuehrer, as I was not sure if he would permit me to work in the farmers stable. Not being too sure how to approach this man in that hated uniform, I got all my courage together and asked. Either this officer understood the war situation or was not a sadist like Stuschka. He permitted me to go up alone and do what I thought was the right thing to do. Up there, I also saw some long logs lying around and asked the farmer if I would be permitted to cut pieces off to make some large mallets out of these logs. This also was granted. Besides that I had to create a couple of saw horses and ladders. I did nothing else for a while in Wulkow but fixing tools. Now I was making stone age mallets and other tools. With the Thousand Year Reich collapsing all around, we 40 Jews, were supposed to help the Germans to win the war with these primitive tools.



First I made four mallets. There are always four men working on one pilot. The rest of the men now prepared the ground where the buildings should be erected. Some of them had to bring lumber and nails up to the farm where I was building many mallets. I had to cut the ends of some of the logs as square as possible, with my hand saw, to a usable size of about 12 to 14 inches. In that stable there was also a large drill. I drilled a hole through the log and inserted into it a long piece of wood like a shovel handle. As a wooden mallet is much lighter than a real one it took far longer to put a pilot into the ground. Besides, after hitting with these wooden things for a while they broke and I constantly had to make new ones. The ladders and saw horses were not so much of a hurry. As soon as there were four mallet finished, they were brought down to the men. Jirko, was a very good carpenter, but he never worked with a mallet. Pavel did, but he was not a very strong man, and could really not do that quite strenuous job for very long. Anyway the three of us, carpenters now taught a couple of the men how to hit the pilots into the ground. I could not stay there, as constantly these mallets broke and we needed new ones.

But pretty soon we had four of the helpers trained and the actual work began. One of my two friends had to put points on the pilots and I had to go back up to the farm, to keep on producing more and more mallets, and repairing the others, as the wooden logs kept on breaking. Probably one of us even had a level along. Pavel and Jirko made sure with this level and a long board that all of these pilots were level with each other. I managed to produce more and more of these mallets. Two and a little later even three groups of four were hitting these pilots into the ground. This first day not much more than part of the foundation was created. We worked until night.

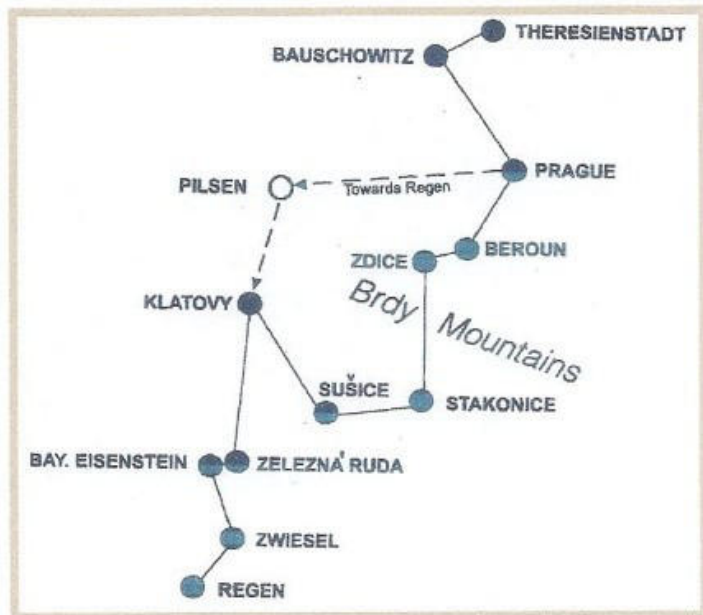
Monday, April 16th, 1945. The work started at 7:00 a.m. Still a lot more pilots had to be hit into the ground. While this was still going on we the carpenters had to start with the actual construction of the building. I, who was now also finished with making mallets and ladders, came down for good. We divided the men into three groups and each one of us started with one group of helpers. First we laid the floor and after that started building the walls. As we had a lot of helpers, they kept bringing us constantly new sections. The men who never did anything like that before were now helping in the actual erection of the building.

..

On the same day, April 16th, 1945 the battle of Nuremberg had started. Nuremberg was about 104 miles from Regen. The American army was advancing on the city from three sides and even though the situation was hopeless, Karl Holz, the *Gauleiter* (head of the Nazi party) of Franconia, who just was commissioned to be *Reichsverteidigungskommissar* (commissioner for the defense of Germany) forced the population, with threat of immediate execution, to defend the ruins of the city, the *Deutsche Schatzkaestlein* (the so called jewel box of all German cities). Whatever was still standing after repeated air raids was now being put to waste.

Tuesday, April 17th, 1945. Walls, interior as well as exterior ones were erected now, and to every one's surprise, even with these unskilled laborers the building progressed. The roof sections were carried to the building and were lifted up. On each side first one of us carpenters would be sitting on the wall and eased the section into its place. After a couple of sections were standing, some of the helpers took over. Jirko, like a rope walker, stepped barefooted from one section to the next, securing the sections with a board nailed temporarily. Now the roof sections were started on the one end of the building, while the

men worked on the other end still putting pilots into the ground. Some men put up the A-sections. By the evening one group of men already nailed roofing paper on the finished part of the roof.

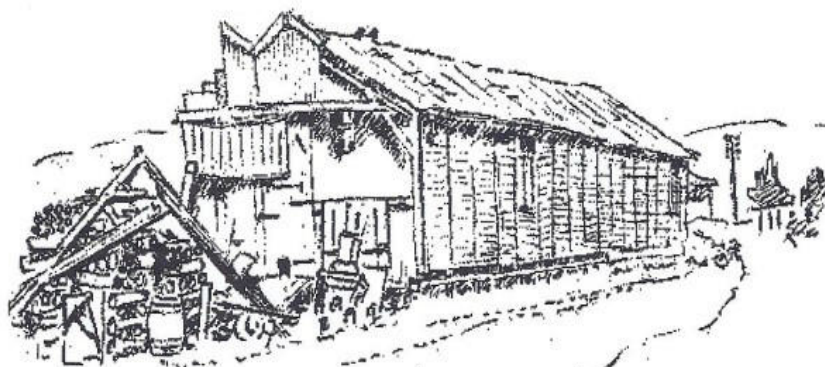


The broken line indicated the way we went to Regen. The rails were destroyed by bombing, so we had a long detour on our return.

Wednesday, April 18th, 1945. We had actually started to build the barrack only two days before. It was probably more than 100 feet long. The building was up in two and a half days. Out of some of the rough lumber I had to build a bed, a table and a stool yet. This was not fine furniture, just rough nailed together pieces. The rest of the men had started piling the sections of the other two barracks inside the finished building. Whatever did not fit was stored between the pilings below the barrack. It never happened before, that three carpenters and a group of amateurs built a building that fast. To this day I cannot understand that this was possible and how we did it.

Just one year later in August 1946, I went to Regen and the barrack was still standing. Now somewhat cannibalized, as the farmers took first of all, the extra sections we stored in the finished barrack and then ripped off pieces of the building.

Thursday, April 19th, 1945. As the advancing American army daily came closer, the *Untersturmfuehrer* became quite nervous and ordered us to get finished, storing all the sections inside the barrack. By 1:00 p.m. this was done and everybody was ordered back into the coach. At 1:30 p.m. we got connected to a train heading for Prague.



This is the barrack we built in 1945, drawn by me in August, 1946 after it had been cannibalized.

How this Officer could manage this, at that late date, is a miracle. We went north through Zwiesel, Bayerisch Eisenstein to Klatovy. There the train personal must have found out that Allied aircrafts had just bombed Pilsen. We were transported now south easterly again towards Susice. From there it went to Stakonice and then north over the Brdy mountains towards Zdice. It was a beautiful Spring day when we were traveling along the Berounka river towards Beroun and from there on to Prague.

The train ride was quite uneventful. The train was not attacked by Allied planes. This was Friday, April 20th, 1945, Hitler's last birthday. As a present to the Fuehrer, the 3rd U.S.- Division raised the Stars

and Stripes on the main market place in Nuremberg which used to be called *Adolf Hitler Platz*, the same place where the Nazi mob every year paid homage to their beloved mass murderers.

Shortly after leaving Prague, the train came to a stop again, as allied bombers had attacked a German railroad junction and an underground gasoline storage area the night before. The rails were torn apart and some rails were facing skyward. Men were working to at least repair one rail so that the mainline to Prague could be used again. It took the train from 4:00 p.m. until 9:12 p.m. to go the short distance to Bauschowitz. The coach with us was brought over to Theresienstadt and we finally got out of the train. We were gone just ten days.

April 21st, 1945, our whole group of 40 returnees was now ordered to help people of incoming transports from 2:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. During the last couple of weeks many trainloads of prisoners were transported to, and many more were on forced marches coming to Theresienstadt as this area was one of the last still under German occupation. The prisoners were in horrible shape, as they were sometimes being shipped and chased around for weeks without any food or water. In many cases only a small percent of them arrived alive. Even worse were the men and women who were marched for weeks, some of them since the winter, through snow and ice, until they finally arrived in Theresienstadt. Of thousands who started these death marches usually only a very small number of them arrived at the destination. The SS-guards shot anyone who fell or struggled. These people did not get any food for weeks and tried to sustain themselves by eating grass, when they found it. They looked like corpses. I and lots of other younger people, who by comparison were in a better physical health, tried to help these men and women to get to hospitals. Two people usually carried one of these pseudo-corpses up the stairs, which was physically impossible for them. Grown men did not weight more than 50 pounds. Of these poor people who now arrived in Theresienstadt, very many of them did not survive to see the day of liberation.

On the way I saw a lot of young women and girls near the center of the town and heard that they just came on foot from Leitmeritz. I remembered some of them from before and I asked them if they might have been together with Erna. A couple of them said they were together with her until March. Someone said one of the girls, Margot Unger, was a friend of Erna and I should talk to her. I found her and she told me all she remembered, but more about this later. On that same evening, Nuremberg, the *Stadt der Reichsparteitage* was conquered completely by the American 7th Army. The *Goetterdaemmerung* of the Thousand Year Reich after 12 years of deception, swindle, theft and mass murder, was coming to an end.

Between April 21st, and May 6th, 5376 men, women and children arrived in Theresienstadt. On Sunday, April 22nd, again our group was ordered to help in the Dresden barrack with people who came in a transport which had just arrived one day earlier. These were Hungarian families, who for quite a long time were shipped around in cattle-cars and were completely demoralized. This was a different phenomenon which nobody knew how to handle. The kitchen in Theresienstadt brought the food for these people to the Dresden barrack, and as soon as the two men with a large kettle of soup entered everybody stampeded towards them and upset the kettle with soup. Nobody got anything. For that reason we, all younger men, who were still physically in a better condition than these people, were recruited and had to act like guards for the cooks and food carrier. As soon as these men with the food arrived we threw a cordon around them and did not let any of this stampeding mob come close. We were there from 1:30. until 10:30 p.m.

These people were told now that they have to go to their rooms, as nobody would get fed in the courtyard. It was very difficult to make these people understand or move. Some of them, mainly women tried constantly to break through the cordon we had built around the food carrier and help themselves to even a spoon full of soup. We were holding on to each other to protect the cook and the kettle, and luckily our ring held. The attackers were physically very weak.

At one time while making a tight circular chain around the men coming with food, a little boy not more than 2 1/2 years old ended up in the middle of our circle. With all the pushing and pulling these people did, somebody must have lost a couple of crumbs of dried bread. It was just in front of me. I let the

arms of my neighbor go and I quickly picked it up and put it into the hand of the little child. We let the little boy out of the circle and as soon as the child got out an adult woman attacked the boy and took the crumbs of bread away from him. I had never seen such behavior before. We knew, that these people were hungry, as they did not get fed while they were shipped around. But they had never been in a camp, and were still together with their families. I as well as some of the other men could not believe our eyes. A lot of starving people came to Theresienstadt at that time, but only these Hungarians acted like animals.

As the distribution of food did not start as they were warned that we would take it away again if they did not cooperate and go to their rooms, finally the courtyard emptied. The men now with the kettle carrier in their middle, went to the first room. We went into the room and had to block it against others who tried to come in. It was awful to use force against these people, but as I said before, they were without any consideration for each other, like wild animals.

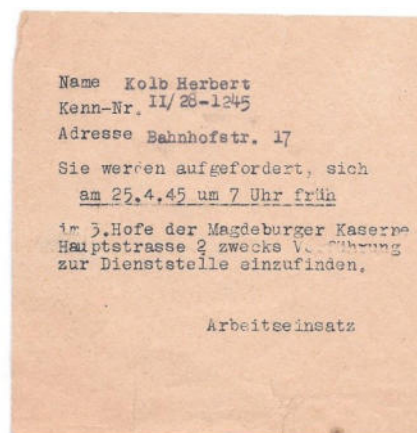
When finally everybody, the food and guardians were in the room, we first had to block the door so that none of the others come in. Than we asked the people to go all to one side of the room. Impossible, they did not cooperate. Each one tried to be first one and they tore and pushed each other. If there were children there, they did not show any compassion for them. There was no other way but physically forcing these people to one side, building a human barrier, trying to get the children separated from the adults and feed them first. And finally let only one at a time through to go with his pot to the kettle. After getting the food these people had to be held on the other side of the room, as the others would have attacked them. Adults took the food from children. We felt very bad doing this, but we had no choice, these people just did not have sense enough to cooperate. They called us Nazis.

