

A follow up to my memoirs # 1

A SLICE OUT OF MY LIFE.

I was born on June 12th 1921 in Munich Germany.

Growing up in Munich during the 1920s and early 1930s provided me with a very good and culturally rich life.

This city is the capital of the state of Bavaria and is also called the city of the 'ARTS', because there were more museums, art galleries, the opera house, many concert halls and traveling exhibits per capita in that city than in any other city in Germany.

At the time when I lived in Munich this city had 650,000 inhabitants, a very good library system and an excellent public transportation network of streetcars and later on buses covering the whole city, which was a quick efficient and inexpensive way to get around town.

Although we walked most everywhere, but in inclement weather especially during the long and harsh winter months, or if in a hurry public transportation was the best way to go. Munich is about 60 miles north of the Bavarian Alps and as one travels southward, the topography becomes increasingly hillier offering a constantly changing picture.

On rare but especially clear days, when standing on my grandparent's balcony, who lived on the top floor of a 4 storied apartment house, one could sometimes see snow covered mountain tops shimmer in the distance.

Although I always had many friends, I often enjoyed being by myself and visit a museum, art gallery or some other exhibit on Sunday morning's after I finished my Hebrew school (Talmud Thora) lessons. The reason I went on Sundays, most of these places offered free admission which I took advantage of as often as I could.

The 'Alte Pynacothek' which was one of the major art museums, became my favorite and unobtrusively I often attached myself to a guided tour learning much about art and specific artists. Before long, Paul Rubens became one of my favorite painters, because the huge size of some of his paintings, the action, the people and their facial expressions, the realism held me spellbound. One of the more outstanding of his painting was the 'last judgement' which covered a whole large wall, and was truly awe inspiring and captivating.

I repeatedly sat in front of it and spent much time there in admiration.

It was mostly from early fall through the late spring that I visited these museums or exhibits because during summer, when the weather was good, families and friends gathered for a

day's outing in one of the many forests which surrounded the city.

Most of these museums and exhibitions were concentrated in the north- central part of town on Maximilian Street the 'fifth Avenue' of Munich, (no stores however) which was considered the up- scale part of town.

This street was a very wide tree lined avenue with majestic private villas, some foreign embassies, many five star hotels, restaurants, theaters as well as the opera house.

I was employed by a corporation in the U.S. which had a plant in Munich and after the war about 1950 I was sent there on a troubleshooting trip and while there went to see an opera. As I entered the theater I was amazed how familiar the interior still was to me and was pleased to see that it had not been destroyed during the war.

I had not been in this theater since 1936 and mentioned this fact to an usher, who told me that this place was completely destroyed during an air raid but was painstakingly rebuilt using as much of the old material as was possible. Amazing!

In my first memoirs I wrote about an incident in which I had a close encounter with Adolf Hitler in his huge open Mercedes Benz automobile, which happened on Maximilian Street where his Munich headquarter was located.

It was on one of his many trips to Munich when Hitler noticed a very prominent Gothic style cathedral like building, which was the over 100 year old liberal (reformed) Synagogue. In response to his inquiry as to what this building was, he was informed that it was a synagogue. "Remove this Schandfleck (spot of disgrace)" he ordered which was carried out as I describe it in detail in my first memoirs.

As I said before on Sunday's during the summer we usually spent the day at the Autari Forest (named after a famed landowner and philanthropist) for family outings. Carrying bundles of food, blankets, and garden chairs we walked to the woods, which took about a one hour.

There was a stretch of road about 1/4 of a mile long unpaved and unshaded just before we reached the woods. This stretch which was extremely hot, my sister and I named the 'Klageweg' (wailing road)

Picnicking was always lot's of fun going from family to family and accept some of their specialities as they came to us for ours. Good fun.

On Maximilian street about 200 yards from Hitler's headquarters (hotel four seasons) was the corner of Herzog Rudolf street.

