

IMPORTANT

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Martin Anson interviewed by Halina Moss

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Side 1

...In a small Bavarian town, called Leuteshausen, (??) which was near the town, near the Kreishauptstadt (??) of Mittelfranken (??) called Ansbach, (??) and my name originally in German, it was Ansbacher (??), Martin Ansbacher. My father's name was Gustav Ansbacher, my mother's name was Babette Ansbacher, and her maiden name was Eckmann. My father was born in Leuteshausen (??), my grandfather was born in the small village of Jochsbereich, (??) very near to Leuteshausen. My grandfather, Seckel (??) Eckmann was, I don't remember exactly but, where he was born. My grandparents from my father's side, was Heinrich Ansbacher, and my grandmother was Rosa Ansbacher, and her maiden name was Wittelswolfe (??). From my mother's grandmother's side, from my grand, sorry, from my mother's side, the parents were, her parents were called Seckel Eckmann (??) and my grandmother's name was - lapse of memory.

Never mind.

It will come back. And her maiden name was Wittelswolfe (??), meaning that my two grandmothers were sisters. Ah yes, my grandmother's name from my mother's side, was Carolina Eckmann.

Do you remember anything about your grandparents' home life?

One second and I'll come to it. My grand, my father's, my father's parents, Heinrich Ansbacher had a general drapery business in Leuteshausen, and in those days also there was a retail shop, most of the business was done by calling on customers who were farm, farming people. My father carried on the business after my grandfather was retired. My grandfather Eckmann was a horse dealer, he bought and sold horses. My grandparents had four children. My father being the second. The oldest one was called Max Ansbacher, my father Gustav, was the second, then he had a sister called Fannie, who later on married a private banker called Rosenfelder (??) and the youngest brother was called Selmar (??) and he was killed in the First World War, as a Cadet Officer, and he was promoted to Officer on his deathbed, because of some bravery when he took over the command of the Company. He was leading after, after his superior, all his superior Officers had died. He fell in, within the first three or four months of the First World War. In fact, he was, I think, the first, the first person in our village, or little town, who was killed in the First World War. He was, by that time, in wholesale business, in Nürnberg, I cannot remember what branch it was, but I remember seeing him as a, when I was very small, and he was a very good looking young man, who looked very smart in his uniform. The place where I was born, Leuteshausen, was a small, it called itself a town, it had about 1600 inhabitants, also you might, or might consider it a village, it really had the status of being a town, and it was 13 kilometres from the Kreishauptstadt (??) the District capital of Ansbach. Well, I was the only child, I may have said that before. My parents had no further children.

Were there any other Jews in Leuteshausen?

In Leuteshausen, for a town of 1600 people, we had at least not sized Jewish community, about 20 Jewish families, we had our own synagogue, and, and as a rule, the community had the services of a paid official who was Rhasim (??), the Jeder teacher, the Shul (??) or anything else which was going. By the way, just to mention it here, our, the man who was our Rhasin (??) in 1914 when the First World War broke out, also was killed on the Western Front.

How was life, what was the standard of living? How would you describe your life?

Well, we lived in, in a building of, of where our house was what is called a "Marktplatz", a market place, it was the building right next to the Town Hall, the Rathaus, and we lived, I would say, a comfortable life of, of small business people, being careful with what one spent, but not being, not being extravagant, but living a fairly decent life.

How many rooms do you think? Do you remember how many rooms, and who looked after the house?

We must have had about six or seven rooms in the house.

Did your mother look after yourself,

Yes, my mother looked after the business as such, but she had, we usually had a maid, and my father continued my grandfather's way of doing business, by calling on farming customers in the area. The area, I would say, a radius of perhaps 30, 30-40 kilometres around Leuteshausen.

How did he travel?

He had a coach and a horse, and we had somebody who came in, who looked after the horse at the weekends, and so groomed the horse, but otherwise my father did it all himself. The Jewish community in Leuteshausen, was a fairly closely-knit one, as it would be in such a small, small community, and more or less everybody knew everybody else's business. The other people in our town, there were, we were three families who were in the textile business, and all the others were in the (BERKATTELIERUS ??)

That's breeding horses and other cattle?

Beg your pardon?

Horses and other cattle?

Yeh. No, cattle. Cattle, not horses. I, I had a, I remember I had a lot of friends of the young non-Jew, non-Jewish people who lived near us, or who lived in our town altogether, and we went to, I went to school with, but later on, gradually, as anti-Semitism raised it's head, one gradually confined oneself more to Jewish friends. I started school, I think it was when I was 5 years old, and went to the local school until 19, until 19, 1918. In 1918 I sat an Entrance Examination to a Grammar School, in Ansbach. Grammar School in, you call it in German, "ein Humanisches Gymnasium" (??). It was a school which, you started off with Latin, later on, Greek, English or French only came later. It was more a classical education.

Did you have, what kind of a Jewish education did you have?

Well, in, in our town, Leuteshausen, we, of course, we had a Jeder teacher, but by the time I started school in 1914, our Jeder teacher had been called up, and we then had a lovely old man, I think his name Wallerstein, or Wallersteiner, from the town of Ansbach, who came, it must have been once a fortnight or so, to give us religious instructions. He didn't bother us too much, we learned a bit of reading, but his main thing he told us a lot of Jewish Bible stories, and as I say, was a very lovable man, and I still remember him because he was very kind.

Would you say your family was an observant one?

Our family, everybody in our town was observant, although I wouldn't say that they were GLACK (??). One lived kosher, but I, it wasn't the type of GLACK (??) kosher or extreme Orthodoxy, which one found in some other places. The first few, in the first year of the Grammar School, I stayed in digs in Landshut (??), with a, the family of a Jewish butcher, name called Shield (??), I think they emigrated to, to the United States later on, and I stayed with them for a year, for the first year, in spite of the fact that our little town was only about 13 kilometres away from, from where I went to school, but it was considered more advisable to, to stay, rather than travel. At least the first year, because one settled down at school better. The second, from the second year of school on, I travelled back and forward from Leuteshausen to Ansbach every day. Leuteshausen didn't have a railway station, we,

there was a distance of about 3 kilometres between Leuteshausen and the railway station, which was in a village called Wiedersbach and unless, there was, of course, ein Post Auto, a regular bus connection between the town and the railway station, but as a young scholar, you considered it below your dignity to use the bus, unless the weather was shocking. We walked to the railway station every morning. We had to catch a train at quarter past seven in the morning, and we really worked it out to a fine art, how late one possibly could leave the house, just to catch the train and no more. To stand at the railway station and wait for the train to come in, that was below the belt. That was below one's dignity! In fact, the art was just about to arrive at the railway station, before the Station Master lifted his hand to let the train leave the station. In fact, on days when we were a few minutes ahead, we deliberately slowed down, not to come too early!

When you say "we", who does that mean?

Well there was, at that time, there were, I must, there were probably 10-12 different youngsters from Leuteshausen who all went to school in Ansbach, different schools, technical schools, another high school, a couple of girls for girls schools, and we all usually met up on the road to the railway station, and we more or less all got there within a few, a minute or two of each other.

And these were both Jewish and non-Jewish?

Yeh, both Jewish and non-Jewish. There was, I think, one Jewish boy who also went there, and was my, the one who, later on, was one of my very best friends, called Otto Gutmann (??).

Can you describe a typical schoolday, you got ...

Well, we, we got, being out of town, we were allowed into, to enter the school building before the official bell went, we were allowed into the classroom and sit down and get our books out. And our way home, we usually caught a train at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, at Ansbach railway station, we walked about 10 minutes from the railway station, I, from my school, I walked about ten minutes, from that school to the railway station. The train journey either way, took about, I would say, 15-17 minutes, and then we arrived around 5.20 in the afternoon in Wiedersbach. We walked from there to Leuteshausen, which meant we got home just before 6 o'clock.

And what did you do then? What was your leisure like?

Well, by the time we got home, your mother had a meal ready, and then in the evening one had to swot. School, in those, in those days, was six days a week, and not a five day week. So for the sixth day, being Orthodox at that time, I would not use the train, I stayed overnight in Ansbach on Friday night, to go to school on Saturday morning. In those, we were allowed to leave our school satchels with a caretaker of the school on Friday evening, and just pick them up from his, from his office, on Saturday morning. As I say, from the time on when I stayed in Ansbach just for Friday nights, I stayed then with my grandparents. On Saturday, we, in winter it was easiest, winter, the day was out, and it was night by, by 4, half past 4, and it was easy enough to take the 5 o'clock train home. In summer, we just broke the rules a bit, and we walked home, so this was against the laws of the Shabbat, we just walked home, it was the 13 kilometres, we always walked along the railway line, and we carried our school bags on our back.

So, tell me more about the Saturday that you spent in

Actually, well, it was, well, the, well, the school didn't finish on Saturday till 1 o'clock, there was no, so, well, we just talked or did things like that, occasionally perhaps I may have gone to the pictures on a Saturday afternoon before going home. I stayed at that grammar school six years. By the time it came to the third year, we, I would take, I had a bicycle, and I would take the bicycle, the bicycle to Ansbach on Friday morning, by train, and on Saturday evening, after Shabbat was out, I would cycle home, the 13 kilometres, and so did my other two Jewish friends. By that time we were three Jewish pupils going to Ansbach for the school. Now,

What were the teachers like?