Finally everybody got food. Then some complained that they did not get as much as others, but these kind of complains we were familiar with and could handle. The carriers now, surrounded by guards, left this room and went to the next one. A couple of us held the door closed, as soon as we were in, so that nobody could come in any more. They forced us to do it. Now the same way again and having the same trouble as before. First everybody to the one side and so on. There was a lot of complaining, but finally we established a routine, and it seemed everybody got some food. We went from room to room, always the same thing. Until, after hours, we came to a room with young French girls.

We used now the seemingly successful method, in getting the girls on one side of the room and started the distribution of the soup. They too kept on shouting and pushing, but we could manage to hold them back. Some of them tried to duck out under our arms, but we caught them. About half of them had soup and then came the big commotion. With all the screaming and complaining we made out, that not every one of them had a pot and they were sharing it with their friends. The one who had the food were now on one side and the others did not have a pot. When these first ones were finished eating we permitted them to hand their pot to their friends. These girls, stayed now on the side of the not served ones on the other. As nobody really could tell who had food and who did not, a lot of them managed to get it twice, or even more often. We were outmaneuvered by a group of young French girls. At least they did not take it away from each other like the Hungarians did.

This process was going on for hours into the night. But at last everybody got something. On April 23rd, 1945, our group had to be guards in the Dresden barrack again until 10:00 o'clock. It was the same routine as before. It was not an easy job and very disturbing that we had to guard against other inmates.

April 24th, 1945, I was told to go to the house L 209 at 7:30 a.m. I don't remember why but it might have something to do, that I was told to be ready for a stand-by alert. There would be another transport. During the afternoon. I got sick.



During the night of April 24th/ 25th, 1945 following order was brought to my mother, the *Hausaeltesten*:

Name Kolb Herbert
I.D. No. II/28-1245
Address: Bahnhofstr. (This was obviously the wrong address)

You are being ordered to appear on 4. 25. 45 at 7:00 am in the 3rd. courtyard of the Magdeburger barrack Hauptstrasse 2 to be shown to the SS-headquarters.

Labor task force department

I did not feel good, also I just did not appear, and it seems nobody else came either. had the feeling if they ship me out again, I would not return anymore. Until Friday the 27th, I played sick and then everything about the transport was forgotten anyway. The Nazis were very busy with their preparations to flee. All vehicles, from horse drawn carriage to bicycles had to be fixed, if anything was wrong with it.

On Saturday, April 28th, 1945 I was told to do some repair of a table, in the so called butcher shop. It stank there sickening like rotting meat. All over were maggots coming out of cracks in the wood. I felt nauseous, but I just had to try fixing their tables.

Sunday, April 29th, 1945. I had to work near the Aussiger barrack, there was some kind of a silkworm farm outside Theresienstadt. A group of us carpenters were marched out there every morning to do repair work. One knew that the war was coming to an end and every day one or another of the former fellows from Prague disappeared to help during the uprising against the Germans. Now the control from the Nazis was not that strong any more, and the men were never missed. One of the ones leaving at that time was my friend Erwin Pick.

In the afternoon I was ordered back to the butcher shop. This time they gave me a small piece of salami to take home. For the next four days I still had repair work to do there.

On May 2nd, 1945, after a lengthy meeting in Berlin, Mr. Dunant the representative of the International Red Cross became the protector of the concentrations camp of Theresienstadt.

May 4th, 1945, the control in Theresienstadt was not strong any more. After all, the SS was preparing to leave. Peter Weis, a friend and carpenter colleague from Wulkow sneaked out of town around midnight, joined by a young girl, Miluschka. They both were from Prague. They wanted to be in the city before the Soviet army arrived. Both of them walked for about 4 kilometers to the train station at Hrdly, near Bauschowitz. At four o'clock in the morning they boarded a train. There was no control about tickets or identification cards. At 6:30 they arrived in Prague. They separated at the powder tower. Miluschka went to acquaintance in the third district, Peter went to his mother's apartment in the 10th district.

May 5th, 1945. This was the last German announcement.

Document L 645

At a meeting at the office of
Mr. SS OSTF (*Obersturmfuehrer*) Rahm, May 5th, 1945

1/ Population Report.

To Mr. SS OSTF Rahm was handed:

- a/ List of the population count with a list of the sick people, listing of the death and register of the dead people from May 1, 2, 3, an 4, 1945
- b/ Remark about changes in the population.

2/ Post

To Mr. SS OSTF Rahm was handed:

- a/ Report about packages who arrived
- b/ Report about express items
- c/ Report about packages with special stamps (These were the one from Prague)

3/ Industry

To Mr. SS OSTF Rahm was handed:

- a/ Report about the fire in barrack 7 in the south area
- b/ Report about the shops for fixing uniforms. The camouflage uniforms have to be delivered right away to the *Kameradschaftsheim* (The Nazi living quarters)
- c/ Report about the workshops for exterior works
- d/ 2 documents for work for the *Dienststelle* (The Nazi headquarter) with the plea of confirmation, which was signed by Mr. SS OSTF Rahm
- e/ Report about repairs and new manufactured items who were made in April 45.
- f/ Report about the ready making of shipping of the proprietor work shop.

4/ Economy

To Mr. SS OSTF Rahm was handed:

- a/ Inventory of the central supply
- b/ Report about potatoes farming 1944/1945
- c/ Report about permission of getting food items free for the disinfection was submitted and signed by Mr. SS OSTF Rahm
- d/ Slips with the numbers 3048,3050, 5300, unto 5314, 20329, 20330, 20333 were submitted to SS OSTF Rahm and after being signed handed back.

5/ Legal matters

- a/ The judgments handed over for acceptance were not taken
- b/ Mr. SS OSTF Rahm ordered that the prisoners who were jailed by orders of the commandant, as well as the one who have served their time should be set free

6/ Health

To Mr. SS OSTF Rahm was handed:

- a/ A prepared statistical chart about people with typhus, and people who were reported who may have typhus.
- b/ Typhus-half-month report
- c/About the plea of receiving Cyclone, Mr. SS OSTF Rahm told, that 300 kilogram will be handed over by Mr. SCHF (*Scharfuehrer*) (sergant) Haindl. The time of delivery will be told by telephone.

7/ Organization

A Report with the plea of reorganization of the Jewish Self Government was given.

Signed by Murrelstein

The uprising against the rest of the Nazi troops in Prague had started on May 5th, 1945. Peter Weis went to the barricades in the 10th district. The fighting went on until on May 9th, when the Russian troops entered Prague. The same day the SS guards finally left Theresienstadt and Mr. Paul Dunant from the Swedish Red Cross took over the camp of Theresienstadt.

I had to work in the afternoon in the Sudeten barrack.

May 6th, 1945, was finally once again a day off for me. Following appeal was printed, for the first time in Czech as well as in German and posted.

Men and Women of Theresienstadt!

The International Committee of the Red Cross took over the protection of Theresienstadt. Mr. Paul Dunant of the Swedish Red Cross that committee is the head of Theresienstadt. He entrusted the under signed members of the *Aeltestenrat* with the leadership of the Jewish self-rule.

In Theresienstadt you are safe! The war isn't over yet! Anybody leaving Theresienstadt will be in danger by the war.

Theresienstadt took over the care of the martyrs in the Little Fortress. This means more work for reparation of repatriation. You must keep on working.

Mail is now without censoring and any restriction to write in any language. As a start, every inhabitant of Theresienstadt who would want it will receive a postpaid postcard, as soon as enough of them will be available.

Newspapers will be purchased and displayed publicly. As there are still a lot of infectious sicknesses, it is imperative to strictly observe the ordinance of the quarantine. For that reason be sure to observe it.

As soon as the war is over, the transporting back will be effected as soon as possible and according to the ruling of the particular governments. Please keep quiet and orderly! Help us with our work as we are trying to make it possible for you to return home. Continue to work on your job as before!

Dr. Leo Baeck, Dr. Alfred Meissner, Dr. Heinrich Klang, Dr. Eduard Meijers
Theresienstadt May 6th, 1945

The following announcement was posted for the next couple of days on the Magdeburger barrack.

Theresienstadt, May 8, 1945

!! WARNING TO ALL !!

Concerned because of war like action in the immediate proximity of Theresienstadt, following precaution have to be taken:

- 1) Only because of urgent reasons one is supposed to go out into the street! In any case should following streets etc. be avoided: The ramparts and entrenchments, the circuit roads, starting on the Leitmeritz gate, Bodenbach barrack, Dresden barrack to the sluice mill and on the streets in direction of Bauschowitz, Leitmeritz, as well as all the roads leading around the fortress and with any traffic.
- 2) Loitering near windows and doors, in the court yards of the houses is forbidden! The moment, shots are heard one should find protection near the windows on walls, that one does not get hit by bullets which enter the window or door.
- 3) For the future, children are not permitted to leave the buildings
- 4) In case artillery fire is heard one has to go to the basement at once. The custodians or building superintendents have to make sure that the basements will be opened. In that case 2 men are positioned as guards.
- 5) Lighting of open fire is until further notice forbidden!
- 6) In case one hears shots, the streets and open areas have to be cleared and one should search cover inside the buildings and behind walls.

Dr. Leo Baeck, Dr. Alfred Meissner, Dr. Heinrich Klang, Dr. Eduard Meyers

War was officially over on May 8th, 1945, but we, the people from Theresienstadt did not know about it. I was working with the group of carpenters at the West Barracks. On that evening I and a friend, Honso Sternlicht, were told by our group leader to bring the part we were building for the latrine from the workshop to the building site the next day.

Early the next morning, May 9th, 1945, I met Honso Sternlicht. We went to the *Bauhof*, where this part was put together and carried it on our shoulders through the *Bahnhofstrasse* in direction of the west barracks. As we came to the southern part of the street we noticed that another transport with men had just come from other concentration camps. Honso and I put that long wooden latrine part down and we looked at the new arrivals who were just sitting and lying around next to the train. We looked to if we

could see somebody we knew who would know or had known one of our relatives. Honso was hoping to find someone who knew his brother who was deported from Theresienstadt in October and I thought, maybe my brother-in-law or any of my cousins were with these men. They too were in such a deteriorated physical shape, that one had to be very close to them, to maybe recognize a familiar feature. Honso and I went up and down the line, spoke and asked some of them were they were, but we could not find any one we were looking for.

As we were walking along, looking to find a familiar face, a little old man spoke to me in a very low voice: "Don't you know remember me?"

I said: "No." The man told me his name and sure, I remembered that a little more than a half year ago, we were working together in the cabinet making shop. I believe he was maybe my age, but looked 40 or 50 years older. I did not recognize him.

In that same group was a young fellow, who luckily recognized me it was Egon Weil from Haigerloch. He was one of the boys I met in 1937 and 1938, when we were there during the vacation. Egon said for the last couple of days, he kept holding and supporting his friend, Alfred Rothschild, also was from Haigerloch. Alfred was already been carried to a hospital, as he was in gravely condition. Egon who was very weak too survived, but Alfred died a couple of days later, he was just too far gone.

Neither Honso nor I found anybody we were looking for. We went back across the street to pick up our wooden section and continue on our way. At this moment we heard machine gun shooting. The people on the street ran for cover. Honso and I threw off our wooden latrine part and did the same. We went into the next house. Both of us had our tools with us and even though it did not make much sense to use an ax against a machine gun we took them out and this gave us a little more courage. If we would need to, we would use it and kill one of the hated Germans. Nobody believed the Germans that they would leave the Jews alone and abide by the rules of the Geneva convention. After all this convention only applied to the Allies by their philosophy. Like in World War One, Germans are above any and all rules.