On this street were the four year private Jewish school which I had attended, next to it was a Jewish youth house and next to that stood the large German/Jewish orthodox Synagogue. It was on this short stretch of road, which had a strong Jewish presence and character and where I spent much of my free time especially after the 1938 Crystal night.

This youth house was a tall three storied building where we gathered for all kinds of activities such as ping pong playing, group meetings, sing along's or just general socializing Saturday afternoons was also the time when most Zionist youth groups held their meetings learning about Palestine and singing new Hebrew songs coming from there.

It became a very popular gathering place for adults especially as the situation for Jews worsened, and people came and looked for information on emigration or learn about other constantly new and always worsening developments.

It was also in this Youth house I had been given an office later on after I became actively involved with the Palamt (Palestine Office) in Berlin, informing and advising parents and children how to become eligible for 'Aliyah Bet' (illegal immigration into Palestine)

This Aliyah Bet came into being to counteract the British 'white paper' which had closed the borders of Palestine and halted all further Jewish legal immigration.

When leaving Herzog Rudolf Street and turning right onto Maximilian Street, which was only a very short distance from that corner, there was a very large and up scale antique store which had in their completely bare store front window a simple display.

There were four skeletons of human heads under each of them was a sign which read

WHO KING -WHO EMPEROR- WHO BEGGAR -WHO GENIUS

It always fascinated me and once I grasped it's meaning I stopped there often to reflect especially as our situation became more frightening and hazardous.

Of all the many museums I visited, the museum of natural history located on the banks of the river Isar was my favorite.

It was much closer to my home, and although one had to pay admission even on Sunday's I went there whenever I had saved enough money from either a birthday, or from some errands or chores I may have done for people.

The most fascinating exhibit in this museum was a very realistic model of a coal mine.

One had to enter this mine by sliding down a chute sitting on a little mat as if to enter a real coal mine and walk through a number of tunnels passing life size figures of minors simulating chopping coal from the rocks.

For my 9th or 10 th birthday, my aunt Frieda, bought me a one year unlimited pre paid

admission card which I used to the fullest

In the early 1930s they built a huge technical library adjacent to the museum which was filled with all kinds of scientific books, materials and outstanding exhibits and the best of all was one admission covered both buildings.

A few years ago a Florida neighbor went on a vacation trip to Munich and asked me for some points of interest.

Among the places I suggested to him was this museum and he too was extremely impressed when he returned and discussed it with me

After 1933 they added another prominent display in that library. They mounted a huge flowchart near the entrance, which showed the many products that could be made from coal including some food additives.

After the end of the first world war Germany lost her colonies and the raw materials they had stored were very quickly exhausted.

Very soon after 1933 it became obvious to world governments that Nazi Germany was rearming, but the post war exhaustion of the western democracies and their desire to rebuild a strong economy and a peaceful world overruled logic and reality.

What they did impose on Germany however was an embargo on any raw materials which could aid their rearming efforts.

Because of that Germany had to find other sources for raw materials or alternate materials, which may not have been as good or safe but would help them in their effort to continue their rearmament programs,

This shortage of raw materials caused the explosion of the Zeppelin in New Jersey because unable to buy Helium they used Hydrogen an extremely flammable substance hence this explosion and the following tragic loss of human lives.

While it is understandable that the western Democracies were tired of war, this ill advised decision not to intervene in Germany right from the start cost the world dearly in lives and materials as in less than 20 years after the end of world war one, the second world war started on September 3 / 1939

German research institutes were hard at work to develop different products from coal, using their huge coal deposits from the RUHR and SAAR

One of the first things I remember they instituted was one could no longer buy freshly baked bread only day old was allowed nor was pure butter any longer available it has some additives (people said it was from coal but I am not sure) the idea behind those restrictions

was to reduce consumption.

Bavaria, like most of southern Germany, is a breathtakingly beautiful country, lakes, forests, picturesque rivers and of course mountains and the Alps which dominate the surrounding landscape.