Can I come to that. Right, you will realise I joined a Grammar School in 1918, or '19. By, at that time, school was, my relationship to the non-Jewish, to my non-Jewish classmates, was fairly good. We, by the way, in this class, there were two other Jewish people, apart from myself. A girl, whose father was a solicitor, and a young man, who, I think he came from Nürnberg, I don't know, I can't remember why he happened to be in Ansbach. No, we were four Jewish kids in that class - myself, the girl Frankenberger, Louise Frankenberger, the one whose father was a solicitor, there was somebody called Otto Teetenhofer (??) whose father had a factory for bottle closures, and the other one was that boy Rudolf Penario (??) who, I think, came from Nürnberg, but I can't remember very well, I, later on did not get on extremely well with him because he was a semi-Jewish fascist, he was a very strong Zionist and I think he belonged, was in the Bund, or the one, the one who, they were,

Jabodinsky? (??)

It must have been the Jabodinsky (??) Group, we didn't get on with each other. So, as I say, the first and the second year of school was reasonably early, reasonably pleasant. Also, during the second year, already it deteriorated. At that time we had a class headmaster, Professor Furtch (??) who was definitely an anti-Semite, and who, in his teaching, always brought out a very strong anti-Jewish line, for instance, we were discussing the Middle Ages, and he would particularly point out that persecution of the Jews in the Middle Ages was caused by the fact that they charged extortionate rates of interest from, from anybody who had borrowed money from them. He kept on talking about 30% and over. So, he definitely was an anti-semite, whereas the, the, the headmaster of the first class, somebody called Beher (??) was a very very nice man, and there was no question of anti-semitism at that time. But in my second class, we were getting into the era of '20, 1920/21, when the German politics came into, under the influence of right wing organisations, and it became quite a fact that a lot of the old, the, the older pupils of that school, as a gymnasium it had nine classes, and not six, belonged to right wing organisations, would appear at school in their uniforms, in their uniforms, they, they would be out on field day exercises, sporting machine gun patches on their sleeves, that they belonged to a machine gun detachment and so on. One of the most prominent groups that was, they belonged to, was the so-called "Frei Korps" or "Bund Oberland".

I'll stop you.

end.

There's a lot to be said about that school. This particular Humanische Gymnasium (??) in Ansbach, they, first of all, the area of Mittelfranken where, where Ansbach was situated, is, was almost exclusively a Protestant area, and it so happened that the Lutheran Protestantism in Germany, the main part of their preaching was that the Jews had killed Jesus, and that we were, therefore, whereas, this is what, was, was, was at the foreground of all the protestant school teaching there, that the Jews were guilty of killing Jesus, and therefore, the families of those, the protestant ministers' families were all very anti-semitic. Now, this particular school had a live-in section, which was called "Alum Neium" (??), which was specifically for the sons of protestant ministers, so you can say that in every class, between 30% and 40% of the pupils were sons of Protestant Ministers, and they set the tone of the class, so they, they set the policy of the class, and being anti-semitic, they made the whole school anti-semitic, so, particularly as, in the older classes, the higher classes, they started to join para-military, semi-fascist groups, like the, as I mentioned, the "Bund Oberland", which, in 1919 and '20 was actively involved in the border skirmishes of East Prussia with the Polish, with the Polish army. They brought rather a strong anti-semitic element into the school. So, by 1922/'23, things really hotted up. This, this was the year when Radenauer (??) the years when Radenauer (??) was murdered by the Tetchov (??) brothers, the German Reichs Councillor Wirth who, who came from the Catholic German section, was murdered by fascist students, and there were one or two other, other political murders at that time, in Germany. I would also say that in my particular class, there was one boy who had grown up in Munich, in München, and had lived there during the time of the so-called "Red Reboblick (??) who, who was, and a Jewish man was a leader of that communist uprising in Munich. They had taken a number of hostages, of the civilian population, and they were murdered, so these murders of civilian hostages was something which this lad remembered, and which he, which he brought out all the time when there were anti-semitic discussions, anti-Semitic ... or utterances, and discussions in the class. So in, in the end, by 1923, it had gone so far that all the Jewish, sorry, it had gone so far that in my class, and in every other class where there were Jewish children, none of our classmates would sit next to us, none of our classmates would talk to us, and we Jewish, the Jewish children in that particular class, had to sit at the very back end of the class, on a bench of their own. We were probably six Jewish children in the whole of that gymnasium, out of the nine classes, so whenever there was playtime, forenoon and afternoon, we Jewish kids were not allowed to play with the others, or not allowed even to stand by the others. We always met in the school yard, and kind of, protected each other. When the bell went that meant, that playtime was over, everybody filed upstairs, upstairs meaning that the school yard was below the, below the level of where the classrooms were, and we had to go two or three stairs up to reach the classrooms, and there was, every day, twice a day, we got more or less beaten up, if not beaten up we got punished. We would go, try to go upstairs and then as we were in the middle of the stairs, the people in front of us, the school boys in front of us, would suddenly stop, very deliberately, we had the school kids behind us, would push that they wanted to go upstairs, also deliberately, and they had us six in the middle. So the ones at the bottom would kick us, would push us in the back to go on, and the ones at the top would kick us back, with their heels, punch us, so this went on day after day, so I, it, my school days in Ansbach were not exactly the type of happy, happy memories one has from one's school days. And I therefore decided that, after six years, I had enough, and I didn't want to go on. I was meant to study, whether I would have been very brainy to study or whether I would have made a good doctor, or lawyer, or God knows what, I do not know, but in those days Jewish mothers, I think that probably still applies today, wanted their children to be academics, so I probably very much disappointed my mother, by not going on, that I didn't go on, I had enough. I stuck it out for six years because one, what one called in Germany, the so-called "ein (??) that people who had pupils who had reached six years of, of an academic career, academic study, were allowed in the case of, in the case of the time when there was, "allgemeine Wehrpflicht" how would you say that in English? Conscription, where there was conscription, somebody with six years academic education was allowed to serve only one year as a Conscript, and he usually served it in a Officer Cadet formation, rather than in the ranks, so this was something one tried to have up one's sleeve, to have those six years academic education, so after the sixth year, I suddenly left the school, and I must say that I hated the thought of the six years I had in that school, I have hated it for the rest of my life.

So were your parents aware of your experience at that school?

Yeh. Yeh.

Did they comment at all?

It is unbelievable nowadays. You see, one was so small-minded, it would have meant going, there were Jewish schools in Nürnberg, or in Munich, one was very small-minded in those days, and the thought of going to a Jewish school of education, a Jewish, a higher school of education, which was entirely Jewish, just didn't strike one, to send your son to somewhere else which was probably 50 kilometres away and not seeing him for so many months. It neither struck my parents as something feasible, nor did I ever think of that, that this was a way out of that dilemma, it just didn't occur to me. One just suffered it.

And that must have been a relief to go home for Sunday?

It was.

What did you do on Sundays?

Well, Sunday, well, first of all, on Sunday, I don't know, I can't remember!

So tell me more about what you did after you finished this school.

After I finished school I went to Frankfurt, Frankfurt-am-Main, for two years as an apprentice in a wholesale drapery business, very big wholesale drapery business called "Allman and Rapp", in Frankfurt. It was a Jewish, the proprietors of that business were Jewish, and more or less all the staff were Jewish except some of the, that, that, the administrative staff were all Jewish, except some of the warehouse staff were not, and of course, I went to Frankfurt in 1926, by that time I was 17 years of age, and by that time, going away from home wasn't much of a problem any more, one ... one was a semi, semi-adult, and just accepted that you have to go away from home. I had a lot of, of, became really friendly with, with the other Jewish people who were in that school. We had, not school, in that business. We had a football team, a private football team, but we played football every Sunday, or went out, by that time, we owned bicycles, we went out cycling on a Sunday, or we went swimming, so my time in Frankfurt was really very pleasantly spent. I had plenty of Jewish company, boys as well as girls, and well, it all, it all went very pleasant I think. There was only, one of the things I can remember but that wasn't an anti-Semitic affair, was they had, the people, the packers who were in the packing room, most of them were non-Jewish, but I don't think that had anything to do with it, they had the habit that every new apprentice who joined the Firm, had to be initiated, so one day, somebody sent me with a fictitious message to the packing room, of course, I was, at that time, I hadn't been there more for about six weeks or so, I didn't suspect anything, but they sent me there with a message. As I was in the packing room, one of the packers shut the door, and they were going to give me a hiding, which is, was the initiation ceremony. However, I, never in all my life, have I taken things lying down. I jumped on top of some boxes, I fought like a lion, and I smashed the spectacles of the senior packer, who, who, afterwards, wanted me to pay for it, and I said, "Not on your so and so life. You started it, and you got what you were looking for." So it took them a long time to get used to the fact that I had not allowed myself to be initiated without hitting out. So I was there, as I say, from 1926 to 1928, after I had served my apprenticeship I, my parents and I decided that I would go home and join my father in his business in Leuteshausen. I learnt to drive and later on, I had a motor car, when I went out calling on customers. By that time my father also had a motor car, but he never learnt to drive. All his life he had a chauffeur who drove him, it was probably similar to people nowadays, the younger children taking to computers like a duck takes to, to the water, but the older people don't. We have a computer in the business and I haven't used it. I only use it for the most elementary things, apart from that I keep, I keep off it! So I suppose my father felt about driving similarly. He said, "I get somebody to drive me." And it, it took a good number of months till my father ever agreed to, to sit in the back of the car when I drove it, so all right, now let me go back there. Then I, in Leuteshausen, yes, we had a football club which I joined, which, at that time, was partly, half of the members were young Jewish lads like myself, and some of the others were non-Jewish. We got on very well, and, for a while, we managed to politically influence the football club, to be anti-Nazi, but the pressure grew gradually. By that time, based on my experience, probably of the school in Ansbach, I had become very politically minded, and I joined the so-called "Reichsbanner Schwartz