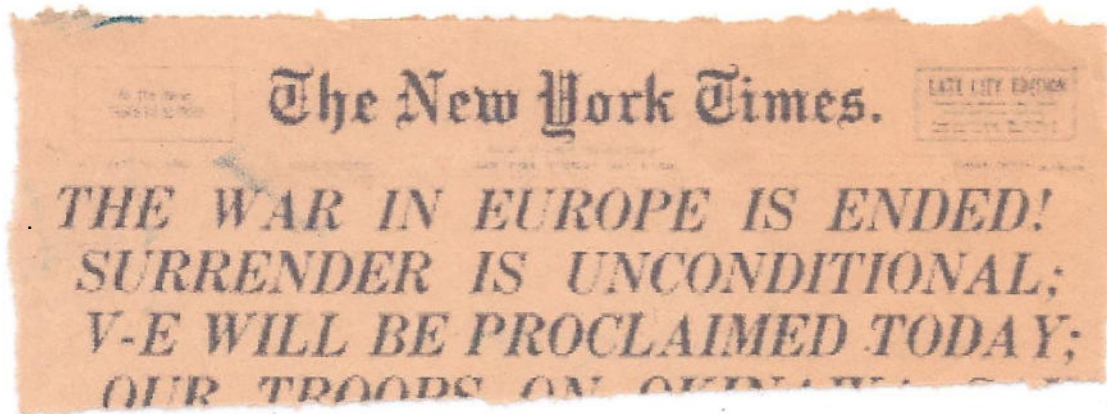
I knew my mother was home and she lived in the area where this machine-gun fire came from. Honso's mother lived even closer to the wooden wall where the Ghetto ended and the Germans used to be. We made our way now through courtyards and alleys from block to block to our mothers. Before we separated, we arranged to get together at our latrine part as soon as the danger had past.

What happened was that two German armored cars, which were fleeing from the advancing Russians, came to the wooden fence on the north-west end of *Bahnhofstrasse* and were stopped by Czech policemen who were stationed there, from entering the ghetto. Being told that this was a concentration camp, the Nazis could not abstain their homicidal lust to shoot at the Jews on top of the rampart. Luckily nobody was hurt. After the danger seemed to be over, Honso and I met again, went back to our abandoned wooden latrine piece, and now finally carried it to our group at the West-barracks. We worked there the rest of the day. During the evening my rheumatic pain in both of my legs became worse. In the late afternoon after work I limped home to my parents place. Lots of people were standing around in the street and everybody was excited and talking about the shooting of the morning. I told my parents that I am going up to their room and lay down a bit, as I had such pains in both of my legs I could only walk with two canes.

I was exhausted and immediately fell asleep. Sometimes later, when I woke up and felt a little better, I heard the people talking very loudly and excitedly. I went down stairs, still on canes, and asked what the matter was, and why were all of them shouting.

"Where were you?" I was asked. "I lay down a bit, my rheumatism was very bad!" "You mean you don't know? The Russians are here!"

Unbelievable, I had slept through the moment every Jew in Europe was waiting for, for years.



One really could not grasp it yet. This meant we were free; that the Nazi empire was finally destroyed; that all the slaves now again would be free men and women. One had to see the liberation with one's own eyes otherwise it would just be another dream, like so many others one had during these horrible years.

"I've got to see them", I said, "I'm going to the fence." Leaning on one cane I limped to the fence, near the Dresdner barrack. Some of the vertical fence boards were torn off so now one could climb through. There on the road to Prague, coming from the north came all kinds of units from the Red Army. What a sight! The feeling is indescribable. The soldiers came in any available vehicle. They were sitting on the 52 ton tanks as well as on horse drawn wagons. Lots of them also came by foot or bicycles. This was a completely different picture than the German army who always marched in perfect rows. These soldiers looked human. They did not march in close formations. They just walked.



They came, a couple of soldiers on foot, then a large tank, after that a horse drawn carriage and then again men on foot, and so on. One could not understand how these soldiers could get organized. It was surprising. An officer for instance just stopped and a couple of minutes later all his men had assembled. He had waited until everyone had caught up and then again like hikers took off, not in a unit.

These Russian soldiers threw all kinds of items to the people: Chocolate, candies, bread, cans of food, and cigarettes. They tried to outdo each other to show their sympathy. One young soldier stopped and offered me a cigarette. I took one. The man wanted to light it, but I made him understand that I did not smoke. After lighting his own cigarette he gave me the whole pack. In some of the smaller armored cars and also sitting on top of some of the vehicles sat young girls in army uniform. The Russians came by the thousands and were greeted by the former inmates with applause. It was an unforgettable sight. Immediately they put large posters on the fence which warned the soldiers that there was typhoid in the town.

We, the former inmates were warned not to leave for the same reason. It was very hard to believe that we were really free. One had to get used to the idea, and that did not come instantaneously or even from one day to the next. It took the Israelites, after being rescued out of Egyptian slavery, forty years until they shed their slave philosophy. The inmates and mainly the older people sometimes took years to lose the fear of police or authorities. Some of them never lost it at all. But even the younger ones had to find ways to cope with the new freedom.

On the morning of the May 10th, I was suffering from Rheumatism to such an extent that I could not walk any more. I stayed home for the next couple of days and only went back to work on May 14th, 1945. In the middle of the morning of the 10th, one suddenly heard the noise of many planes. There was a great anxiety, as everybody thought that the Germans were coming back to bomb the camp. Luckily the planes were Russian. They had found out that in Leitmeritz there was a contingent of German soldiers who had not capitulated yet, and the Russians thought they were there to liquidate us in Theresienstadt.

At the time of liberation, on May 9th, 1945 there was no more food in Theresienstadt, and because of the influx of the people who had been driven and force-marched to Theresienstadt, a typhoid epidemic had broken out. The Russian commander ordered the west barracks emptied and space made for the ten thousand cases of the sick people. If this is done in 24 hours, he promised he would have well doctors in Theresienstadt as well as food for the rest of the population. The talk was about 100 trucks of food. Everybody from the west barracks was immediately moved out and the sick men and women moved in. Also all the carpenters were ordered to report for work to these barracks, where partitions and other constructions had to be done as quickly as possible. I had to go as well. .

In these barracks were men and women laying bed by bed next to each other. It was hard to distinguish the difference, as all these typhoid sick people had shaven heads. We carpenters worked right in the same rooms where the beds of the sick people stood and surprising, none of us caught the sickness. The Russian army brought Red Army doctors and Czech doctors from Prague to the ghetto and in a short time had the epidemic under control and no more new cases were reported.

The organization in Theresienstadt functioned well. In one day all the people living in these barracks were moved out and the sick people moved in. Also the promise of the Russian military commander materialized. The Red Army brought one hundred trucks of food to Theresienstadt.

Mr. Paul Dunant from the Swedish Red Cross passed the command of Theresienstadt to the Russian commander; Major Kusmin. Life in Theresienstadt went on almost like before. People worked in the same places, went three times a day to the assigned kitchen to get their food, but now it was sufficient and more nourishing. They even slept in the same houses or barracks as before, as there just was no other way. The yellow star with the word Jude on it was, in most cases, taken off and as a matter of sympathy or appreciation to the Russian liberators a lot of the prisoners now wore little red pieces of material on the same spot where they used to have the star. I did not take the star off. People told me I should and I answered them that for years I was forced by the Germans to wear it, but now I am free and proud to be a Jew and will wear it as long as I feel like it.

The *Aeltestenrat* (The head of the Jewish administration) has announced with immediate effect following increase in food.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Theresienstadt, May 10, 1945

Everybody in the camp will get $\frac{1}{4}$ bread daily like before, but the town people will receive $\frac{1}{2}$ bread for 3 days.

The meals of potatoes will be increased and the soup will be thicker.

For supper there will be twice a week potatoes, and twice a week rolls besides the main meal. During noon, there will be at least 3 times meat, of which once in the form of chopped meat. Also after inventory of stock, salami.

- 1.) There will be double as much sugar, which will be 100 grams per week. This will be supplied in two parts of 50 grams each.
- 2.) Margarine will be given on the third day.

Der Aeltestenrat.

Terezin, May 11, 1945

!! ANNOUNCEMENT !!

All the people living in Theresienstadt are told that in the interest of the whole community, and to be able to keep the important operations of the life of the town working, and to prevent the spread of more sicknesses, have to continue to do the work which they were doing until now.

Everybody has to start working again without delay. We are working on getting payment for you.

People who do not do their duty about work, will not get permission to leave.

At the same time we again will remind everyone, that leaving the area of Theresienstadt without the official certificate is not permissible and should be refrained from.

The Commandant of the Gendarmerie
First Lieutenant Bambas

Following announcements was posted on the Magdeburger barrack:

ANNOUNCEMENT.

A medical team of the Russian Army will be here in a very short time to help us in the fight against the epidemic.

By orders of the Russian commandant, following houses have to be evacuated: Langestrasse 11, Parkstrasse 4 and the West barracks, as long as they are not occupied already by people with infectious diseases. These locations will be used as hospitals. A Russian hospital train will do the necessary sanitary preparation.

The Russian commander has ordered complete 15 day quarantine for the uninterrupted purification of the town, effective immediately. During that time neither transports nor individual people are permitted to leave town.

It is in our interest to be as helpful as possible in this generous relief measure, so that by the time the quarantine will be lifted, the repatriation can be handled in a fast and organized manner.

We ask you for your sensibility and your help. By helping the sick, you will help yourself.

Theresienstadt, May 13, 1945

And a second announcement on the same day:

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Duty to performed work.

The Russian commander has ordered, effective immediately, that everybody in town, has to work. Anybody who refuses to do what he is told or does not do his work as well as is in his power, is charged with a crime. As the situation here is critical; he will be punished severely.

All able bodied men and women, to the age of 60 years have to appear in the Magdeburger barrack at 21:00 o'clock. Men in the court No. 2, and women in court No. 3. Work will be given to them there. Exempt are all those people who are already employed at hospitals, food processing and menial labor organizations and are still working in those places. Also, people working in the offices, their supervisors, *Hausaeltesten*, block superintendents and district superintendents. Also not to appear are people in quarantine, their nurses and service personal.

As the repatriation is canceled for the next 15 days, people who already have valid working papers, have to appear.
It will be reminded, that people leaving the town, which is strictly forbidden, will be severely punished.

One day, shortly after the liberation, some of us were ordered to help fixing a castle for orphaned Czech children. We were driven with a truck, to the place. I do not remember any more where it was. This castle was probably inhabited by Germans, who had fled. All I do remember is that I took two maps I found which were from that area, as I would need them for my ride back to Nuremberg by bicycle, when the quarantine lifted.

May 14th, and May 15th, I was ordered to the carpenter's workshop in the *Reitschule* to build beds for the typhus sick people who were now moved to the west barracks. The Russians had brought to Theresienstadt s large number of Russian army doctors and nurses and also Czech medical personal.

May 16th, I was working again in the west barracks, building separating walls in the typhus barracks. In the afternoon I had to go back to the workshop, building beds.

May 17th, was the same routine, during the morning in the workshop and in the afternoon working in the barracks. In the evening I and the other carpenters were invited by the Russian officers to the *Sokolovna* (The falcons). This used to be a Czechoslovakian club, which became a hospital during the ghetto time. Now the Russian took it over and kept it as a hospital. We were invited to have supper with the Russian officers. The food there was better than the Theresienstadt kitchen.

Everybody, officers and common soldiers, as well as we, were sitting at the same table being served by girl soldiers in uniform.

May 18th, again I worked in the West Barracks and in the evening again we were in the Sokolovna, guests of the Russians from 7:00 p.m. until 10.30 p.m.

From May 20th, until about June 9th, 1945 I worked as well in the south barracks, the west barracks and in the workshop.

May 21st 1945, my father realized when he lifted heavy paper rolls that he had pains in the in the lower part of his abdomen. He went to a doctor and was diagnosed with a ruptured hernia.

June 6th 1945. Now under Jewish administration, my father as well as my mother got the following letter from Mr. Jiří Vogel, who seemed to be the administrator of the "Former Concentration Camp Terezine":

For reason of your announcement of volunteering and the judgment of the department who employed you, the self-administration of the former internment camp of Theresienstadt puts you in a contract of employment until June 30th 1945, with a salary of

4,000.00 crowns monthly, which would be paid later on. The self administration keeps the right to employ you otherwise if it seems necessary.

Signed

Sámo správa býv. koncent. tábora

v Terezíně

inž. Jiří Vogel

It was impossible for me, a Jewish fellow from Germany, working in these typhoid barracks, to talk to the Russian nurses or soldiers, but the Czech could make themselves understood. A pretty, young nurse worked as the assistant of one Russian doctor, a colonel. She was, as my comrades found out, 19 years old and told them that she joined the Red Army after her father was murdered by the Germans. In the evening we saw her on guard duty with a rifle and bayonet on top. She was a small girl and the weapon seemed taller than her. The next day one of our men was trying to have a little fun with her and asked her what would she do if someone really came sneaking by, would she shoot? Her answer was very short: "Don't try!"



My repatriation passport

The Russian supplied the kitchen with food. As everybody was quite undernourished, three times a day we got barley to eat. It was enough to fill ones stomach, but it was tasteless. After a couple of days we started complaining: "The Germans tried to starve us to death and the Russians make us eat all the barley of Europe!" Barley was the best way to get us starved people back to health again, as our constitutions could not digest anything too rich. The people in the typhoid barracks always got very beautiful white bread, compared to us the healthy ones, who got nothing but dark bread. After a while the sick ones did not like their bread anymore and kept on trading it with us for dark bread.