Munich was also the beer 'capital' of Germany and breweries dotted the city emitting a very distinct but not unpleasant aroma. Therefore when traveling outside of the city of Munich, Hops a major ingredient in brewing beer, was growing all around the area.. As far back as I can remember, my father always owned a car many years before other people did, which made me the envy of my friends.

His business required him to travel both in the city as well as to outlying smaller towns and villages all over Bavaria and beyond and many times into Switzerland.

He undertook these longer trips twice a year and was absent from home sometimes 3 to 4 weeks..

He sold stationary, office supplies and greeting cards and the samples he had to carry to show his customers were very bulky and heavy, so a car was a real necessity.

Unlike in the United States at that time in Europe cars were a real luxury and very expensive, nor was there a great need for them, good public transportation I am sure had a lot to do with it but also the cost.

Because we had a car our father occasionally treated us to a surprise day trip, 'die Reise in's Blaue' meaning 'the ride into the blue' he called it., which I believe it indicated a trip into the blue skies and country mostly a surprise trip. (Some idioms are hard to translate)

Bavaria has literally thousands of lakes many of them are nestled very high up in cavernous craters, left over from ancient melting glaciers or volcanic eruptions. The water in these lakes was extremely cold and not suitable for swimming not even in the height of Summer. One particular trip which remains vividly in my memory was called 'Schliersee' It was a long drive right into the high Alps and is a very large lake surrounded by the 'Watzman' mountain chain.

Schliersee is one of the more majestic lakes and a favorite tourist attraction, offering boat rides with which they criss- crossed this lake and explore hidden caves.

We boarded on of these boats holding about 30 people and after riding along the edges and into some caves, we moved towards the center of the lake.

When we got close to the center, the tour guide went into the middle of the boat stood up and discharged a rifle aiming it at one of the mountains.

It must have been a special gun no bullets, but the explosion was extremely loud and the subsequent Echo bouncing back and forth from one side of the mountains to the opposite side seemed to be lasting forever. Most awe inspiring.

We took many different trips but always as a family throughout Bavaria and beyond. On rare occasions when my father went for only one week he took my mother along for a well deserved rest and vacation. By that time my sister and I were old enough to take care of ourselves and routine things in the house.

When on occasions he had to take a one day trip out of town and I was off from school he always took me along with him.

I suppose I was company for him but although my father was not a big talker his invitation to accompany him was always very exciting for me as I enjoyed traveling with him and seeing new places and things. Quite often we would stop at an inn for a light lunch which made me feel real grown up to be with him. Or we might stop at a farm for a freshly milked glass of milk and spent a little time looking at the farm animals it was a good time but Oh So Short!

Every once in a while the whole family drove to Stuttgart a city about 175 miles from Munich to visit my father's family. This was usually over a long weekend to make this at that time very long trip, worth while.

Because these trips to Stuttgart were so very seldom one of my aunt's or uncles would come along as they knew the people and wanted to visit with them as well.

The terrain is very hilly and the little Opel car we had was not powerful enough to carry 5 adults, which inevitably almost always caused a breakdown.

Being stranded like that decades before cell phones would be invented, we waited until a kind soul would stop and take my father to the next gas station. Waiting for the tow truck and than stand round until the problem was fixed put quite a damper on the trip.

Although more than once the mechanic would say" you are overloaded" did not seem to make any impression on my parents continued this practice.

Once we arrived in Stuttgart there was aunt Jenny, my cousin Ruth, (we called her Rutlie) uncle Daniel and later on aunt Anna and her husband Albert moved to Stuttgart as well.

In addition we met several extended members of my father side of the family called Neuman and Ohrwaschel always had lot's of fun to be with them.

While in Stuttgart, once or twice my father took us to show us some of the out of the way places where he spent part of his childhood.

Another feature in Munich were the many beer gardens located all over the city.