" (??) called, which was a para-military organisation, which based itself on the Democratic Weimark Constitution, which was in no way communist influenced, and the Reichsbanner Schwartz would go through it's members from the Social Democratic Party in Germany, from the Democratic Party, and from the Catholic Centre Party, which means it was the centre of the German political spectrum. As I was the most active, I became the leader of our "Orts Gruppe" (??), local group, and we, and I was fairly active. I met, oh let me go back to my business. When I joined my father's business, I did not take over his own area, I opened up additional accounts in a part of Mittelfranken where my father previously had not called, so, and most of that area was between Ansbach, the town of Ansbach, which I've mentioned before, and the town of Nürnberg, so a lot of my business travel took me through the town of Ansbach, which had a very strong Social Democratic Group, and a very strong Reichsbanner Gruppe, and I regularly popped in at, at the Office of the, of the man who led the group in Ansbach, he was, he had, he was the local reporter for a Socialist newspaper in Nürnberg, so very often, driving, passing through Ansbach, I would pop in and we would discuss political things and so on. The "Reichsbanner Schwartz" (??) called, by the way, did wear, we were para-military, we did wear some sort of uniform, which was a green shirt, black trousers, shoulder strap and a navy blue cap, and I felt very proud and very important wearing it. One day, we had, my father, of course, knew something about it, that I was politically active. He wasn't terribly keen on it. Jewish, in those days, Jewish people felt you should keep your head down and not draw attention to yourself, it wasn't my idea. So one day, I had organised a Reichsbanner District Meeting, in our own town, in Leuteshausen, and we had uniformed groups from three or four other places in Mittelfranken, who all came to Leuteshausen, and we marched through Leuteshausen, with the "Schwarz" (??) flags flying, and I was marching at the head of the column, my father, I can never, I will never forget my father's face when he saw me walking in the front. It, I will admit that there was quite a lot of trouble afterwards in Leuteshausen, my parents regularly had stones and bricks thrown through the window, they, occasionally, they tried to beat me up, which they weren't terribly successful, but I have, I had before mentioned my good friend, my best friend, Otto Gutmann, who really, or who was with me in the Reichsbanner, Otto was one of these people, if you got into a fight, you could rely on Otto, he wouldn't leave your sight, and you could hear. I wasn't bad, but, at taking care of myself, but Otto could take on two or three, so Otto and I became very, very firm friends, and the, the, and the political situation in Leuteshausen became worse and worse. In the end, our football club joined with a local "Association" (??) and they didn't allow Jewish youngsters to play any more. In fact, all the people who had been in the Football Club with us, they all, most of them turn anti-Semitic, one or two probably didn't, but they certainly no longer were keeping company, with the Jewish, with their former Jewish friends.

And that was what year?

That was 1930/31. You see, I came back home in 1928, so by that time, the political situation in Leuteshausen grew worse.

end.

I think we finished off last time, that when I was in Leuteshausen, in Mittelfranken, and working in my father's business as a salesman, the activities were, we were selling to farmers and smallholders, and small business people in other towns, and in the country, and I build up on a new area for our business, where previously we had no customers, in the area between Ansbach and Nürnberg, but I had, through the anti-semitic experiences which I had made both at, at the high school and , I had become very political interested. Apart from being the local leader of the republican defence organisation, which was called "Reichsbanner Schwartz ", (??) I also did a little bit of journalistic work, writing articles for a Republican paper which, the, Republican weekly, which I would say, was a very hard-hitting paper. It wasn't a very high standard journalistic type of publication, but it was very strong, it had no, no other news except the defence and the attack, the defence of the Weimar Republic, and attacks on the " " (??) the Nazi Party. And the paper was called The Alarm, and whenever I had an article in it, I signed it with my full name, which always produced bricks being thrown through, through our window at home. Right, which wasn't also, my parents weren't terribly pleased with me, being so, so active, and obviously, being older, they were not used to being, they didn't like it being attacked. My life in Leuteshausen went on for a couple of years, it, in 1931, I, my parents and I decided that I would better not stay at home, I, I wasn't prepared to stop my political activities, and they weren't terribly keen on being the target for stone throwing and so on at their house, so I decided I would go to Berlin. I had my father's older brother, lived in Berlin, and he had an export office in Berlin, and he was mainly a buying agent for the Great Universal Stores in Great Britain, who, they had their head office, at that time, in Manchester. Now, I don't know whether I have mentioned this before, that as the local leader of the Reichsbanner (??) I was occasionally invited when any bigger meetings took place in the, in the district town of Ansbach, which was the County town of Ansbach, county of Mittelfranken. At one of those meetings, I was introduced to a man called Dr. Helmut Klotz, I spell it out, K L E, no, sorry K L O T Z. He had quite a very colourful personality. He had, in the pre-1923 days, no, sorry, to go back, he had, during the First World War, he was either a very high office in one of the German submarines, or he was a submarine Commander, and, and originally, in the early 1920s, he had actually been a member of the Nazi Party, and he was one of the people who was arrested in 1923, after the unsuccessful Hitler putsch (??), Hitler's first attempt to reach power by force. But he soon, whether he became politically wiser, or whatever, in the 1924, or '25, he turned, and he turned towards the democratic system, and he became the lobby, a lobby correspondent of the German Social Democratic Party, in the German parliament, in the Reichstag, and he also was actively involved with the Reichsbanner (??), so, at that time, in 19, it must have been about 1930, he was the main speaker at the big Reichsbanner meeting in Ansbach, and I was there with a small group of Reichsbanner people from Leuteshausen, and I was introduced to him. In 19, early 1931, when I went to Berlin, and took up a very minor office job in my uncle's office, my uncle, by the way, was called Max Ansbacher. I, of course, rejoined the Reichsbanner in Berlin and I lived in digs in the district of Shalottenburg (??) which is one of the part of Berlin, on the West of Berlin, and, and I wasn't in Berlin very long when, one day, while travelling on the Berlin subway, on the Stadtbahn, I had to change trains and I run into, into Dr. Wilhelm Klotz, who was living in Berlin, Tempelhof. I spoke to him, he did remember me, and we then became very close, very close companions, or call it friends.

He still, he was still of, very active in the anti-Nazi Movement, he was one of the first people who brought out a pamphlet against Dr. Rohm (??) who was, at that time, the leader of the "Erneste " (??), and, not, the leader of the Storm Troopers, of the "Erneste "(??) for the whole of Germany, and Dr. Klotz, through some contact he had, found out that Rohm was a homosexual, and he published that in a pamphlet, which was called, The Liebesbriefe das Dr. Rohn", Liebesbriefe mean the "Loveletters of Dr. Rohn", he got hold of letters he wrote to other homosexual friends while he had been in, I think, he had, he was a, he had been some army officer in the German army, and he had gone to Bolivia in the mid-1920s, and stayed there till the late 1920s, and I think while he was in Bolivia, he was something like the Chief of Staff of the Police, in the Bolivian army. So, anyway, publishing that pamphlet against Dr. Rohn (??), did not endear Dr. Klotz to the Nazi Party, and they really became vicious against him. As I said before, I became very closely associated with Dr. Helmut Klotz, I spent much time in his company. Whenever he went out making speeches in any part of Berlin, to other units of the Reichsbanner, he, I would come along with him, in uniform, so I gradually, the, I suppose gradually, the Nazi Party got hold of my name as well, and occasionally I got telephone calls threatening me that the same thing would happen to my friend, to me as to my friend, Dr. Klotz. Now,