Sometime in the early days of June, 1945, I was planning to go back to Nuremberg as soon as the quarantine was lifted, to see if anyone of our

relatives came back there with the transport of people from other camps. Towards the end of the war, coming to Theresienstadt was a former Nuremberger, Julius Ceslanski, who was deported in November 1941 to Jungfernhof. He thought his wife might have been killed and he did not know if any other person of the transport might have survived.

On Sunday, June 10th, 1945, Ceslanski and I were going to get the repatriation papers from the Russian and the Czechoslovakian administration in Leitmeritz. We walked the two miles. At that time lots of people went also for their demarcation papers. On our hike, I met another friend from Wulkow, Walter Grunwald. He was going to try to go back to his native Berlin. He hoped that his parents were still there and alright. I gave Walter the address of my friend Eba, and asked him if he could see how she was, and tell her about me.



I have forgotten his name, but the man who slept in the same room with me, somehow managed to find two bicycles which the Germans left behind during their flight. He gave them to me. One was a man's and the other a lady's bike. With these I was going to ride to Nuremberg with Ceslanski.



I made three little flags for our bicycles. One was Russian, one American and the third one was my own design. On one side on a dark blue piece of denim from workpants, I sewed one of our yellow stars, and on the second side I embroidered the emblem of Theresienstadt. I did that with stitches on the sewing machine we got for my mother before the end of the war. The chain stitches around the yellow star my mother probably made.

The Way back

On June 12th, Julius and I got our final certificate from the department of health in Theresienstadt and we started on our trip. Leitmeritz was only 2 kilometer away and there was a railroad station. We rode there and found out that a train was coming by very soon, and with our IDs from a concentration camp, we could travel without tickets. We did not have any money.

The bicycles were put on the train and in the evening we arrived in Karlsbad. It was now too late to continue our travel; we looked for a place to sleep. Walking our bicycles we saw a Russian officer, who spoke Yiddish. He told us about one particular hotel which was reserved for liberated concentration camp prisoners. We got there, were shown to one of the rooms, and got something to eat too. This was the first time after two years I slept in a real bed.



It was raining the next morning when we started to ride south-westerly. A little while down the road towards Falkenau we came to the demarcation line and there was the first American soldier checking our papers. I had English in high school and could at least understand the soldier a little. He directed us to a particular schoolhouse in Eger, which was reserved for refugees.

It was only about 40 km, but by the time we arrived in Eger, it was dark again. This was June 13th, 1945. An American captain greeted us and also brought us some food from the soldier's kitchen. His name was Hauptmann and he was Jewish too. From him we found out, that there were another 14 refugees from different camps in that school.

Later on we met the other group and the captain asked us where we are heading. Telling him that we are both from Nuremberg and heading for the city by bicycles to see if we find relatives there alive, he told us that we should take it easy for a day or so, because the army will have trucks running to Nuremberg and they will take us along. In the meantime tomorrow morning all of us should send two men over to the American army kitchen and pick up the breakfast for all. Everybody now laid down some place for the night. A couple of soldiers were stationed in that school too and they gave us a couple of blankets. There were no beds there, but with the blankets it was not bad on the floor either. As in any schoolhouse there were lots of rooms, therefore we slept in a separate room from the others.

The next morning when we woke up we went from room to room to find the rest of the people, but there was nobody around anymore. The soldiers told us, these 14 people, men and women, were taken by a truck to their destination.

We had to find out where the army kitchen was, and went there to claim our breakfast. The cook was told before and knew about the 16 refugees. He passed us a large milk can filled with barley and topped with 32 pancakes.

"Oh no", we said, "There are only the two of us; the rest of the people had left in the early hours of the morning."

"I don't care 'how many you are,' he said." I was told to prepare for 16 people. Take that can and don't come back here anymore, I can't make a special meal for the two of you! From now on go to the Czech police and let them feed you!"

We thought we would probably get a ride soon too and left.

First we went back to our school. We were going to figure out the next step to take. As we did not have breakfast yet, we sat down on one of the school benches, opened our big milk container and started eating the pan cakes. Even though both of us had been living on a starvation diet for years, 16 pancakes for each, still seemed a lot. We did not know if anybody would give us anything for lunch, so we kept on

eating. It took us until sometime in the afternoon, just eating pancakes. We never made it down to the barley.

We next tried our luck with the Czech police. We took our large container and walked the couple of blocks to the police station. There we told the officer in charge what we were told from the American cook. Surprising enough, the policeman took our container and told us to come back for supper in the evening. After that, we were supplied with food from the Czech police three times a day, which was much better than the American army food.

From now on we were busy getting from one of our food supplier's places to the other. The soldiers who were stationed in the schoolhouse, once in a while gave us packages of K-rations. Captain Hauptman sometimes invited us to the army mess and besides we daily got the lunch from the Czech police. We were really very busy all day long just getting around and eating. Once the captain invited us to a movie in the theater, which was taken over by the U. S. army. Ceslanski and I were the only ones in the fairly large movie theater. We got a private viewing of the film "The lady in the window". Both of us understood very little, as it was in English, but it was a nice gesture of Captain Hauptman, who did everything to make us feel comfortable.

Every day we asked when we would finally be taken to Nuremberg and every day again we were told probably the next day. It went on like this the whole week. We were not interested in sightseeing and just were busy going from one eating place to another, also with eating. Only once I remember we went for a little walk. For both of us it was just a time to relax and enjoy any food. The K-rations I never opened but packed them to take along. We did not know at all if we would find anybody whom we could stay with and obviously how to get anything to eat.

Finally on June 20th, 1945, the day came. It was a Wednesday. We had been in Eger a whole week. The soldiers put our bicycles on the truck and we climbed on it too with our little package of extra food. Now, sitting on the back, we enjoyed the country side. It took some time, as some of the roads were damaged by the retreating German army. I think it was in the early afternoon when we arrived at the eastern end of the city, in *Erlenstegen*. We got off, took our bicycles. The soldiers had to drive somewhere further south. After fastening our little packs on our bicycles, which were filled with army rations and gifts from the soldiers in the schoolhouse, we rode towards the city.

It took a while riding along the Erlenstegener Strasse to get to the Aeussere Sulzbacher Strasse. There was quite some destruction and we felt some satisfaction. The destruction of and burning of the synagogues and of the Jewish apartments and houses the Germans started in 1938, finally came back to haunt them.

Somewhere there was a social service office, where we had to register for a place to sleep the next night. That permit was written out for the two of us on the name of Julius Ceslanski. The permit was for 2 persons for an undetermined time to sleep in the bunker in the Westtorwall. The place was one of the large air raid shelters on the north east side of the old city. It was signed by the city's social service. Both of us had no intention of spending a night in company with the Germans. We first were going to try and find anybody we knew who might still be living in that bombed out city. We decided to separate, but arranged a time and place where we would meet the next day. After all, we did not have any address where we could reach each other. Besides, at that time was neither telephone nor mail service.

I continued to ride west, trying to get to the Jewish cemetery, to the Baruchs, hoping they are still there. There loomed the large tower of *Laufer Tor*, one of the five Albrecht Duerer designed. It was still standing, but all around there seemed to be even more destruction than I expected. There was no way to ride my bicycle, there



were no more streets. It went from one hill of debris to another and I just presumed that by continuing in the same direction, that this was Laufer Gasse. The destruction here was almost 100 percent. One could see from there nothing but ruins. There was no obstacle blocking the view south towards the heavily damaged St. Lorenz church and north were some buildings of the castle still stood.

I did not feel any pity for the population who lived there. I could not help but remember that somewhere there on the north side of that street, if this was Laufer Gasse, used to be the house Nr. 33. were my aunt Hertha my mother's sister, her husband Siegfried Fleischmann and their two children Max and Ruth used to live in an apartment. Ruth, my little cousin, who would be now almost 15 years old, was blind since she was four years old because of an ear infection, which could not be treated because she was Jewish and was not permitted to go to a clinic. Around 1937, they were thrown out of this apartment



and had to move to Obere Kanalstrasse and later on when again they were forced to move they went to the house of Siegfried's siblings Ida and Eugen Fleischman on Praterstrasse 5. There in the pogrom on the 10th of November 1938 all the furniture, clothing and all their possessions were totally destroyed by the German mob. I wondered, what happened to these relatives of mine. They were deported in 1942 to Izbica in Poland.

The people walking between these ruins, ashen gray and in torn clothes, and still did not believe that the war they so enthusiastically supported, was lost; that their beloved Fuehrer and his cohorts either took the cowardly way out by killing themselves and their families, or had fled their ruined country with the gold and jewels they stole from the subjugated people. Are these the Herrenvolk, (master race) who only a short time ago were enthusiastically supporting each hate filled speech of their idolized leaders, who told them that they are the crest of creation, and no other nation or people comes even close to them: that all these other races are as low as animals, which not only can be enslaved, but if the Germans feel like, killed. Their God-given right is to take anything they desire from them. They also believed that because of their noble birth they were meant to be the masters of the earth.

It was their inherited right to have no compassion for any of the millions of prisoners their heroic soldiers made of civilians, women, children and very old people, but they certainly expected humane treatment for their sons and fathers should they fall unfortunately into the hands of their adversaries. International law which was just for others to follow, not for the master race, was just a degenerated democratic invention. The world should be ruled by German law.

Pushing my bicycles further, because there was no way of riding it, I came to a large heap of rubble, this used to be the Rathaus, (town hall). Towards the left was the large market place. I went down there, I wanted to see what happened to the building, with the mural done by the Nazis, with the saying: "*Trau keinen Fuchs auf gruener Heid und keinen Jud bei seinem Eid!*" (Don't trust a fox on the green meadow and no Jew by his oath.) That building like the rest of them around the plaza, was gone. On the northern end still stood a cement structure, which seemed to enclose the so called Schoenen Brunnen (Beautiful fountain). On the east side of the market place, the front still partially standing, was the ruin of the Frauen Kirche (The church of our lady). On that same place used to stand the synagogue, which another generation of barbaric German hoodlums destroyed in 1349. At that time just like during the Nazi regime, the Jews were first thrown or forced out of the city and the last ones were burned in what was

later the Stadtpark (city park). A little further on I came to the western city wall, the Ring. I did not know exactly where I was, as everything looked quite different.

Finally I arrived at the Haller Tor, The large round tower there, was still standing. I left the old part of the city and made my way further west, through the section of St. Johannis. One could at least ride the bicycle again, even though a lot of the buildings were also burned out or just in rubble. In front of the schoolhouse, which was standing there almost untouched, were hundreds of girls and women, all screaming and waving. I asked one of them what the matter was: "The Amis are in there," I was told. The American army had billeted the school for their soldiers. The proud flowers of Germanic womanhood were prostituting themselves for one chewing gum or a bar of chocolate. Actually that should not be so surprising, while they were still BDM-girls (*Bund Deutscher Maedchen* the German Nazi Girls Association) they were told what a patriotic deed it would be, to present Hitler with a child they had conceived from any of the true Arian, red-blooded SS-troopers. The Nazi hierarchy had created special bordellos where these Nazi whores were told that their deed would create a purer German race, the epitome of human beings.

Riding along the Johannis cemetery I knew the next would be the Jewish cemetery and maybe the family Baruch who were custodian of the cemetery still lived there. The Baruchs were old friends of my family and of Erna and Julius if they would have returned, they surely would be in contact with them. Ella Baruch was not Jewish and I thought that the family might not have been deported. I did not know that one of the battles of Nuremberg was fought right in the area. An American army unit coming from the west, from Fuerth, came under fire in the Jewish cemetery while the Nazis still held the Christian one right next door. A lively fire fight developed and a lot of the tombstones were nicked by bullets.

The damage there was much less than the one done by the Germans during the years from 1933 until the end of the war. All the metal fences the metal letters and bronze plates were taken off. As tomb stones were thrown over, my father and many other Jewish people had the headstones of their family members put down horizontally. At that time the Nazi propaganda announced, the Jews have secret messages in Hebrew on the tombstones to direct the allied planes to the best targets.

I was lucky. The Baruchs were still there. The buildings on the cemetery were damaged, but still livable. The welcome was very emotional and I was told that I am the first one of all the deportees to come back. I also heard that there was no room in the Baruchs house where I could sleep, but in the Hamburgers place which was next to the mortuary, there was place in one of the other buildings. They also were a mixed marriage family who were bombed out of their apartment and they were lucky to have found room on the cemetery. Lotte and Adolf Hamburger had a son Arno who had immigrated to Palestine in August 1939 as a sixteen year old, shortly before the war and he was now a soldier in the Jewish brigade of the British army. His company was stationed in Italy and he frequently got passes to visit his parents. When Arno came on furlough we both shared a room in his parent's small place.

The next morning, June 21st, 1945, Julius Ceslanski and I met and together we went to the American Red Cross office in the U.S. Government headquarters, which was in Krelingstrasse in the north of the city. From now on we had daily conferences with a representative of the American Red Cross, Miss Helen B. Nixon. We were trying to get help for transportation from Theresienstadt for the rest of the survivors including my parents.