These famous beer gardens opened only from early May to end of September and were always filled with people especially in the evenings.

Mothers filled picnic baskets with cold suppers which everyone took a turn carrying and families went inside the beer gardens, where tables and chairs were set up all over and we always made a bee line to find a table under the shades of the many trees.

Walking around these gardens were the famous women waitresses carrying many large steins filled with beer bringing them from table to table were everyone eagerly waited to buy and drink this delicious cold fluid.

It seemed to me that those women were hired for their large bust size, as they often used them to rest some of those heavy steins as they walked around.

It was a lot of fun for us kids as we always found a place to play and invented many new games to keep us busy.

We usually sat there until dark and then went home after it had cooled quite a lot.

There was no such thing as air conditioning during those years so it was a great way to escape the sometime hot summer evenings.

Although when I say hot it does not in any way compare to the hot and humid weather in New York or other hot states in this country because Munich is 1600 feet above sea level so they seldom have really hot weather.

We did however have a warm moist wind during the month of February called 'Foen' which came from the snow covered mountain tops as the air temporarily warmed.

I said as the air warmed temporarily because we had still lot's of cold weather and snow well into May

Many people complained of headaches and mental depressions and blamed it on this 'Foen' but I think that was mostly imagination.

In all of my childhood memories I remember only one time that our family went on an extended vacation. We spent a bout four or five days on a farm (Eberspoint) where we went every morning to get a glass of still warm milk from the milking station, there was a lake nearby and I still remember my father sitting in the water and holding me on his lap. From what I was told I was about four years old but it stayed with me all this time. May be it is because my father never to my recollection went into the water for a swim He also often teased my mother who claimed to be a good swimmer as having one foot on the ground.. Marital spats!

When I was very young I had a terrible fear of face masks; to this day I feel a little funny even when looking at children wearing them but as a child they frightened me terribly. Bavaria is a predominantly Catholic country where Christmas is celebrated involving numerous public rituals.

During the days preceding Christmas, religious processions were winding through the streets which were followed a few days later by the St. Nicholas days

During the St. Nicholas period, which lasted 3 days, some adults dressed as St. Nicholas covered in a white sheets wearing the high bishop's hat and face mask carried a big white sack over their shoulders and often holding an open lit candle as he / she entered a building (these people visited only friend's or neighbor's homes) St. Nicholas was often accompanied by "Ruprecht" his servant, dressed in drab dark clothes wearing a sinister face mask and an empty dirty sack over his shoulder as well as a large whisk broom..

The idea behind this custom was to visit children and check if they had been good during the year and should receive Christmas presents. The purpose of Ruprecht was to take the 'bad' child and put them in his sack and take them away. Of course this never happened but that was the tradition and a at that time a typical German way to teach children's good and proper behavior.

The whole purpose of St. Nicholas is similar to Santa Claus except he only brought fruits, nuts and cookies, the real gifts were placed under the tree and ostensibly brought by the Christ child

Our Neighbor upstairs Mrs. Lehrbach,, a tall women often acted as St. Nicholas to my sister and me, she presented quite an overpowering figure and always scared the living daylights out of me. Not knowing who it was she had changed her voice and gave me the third degree but always ended up giving us the traditional fruit nuts and cookies

Days before this event took place I started to fret over it but told no one how I felt, I guess I must have been ashamed to admit this silliness..

There is another episode connected with that which I seem to kind of remember but probably mostly because it was repeatedly told to me.

My uncle Karl who was 10 years older than I and a couple of his friends came to our house around that time to act as St .Nicholaus for me.

They came into our home wearing the traditional white sheet and face mask. I must have been very little may be three or less as I still sat on the Pottie.

As soon as I saw them I started to scream and they dropped whatever they were carrying and ran away probably more frightened than I if that is possible.

Christmas eve was the time Europe celebrated this holiday and distributed gifts.