it happened at some time in 19, early in 1932, when Dr. Klotz was in his correspondent's position, in position as a reporter, in the German parliament, in the Reichstag, that three or four Nazi members of parliament attacked him, and were trying to kill him, but some other people intervened, and he got very badly beaten up, but not badly hurt, but he had to go to hospital. I read that as I went for lunch, and saw the headlines of the newspapers being sold in the street, I read about that attack which had taken place on him, I phoned Dr. Klotz' wife, and asked her, did she know anything about what had happened to Helmut. She said, "I don't know anything else, except what's in the paper", so I got in touch with the unit of the Reichsbanner to which I belonged, I will talk to that in a few minutes, and organised half a dozen youngsters to meet me at, at Tempelhof subway station to take up the protection of Dr. Klotz' house, because he was coming back out of hospital that afternoon, which we did. He, he was quite a, although he was very pleased that we would do all that for him, he was a very courageous man, and by 11 or 12 o'clock in the evening, he sent us home, and said, "If they come back, I can defend myself." So that was that. Now, just to come back to the Reichsbanner. I said, I rejoined it as soon as I came to Berlin. The leader, the Reichsbanner had several groups. All the people were in the so-called Reichsbanner proper, because at one time, after the end of the, shortly after the end of the First World War, and when the various attempts were made to overthrow the republican government, the Reichsbanner was formed as an organisation of former active soldiers, to protect the republican government, and people like us, who were too young to have been in the First World War, were in a unit called the "Jungbanner". The leader of the local Shalottenburg group of the Jungbanner, a very nice Jewish lad, who lived in the street next to me, next to mine, in Berlin, so I became very friendly with him, and I joined, I joined a special Organisation, a special group in the Jungbanner, which got a kind of, we were trained by, partly trained by the Berlin Police in street fighting techniques, and the use of arms, and we were some kind of, well, commando group within the Jungbanner in our district, of course, this probably does not do justice to the, to the proper (BRIDGE ??) commanders during the War, because obviously our training was nothing like as good as that, but we were a paramilitary group, and when we went out on various actions, all we carried was a card with our, with our number. We all had a number, and a photograph, and that was all, we never carried anything with our names. But it was good fun, I liked it. We spent much time, as you, as people who grew up at that time, will recollect, in the situation in Germany, there were elections for German parliament, there was an election too, for the German presidency, so there was plenty political activity, so we would either, at night, we often went out putting a poster, sticking posters on the walls, putting our sign, our logo on the walls, and at the same time, if we met any Nazis who were out doing the same, obviously we would try to tear theirs down, or we would get into, into fights at street corners. So, but one part of the area in Shalottenburg, which was within our area, was the so-called "Kurfurstendam" (??) which most people know as one of the well-known cafe/restaurant/entertainment areas in Berlin, in the West of Berlin, which it really is to this day. Kurfurstendam is very well known. Right, I stayed in Berlin, and, right, there is something to be said before. In the middle of 1932, I cannot remember exactly when it was, but it must have been in June or July, the whole political order in Germany changed, up, up to that time, the Chancellor, the Head of the German Government was Dr. Brüning (??) who came from the Catholic Centre Party, and he was, he was removed from power as the German Chancellor, Reichs Kanzler, by a political, it wasn't a revolution, it was a, by political machinations, and Herr von Papen, who came from the far right of the German, German political group, political groups, not from the Nazis, but the political group near the Nazis, the so-called "Deutsch Nationale Partei" (??) who were, who one knew that this change of Government, which was, in a way, illegal, would be the people who would even, or prepare the way for Hitler to come to power, so we, in the Reichsbanner, felt we had been trained just for a situation like that, and most of us expected that, together with the trade unions, and the Prussian police, which, at that time, was definitely friendly to the, and supportive of the democratic government, that we would have to fight a civil war against the Nazi Party, against the Storm Troopers.

However, our leaders were either too much of a coward, or maybe they knew better, maybe they were pacifists, whatever, they decided that no, there was no sense in having a civil war. We had all gathered in our, in our, in the various headquarters which had been assigned to us, where we had our regular meetings, and we were waiting for the word to pick up arms somewhere and go out. Instead of that, we got what? We should go home, we would not fight, that we would regain the, the republican government would regain power at the next parliamentary elections, which, of course, never, the parliamentary elections took place, but everybody knew that there was no future for the republican government, if they didn't stand up to this test. In fact, most of our youngsters were very disappointed at not being given the fight. Many of us might not have survived it, but if we had been allowed to fight, we might have avoided the Second World War, by not allowing a Nazi government to come to

power. But this, the last opportunity to save the republican government was missed, and from then on, it was a gradual slide into the Nazi dictatorship. As my last word about the Reichsbanner, may I say that one of the main functions we also had, was protecting any political meeting organised by the Social Democratic Party, by the Democratic Party, or by the Catholic Centre Party. These were the three parties which, which fought the backbone of the government, and of the Weimar Republic, and it had, for a long time, been the aim, both of the communists, with their, with their active organisation, and the Nazi Storm Troopers, to make it impossible for democratic parties to hold proper election meetings, because if the one or the other would make trouble at a political meeting, the police would have to intervene, and for the sake of public order, would have to close the meeting, and say to the people to go home. It was our job, at those meetings, if there were any groups of communists or Storm Troopers there, that we took charge of the situation, we would bundle them up, get them out of the meeting, so that the meeting could go on, and the Police would not need to intervene. That was one of the jobs also, which we had to do, which we did quite successfully. Right, well,

Your family, meanwhile, what was happening to your parents, your brothers, your sisters.

I have no brothers and sisters. I was the only one. So had,

(CANNOT HEAR QUESTION)

So, in 19, that was by the mid 1930s, the German situation was, the political situation was gradually sliding to the Right, and after there, what happened in the midsummer of 1932, when we ere not allowed to fight, really, the spirit had gone out of us, because we felt we had missed the last opportunity to fight, and the political opposition from the Reichsbanner came, became very unimportant, also by the late autumn of 1932, my parents and a distant cousin of mine, of us, of my father's, a second degree cousin, who also lived in Leuteshausen, both families decided to move away from Leuteshausen, and move down to a place, to a town called Landshut, which was in Niederbayern, which was the area north of Munich, between Munich and Regensburg. This was a Catholic area, I think I mentioned it earlier on in my remarks, that it was the, the Lutheran Protestant areas and population of Germany, which were the first to fall victim, or to follow the Hitler doctrine, whereas the Catholics did not, so this area was a Catholic area, it was a town of about 30,000 people. My parents moved there, and our distant uncle and his family moved there, and then my, I and my cousin, Wilhelm, who was the elder son of our, of my father's cousin, who was also called Ansbacher, his name was Fritz Ansbacher, and his wife was called Selma Ansbacher.

end.

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Side 2

... so you moved to

Yeh, well, our, both my father, my mother and those cousins of ours, Fritz and Selma Ansbacher, I was the only child, they had three children, and the elder son, was, the eldest son was Wilhelm, and the plan was that Wilhelm and I would, together, open a drapers shop in Landshut, and that Wilhelm and I would be the sole Partners, although our two fathers did support us first of all, they provided the capital to open the business, and they also helped in the running of the business, although they were officially retired, but they helped us, so I moved down to Landshut, in, I think, in October 1932, and by that time, had completely stopped political activity, I didn't think there was any sense any longer, and we opened that business, which existed and I may almost say, blossomed, until the end of 1938, at the time of the Reichs Kristallnacht. In fact, we had rented premises in the middle of the town, and the owners of that property were two very respectable retired old German army Colonels, and we had, and they had let that, the shop part, on the ground floor of the building to us, and gradually, but that is, actually that happened later. In 1934 or '35, the local Nazi Party in Landshut, forced those two old gentlemen to come to us one day, almost with tears in their eyes, confessing to us that they had to break their word, and cancel the shop contract, the rent contract, which was still, had still quite a number of years to run. They told us that they had been threatened, that they would see to it that their war pension would be withdrawn, or cancelled, if they would show themselves as being supporters of the Jews, and they were really terrorised, that they couldn't do anything else. But we did have a chance to get another property, whose owner was somebody who was also retired, but somebody of independent means, whom the Nazi Party could not put under pressure, and we carried on business in those new, in those new premises, until the end of 1938. Yes, well, Hitler came to power in January 1933, and at the, by April 1933, it was somewhere around 11 or 12 o'clock, during the day, the Storm Troopers appeared in our business, declared all of us, my father, our relative Fritz Ansbacher, my cousin Wilhelm, my business partner, and myself as being, having to be taken into what they called "schutzhaft" or protective custody, which normally should be that somebody is being taken into, in the police protection for his own safety, but they turned, the Nazi Party who, who run the country on very much on the lines of the Weimar, on the letter of the Weimar Republic, but not in the spirit of the Weimar Republic Constitution, turned that round and people all over Germany got arrested and taken into schutzhaft, not for their protection, but for the protection of the public from their interest. So, right, the funny thing was that I had owned a revolver, and my, and Fritz Ansbacher had owned a revolver, and we were always going to work with the revolvers in our pocket, but that morning, for some reason or other, he had a premonition, and I had a premonition that something was going to happen. And he, without telling me, and I, without telling him, took the revolver out of my pocket, and hid it in the business, and so did he, and the first thing that happened when the Storm Troopers came into the business, they searched us for weapons, because at that time, it was, the Jewish people were arrested, and had weapons in their pocket, that made the situation considerably worse, because, by that time, the Nazi Party had issued a law that no Jew was allowed to own firearms. However, as I say, with some premonition, we had both taken those revolvers out of our pocket and hidden them in the business, so that they came in, they took us to the local Police Station, we were there, in that local police station, for about five weeks. I cannot say that we were maltreated, because once you were in the police station, in, or actually, from the police station, taken to the local prison, you were in the hands of prison warders, who were not Storm Troopers, who were people who were prison warders by, by profession, and so we were not really badly treated. We were kept there for a purpose. One day, my, Wilhelm Ansbacher, my cousin, my business partner, and I, were released from, from the prison, from the protective custody.

How long were you there?