Finally after about a week of meetings we were told that on the following day two army trucks each with two soldiers would take us to Theresienstadt to pick up the people and bring them back to Nuremberg. Ms. Nixon was instrumental to have a temporary pass written out for both of us for June 30th, 1945 from colonel and Military Governor, Charles H. Andrews of the infantry.

Early the morning of June 30th, 1945, the trucks left with us sitting on the back of one of them. As we arrived on the demarcation line, the soldiers had to report to the Russian military. After a short stop, where all the papers, ours as well as the ones of the soldiers were checked, the trip continued. The roads were not in the best condition therefore the trucks only arrived in Theresienstadt at night. All the people

who formerly were from Nuremberg still had to be informed, to be ready the next morning around eight, as the soldiers had only a permit to stay one night in the Russian occupation zone.

Until that time my father, who was working in the multiplication office in the Magdeburger barrack had to give notice that he was leaving. The rest of the people, most of them were over 70 years old, did not have too much to pack and were ready at the given time. The trucks were loaded and all 35, men and women, including us, were sitting on the trucks. These were the sole survivors of the three transports to Theresienstadt from Nuremberg. Of the transport on September 10, 1942, with 533 people deported, only 25 survived, the transport of June 17, 1943 with 14 people, 4 survived including my parents and I and of 10 who were deported to Theresienstadt on the January 17, 1944, 5 were still alive.

I believe it must have been during the later hours of the morning of July 1st, 1945, when everybody was assembled. The trucks left and less than 24 hours after entering the Russian zone we went across the demarcation line again into the American zone. Even though the trip was not very comfortable, nobody complained. It was previously arraigned that we would be brought to the former Jewish nursing home in the *Wielandstrasse*, which was returned to the Jewish congregation after the war. The Nazis had taken over this house. There were no beds or furniture there anymore. When we arrived in Nuremberg it was already night, everybody just had to sleep somewhere on the floor. Even the electric light did not work yet. Freedom certainly did not mean a paradise.

Paul Baruch and some of the other Jews who being in a mixed marriage, were still in Nuremberg, had made arrangement with some officials of the city, that all the survivors would be sent the next day, July 2nd, by trucks to the Protestant vacation home in Rummelsberg near the town of Feucht. Until the house in *Wielandstrasse* was fixed up and furnished, they would be lodged and fed there. Julius Ceslanski went to Ansbach. I did not go with the rest of the people either. My first goal was to find my sister.

I planned that after coming back from Bergen-Belsen and having brought her safely back to our parents I might be able to help with the refurbishing of the house. In the meantime I stayed in Nuremberg with the Hamburgers and ate at the Baruchs.

On the following day I started to get ready to go to Bergen-Belsen, I heard Erna would be there.

Three and a half months before on April 21st, 1945, a group of young women arrived in Theresienstadt and I heard from them that Erna was with them until March, then was shipped together with three other women to Bergen-Belsen I was told that the one who knew her best was Margot Unger and when I found her she said: "Don't worry Erna is alright, she and two more of our girls were sent to Bergen-Belsen because they were pregnant and could not be used for work in the factory any more. But don't worry, Erna is all right!"

On July 3rd, I found out Bergen-Belsen was in the British zone near Hanover. That meant I had to go into another occupation zone. I went back to Miss Nixon from the American Red Cross and told her I want to go to Bergen-Belsen looking for my sister. As I intended to go by bicycle I asked her if she could get me a pass. Travel between the different zones was at that time almost impossible or at least very difficult. She immediately wrote following letter for me:

4. July 1945

**Military Government
F 1 B 3
Nuremberg**

To Whom it May Concern:

The bearer, Herbert Kolb, has been released recently from the concentration camp, Theresienstadt, and is seeking his sister, Erna Neuberger, who is in another concentration camp.

Any assistance you can give him in reaching her and helping her to return to Nuremberg will be greatly appreciated.

Helen B. Nixon
American Red Cross

As soon as I came back to the Baruchs in the Schnieglinger Strasse, I tried to get ready for the trip. I packed only the absolute necessities, a couple of sandwiches, and tied this on the back of my bicycle. A short time later, probably the following day, I left on the bicycle to the railroad station in Fuerth. The one in Nuremberg was completely destroyed, but Fuerth's was still functioning and was much closer to Schniegling. I found out some trains were already running, but not on any schedule.

Shortly after I arrived, around 7:00 a.m., there really came a train going towards Frankfurt. It was just a freight train and the people were now traveling like they shipped the Jews. Some of them were sitting on open coal wagons and from the coal dust they were completely black. I managed to get my bicycle and myself into one of the wagons. It took forever and only by the next morning the train arrived in Frankfurt. I was lucky and found another train that went as far north as Giessen. That was the end of another railroad possibility. I went to the American military headquarters there, to find out if they could help me with transportation to go farther north. It was now mid morning.

Showing an American soldier the letter from Ms. Nixon, I asked him if he can help me with transportation to go north. The officer did not know of any American trucks going north, but he wrote me another note on a piece of tissue paper as follows:

M.P. (Military Police) Get this man a ride to Hanover - Route 3. He is OK and has his papers. If you can't get him a ride all the way, get him started out of town.

Geo. E. Smith
T. R. P.

I started on my bicycle. I managed to even get a small tube of rubber cement from one of the soldiers in the compound, as I was afraid to travel on these unrepaired roads, which were torn up by tanks. If I should get a flat without the possibility of repairing the tube, it could be disastrous. Nowhere could one buy any of these items. The weather was good and the roads were generally quite empty. Pedaling north for a couple of hours I saw two American soldiers resting next to their truck. I went to them and showed them my papers, the one I got from the Red Cross in Nuremberg and the one from the commander in Giessen. The soldiers agreed to take me along. They tied my bicycle on the hood and I jumped on the back of the truck. I got a ride to somewhere south of Kassel.

I found the railroad station which I heard was still operational and found out that a train was soon leaving going north. This was just perfect. I pushed my bicycle through the main hall towards the platform. Coincidentally I met Manfred Heizer in the station, one of the fellows who was with me Wulkow and Regen. We did not have much time to talk, as I did not want to miss the train. But as all these trains had

no schedule it took hours until it left. I believe it did not cost anything and I could not find out how far it would go. But this did not matter as long as it went north.

My bicycle was on the train, and at last the train started. Each wagon was packed to capacity. It moved very slowly, I could have traveled faster on my bike, but I was happy at least not to have to pedal. Nobody knew why, but after quite some time it had not gone more than 10 km and the train stopped. Everybody had to get off. The retreating German army had blown up the bridge over the Werra or Weser River near Muenden. One after the other had to cross on a pontoon bridge to the north side of the river. There was another train standing there and now it too waited until everybody had come across. Again it took hours. All were hoping it would get us now a little further. Finally it got in motion and went as far as the rails were usable. This trip was just another 17 or 18 kilometers. If I would have pedaled I would have been there hours before.

Now there was nothing but peddling a couple of hours more, as long as it was day light I didn't have a light on the bike either. Just after dark I found a Red Cross home for returning refugees. The place was completely empty; I was the only guest for the night there. The Brazilian Red Cross nurses did everything to make me comfortable. It is possible that they made me something to eat.

I left fairly early in the morning, I was anxious to get to Bergen-Belsen and find Erna. Around noon I arrived in Alfeld. Right on the main road was an inn. I stopped, sat outside at a table, had a glass of beer and ate my butter sandwiches which Ella Baruch had packed for me. Suddenly right across the street I saw a man who looked familiar. But this would be almost impossible that in two days I should now find another familiar face. But it was no mirage. That man, I don't remember his name, was with us in Wulkow. We talked for a little while; I told him I am going to Bergen-Belsen to find my sister. If on my return trip I come again through Alfeld, he invited me to sleep in his house. I told him I might then be with my sister and a baby. He gave me his address and told me that he was married to a non-Jewish wife; therefore they still had their house.

I did not trust him in Wulkow and thought he was a stoolpigeon for Rafaelsohn. I also remembered, while in Wulkow he always acted as if he was hard of hearing and only now did I find out that he just faked that. He was kind of a weird character I had never anything to do with him and stayed away from him. I still believe he was a collaborator and maybe just faked the hard of hearing to spy on us...

While we were talking a station wagon stopped and a couple of people who were sitting in the back with the back flap open practically fell out. They were almost asphyxiated from the exhaust fumes.

After cycling a couple of hours I saw a truck which had stopped on the road. German civilians were sitting on top. It was just starting again when I asked somebody on the back whether I could hold on and let the truck pull me up the hill ahead. One of the passengers had a piece of rope and tied it to the back board of the truck. Now I could save my legs a little and let them pull me for a couple of kilometers. The truck did not move very fast, but it was much easier than pedaling. But when he was going downhill I had to let go as he now went quite fast and I was scared if he suddenly stops I would ride into it. Down again I had no trouble catching up with it again.

I don't remember where but eventually I arrived on the British-American demarcation line. I had no problem crossing the line, as the papers did the job. The British soldier checking me happened to be Jewish. I gave him the name of Jack, Neuberger, my brother-in-law's brother. I did not know he had changed his name to Newton, but I did know somehow that he was in the British army. I also gave him the name of my friend Werner Kramer who came to England with a children's transport. His parents also were survivors from Theresienstadt had asked me to try to find out about him. They did not have an address. The soldier promised to inquire at the chief rabbi's office about it.

Traveling now through the English zone I pedaled through Hildesheim and finally towards evening arrived in Hanover. As I did not have a map of this area I was under the impression that Bergen-Belsen was just north of the city. In town I found out that the camp was not that close, but north of Celle. I was

getting more and more anxious and did not want to spend another night somewhere else but figured I could still make it and maybe I would even find Erna yet that night.

I rode on and on, not realizing, that it was another 40 kilometers just to Celle. Here I heard it was still further north. It was now night, pitch dark and I did not have a light, but I did not give up, I knew I was not that tired, I could make it. My eyes got used to the darkness. I rode on.

From Celle going north the road went slightly uphill and it got harder and harder, but now I did not even have another choice, as there were no towns or villages on the road any more. There were no houses on either side of the road, nothing besides some trees. Luckily there was absolutely no traffic. It was another thirty or forty kilometers until I get to the camp. At least another 2 hours of pedaling.

Coming closer to Bergen-Belsen all I saw was barbed wire on my left, but no barracks or houses. This went on for miles. It was already very late at night and everything looked completely deserted. There was a sign a little farther. It said, that the inmates of that concentration camp were all moved to the former SS hospital next door, just on the northern end of the camp. Now this could not be too far any more. I pedaled on.

The guard at the door let me in after I showed him my papers. Somebody was still in the office and I was given a place to sleep that night. I told them that I was looking for my sister, but was told that at that time of the night I could not find her any more, as the office with index cards was closed.

I don't remember where I slept, but I am sure I had my bicycle with me, because this was the only way that it would not be stolen.

The next morning, as soon as the office opened, I went back and asked for my sister. Obviously nobody knew her and I was told to look through the index files of the survivors of the camp.

First I looked for Neuberger, but there was nobody with that name. Then I searched for Kolb, also nothing. Maybe it is spelled wrong I looked for Neuburger and anything what could have been misspelled. But I did not find anything. I had a list of names along of some people from Nuremberg and Fuerth who had asked me to find out about their relatives. There was Rosi Seeligmann nee Goldmann, who was deported to Theresienstadt with us. Her husband Paul had survived and came back to Fuerth after he was shipped with one of the train transports to Theresienstadt. Nobody with that name either. Betty Ceslanski, the wife of Julius; also nothing; Lilly Baruch, born August 29.1900; Nothing.

I now tried to find anybody who might have come from Nuremberg and might have known Erna and these other women. This was much more complicated, as now I had to go through all the cards from A to Z. This took hours. finally I found one familiar name, Trude Guenther. She certainly would know Erna. I wrote down the room number where she would be. But I kept on looking for more in case I could not meet her; after all there were thousands of people in that building. I looked through more and more files and finally found three more listed from Nuremberg: Karoline, Peter and Samuel Stern. I did not know who these people were, but I wanted to look for them anyway. All three lived in one room; I figured that might be a family.

I wrote down the room number. There were no others from Nuremberg in that large file. I knew Trude quite well and thought if anybody would have known Erna it would be her.. Trude as well as Erna used to be very active in the Jewish sport club and knew each other very well. I first went to look for her.

A little while later I came to the room and Trude was there. She recognized me and I also could pick her out from the other girls in the room. She told me she was for a while very sick even after the liberation and had no idea that Erna was in Bergen-Belsen too. Besides, she was still not well and had troubles remembering anything. I believe she told me she had encephalitis and for a while she remembered absolutely nothing. She could not help.