We always spent it with the Lehrbasch's, where the woman kept us waiting in the kitchen until she rang a little bell which was the sign the Christ child had been and left.

We went into the next room to see a fully decorated and candle lit Christmas tree with all the presents for their family. She usually put a little something under the tree for my sister and me. As we stood around the tree we all sang 'Holy Night' together.

Although not being of that faith I still found it very festive.

Of course Chanukah which falls around the same time was celebrated in our house with Frieda, the Lehrbach's daughter always present and included in the singing, Dreidel playing and also received a gift like my sister and I.

I remember a very exciting event when I was about six or seven years old, which took place in our neighborhood and especially in our home.

Lighting homes and streets during evening and night hours was by means of gas .. I clearly recall every evening a man carrying a long pole. With a burning flame on the tip of it lighting all the street lights which were fed by gas.

Coming into the home in the dark one of my parents struck a match and went to a ceiling light fixture pulled a small chain to open the gas valve which when ignited lit a ceramic thimble like cylinder which started to glow emanating light.

This ceramic piece was called a sock (stmupf) and looked like a large thimble. It was made of white ceramic and had tiny holes like a sieve all around. As the gas flowed into it the cylinder once lit started to glow and the higher the gas flow the brighter the light.

Although this contraption gave off light it was not anywhere near as bright as the electrical light bulb. .It worked the same way as when one would open or close the

vertical blinds in the house; pulling the left chain slowed the gas flow making the light lower; pulling to the right increased the gas flow making it lighter pulling the chain all the way to the left shut the gas and the light went out but very slowly as this ceramic cylinder slowly cooled. Every once in a while one of these ceramic cylinders started to wear out and blew holes into the side and we saw a small gas flame come out and quickly shut the gas. With the help of a light from another source the cylinder had to be replaced somewhat like to days light bulbs but very gently and carefully as these ceramic cylinders were very brittle and easily broken and quite costly. My father was the one who usually replaced them and if he was out of town either my mother or our janitor came and did it for us.

You can imagine my excitement when one day a group men came and started to brake a hole into our home through the outside wall they mounted porcelain electric insulators on our outside wall and pulled wires throughout our apartment. They put the wires inside metal tubes and fixed them onto the ceiling bringing one tube down a wall in each room and mounted a large dark brown switch made of some kind of plastic at the end of it. Grumbling all the time my mother went from room to room to clean up the constant mess made by the workmen.

When they had finished and left we were told that we would be notified when electricity would be connected. It took only a few days when word came that the power was on and as we turned the switch we had light as bright as we never had in our house before.

Talking about lights when riding a bicycle in the dark it was mandatory to have a light mounted on it. The lamps used were quite large and to make them light up we put a few small stones we called carbid into it and lit them with a match. When no longer in use one just snuffed the light out as we do with candles to this day.

We heated our house with a large flat top stove t on which all the cooking was done and some additional piping around it acted as heaters. This stove burned coal which we put into it by using a metal rod with a hook on the end something like to days fire place pokers. Depending on the size of the stove they had two three or four large holes in the top plate which were closed by putting a number of interlocking steel rings over them and thus closing the openings making a perfectly flat surface. The purpose of these holes was to put coal into the stove and also to clean the ashes after the fire was out. On the left side of this stove was upright piece mounted on it which had little warming niches to give additional heat to the room. There was such a stove in every room only in the living

rooms and bedrooms they were covered with colorful tiles to make them look attractive. Under the stove was an opening similar to the kneehole opening in desks where we kept wood and a bucket with coal

We also had a small gas burner which was also used used for cooking or to heat the 'teakettle' but winter time most all the cooking was done on the stove

Let me tell you a little about my mother and her cooking, her baking and the way she raised us and was always there for us.

As all mother's are to their children, mine was to me; she too was the best cook and baker but had a special talent for making Pirogies acclaimed by all in the family, a fame she carried with her even to the United States and kept it among family and friends.