That was about five, after five weeks, but our fathers were still kept, and somehow or other, I cannot remember the exact details, we were told we should get in touch with a certain Nazi Party solicitor, who might be able to arrange the release of our fathers as well. Now, this Nazi solicitor, he was quite a decent man personally, really, had his offices in Regensburg, which was the county town for the district of Niederbayern, and my cousin and I went there to have a talk with him, and he said he would

come to Landshut and undertake to consult with the local Nazi Party, and see what could be done. Of course, he probably knew already what could be done. And, amazingly, he stayed and slept in our private house while he was there, for two or three days. He came, after his meeting with the Nazi Party, he came back and said, "Yes, it was a question of money", but somehow or other, we have offended the law, the "Volkstimme", (??) the "Volkstimmer" (??) the peoples' opinion in this town, and that if we made a considerable financial donation, this could all be smoothed out. He went to Munich to see the, the Nazi Chief of Police, who was Heidrich (??) who later on became one of the heads of the German, of the Gestapo, and was killed in Czechoslovakia, because he was the Chief of Police of Czechoslovakia, or was it the "Reichs Stadthalter" (??) "Reichs Gaulauter" (??) of Czechoslovakia, so Mr. Heidrich (??) seems to have agreed to that move, and that solicitor came back to us, quoted a sum, which I think was somewhere in the neighbourhood of 50,000 Deutschmark, plus, plus Fritz Ansbacher's motor car, which was a kind of a sporty car, and the local Nazi Party, the leader of the local Storm Troopers, had taken a fancy to that car, and he was going to run it himself, so, after financial arrangements were made, to hand this amount of money over to the local Nazi Party leaders, our fathers were released from protective custody, without any further trouble. So after this release from schutzhaft, we carried on, we reopened our business, and we carried on the business as before, and I must say that our customers, in spite of attempts by the Nazi Party to boycott Jewish businesses, our customers kept on coming, in fact, very often, people said to us, "Going to a Jewish shop was the only way where the population could oppose Hitler's ideas", and our turnover, in the business, went up, year after year, right until the end, when our business was forcibly closed down, at the time of the Reichs Kristallnacht in 1938.

So I lived in Landshut, I had a lot of, Landshut a very very small Jewish population, there were only about 9 or 10 Jewish families, and there was no Jewish community, so, on (YOMONTOVEN ??) people would either go to Munich or somewhere else for the services. I had a lot of friends in Landshut, all non-Jewish, and I also played football in a non-Jewish football team, but gradually the pressure grew, then one day the Nazi Party notified the football team that they would have to exclude me from their team, because Jews shouldn't play in a football team any more, and if they refused to exclude me, and throw me out, that they would close down the team, so all my friends there, in the, in that football team, said, "We're refusing to exclude Martin from the team. He's a nice chap, have nothing against him. Close down the football team, we are not going to exclude him." And this is what happened, they closed, they closed down the team. Well, we, I continued to meet a lot of those, a lot of the people who used to be in that football team, were also very personal friends of mine, but it gradually became more and more difficult for them to openly associate privately. One of the last few was the son of one of the local bakers, he had a motor cycle, and I had a motor cycle, we were very keen motorcyclists, and to avoid any trouble for him, we would meet outside our town, on Sundays, we would make arrangements where we would meet with our bikes, and then drive off to the mountains, and at some point or other, somewhere or other, people who knew us, must have seen us, because one day his father got a visit from one of the local Nazi leaders and said, "Your son is still keeping friends with Jews. Either he is going to stop that, or you will no longer deliver bread to the local barracks." That man had a contract for the German army barracks, to supply so many hundred loafs of bread a day, and the fellow phoned me, and said, "Martin, this is the case. I could stand up to them, but it's my father's business." So I could understand that as well. So that was the last of my friends I openly associated with, and at this point, I think I also ought to make, mention a former girlfriend of mine, a non-Jewish girlfriend, in Landshut, she was a sales girl in the business, in a business, not in ours, and we, whenever we went away for the weekend, we had made plans, we would meet in Munich or somewhere else, and go away. Now, one day, she, she was employed with a national company who had branches all over Germany, something like a small supermarket, in those days, supermarkets were smaller, and she was moved to another town in Bavaria, in Upper Bavaria, which was the other side of Munich, which was the side nearer and on, nearer the mountains, in the upland of the mountains, the Alps, and I had warned her, "Never have my photograph on your bedside table." Well, she made a mistake, she had it on her bedside table, and one day, another girl was transferred to that branch, who had also been to Landshut, and who saw my photograph, and she said, "That's one of the Ansbacher boys." She said, "Yes." So, she must have notified the head office of that, of the Nazi district, because within a couple of days of that girl seeing my photograph, the area manager, area personnel manager of that company, appears in that business, he calls out the girl I was friendly with, and told her, "You have two choices. You can either leave your job immediately, without compensation, or any other wages, or anything, you leave your job today, and go home. Or, or Martin, or I see to it that he is taken to Dachau concentration camp." So the girl was decent enough to leave her job and go home, and saved my life. The funny thing is, by the time this happened, we had more or less decided that it

was getting too dangerous to keep up that friendship, and I knew nothing of what had happened until about a year or two later, a year later, when I happened to be on the same train coming home from Munich. She lived in a place half way between Munich and Landshut, and she was on that train, and I happened to say hallo to her, but I walked past, and I sat another carriage, and she came through to my carriage, and then told me that whole story. I said, "What did your father say, when you had to, when you came home?" She said, "My father said, 'Did you steal?' I said 'No.' I told him what, why I had to quit my job. And he said, 'Well, I'm not telling you off.'" So I really probably have to thank her readiness to sacrifice her job for my life, which I've never forgotten the girl. In 1935, or '36, of course, the Nazis introduced the so-called "Nuremburg Laws", when it became socially impossible for Jewish people to be in any sport, to socially anything whatsoever, and I then joined first the Jewish Sports Club in Munich, and I didn't like it particularly, and then I joined the Jewish sports club in Augsburg, the town of Augsburg, which was about as far from Munich in the other direction, as Landshut was from Munich, and I joined there, we had a Jewish football team, a tennis team, God knows what, and this is where I got to know my wife, because she was a member of that, of that club, because she came, she came from Augsburg, she and her parents lived in Augsburg, so from then on, I travelled more or less every Sunday, or every second Sunday, or second weekend, say, because sometimes I would go already on Saturday, and stay over until Sunday, come home on Sunday night, go to Augsburg and play football, we played against other Jewish clubs, in Bavaria, in Nuremburg, and so on, so I lived quite a nice social life within the Jewish, within the Jewish population of Bavaria, until the, the 9th of November, 1938.

(CANNOT HEAR QUESTION)

Yeh.

end.

F230

Side 1

... and by the time 1938 came, one began to realise that one would have to emigrate sooner or later, and everybody was looking around for relatives abroad, particularly the United States and so on, where one could find somebody, because, at that time, if it was to the United States, one had to have a guarantee from, from a relative in the United States that they would be responsible to the US Government for the person who was going to come. Right. I, we did find a very very distant relative from my mother's side, in the United States, and in fact, it so happened that on the eve of the Kristall night, I was writing a letter to that relative in America, to whom I had, neither I nor my mother, had ever written in all our life, so it was a bit of a difficult letter, but right, I was late in going to bed. By about half past four in the morning, the doorbell at our house rang. I looked out of the window, and I saw a couple of dozen Storm Troopers outside the house, demanding that we open the house. I said, already, before, who lived in the house. It was my father, my mother, myself, a distant uncle, Fritz Ansbacher, his wife Selma, their eldest, their eldest son Wilhelm, who was my business partner, their daughter, Elsie, and their youngest son, Max. Now, it's, I woke up my father and my mother, I woke up, I went downstairs to wake up Fritz Ansbacher and his family, now, it so happened, both, I mentioned that before, Fritz Ansbacher had a revolver, I owned a revolver, and for some time we had made up our mind that if ever anything should happen again, of an arrest, we would not allow ourselves to be arrested peacefully, we would shoot it out and whatever happened, happened. So I went down, woke up Fritz, said to him, "Fritz, get your gun out. This is it." So, at the last minute, probably, in the afterthought, he was right, he said, "I'm not going to shoot. I'm not going to be part of defending the house." We had made plans, one of us would protect the back door, the other one will protect the front door, and fire at anybody who wanted to come in. So, at that time, there was a death penalty for Jewish people owning firearms, so as Fritz refused to, to go ahead with our plan of defending ourselves, the only other thing that could be done, was to get rid of the guns, while the S, the Storm Troopers were battering at the house door, I went up into the loft, and I managed to hide the two revolvers with all the ammunition, up in the rafters, and while I was up there, they had, of course, broken into the house, but I managed to come down from the loft, just in time, that they didn't see me, where I was. So as I came out there, they were already coming upstairs, and they were behaving really like, how should I say? Terribly offensive, they were hitting everything, there was a dog in the house, who really was a very, a very vicious dog, and they kicked that dog, in such a way that that dog, for a week afterwards, that dog didn't come out of the corner, so the first thing that, they were hitting my father, and my father got, lost the hearing in one ear, he had blood coming out of his ear, then they hit my grand, I forgot to mention, my grandmother from Ansbach, who was my mother's mother, had been with us, or staying with us for two weeks already, because she had been forced to sell her house in Ansbach, so she was, at that time, about 74, or 75 years old, and they hit her with a rubber truncheon, all across the face, right over her eyes, and her face swoll up, swelled up, and she was later on, in medical, under medical attention, and she almost lost the sight of her eyes. But when I saw that they were hitting my grandmother, I told them they were behaving in a despicable manner, and then they were trying to go for me, and the leader of the Storm Troopers whom I knew from sight, he was in the Head Post Office, on the parcel counter, he, he was trying to hit me and then I hit him back, and I knocked two of these teeth down his, his, knocked two of his teeth out, and after that, he and three others took me to my bedroom, they locked the door, and they went for me, and I never thought I would get out alive. They had, first they hit me while I was lying on the bed, and knocked me to the ground, they kicked me with their feet. Eventually, one of the men, one of the other Storm Troopers said to that fellow who was in the Post Office, "I think he's had enough, let him go now." So they did stop. I came out. So, by, I don't know how long that whole thing lasted, but I know, but by about half past five or six o'clock, all of us who had been in the house, were frogmarched to the Nazi Party head office, headquarters in Landshut, where the other Jewish people from Landshut had already, were already there, when we got there. We were, the Commander in that Nazi Party headquarters asked, "Had there been any incident in connection with our arrest?" So that fellow from the Post Office, who was the Storm Troop leader, said "No." Because there was another law, that if you resisted arrest, or if you attacked any member of the Nazi Party physically, you were attacking their, the system of the State, and that there was death penalty on that as well. So, however, I assumed that the man, being there with 20 armed, heavily armed men, was ashamed that he would allow a Jew to hit him in the face, so he said, "No, there were

no incidents." So we were there, by about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, the women were allowed to go back to the house, and we men were taken to the local prison, but the leader of the Storm Trooper, of the local Nazi Party, I have mentioned him before, he was the one who had his eye on Fritz Ansbacher's sports car, and got it, he said to our women, before they went home, "You may not find your house in the same condition as you left it." By God, he was right. When my mother, and when they all came home, they had absolutely vandalised the house, as far as our own part of the building was concerned. They had slashed all the curtains with their knives and daggers, they had poured all the jam pots and the jam, and what do you call it?