I tried my luck now with the Sterns. Mrs. Karoline Stern knew my father very well, but also did not know anything about Erna. She was the wife of Arthur Stern, the instructor in the workshop in the school in Kanalstrasse, whom I knew very well. Peter and Samuel were their two boys 9 and 6 years old. Mrs. Stern who said I should call her Lina, told me if I have no place to stay I could sleep in her room. At this point I was not too interested of finding a place to stay; I wanted to find Erna and was sure I could stay with her.

I had photographs along of Erna when she was about 18 years old and was sure she did not change too much. She would be almost 22 years now. From room to room I went now. Most women in Bergen-Belsen at that time had very little hair, as the Nazis usually shaved them. The picture of Erna was with hair and I kept on covering her hair with my hand to make it more how she might look now. I kept going. In every room where I went I asked every woman if they remember somebody like that who possibly had a baby in March or April. I did not have to ask the men, as they were in a separate camp. Everyone just shook their head. Nobody had seen her. This was very discouraging. This went on all day. As not everybody was in their room, I went back to some of them.

I came to a room, and again showed the picture. Nobody remembered her. All just shook their heads. I was just going to leave when a small red haired woman, Rosa Albert, asked to see the picture once more. I went back to her. She said, "I think I remember her." I said my sister must have come to Bergen-Belsen together with two other women, sometime in February. All of them were pregnant and expecting to give birth shortly after their arrival.

"Yes", said the lady, *"I remember now, your sister was pretty young?"*

"Yes", said I, *"she was not even twenty-two yet, do you know where she is now?"*

"I do", said the lady, *"but I feel awful to be the one to tell you."*

I thought lightning had struck me: *"Please, tell me anything you know!"*

"Your sister came here, like you said, to camp III, with two other women, both of them were Czechs. These women already left to go home after we were liberated. All three women had babies and of one of them I believe the baby died, of the other one, if I remember right, the baby lived. I don't remember which one it was. Your sister slept in the top bunk. She gave birth to a baby boy and had a pretty easy time. During the night she got very high fever. All of us were sick and we had nothing to help her, besides we were starving, we did not get any food for days, even weeks. We did not get bread since the beginning of March. In the night between 11:00 and 12:00 o'clock she developed high fever and fell out of the bunk in the third tier, she was unconscious. She never regained consciousness and must have died immediately!"

"What about the baby?" I asked.

"The baby, a boy, died about a day and a half after birth, nobody could feed him. So many thousands of people died around that time, that one did not remember more details!"

(More than 50 years later I found out that besides Erna, one of the other women, Trude Freund, also gave birth and she as well as her baby had died. Charlotte Swenkova, the third woman, survived, but her baby also had died.)

I thanked the lady and left. I was stunned. This was such a blow. I did not expect this. After all, just in May I spoke to the girls who were together with Erna and they told me not to worry, she was well when she left them and they were sure she would be all right. I could not cry, I could not speak. I walked around aimlessly, what should I do now? My mission was over. Should I ride back to Nuremberg at once? How can I face my parents? Who can give a message like that to his parents?

Erna had gotten married so young, she was just nineteen, to save Julius from deportation. She as well as Julius figured that the war would be over before the Germans could deport them. Everybody

believed in a miracle. That was an over-optimistic miscalculation. Miracles did not happen anymore. Erna loved Julius and he loved her, but in normal times she would have waited at least until she was twenty-one to get married. My parents had to sign permission for her to get married. The Germans in 1942 still needed that acceptance signed.

When she got pregnant, both Erna and Julius, did not even consider an abortion. The Nazis had ruled in Theresienstadt, any pregnancy had to be reported and by decree, aborted. Julius was looking forward to this baby so much. What about Julius, is he still alive? In his last note to Erna, the one he managed somehow to get out of the train, he wrote about it. This note was probably responsible for her death now. One can't blame him about it. It was just their unshaken optimism that Germany would be beaten by the time the baby would be born. Nobody believed that it would take that long. Also nobody believed that the Germans could be as barbaric as they proved to be.

She sacrificed her young life for her husband and for this unborn child. I even tortured myself, thinking, that maybe I was responsible for her death. After all, it was me who built this little so called room out of a three story bed up in the attic of the children's house. They would not have been able to live together otherwise. We were so very sure I would find my sister, that my mother even warned me not to take her home on my bicycle with a newborn baby. It would be dangerous for a woman who just gave birth. It even would be impossible to take a newborn baby on such a trip.

I went back to Lina Stern. Lina was a mature woman. Maybe she had an answer. I needed somebody to talk to. Lina tried to comfort me. She said not to leave right away:

"It really is no hurry to tell that to your parents. Stay here a couple of days, until at least you get a little over it somehow. There is absolutely nothing you can do about it to soften the blow. In a couple of days you may see things a little clearer. Look, I also lost my husband; one has to get on with living. Do as I tell you, wait a couple of days!"

I listened and stayed for a few days. Lina ask the lady who shared her room to move to another room and I stayed and slept with the Sterns. I do not remember anything about that time in Bergen-Belsen. I probably got food there too. Mrs. Stern asked me what I think; should she too finally return to Nuremberg? I told her that the *Schwesterheim* was going to be furnished for people who return and as long as nobody can emigrate yet, it might be the best way. She told me that she can't come as long as there is no transportation, no trains running, etc. Maybe it would be possible that she and her children would be picked up. She also did not know the situation in the country.

I believe I stayed a week, I was afraid of just thinking of going to my parents with such a message. Finally I had to go. I started out one morning in the middle of July. Every moment on that trip I was trying to formulate what and how I was going to tell my parents. I could not think clearly. Every kilometer was a torture. It scared me just to think about the meeting with my parents. I was sure, as soon as I enter the room, they would ask for her. How can I soften that blow?

I left and again it took me three days to reach Nuremberg. On my trip south in Alsfeld I went to the house of the former comrade from Wulkow and stayed overnight. I remember I slept in the room with his very pregnant daughter.

Someplace I found a truck again, I believe it was a German one and asked the driver if he would take me and my bicycle. He did and it saved a couple of hours of riding.

I arrived at the Baruchs at night and they too wanted to hear about my trip and Erna. They too became very upset; they were very close friends of Erna and Julius. Still to come was the worst part of my life.

The next day, probably Sunday, July 22, 1945, I rode to Rummelsberg. It happened just the way I knew it would happen. As soon as entering the room, my parents asked about Erna and the whole drama had to be disclosed. My mother as well as my father had lost siblings in the first World War, who died for

the German Empire, now their child was murdered by their countrymen. If they had ever any patriotic feelings for their monstrous homeland, it sure was gone now and only hate was left for their fellow citizen. They too knew that there was no way they could live in that country with these people who had killed their daughter.

I intended to ride back the same night, as I did not have a room or bed in Rummelsberg, but I had very severe rheumatic pain in my knees and hips, I almost could not walk any more. I decided to stay overnight, sleeping on the floor and probably stayed until Monday or Tuesday.

I bicycled back to Nuremberg to the Baruchs and every day I helped refurbishing the house in the Wielandstreaße. As I had done before, I slept in the apartment with the Hamburgers until the 29th of September 1945.

The following story is what I could find out about my sister Erna. I spoke and wrote to some of the women who were with Erna in Oederan. I also went in 1997 to Oederan to look at the place where the women worked. In town the people of the museum did not even know at that time that there were hundreds of women used for slave labor. Now they even acknowledged that three Hungarian women died there and are buried in the cemetery.



The memorial plaque for the women prisoners in Oederan

| | | | | | | |
|-------|----------|--------------|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 59331 | 7. holl. | Mausner | Toni | 9. 4. 17 | V. Busch 12. 9. 44. 30. 10. 44. | 30. 10. 44. Oederan 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 2 | " | Mayers | Edith | 30. 9. 15. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 3 | tsch. | Maisel | Gerda | 2. 7. 24. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 4 | " | Maisel | Hanna | 1. 1. 21. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 5 | holl. | Mankel | Haroot | 15. 4. 23. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 6 | tsch. | Müller | Gerda | 20. 9. 21. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 7 | " | Müller | Lionilla | 10. 10. 20. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 8 | " | Nett | Rosa | 10. 3. 18. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 9 | deutsch | Neuberger | Erna | 31. 7. 23. | " | 12. 3. 45. Bergen-Belsen 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 59340 | tsch. | Neumann | Dlena | 22. 8. 25. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 1 | " | Neumann | Eva | 22. 8. 25. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 2 | " | Neumann | | | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 3 | " | Neumann | | | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 4 | ung. | Neumann | Kl. | 10. 3. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 5 | " | Neumann | | | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 6 | " | Oträs | | 13. 12. 13. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 7 | " | Parra | Ester | 5. 8. 16. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan 6. 7. 45. Kislone |
| 8 | " | Parra | | | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan 6. 7. 45. Kislone |
| 9 | tsch. | Passer | Elisabeth | 15. 2. 10. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 59350 | " | Passer | Kitty | 19. 4. 25. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 1 | ung. | Pasternak | Rosa | 26. 12. 08. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 2 | ung. | Perl | Frida | 3. 6. 20. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 3 | tsch. | Pfeffer | Elvira | 8. 9. 09. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 4 | " | Pfeffer | Judith | 26. 6. 26. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 5 | " | Pick | Ruth | 13. 11. 15. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 6 | pol. | Pinzler | Rosa | 26. 6. 17. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan 6. 7. 45. Kislone |
| 7 | " | Planzer | Anna | 16. 9. 09. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 8 | tsch. | Podvinec | Therese | 19. 3. 20. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 9 | " | Podzahradsky | Kitty | 18. 10. 25. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |
| 59360 | deutsch | Pollak | Alma | 27. 3. 05. | " | 30. 10. 44. Oederan |

Oederan and Bergen-Belsen

On April 21st, 1945 a group of young women arrived in Theresienstadt. They came from Oederan, after being shipped for 8 days, without food, in open railway box cars. They arrived in Litomeritz (Leitmeritz), and from there they had to walk to Theresienstadt. These women were from the transport Et of October 23rd, 1944 from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz. This was the same transport Erna was on, but Erna was not with them now. I recognized some of these girls and asked them where they had been and whether my sister was with them. They knew her very well, as they were together with her until March 1945. I was told that the one who knew her best was Margot Unger. I soon found Margot. Margot's number was 59429. She was deported together with her older sister Ruth, number 59430 and younger sister Charlotte, number 59428. Margot told me the following story:

The very crowded train arrived in Auschwitz and afterwards everybody was chased out of the wagons by the SS guards with their dogs. They were screaming and hitting the people aimlessly with whips. There was panic. The people were terror stricken, many of them crying with fear. The guards made them line up and they were separated into different groups. 51 men and about 200 young women were picked out of the 1715 new arrivals, the rest of the people were gassed to death immediately. For many hours the girls were standing on roll call, constantly being tortured by the SS guards. Finally they were marched off. Once more they were selected. They had to undress, put their clothes in bundles and throw them away. This was the end of October. They were completely naked, led like cattle in front of an SS officer, probably that hangman, Mengele. There again they were selected. After that they got clothing thrown to them, without any consideration of size. Then their hair was shaven off. This group was never tattooed with numbers. For three days it went on with constant tortures and more selections, but never anything to eat. Some of the earlier arrivals in their barrack explained to them that the smoke they could see was coming from the crematorium. It was their parents and children being burned.

On the third day they were marched to the train again and loaded into cattle cars. Even though they just came from the west, on October 27th they were transported westward again, to Oederan, a small town in Saxony, near Chemnitz. On October 30th, 1944 they arrived there. Oederan was a part of the Concentration Camp system of Flossenbuerg. After they were unloaded they were marched to a factory building close by. Already 300 women were there, most of them from Poland and Hungary. The factory previously had produce threads under the name of Erwin Kabis, but was confiscated in autumn 1944 by the *Agricola G.m.b.H. Werk K.* a part of the *Deutsche Kuehl-und-Kraftmaschinen G.m.b.H.* This was mentioned for the first time in a report from September 12th, 1944. The machines were torn out of the building and it was changed for war production.

The women were directed to the back building, which used to be the dye-works. It had three story bunk beds like in Theresienstadt. Between Erna's and Margot Unger's bed was just a little space were one just could squeeze through. As they were that close to each other the two of them became good friends. Margot told her that she and her sisters were born in Chemnitz, which was less than 10 miles east of Oederan. Erna was telling Margot about her husband and about the child she was expecting. At their arrival in Oederan each one got three hot potatoes and 17 deka (170 grams) of bread.

The women were assigned to different jobs. Margot and her older sister Ruth worked in the group called the *Aussenkommando* (outdoor work force). They had to mix cement by hand and load up lorries. They were also digging trenches for installing water pipes and building and converting factory buildings.

Her younger sister Charlotte worked in the night shift in the ammunition factory. There the women had to insert the projectiles into the cartridges for 2 cm anti-aircraft shells. This factory, which was across the railroad, used to be a weaving factory. While the women in the factory had to work in three eight hour shifts, the ones who did outdoor work had to work for twelve hours.