Every Friday night we had our traditional Shabbat meal replete with the mandatory 'gefilte Fish', Chicken soup, potato salad and additional complements and deserts.. Home made Challa bread and cakes were always present and even much more so during the holy days.

We had a large live in kitchen where when my sister and I were small had a separately made small table and two benches where we eat our meals while our parents sat at an adjacent regular table Very often our non Jewish upstairs neighbor's only child Frieda who was a bad eater was sent down to us by her mother in the hope she would eat better with us, which seemed to work pretty well.

As a matter of fact this Frieda was as good in reciting the blessing before eating and when I forgot to say mine, she would tell my mother on me saying "he did not make his Motzeh" Reminds me of something which happened to my sister.

We had a lot of children on our street but it seemed that our courtyard was the most popular and many children came and played with us in our yard although living in another building. Some of these children came from very poor families but it made no difference to us and we all played together in our court yard.

It was on a Saturday my sister brought up a little girl to play with in our house. As was customary on Shabat there was always a cake on our table, which the girl must have been eyeing for a while. Looking at this cake this girl suddenly said to my sister "Ruth ask me if I would like a piece of cake?"

My sister must have thought it may be another game, unsuspectingly did ask her if she wanted a piece of cake, quick like lightning the answer came with a firm YES and she got a piece of cake. This story went around our house for years

I recently saw the operetta “die Fledermaus’ (the bat) by Johann Strauss a farce ,but most entertaining and musically enjoyable, which brought an incident back to mind when I was about 10 or 11 years old.

It was Xmas time and as was the tradition in Munich many theaters showed Xmas plays mostly fairy tales like ‘Snowwhite’ or ‘Hansel and Gretel’ etc.

Not very far from where I lived was a theater which specialized in operettas but advertised one of those fairy tail plays. Getting permission and of course the money from my mother to go one afternoon I was also able to convince a couple of my friends to join me. I was the only one who had opera glasses so I agreed to share them with the others..

Now that I look back I really did not know it but when the curtain opened it was the merry widow and not a Xmas play. As I had thought.

Amazed but not unhappy we watched this very pleasant performance. When I got home I did not say a word as I was concerned that I would get reprimanded for not being truthful as my mother would have never let me go to see that play. It is quite a grown up story and showed many females in evening gowns or sometimes some scantily dressed. How it came about I do not remember may be a tune from this operetta was playing, but as we were having our dinner I blurted out “Oh Those Women” “what are you talking about” I was asked. When I told them my story and since some time had passed both my parents especially my father laughed and that ended it except my father told everyone willing to listen about this episode. One should remember that at that time things were so much stricter than they are to day.

A great Bavarian specialty during the fall and winter months was the Sunday ‘ roasted goose’ eaten with potato dumplings and red cabbage.

These potato dumplings consisted of one half boiled potatoes and one half of raw ones, grated which after grating had to be squeezed dry in a cloth and mixed together making it a thick paste. They were boiled for about 20 minutes and became a delicious tasting substance when soaked in gravy. On an occasional Sunday morning after Hebrew school I went to my grandparent’s house because all the aunts and unmarried uncles were home and I enjoyed watching the hectic pace and active conversations.

I now readily admit that I often went there hoping to find a goose roasting in the oven and I knew that they would coax me to grate potatoes for them which meant an unexpected meal was in the offing .

We always played a little game before I started to grate, mostly it was aunt Laura who would ask me to grate them, to which I always responded with a firm NO hoping that this would not be the end of the discussion, which it never was.

Now they started to urge me and as always it ended with the invitation to eat with them which clinched the deal.

Aunt Laura who was a beautiful woman and also had a magnificent voice, was always ready with little limericks or labels for people, would say to me “your mouth says no but your eyes say yes”, which with lot’s of laughter started me grating and mixing the whole lot together..