Marmalade?

Marmalade pots, and every, all the fruit which one had, you know, the fruit preserves in tins, and jars, they emptied it all over the carpets, which were in a total mess. They smashed up a complete dinner set, every plate, every dish, every cup, every saucer, smashed up. They, they smashed up my gramophone, my record player, it was an old-fashioned gramophone in those days, and they broke all my records, so the house must have been in a terrible mess. We, we men never saw it, but I know that when my mother came home, and told us afterwards, that some of our non-Jewish neighbours, who have a look at the house after the Storm Troopers had withdrawn from it, people seemed to have broken out into tears, and cried, because they said they had never seen anything like that, anywhere. So, right, that was the scene at our house. As I said, we men were taken to the local prison, it was a Friday morning, and we were in that prison until Sunday or Monday, and then we were taken by bus, a small mini bus, to Dachau concentration camp. We arrived, and the normal procedure, I don't think one can call it a normal procedure, the concentration camp procedure, which is, by now, well-known, took place, you arrived, you were shouted at, you, you had to go in, you had to undress, after undressing, you walked through a shower room where the prisoners had to stand up against the wall, and, and the camp guards were on the other side with a fire hose, and they were supposed to spray you, that one didn't have any, that one came clean into that camp, but it wasn't the body they sprayed at, it was, they sprayed people right into the face, and they shouted, "Open your mouth", and they'd direct these sprays right at the open mouth, so one of their prisoners, the Capos who was in that shower room, a Capo was a prisoner who had been elevated to the position of a kind of, foreman, they did have to do the dirty work for the SS Guards. He said to me, quietly, "Open your mouth, the longer you keep your mouth shut, the more they will spray at you, so open it." So I opened my mouth properly, it may have taken half a minute, or something like that. Well, on we went. We got our camp uniform, our prisoners uniform, which was all striped cotton uniforms. Remember this was, by that time, we were in the middle of November, in a very cold winter, and I couldn't believe that this was going to, the kind of clothes I was going to wear in the camp. I, I, later on spoke to somebody, one of the Capos, and I said, "When are we going to get our winter uniform?" He said, "This is your winter uniform. You'd better wash yourself cold every morning, to toughen yourself up, because this is what you're going to wear." He said, "They have two sorts of uniforms. They have warm ones which the prisoners get in summer, and they have cotton uniforms, which the prisoners have to wear in winter." So our clothes, clothing, consisted of a shirt, a pair of short under, underpants, no vest, nothing, cotton trousers, a cotton jacket, and that was it, and the prisoners, one of these prisoners caps. So right, we, we were, I can't remember my block number, I think it was Block 16, where we were allocated. It was huts which were constructed to hold probably between 70 and 100 people, and there were about 250-300 people in each hut, so we were sleeping, partly on bunks, partly on the floor, on straw, so obviously, there was not much sleeping at night, because we were lying across each other. That night, when we arrived, the Viennese transport arrived, and they had even been dealt with even harsher than we were, they arrived with, I think with three dead, in, in the railway carriages, and one or two of them had gone, apparently gone, lost their mind and so on. So eventually, we settled down in the camp, to a routine. The routine consisted of getting up at 5 or half past 5 in the morning, getting washed, then collecting the breakfast food, which was some very thin soup, or something or other, which had to be collected in the cookhouse. After that, at 8, by 7 o'clock, all prisoners marched out of their, from their huts, up to the, to the roll call place, which was opposite the camp Commander's office. There we stood, usually an hour, before the camp Commander decided to come down and take the, take the roll call. Every person who was in the camp, every prisoner, had to go out there. If they were ill, they had to be dragged out, they had to be led out, they had to go out there, leaning on other people, shoulder, it didn't matter what, whether they had a temperature or not, we had people who collapsed and died on the roll call, and if, as it happened, very often, some of the SS men made the mistake in checking, in checking the number of the people who were lined up, therefore the roll call, they had to do it once or

twice over again, the longer, the more often they counted, the longer it took till the camp Commander came down to take the roll call. So, if one was lucky, by 8, half past eight, he came down, took the call, and marched off. They, in those days, they did not, had taken into, oh, I forgot to say that it was Dachau concentration camp we were taken to, because Dachau was only about 30 kilometres from where we lived, so I think there were something like, probably 20,000 Jews, prisoners arrived at Dachau concentration camp, between the 9th, or 10th November, and about 13th or 14th, so obviously there was nothing to do, except that one had to march up and down, and up and down, and up and down the camp streets, and then they were saying, "The Jews should sing while they're marching." They thought that would break our heart. So I would, we sang, we felt singing was one way of keeping up our morale, so we all sang very lustily, the next order was, "Jews to stop singing", because they realised it was building up our morale. So we were taken to, then we had to make physical exercises, to pass the time, which usually had to be done by a Capo, the man who was in charge of our camp hut, and usually some SS personnel was there supervising. Now, for us younger people at that time, I was coming on for 30 years of age, exercise meant nothing, I could do them, but it was a different story for people who were 50, and 60, and 70, because they had to do the same kind of exercises, and whenever somebody collapsed and broke down, you were not allowed to help them. It so happened one day, that my father collapsed next to me, during the exercises, and, of course, I lifted him up. The next thing, the SS man shouts at me, "Why are you lifting up that Jew?" I said, "He is my father." I suppose the man was decent enough, because he turned his back and walked away, because if he had stayed on, according to camp regulations, he would have had to report me as insubordinate behaviour, and that would have meant the bunker. So, I suppose the man was decent enough to say, "Well, it's his father." So he turned his back and walked away, he didn't want to see it. So, my father got over it. And these things happened, one of the things which we could organise, was the collection of, the collection of the food. The food, there was the breakfast, there was the lunch, and there was tea in the afternoon, or evening, rather. All meals were very very meagre, but it had to be collected from the cookhouse. The procedure in the cookhouse was as follows. There were three people had to go to collect two big urns of whatever food was being dished out, so one man walked on either side, carried, holding the handle of an urn, and the one in the middle held the handle of two urns, so you, one arrived at the cookhouse, and as one went in, there were always SS men standing behind the door, which kicked you in the back, so you went forward, and you took your, the three man team grabbed the two urns and walked out of the cookhouse on the other side, and then there were SS men standing at the other door, and kicked you in the back. Now, the dangerous thing was, if, by chance, with them kicking you, food would get spilt, they would withdraw the food, they said, "because it was", they would say it was done deliberately, food had been spilt, so your hut will not get any food for this particular meal. So you had to stand very firm not to spill, let any food get spilt. So, what we organised was that we younger ones took it upon ourselves to do all the food collecting, we didn't get any of the middle aged, or older people, to do that, because we knew they couldn't take it. Also, when we were marching through the camps, up and down, and up and down, we walked in a column of four or five, four or five men width of the column. We always arranged it that we younger ones walked on the outside, and we took the older people on the inside of the column, because if anybody, because it happened very often, one of the Nazi guards would walk past while we were marching up or down, would just kick somebody, he would hit somebody over the head, so we tried to protect the older people, by having them in the middle, because if anybody got it, it would be the person walking on the outside. So, well, this whole thing went on. My, of course, the people outside made applications for release from concentration camp, there were various methods of getting release, usually it, you had either to prove that you were going to emigrate, or something or other.

Now, by the time we had been in Dachau for some time, my mother had got in touch with my father's younger brother, who, I think I mentioned it before, was a, was a doctor in Frankfurt, and who emigrated already in 1933. He had, by that time, settled down in London, and it was through him, that my father, my mother and myself got permission from the Home, from the British Home Office, that we would be allowed into Great Britain. He had to guarantee that we, he would see to it that we would be no, no, wouldn't put the British Government to any expenses maintaining us, but let's come to that later. Now, my father and Fritz Ansbacher, they were released, I think, somewhere in the middle of December. Max Ansbacher, the youngest son of Fritz Ansbacher, who was also in, interned, or, who was also sent to Dachau concentration camp, he was released under the juvenile group, because he wasn't 16 yet. Or he was just 16, he was a Junior, and they were not supposed to have been arrested, so they were released. So, at that time, the people still left was my cousin, Wilhelm, who had been my business partner, and myself, so one day, both Wilhelm and I were called away, after the morning roll

call, this was the procedure when people were released from the concentration camp, that your name was read out after the morning roll call, and you were then called into one of the buildings.
end.