Margot did not remember if Erna was working either in the ammunition factory or working in the sewing and weaving factory. The women in the *Aussenkommando* had a typical concentration camp uniform with a white cross painted on their back; the one working in the factory had just their little flimsy summer

dressess. The outside workers were doing heavy construction work. The clothes of all the women were completely inadequate, as in winter the ground was snow covered most of the time. The ones working out doors were freezing bitterly, as they had no socks, no underwear and only wooden shoes. Even during the cold winter, the barracks were not heated. At night, after a 12 hour workday, Margot and Erna met in their bunks. The 12 hours probably included the roll call three times every day, which might have taken hours. These roll calls were like in any camp, whether it rained or snowed or if bitter cold. The food was also completely insufficient. Every day they got just a thin soup and one slice of bread. Coffee was just a watered down black brew, no coffee at all.

In Oederan at least the barracks and the beds were clean. These were not what one understands as beds, but just rough wooden constructions on which some bags filled with a little bit of excelsior were placed. Even the treatment was in most cases bearable. There were 30 guard women for the 300 Jewish women. Just one of their SS Aufseherinnen (*guard women*), Wininger, sometimes to show her Germanic training in inhumanity became the personification of a wild beast. She tried not to be outdone in intolerance by the perverse male counterparts. Friedrich Schiller, the German poet, describes this kind of German women very fittingly, in his poem of *Das Lied der Glocke* (the song of the bell) with these words: *...da werden Weiber zu Hyaenen und treiben mit Entsetzen Scherz ...* (... there women are just like hyenas and atrocities are for them just jokes...)

For the smallest kind of infringement of the rules, Wininger shaved off the eyebrows of the prisoner. This beast of a German woman, wanted to show her sister, Oberaufseherin, (*head SS guard*), Wolkenrath-Muehland that she is just as tough with her charges as is demanded by the rules of the supermen. Again, at other times, she could almost be humane. For instance she permitted Erna just to do the cleaning of the barrack, and not to have to go to the factory any more, when her pregnancy could not be hidden any longer. At that time three of the women were in their ninth month.

The Red Army kept on advancing from the east. Erna's number was 59339 and the two other pregnant women, Charlotte Swenkowa (the Germans listed her as Schwenk) from Prague, was number 59405 and Trude Freund, was number 59218 from Czechoslovakia. (*I had gotten the name of Olga Sinerova, a nurse from Rimavska Sobota in Slovakia, but this seemed to be wrong.*) These three pregnant women were told to be ready to be shipped somewhere else, as they could not be kept any longer in Oederan. On March 12th, 1945 the three were taken to a train and shipped to Bergen-Belsen.

Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg
Arbeitslager Oederan
(10) Oederan I. Sa.

Oederan, am 12. März 1945.

Betrifft: Überstellung von schwangeren Häftlingen
Bezug: Kommandanturbefehl des KL Flossenbürg vom 22.2.1945
Anlagen: Keine

An die
Kommandantur des KL
F l o s s e n b ü r g.

In Ausführung des obzitierten dortigen Befehls wurden die schwangeren Häftlinge des hiesigen Kommandos

| | | | |
|-----------|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| Freund | Trude, | geb. 12.5.1923, | Häftl.Nr. 59218, |
| Neuberger | Erna, | geb. 31.7.1923, | Häftl.Nr. 59339, |
| Schwenk | Lotte, | geb. 15.8.1909, | Häftl.Nr. 59405, |

am heutigen Tage nach dem Aufenthaltslager Bergen-Belsen bei Celle in Hannover überstellt.

An die
Politische Abteilung des KL
F l o s s e n b ü r g

zur Kenntnisnahme.

Wininger
Oberaufseherin

Oberaufseherin
IC/2,II
I. I. S. FOTO No. 57.327

On March 12, 1945, the head guard Wininger wrote the above deposition to the Political Department of the Concentration Camp Flossenbuerg for acknowledgment.

It reads:

Concentration Camp Flossenbuerg
Labor camp Oederan
(10) Oederan in Saxony

Reference: Transfer of pregnant prisoners

In reference to: Orders by the commandant of the Concentration camp Flossenbuerg from 2, 22, 1945

Remark: None

To the Commandant des Concentrations Camp

F l o s s e n b u e r g

The execution of the above mentioned order, the three pregnant prisoners of the command here

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------|------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Freund | Trude | born | 5, 12, 1923 | prisoner number 59218 |
| Neuberger | Erna | born | 7, 31. 1923 | prisoner number 59339 |
| Schwank | Lotte | born | 8, 15, 1909 | prisoner number 59405 |

Were on today's day transported to the residence camp Bergen-Belsen near Celle in Hanover.

Political Department of the Concentration Camp

F l o s s e n b u e r g

for acknowledgment

signed Wininger
Head prison guard

Head prison guard
IC/2,II

Three women SS-guards were sent along. The three Jewish women were not unhappy about the transfer as they believed they would be sent to a hospital and would be able to bear their babies in real beds with white sheets. (a document I have from the Red Cross from Arolsen says that 3 women came to Bergen-Belsen on March 14, 1945.

None of the three prisoners had ever heard anything about Bergen-Belsen. Their bread and butter (probably margarine) were taken from them on arrival there. On that day there were 44649 prisoners in Bergen-Belsen. 698 had died, and 1982 new prisoners arrived.

Bergen-Belsen was liberated by the British army on April 15th, 1945. In the month of March 1945, 18,168 inmates had died, included were 3,980 women in the so called *Frauenlager* (women camp). Erna had died sometime between March 13th and April 15th, and I believe it was rather in April then in March. At the time of the liberation 25,000 women, 18,000 of them Jewish, were still alive. Of these, 17,000 survived. The total of liberated prisoners in both camps on April 19th, 1945 was 61,810 of which 825 died on that same day.

Grete Salus, number 59392, another one of the survivors of the camp in Oederan, who also was transported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz at the same time, wrote a book: "*Niemand, nichts - ein Jude*" (nobody, nothing - a Jew) "Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Oederan." She writes:

...the train ride in the closely crammed cattle cars took 32 hours, one afternoon, one night and a full day. Besides the people in the wagons, there were all the suitcases and backpacks and only one pail of water and another that served as a toilet. Not everybody had room to sit down on the floor. People managed to look through cracks in the door and saw they were being shipped easterly. After they noticed Breslau and Gleiwitz in Selisia, they figured that they were taken to Birkenau They had heard of Birkenau in Theresienstadt and believed that it was another camp like Theresienstadt. Nobody knew that Birkenau was Auschwitz. At that time nobody knew anything about Auschwitz.

The train arrived around 10:00 p.m. and just like Margot said, they were chased out of the cars by screaming SS-men: "Leave all the packages and leave the sick people and get out fast, fast, fast!" Men and women were separated. Each line had to pass in front of a SS-officer, the infamous Dr. Mengele who was directing with a flip of his hands to the right or to the left. Nobody knew at that time that this meant either to life or to death by gassing.

The much smaller group was the selected women on the left side, who were marched off, flanked by German order police men. On both sides of the road were barbed wire and behind they saw barracks, lots and lots of barracks. The guards told them to stay in the middle of the road, as the wires on both sides were electrified. After about half an hour of silently, stumbling through the night suddenly one of the officers screamed "Halt!" They were standing in front of a large stone building. The door was opened and they were ordered in. Shocked they realized that there were a lot of SS-men and men and women in striped cloths were in the front room where they were pushed in now.

Someone screamed: "Take off your cloths! Fast, fast, everything off, only keeps your shoes in your hand!" They were horrified, in front of all these men they should undress? The people in striped clothes just tore off the clothes of anybody who hesitated. Grete could not find her shoes any more.

In front of all these SS-hangmen they had to stand up straight: a line of nude women being looked over, by these murderers from head to toe like cattle at a market. They had to go slowly by in front of them and a doctor picked out some of the women, who were too thin or if he found something else wrong with them and made them stand on a side.

They were still nude when they were ordered into the next room. On the floor were mountains of hair. They had to sit on stools and somebody cut off all their hair with a machine. The girls and women did not recognize each other anymore and had to ask: "Who are you?"

In the next room were basins with some kind of a liquid with which their skin on the shaved parts of their body was dipped. This gave them burning marks which stayed with them for a long time. SS-men and-women were constantly coming and going through these rooms. Suddenly a big scream! One of the naked girls was hit in the face by one of the capo striped women, with a German SS-woman standing next to her with a whip. The reason: some of the women were not shaved close enough. They now were shaved over once more.

They had to pass a couple of tables where their rings and earrings were taken from them. In case these did not get off easy they were filed off. The next place was the shower. Somebody said something about gas, but these women had not heard of gas yet. Still nude and wet they had to go in the next room. The doors were standing open, it was quite cold and there were a lot of Germans coming and going like in the lobby of a large hotel. Freezing, the nude women were huddling together. In the middle of that room stood one of those guard-women distributing clothes; wooden shoes, socks and scarves. For a long time they had to stand in line until their turn came. They got a fantastic collection of rags of summer dresses. Nobody got a matching pair of socks. Some were white some red, some only got one sock. Grete was one of them.

Men in striped uniforms told them that they now have to wait until morning. When somebody asked what would happen to them, the men just shrugged their shoulders: "Nobody here knows what happens!" These men were assorting the clothes which the women had brought. Once in a while one of these men came by with some of the clothing and one or the other women rushed them and tore pieces out of their hands. Grete was lucky and captured a stocking. She now had at least one sock and one stocking.

The next morning standing in rows of eight, was the first time they saw the camp. As far as the eye could see, nothing but barracks, barbed wire, and towers with machinegun emplacements. They were marched off, guarded again by men of the military order police. The wooden shoes got stuck in the mud and some of the girls fell back to dig them out again. As the guards noticed that the women could not make headway, he permitted them to lock arms. This way it went a little better.

They now came to a cement barrack and were counted. Once, twice, twenty times. From front to back and from back to front. A woman in the striped clothes came out and now one by one they had to enter the barrack. There were three-tier stalls, like rabbit stalls, on both sides of the room.

Part of one side of that room had to be emptied for the newcomers. The former occupants, who did not move fast enough, were driven out by the capo-women with beatings. The new prisoners had to conquer for themselves some room and finally exhausted, could at least sit down.

Suddenly, the older inhabitants run to the door. Lunch! The newcomers jumped out of the beds too and run to the door. But there was no food for them.

Roll call! Everybody stormed out of the barrack. Lined up in rows of six they were standing there. Four hours, six hours, even longer than that, until finally the German guard-woman came. If the number was right they could go back to the barrack, if not they would have to stand there for a couple more hours. Finally after they were back in the room they were permitted to go to the latrine. Before then it was forbidden. They were told it is "*Blocksperr*". The only place to relieve themselves was a pale standing outside. The one who used it when it got full had to empty it by just pouring it over outside.

The next morning at 4:00 a.m. Roll call! After that everybody got hot coffee. It was really no coffee at all. They drank a little, but mostly they used it for warming their cold hands. The rest they used to wash their hands a little.

Again roll call. This time the newcomers got bread and margarine too. Everybody was ordered back to the barrack besides the newcomers. The 214 women had to stay. The *Blockaelteste* (capo-woman) counted them: "You will be going on transport today!" She said. They were happy not to have to go back to that horrible place, even though they had no idea what the unknown was to bring them.

They marched off. Even with the wooden shoes it went better now, the women were getting used to them. It was quite a walk, but they finally came to a gate. There was a guardhouse. The woman-guard, who brought them there, whistled and a woman sentry came out: "I can't process the prisoners anymore", she said. Back to the barrack again. Their beds were already occupied again and it took a while until they got them back. Their blankets too were gone, but the capo women replaced them.

The next morning after roll call a clerk came, wrote up names and told them they probably would go on a transport today. She mentioned not to give our ages older than 32 years and not younger than 17.

Suddenly somebody called out:

"Watch out German control!" That moment they already came in:

"Attention, attention, Theresienstadter, take off your cloths, take off everything!" With that they were chased out of their beds, counted and again they had to stand in line all nude. With the arms up high the women had to march by in front of Dr. Mengele. The ones he accepted as usable labor slaves got a smack on their back as a sign of approval. 14 were not accepted to come with us. They were already one step closer to death.

One of the Czech girls, Milena Lengsfeldova was born November 3, 1927, she was not quite 17 yet. She quickly gave herself another birthday. She said, February 3, 1925. There were two more girls who either were just 17, or they also gave a different date, Inge Goldschmidt from Germany gave her birthday as June 13, 1927, and Judith Lahovics another Czech girl gave it as July 7, 1927.