Many years later in America this aunt Laura found a name for her sister Frieda, husband Gus, his identical twin brother Al and his wife Mary, “the four Frieda’s” They were always together and even lived in adjacent apartments, this name now used by all of us stuck to them to the end.

Spring and summer always produced different kinds of foods.

First it was the spring soup and than later in early summer the cherry soup or mixed fruit soup or the sweet blueberry Pirogies or the gnoccie like dough noodles with sugar and poppy seed or cinnamon and of course the Plum ‘Thingies’ as Naomi named them, our mother always invented something new

All those little treats made eating at home (restaurants did not exist for us) fun as it offered a good variety. Except when my father was out of town traveling, mealtime was the time when the whole family was together discussing various subjects or the day’s events and experiences.

As early as the fall of 1932 Jews started to have difficulties getting jobs or doing business with non Jews. As a matter of fact slowly but continually Jews were sacked from their employment often without reason and sometimes even without receiving the legal termination and accrued vacation pay.

My father was a traveling salesman and dealt almost entirely with non Jewish retail shops. Although he had established a large following of customers, slowly these storekeepers became more reluctant and afraid to deal with Jews in fear of being denounced and reported to the Nazi party, his ability to earn money was therefore drastically reduced and made extremely difficult.

My father was the first born son to Ruben and Frieda Grajevski and was born in 1894 in the city of Berlin, Germany.

His parents had immigrated to Germany from Warsaw, Poland just a few years earlier and selected Berlin the capital of Germany as their residence.

My grandfather whom I never knew, earned his living selling hand made cigarettes, which must have been a very difficult existence as they frequently needed to move to different cities around the country most probably in search of better opportunities.

After a short stay in the city of Worms (Rashi's place of birth and study), they moved to Dresden and from there to Munich until finally settling in Stuttgart.

They had a total of 7 children 3 boys and 4 girls.

The first 4 children were all born in different cities, only the last 3 were born in Stuttgart, the city where Ruben and Frieda spent most of their time in Germany and both he and his wife ended their lives.

Being the eldest, my father was drawn into his father's business activities at a very early age. After school although only nine or ten years old his father trusted him with collecting money from various customers which were mostly small neighborhood restaurants or taverns, because during that time cigarettes were not packaged as they are to day and people bought them singly in one's or two's mostly from Taverns restaurants or beer halls.

My grandfather bought different types of tobacco always bundled in large bales , which he mixed hoping to achieve better tasting and milder mixtures.

Apparently not being aware of the dangers of smoking, he used my father as a taster. In the morning before breakfast he gave him a new cigarette to smoke so he could judge the mildness of his newly mixed tobacco.

Because of this practice my father became addicted to nicotine and as much as he tried, throughout his life he was never able to control his craving for cigarettes,. No one knew then how powerful tobacco addiction is on some people and because of this heavy smoking he developed emphysema later in life.

Reminds me of another incident my father told me when he was only about ten or eleven years old. All his life, my father loved animals and as I grew up we were never without one or two birdcages holding singing canaries as his pets.

I noticed once that my father's thumb was al little out of place and when I asked him he told me the following story.

Even as a child my father always had some kind of pet at home and this time it was a small salamander which had apparently escaped from his cage and as the two of them

were frantically looking for it my grandfather said to his son if this thing got into the tobacco you will get it but good. He was of course afraid that if this thing was dead inside the tobacco it would affect the tobacco quality and he would have to throw it out and lose money he could ill afford.

Unafraid my father said "if you hit me I go to a policeman" furious as his father was already because of the possible loss he had an umbrella in his hand and wacked his son. Protecting himself he raised his arm and the umbrella hit his thumb. "Now go and see a policeman". They found this salamander a little later under the bed so all ended well. My grandfather had of course been equally addicted and died in his early 40s of lung cancer, his wife's death had preceded his by almost 10 years

After my grandmother died in Stuttgart, my father the oldest was only 11 years old and the youngest son Joseph, was one year

His father hired a housekeeper, whom I still met once on a visit to Stuttgart, but it was too much for the housekeeper to care for 7 children so the three youngest Anna, Daniel and Joseph were sent to a Jewish orphanage in the town of Esslingen only a short distance from Stuttgart.