... building, in, they took us into their, their Gymnastics Room, which was a huge hall, probably the SS Guards used it for to do their physical exercises, we were in there, but one had to get undressed, and one was going to be inspected by an SS doctor, to make sure that nobody was released who showed any sign of maltreatment, because they knew if people came out, that eventually, when they emigrated, people would see that they had been maltreated and this would be used as evidence against Germany, so therefore, you didn't have a chance in hell to be released if you had any wound or anything that had been inflicted upon you in the Camp, so these doctors inspected the prisoners to be released, but that morning, the doctors who were supposed to do that, did not arrive till about 12 o'clock. So, from about half past eight, or 9 o'clock, after we had been called in, from the roll call, told to take our Camp clothing off, told to go through a shower, we stood in that huge Gymnastics room, split naked till about half past eleven, or 12 o'clock, till the doctors arrived. To make it even worse, the SS soldiers who were there, the SS Guards, had on their big warm uniforms, woollen uniforms, they wore heavy great coats, and they opened all the windows, as many windows as there were, in that hall, and we were in the middle of a winter, it must have been at least -10 or -15, because this was in the middle of a moor area, so we stood there for nothing less than three hours, split naked, and the SS Guards had, they even put their collar up so that their necks would be nice and warm, and we stood there, split naked. Well, eventually we were released, we managed to get a train home, and the morning after I came home, I went down with temperature, and very severe pain in my back, because the doctor, who found that I was suffering from a kidney inflammation, and I really was in agony for days, for weeks. He said to me that I might suffer from that kidney inflammation for the rest of my life, I would have to be very careful, but I'm pleased to say that it cleared up and I never had any trouble with it. But I was in bed for about three weeks, as soon as I came out, obviously, the next thing was, to be released, to be given a Emigration Permit from, in Nazi Germany, you had to pay a number of taxes to the Government, which everybody knew, there was a so-called Reichs "flucht steuer" (??) meaning the tax you pay because you're leaving Germany. Whatever you took with you, on furniture, or anything, you had to provide some kind, you had to provide invoices of what you had, what these things cost you when you bought them, and you had to pay the, the same amount of money over again to the German Government. After you had done all that, and you had paid the taxes, what tax there was to be paid from the business, and so on, you then went to Munich, to, there was a special office dealing with Emigration Permits, and you got then, you had to receive a document called the "Unbedenklich keitz achlarung" (??) meaning that there was no reason, taxwise, why an Emigration Permit should not be issued, so every, whenever you went there for your Permit, it took, it took weeks and weeks, you had to go back, and again, and back and again. One met so many Jewish people who were all there for the very same purpose, so eventually I got my permit, and I left Germany on Easter Monday, 1939, and flew to London. My uncle in London had managed to get me, to get a job for me, as a trainee waterproof cutter, in a clothing factory in Glasgow. I think I mentioned it, if not so, I mention it now, that after my uncle emigrated from Germany, he had to study for one more year in Great Britain, to make a British Medical Certificate, which he did in the Glasgow University, and through the year he lived in Glasgow, he had made a number of Jewish friends here, and one of them was prepared to take me into his factory, as a trainee waterproof cutter, he made raincoats and things like that. And this is how I managed to get a Permit to come to the UK, because if you had no Work Permit, if you had no workplace, you couldn't get an Immigration Permit, or, it was all a bit difficult, but right, I arrived in London, can't remember any more which airport it was, I think it was Croydon, Croydon airport.

Were you alone?

Yeh. My, our relatives collected me and I went to them, and then within a few days I had to go to the Woburn House, which, at that time, was a registration place for all Jewish refugees arriving in Great Britain, and I told them I was going to live in Glasgow, and they gave me the address of the Glasgow Office, where one could ask for assistance and help, and financial help and so on, but I'd made up my mind I wouldn't take a penny, neither did I take a penny, I asked for nothing, and I came to Glasgow, and they had got me digs, they had got digs for me with a Mrs. what was she called? With a Jewish family who lived in Alison Street. Well, my, my salary, which I was going to get as a trainee waterproof cutter, was going to be 30 shillings a week, I paid 28/6d. a week for my digs, which left me with 1/6d. for the rest of the week, to live on. Of course, with my digs I had my food. People were extremely nice, they were very helpful to me, very nice landlady, very considerate. But at 1/6d. you

couldn't do a hell of a lot, so I walked to my place of work every day, and walked back, it was about 35 minutes walk, was in Shorelands, the Firm was called Universal Covers, and the owner was a Mr. Joe Levi, where I worked. So one day, that lady where I lived said, "Martin, why do you walk there every day? Do you not have the money for the tram?" I said, "Oh yes, I would have the money for the tram, but I like walking." Because she said, "if you didn't have money for the tram I would charge you a shilling less a week, that you have money for the fare." I said, "No, no, you're 28/6d. but I like walking." So, as I say, I arrived there, and I stayed with them for a couple of months. My parents were due to arrive in Glasgow in July or August, but they didn't arrive until well into August. By that time, I was getting very desperate because the situation between Germany and Poland became more tense with every day, with every day, and I didn't know how much people in Germany knew about it. My father and mother stayed in a very nice hotel in Munich before they left, they were going to spend the last penny, because they couldn't take it out in any case, so I kept on sending them telegrams, that they should come, so eventually they did come, it was, I think, still three weeks before the War against Poland broke out, but I had been looking for a flat for us, in the Govan Hill area, Cross Hill area, and it wasn't easy, but eventually I managed to get the offer of a flat, that they would let it to me. I understood from Glasgow Jewish people that the factors, it was in those days, factors, who let the flats, for the property owners, factors, a lot of them, particular the one where I rented that flat, were not known to be very favourable towards Jewish tenants, but I was told afterwards, I got that flat because it was in such a terrible condition, that nobody else would take it, as I soon found out. I moved into the flat, about a week before my, a fortnight before my parents arrived, and every night, that flat was alive with cockroaches, with mice, with rats, anything that could move on the floor, must have been hidden in that flat, so I spent the next couple of week, putting down rat poison, mice poison, killing cockroaches, with, I would get up three, four times a night, with a, with some instrument in my hand, kill as many as I saw crawling across the floor, so, and put powder down, because I knew if my mother came and moved into a flat like that, she would be very very unhappy. So I managed to get rid of all the, what you call it "ung" " (??) that

Livestock!

Livestock! Right! And I also went and wallpapered two of the rooms, or three of the rooms, the kitchen and two of the rooms, I think, wallpapered at the weekends, before my parents arrived. I think I even made a reasonably good job. So, when my parents arrived, the flat wasn't too bad. They arrived, we, first I, and then my parents, both had a lift van, which was a big container where one could take out one's belongings, furniture, bedding, cutlery, crockery, and so on, so we had a reasonably well-furnished flat, once all that stuff had arrived. Well, right, I continued working there, in the Universal Covers. The War broke out in late August, or early September '39, and it was not until June 1940, after the military debacle in France, that the British Government interned, interned the Nazi Refugees. My father, as he had no job, was taken in first, together with a lot of older people, and he was taken to the Isle of Man. I was arrested with a lot of younger people, I was collected by the Police, with a lot of younger people, who were all in work, and I was, our group was not taken to the Isle of Man, we were first kept for three days, we were in the Mary Hill Police Station, then we were taken to the Donaldson School Camp in Edinburgh, which was a school for the deaf, which had, before the War, been a school for the deaf and dumb, from there we were taken to an Internment Camp in Argyll, which, before the War, had been a foresters camp, Glen Brenda Camp, (??) Glen Brenda Camp, yes, in Glen Brenda Camp, we must have stayed about two months. The scenery, of course, was beautiful, real Argyllshire's scenery, mountains, and then from there, later on, we were moved to another Scottish foresters camp, near Knott, Knott Hill Camp, (??) on, near Dunoon. By that time, while we were in that Camp, we, there was also there were letters going round, if anybody had any Emigration Papers with any Consul, they would have to say so. I was, I had, I stated that I had an Emigration waiting number to go to the United States, and so eventually, I was moved from Knott Hill Camp, to the Lingfield Race Course, which was also used as an internment camp, for those who were eventually going to America, because, with the bombing of London, the American Consul had moved his office, the Consulate, from London, to Derby, and Lingfield was very close to Derby, so if one had to go and see the Consul, it wasn't far to go. But I didn't want to go to America, I felt this was the War, the War was on against Hitler, and the Nazis, America were, at that time, not at War, and I felt my place was here, in this country, and to help us winning the War, so I decided not to make use of any possibility I would have to go to America. While I was in the Camp, I volunteered as an Air Raid Warden, and this Camp was bombed, the Camp wasn't bombed, but the Lingfield Race Course, on the one side was terracing, for the people who were watching races in peace time, on the other side there