200 women selected for a labor camp. This time they were let through by the sentry at the guardhouse at the gate. It was very stormy and the women shivered in their flimsy cloths. Again they had to go to a shower. It was a different one where they were lead to, much more primitive and very dirty. In the hall they had to undress and all their cloths was taken from them. Only the socks they were permitted to keep. For two hours they had to stand and wait all nude. They were so cold that they were shaking all over. When they got into the shower one of them was saying: "Let's hope they don't put the cold water on

now!” Even in the shower it was very drafty as all the windows were broken. One of the SS-bitches was walking around cracking her whip. Hot water spilled over their numb, cold bodies.

Steaming and wet they had to line up next to the open windows to receive their new cloths. Some of the women, who asked for different shoes, as the one they got did not fit, were beaten up. They even got coats this time, but no scarves for their bald heads. For six hours they had to stand outside while it was raining and snowing. Unbelievably, nobody got as much as a cold. While standing there, they tore out the linings of their coats and covered their heads with them. This was October 27, 1944.

After many hours which seemed an eternity, the women were told to climb into the waiting, open cattle cars. They got bread, salami and margarine before boarding the train. SS-Order police was guarding them, who told them that their destination was Oederan in Saxony. The train went through Dresden again, almost exactly a repetition of the trip a couple of days before, only in the opposite direction. The ride took even longer this time. Totally exhausted they arrived in Oederan, which was administratively belonging to the concentration camp Flossenbuerg. From there they got their numbers. This was October 30, 1944.

The first three weeks the women did not have to work at all, which at least helped them to recover from the mental and physical fatigue of the last days. Later on the women were recruited into different work groups. In each layer of the three story beds slept two women. Quite often there were so called bed controls, where a lot of valued objects like knives scissors combs and mirrors were taken away.

During the later months there was not much work anymore, but the women had to act like they were very busy. Chicanery increased as the news from the front worsened daily. Hunger became also more and more, as in the last three months there were no more potatoes and the women only got a thin watery soup with turnips and a small piece of bread which got smaller and smaller every day.

Grete writes: A very sad chapter was our three pregnant women. One of them was very young. (this was Erna, who was only 21 years old.) She was about in her ninth month in February and one could not keep it a secret any longer. Her condition as well as that of the two others, was very pronounced, one could not make up less months in their pregnancy any more. These women were suffering enormously from hunger and worries about themselves and their unborn children and the rest of us worried with them. The worries were well founded, as one day the command came to them:

”Be ready for departure!”

Our comrades were sent with three women guards to Bergen-Belsen. One of the women survived, the others died as well as all the babies who were born there.

Grete Salus writes about some of the German workers who helped the prisoners by giving them some food. They had to be very careful not to be seen by other German co-workers, who might denounce them. One of the women she mentioned especially was Else Schroeder from Oederan. Her son Horst Schroeder remembered:

“I was 10 years (old) in 1944 and lived with my mother and sister, but no father. My mother worked as a cleaning woman in the weaving mill of Salzmann in Oederan. As her wages were very low, we had to live very modestly. Sometimes my mother talked about a Grete, but she impressed on us children, never to talk to anybody about this. During the war I often went to the farmer Haubold Klotz in Oederan to tend his cows. Because of my work I got extra food from him, which we badly needed. When I came home in the evening and brought a couple of slices of farmers bread with me, my mother said, that the next day she could take a little more bread along to work. She gave that to the Jewish prisoners.

Sometimes I picked my mother up from the factory and walked home together with her. At one time she showed me a hiding place on the fence of the factory where she leaves food for the prisoners. At that time she also mentioned, that it would be less conspicuous if children would play in the meadow nearby. Once in a while I hid something there where my mother told me to.”

Another woman, a young girl, Edeltraut Petrat, remembered that in the years 1944/45 she worked in the kitchen of the Salzmann company in Oederan and therefore did have contact with the prisoners. "The women in the kitchen always cooked a little more than necessary and therefore could give the surplus to the prisoners. As I was the youngest and a small, delicate little girl, I always had to do that secretly. In my opinion, this was discovered and denounced by a woman whose husband was the factory's foreman. As all the women prisoners' hair was shaven, they were amazed by my lush red-brown hair and loved to stroke over it with their hands.

On Friday, April 13th, 1945, Grete writes, "the women officially heard that probably in the night they will be evacuated. All night long they were listening to heavy artillery being driven through the village. Their nerves were on the breaking point. Is it possible that they would be liberated soon? But nothing happened that night and the next morning, April 14th, 1945, they were marched to the factories as usual, even though there was almost nothing to do. Most of the German workers did not show up any more.

Great excitement reigned in the camp because at 3:00 p.m. we had to fall in for departure. The order said:

"Prisoners and all the overseer personnel fall in for evacuation before the enemy!" Destination unknown. At about 8:00 a.m. we could already hear the rumbling of guns and our hearts beat faster in the hope that it would now come to an end after all.

When we fell in at 3:00 p.m., the windows were rattling and the ground shook beneath our feet. Hand in hand with my friend, equipped with a bucket stuffed full with my belongings, we, 500 women stood in the yard of the camp, to bend once more under the cruel yoke. And this in the face of the advancing Allies, whose guns we could hear and who could not hear our prayers. Under an escort of armed Reserves and Hitler Youth, we left, wrapped in our blankets. We walked to the station and were loaded into open coal cars!"

We did not get any food or water and in our famished state, fell into semi-consciousness. Nobody knew where they were heading, until somebody heard the SS-women screaming from wagon to wagon: "Mauthausen!"

As the train came to the railroad station in Aussig they saw German refugees, sitting on packages and bundles and looking perplexed. This stop was probably not planned and therefore they drove them as soon as possible to a siding away from the station. The engine left and the cattle cars were standing there for the next two days. Then there was an air-raid. The planes flew very low over them, but they were concentrating on other targets. Very clearly they could hear the planes strafing some objects.

Margot remembers, one of the SS-guardswomen told the prisoners to wave their striped uniforms and they painted a white cross on their backs, so that the planes would not bomb and strafe them.

The whole trip was like that. Constantly the engines left and they were marooned on different places. Near Leitmeritz they were standing for another three days. A very heavy armed SS-train joined the prisoner's coal cars. For days their train was driving around in circles between Aussig and Leitmeritz and back again to Leitmeritz. The women still did not get any food and in their weakness they fell into a half sleep.

Somebody heard they were being shipped to Dachau and then again to Flossenbuerg. Towards the end they heard about Theresienstadt. Again they drove towards Leitmeritz and the women were hoping for Theresienstadt. But then they heard they would bring them to the *Kleine Festung*.

For half a day the train was standing near Theresienstadt but the commandant of Theresienstadt did not let them enter and after that the train went to Prague. The new destination they heard was the Pankratz jail there. Then the train came north again and was standing for a while again near Leitmeritz. The SS-train was still with them.

Finally that train with the Nazi soldiers left. It started to rain very heavily. At least the weather was good for the last eight days, while they were driven around without ever getting any food. Finally in Leitmeritz the women were told to get out of the train. They walked or better dragged themselves through the town and trudged along towards Theresienstadt. This was Saturday, April 21st, 1945. The women from Oederan were the second transport of former inmates of Theresienstadt who arrived back there. On Friday, April 20th, 1945 the first transport arrived with only a couple of women who used to be in Theresienstadt before being shipped off."

Hanna Fiala, number 59207, another survivor from Oederan says, that she does not remember anything from the transport from Auschwitz to Oederan. It seems she was still in shock. This she remembers:

Of the 1,800 people who were deported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz only 200 women survived there. The rest of the people were killed on the night of their arrival. Many of these surviving women lost in that night their husbands, their younger children and their parents. After some time we were told that they will transport us to Germany to work. In our thin summer dresses, which they gave us, nothing underneath no socks, only a short jacket and with a shaved head, we stood again for roll-call. It rained, mixed with snow, it was very cold. We were not permitted to move and had to wait for who would bring us to the train. This way we stood all day, but the train did not come. At that time came the frightening thought, that this might have been another German deceitful play, and we would end up in the gas chambers, which were very close by. At the end it seems the train came anyway. After all this we were stunned by fear, sorrow, hunger and the cold.

My memory only came back, when I jumped off the cattle car on the railroad station in Oederan. It was a nice autumn day. All around me I saw miserable creatures with the shaven heads. I was thinking, who were these poor girls in these torn dresses? Only then did I realize that I too looked as inhuman as they.

They brought us into the factory, where they gave us soup. After that they took us upstairs. There were three-tire beds, in each one a large paper bag filled with straw and a thin blanket. The rooms were warm, as large pipes went through this room to bring steam to the factory. *(It seems that these pipes were maybe only in one room, as nobody I spoke to remembers them.)*

The beginning in Oederan was not bad. Our *Oberaufseherin* (head prison guard) had not arrived. We also did not work yet, as the machines were not operative. The first guard woman became the head mistress. I believe her name was Gerda and she was from around that area. She was a rough, but not bad woman. All I remember is that she had four or five children, each one from another man she was engaged to. Generally she left us alone, and we could recover a little bit from the ordeal in Auschwitz. At the time when I had to be her cleaning woman, she even got some books for me. As paradoxical as it sounds, we tried not to lose all our culture. The French prisoners of war sometimes smuggled some books to us.

Hanna said that they always tried to keep it a secret that pregnant women were between them. After seeing a picture of Erna, she remembered her. They were looking after their pregnant comrades, and tried to ease their lot as much as possible. As prisoners were working in the kitchen, the girls there usually managed to give them a little more of the small amount of food each one of them had. Hanna said that through their sleeping quarters ran large pipes with hot water. Because of that they could wash with warm water, wash their clothes and could dry them by hanging them over the pipes. She says nobody was beaten in Oederan. There was only one *Oberscharfuehrer* (sergeant) the rest of the guards were women. She only remembers the names of a few of the *Aufseherinnen* (guard women). One of them was Lind. Everything changed to the worse when the head prison guard woman and her friend Sonja Schienabeck from Munich came. Both of them were fanatic Nazis. Sonja was a tall slender blond woman, always very elegant. She told our girls, that she was from a poor family from Munich, and a Jewish doctor helped them a lot. The Jewish girls trusted her because of that, and told her a lot of things which were happening in camp. She told everything to her best friend the *Oberaufseherin* (Head women guard)

Winner. Whenever there was an air raid Sonja took her white fur coat along. I believe she was a prostitute.

Winner was the head guard for only a short time. Then came Wolkenrath-Muehland, also a mean Nazi woman. Not only did she reign over us, but even the rest of the guard women did not have it easy with her.

There was one of the women guards I remember favorably. Her name was Mariechen. Her father was a foreman in the factory and he too helped the girls. Mariechen was small and thin and had her hair brushed smooth back. She was inconspicuous. At that time, around Christmas, I was the cleaning woman for the guards. As I came into Mariechen's room on Christmas morning to clean, she closed the door behind me. On the table was a plate with different delicacies. I was told to sit down and eat everything unhurried. It was not the food that was touching. Between the baked morsels was a little card with a quotation from the bible. I do not exactly remember the wording, but something like: "Don't despair; it will change to the better one day!" This little scrap of paper gave me the confidence, that even between the guards were such who knew, that we ragamuffin, inhuman looking characters were normal human beings.

At one time, one of the guard-woman did not let me into her room. After a while, when she did not clean her room herself any more, she ordered me in again with a lot of special instructions. Somebody had given her a little radio and she was afraid I could damage it. She was one of the not bad ones, and she left the radio playing that I could enjoy it while I washed her floor. But under no circumstances should I touch the radio or even come close to the table. She left the room, I heard Haendel's Largo and I started to cry. I could not stop crying any more. This was the first time; I realized suddenly what they have done to us. This simple peasant girl was convinced that we were a primitive human species.

When they were transported from Oederan, the Nazis first wanted to transport the women to Dachau, but the allied planes were bombarding the rail lines constantly, so that the train was stopped all the time. In the end we had to march to Theresienstadt.

On February 9, 1970 a lady who seems to have been in Oederan was interviewed at the German General consulate in New York. Her name was Mina Chern formerly Czarnoczapka. I believe she was from Poland and she says she came to Oederan before the women from transport Et from Theresienstadt. She probably had lots of it forgotten and made some of her story up, as some of her statements are obviously wrong. She was in Oederan with her sister Regina Diamant who lived in Toronto, who might be the Rosa Diamant whose maiden name was Lefkowitz and was interviewed on February 20, 1970.

Mina says she worked in the ammunition factory on a machine drilling holes into bullets, the same as Rosa said. Mina said: I have trained a young girl, 18 years old on my machine. She was from Czechoslovakia. She was married and pregnant. She was not in my room. I knew her very well, but I can't remember her name. She was sent away with another woman who was also pregnant. In Theresienstadt a young man ask me about her. That was her husband.

I am sure some other statements she made were wrong; therefore I am not sure if the girl she trained was my sister. But as I asked a lot of these girls about my sister, it might have been me who spoke to her.

Jean Diamond formerly Rega-Rifka Diamant, who was interviewed on the 12th of December 1969 might be the same person as Rosa and Regian Diamond. She also spoke about a girl who was pregnant and shipped away.