was a little copse, a small piece of wood, and the Canadian Tank, Tank Battalion, Tank Regiment, I don't know where in that, in that wood with their tanks, so the Germans must have known it, so they were trying to bomb that Canadian Tank Unit, almost every night. They never hit us, and they never hit the Canadian Tank Regiment, but a lot of the bombs went, came down in the middle bit, in the middle of the race course, so we had a, what do you call it? Air Raid patrols? And I volunteered, because I felt I would rather be out and see what's happening, rather than sitting up on the terraces, and wait till something comes down through the roof. So it was quite an interesting time, especially as, during that time, we were near the, the Epsom Downs, and every day, above the Camp, we saw the Battle of Britain taking, took place, and we, we saw the German planes coming, and we saw the RAF flying, flying up and saw the dog fights, and we always applauded whenever we saw a German bomber or fighter coming down in flames, so it was a most interesting time really, to be an eye-witness to the Battle of Britain. Well, a good few of my present friends in Glasgow are all people I got to know in the internment camp, there was Rudi Leyden (??), there was old Mr. Gotsch (??), there was Mr. Gumbrich (??), there was a fellow, Lander, Lander Alarms, I can't remember all the names of, and there was Rudi Brass (??), there was Robert Friedlander (??), there was his brother, well, there was everybody. And it was really a most interesting time. I mean, we had people there from every walk of life. We had University professors, we had lecturers, and you could go to lectures every, every day, morning, noon and night, it was like being on a University Campus, I mean, one really could enlarge one's knowledge. I mean, we were never bored. The thing was, one, it was difficult to get news from home, because all letters, all correspondence between the outside world and the internees, went on Red Cross messages, and all the mail had to go through the centre of Liverpool, and Liverpool was being bombed every night, and the centre at Liverpool had to move from one office to the other, so sometimes we would get mail which was three and four weeks old, which was a bit disconcerting, but didn't know because you heard Glasgow was being bombed as well. They couldn't say much. They said, "We're all right. All right", and there wasn't much, well, my mother could tell me she wasn't doing an awful lot. My father was away, she would say, "Well, I've had a letter from Dad and he's all right." And Dad would get a letter saying "Martin is all right." So, eventually, I was released from internment, I think, in October, in October 1940, as a young man, because I volunteered to go for war work, that was one of the, everybody tried to get out under the different, for a different reason. I would like to say here and now, that I do not, in any way, blame the British Government for interning us. Right enough, we were refugees from Nazi oppression, but we were also frightened people. At that time, after that, what happened in France and at Dunkerque, the British soldiers came home, they came home without weapons, Britain faced an enemy who was armed to the teeth, they could, in a way, expect an invasion any day, and I know from myself, if I had been in Glasgow, and I had been told, or heard that a German, German troops had landed anywhere on the Scottish coast, I would have packed a bag, and left and went up to the Highlands, and so would my parents have done, of course. And it takes only two or three people in one street to panic, and the whole street panics, and we refugees, with our experience of Nazi Concentration Camps, we would have run to the other side of the country to get away from the Invasion area, as far as possible. That would have caused panic amongst the civilian population, it would have obstructed the roads, at a time when the British Army would have needed the roads to move troops and material from one side to the other. Also, I would say that we, there were probably between 50 and 60,000 German, Czech and Polish refugees in Great Britain. It would not have been beyond Hitler's ingenuity, to plant amongst those people, a number of spies, under the guise of being a refugee, and even if they had only found 10 amongst us, it was worthwhile interning us all, because all we wanted, and were after, was that Great Britain should not collapse under the Nazi onslaught, but that Great Britain should win the War against Hitler, and whatever sacrifices we refugees had to make, in the process, were of no importance whatsoever, to, to the progress of history, and to the fate of what the world would have experienced if Hitler had crossed the Channel. Right. I came back from internment, my father came back from internment a couple of months later. I took on a different, by that time, I wasn't confined with my job, with jobs any more, I could move from one job to the other, I took no a similar job as I had done in the Universal Covers, with a non-Jewish firm in Mary Hill, McLellands, and I worked there for a while, and then the Government came out with their Government Training Scheme, training people to be engineers, engine fitters, and so on, and a friend of mine, Addy Bester (??), who later on emigrated, with his family, to New Zealand, he and I went together to the Government Training Centre at Thornley Bank, and were trained there as engine fitters.

(END OF TAPE THREE - SIDE TWO)

I went to a Government Training Centre, I enjoyed it very much, I always had an engineering bent, and it was great. My, my technical drawings were so good there, that our Technical Instructor showed them round the whole of the, of the, of the shift, showing them how nicely technical drawings can be done. So we were there for about six or eight months, the course lasted six or eight months, but we found difficulties in getting a job, because obviously, all factories were on War work, and taking in somebody who was a German refugee didn't appeal to everybody who was in War work, I remember that Adolf Bester and I once went to a factory, who was making, in Glasgow, who were making tanks, Scotland, I've forgotten their name. And we would have been dead keen in building tanks to shoot at the Nazis, but the man said, "No, I'm sorry, I don't know whether I would get away with it. But I don't want any Germans." I could, I could understand it, so would, so would we perhaps have been. Eventually, my friend, Adolf Bester, got a job in, in King Aircraft in Hillingdon as a mechanic, instrument mechanic. In fact, he moved up later on, to be their Factory Inspector there, and I went, eventually managed to get a job in Newton (MAIRNS ??) in a firm, ABCO Motor Mowers. This was a firm who built motor mowers during the War, not, well, motor mowers in peacetime, who had, who had Branch service, service units, all over the country. They had about 10 or 12 Branches all over Scotland, all over the UK, they had one in Glasgow which was the Scottish one, and after the outbreak of war, the Ministry of Supply had taken on this Firm and they were then working as a Nazi, as Army Auxiliary Workshops, repairing Army motorcycles. I, I got there, the boss was an extremely nice man, a Mr. sorry, maybe I get the name later on, he was extremely nice, he said to me, "Well, Martin, you're a German refugee, never mind, but I'm sure you're all right." So, at that time, in 1941, the supply of spare parts for Army motorcycles was still not all that well organised, and my first job in there was dismantling motorcycles into different parts, keep all the parts which were good and usable as a second-hand store, and supplying them upstairs for the motorcylces which were repaired. They realised, from my commercial experience, and my technical experience, that I could do better than being downstairs in that little dump. So they took me upstairs and made, and they put me in charge of the spare parts, Spare Parts Department, and I was the link man between our resident Ministry of Supply Workshop Officer, and the Firm. We would plan, between us, we would get motorcycles in from Army units which needed repair, and I would have a note of which machines, which make was in, I would have to get ready, see that the necessary spare parts for that particular make, were coming in, assessing what I assumed might be required, and during all that time, a lot of our motorcycles, which we repaired, some of them went back to their own Units, others went straight to convoys which were going overseas. I know we repaired all the motorcycles in the, which, which were used in the Invasion of North Africa, in the so-called armoured, armoured mail division, their camp, their Regimental sign was a mailed fist, that we did all the motorcycles for that Unit. So, while I was there till the end of the War, something like, probably 3,000 motorcycles went through our hands, and we never missed a convoy. In fact, that resident Minister of Supply Workshop Officer, was one of the people who signed my Naturalisation Application after, at the end of the War. So, right, I got on extremely well with my Scottish colleagues who were the mechanics, and so on, and during all the time, when there was German bombing of Glasgow, or the Clyde, nobody ever came and said, "That was your friends who were over here last night." They were very very fair and I must speak in the highest terms of them. So, by the end of the War, the Firm, ABCO Motor Mowers, relinquished their Army contract. I would have liked to stay with them after the War, and go into engineering, go into their Head Office in Birmingham, I would, as I said, I would liked to have gone down to their Birmingham Office, as, to be the Head, in charge of the Head Stores, but they told me I couldn't, they couldn't do it because (a) returning soldiers would be entitled to get their jobs back, secondly, they said, "Martin, you're not a time trained, served or trained engineer, we would have trouble with the Trade Unions." But they made a very fair agreement with me, they said, "Martin, we know that you want to leave, you know our situation. You can stay, if you'll stay with us, till we have wound up our contract with the Ministry of Supply," because if a mistake had been made, it would have cost them a lot of money, they would have had to pay for the spares. "If you'll stay with us till the Ministry of Supply contract is finished, we keep you on until you have found something which you want to do." So, this we arranged, and this, they were very fair about it, and eventually I took on Agencies, but now I come to my wife. Pat, whom I mentioned, I got to know during the time when I used to go to Augsburg to play in the Jewish Football team. She came to this country in 1939, in May or June, as well, and had a household job in Bradford, and we were really just good friends, not sweethearts, and in all the years while she was in Bradford, and I was in Glasgow, we would be very regular in contact

with each other, telling each other about our boyfriends, girlfriends, and so on, and so we really were (DOORBELL INTERRUPTION HERE) and we had been very good friends, and once or twice we met, before then, after then, then we decided, "Why shouldn't we get engaged?" And so we got engaged, and in July 1946 we got married. So afterwards, well, there isn't an awful lot to report, I started Agencies, which at first didn't work all that well, but one works oneself up, we had a pretty hard, tough time, to begin with, and, but eventually things improved, and various Agencies, as I got more experience of the road, I got better Agencies, and then our first son, Stephen, was born in 1948, and Howard, our younger one, was born in 1951. And this is, this is about where we are.

And what happened to your relatives, and Pat's relatives?

Pat's parents were, died in, in, in Concentration Camp, but which one they died, they died in Auschwitz. My parents, as I said, came over here, my mother died in 1948, or '4, in, I think, October '48, and my father died in 1955.

(END OF TAPE FOUR - SIDE ONE)

END OF INTERVIEW