Prior to their final move to Stuttgart the family lived in Munich for a few years, where my father went to school. His sister Lena was also born in Munich and lived there all the time until her emigration to Buenos Aires Argentina in 1937.

Interestingly, she Lena worked for many years in a cigarette factory possibly through a connection of her father however she never smoked and stopped working after she married Herman Lichtin a successful business man.

They had one son Rudi and the three of them managed to escape to Argentina in 1937 Relating a little story our parents told us during the time my father was living in Munich and he and my mother became fast friends as they were schoolmates.

As our mother told us which I think is very cute, they were both about 9 or 10 years old and she thought that he was a little bit more of a special friend to her than to all the other girls. It was a time when large glass marbles with fancy inside designs were new and my father had gotten an extra large colorful one.

It was a sunny after noon and after school he went with her to her house they crawled under the bed where the sun rays still lingered and as he held this glass marble into the sun rays to show her the beautiful rainbow effects, my mother suddenly said to my father "you always said you like me best, but you go with all the other girls". His reply was very

simple “that’s all right because I am going to marry you” he obviously kept his word even though they moved to Stuttgart and did not see each other for several years. except for an occasional short visit to Munich

Our mother also told us, that he often came to visit her after school with pockets full of money he had collected for his father, which shows how mature and responsible he was even at such an early age.

My mother had been an apprentice to a seamstress and after she completed her term, worked in a uniform manufacturing plant during the first world war.

With the increasing difficulty for my father to earn much money, our mother now started sewing and made women’s cloths for friends and family.

Her expert sewing ability helped us very much as it augmented my father’s constantly shrinking income

Day in and day out she sat by her sewing machine from morning till late at night only on Shabbat or Jewish holidays and a very rare Sunday was her machine idle.

At that time I was working as an apprentice in a factory which had started on April 15 / 1935 just two months prior to my 14 birthday.

It was a four year indentured apprenticeship but with the growing persecution of Jews it ended October 1938 six months before completion, after the factory was confiscated from the owner and given to a Nazi official..

Towards the end of my stay in this factory they assigned me to extra dirty jobs cleaning old laundry machinery returned for repair or refurbishing, which my boss gave too me, (he loved Jews!)

I also gave my earnings to my mother keeping just a few pennies for myself.

My mother was also an excellent listener and interested in many different things.

Many times I sat next to her and we would talk about a book I had read or some other experiences in my daily life. Even during my apprenticeship I found her very interested in the many the new mechanical things I was learning. It was easy to talk to her and also to confide in her as she really kept a confidence.

My relationship, with my father was not as close as I would have liked it. He always seemed to be so busy and distant or very often he would sit quietly by himself smoking and thinking.

I do regret that I never really got to know who he was, or could understand his fears for the future for his family or himself possibly for the Jewish people. He was not a great

communicator but on rare occasions told a few stories when he was young living at home as a boy

My father was a very hard worker and tried under often most difficult conditions to the best of his ability to be a good provider and was always a good and loyal husband and dedicated father

I had a much closer relationship with my grandfather whom I often accompanied in my free time. on some of his errands He was a very tall and distinguished looking man had a large mustache was always dressed in suit and tie, immaculately clean and very thorough in whatever he did.

As his oldest grandson I think I occupied a special place in his male dominated opinion, which was so strong at that time. He often told me stories from his military service or from his business travels disclosing some secrets about people he traveled with on business and their religious transgression when they thought no one was watching We both had a good laugh about that sometimes as I knew some of them personally portraying themselves as pillars of our synagogue acting in a "holier than thou" manner wrapped in the prayer shawls appearing deeply in devotion and prayer..

One particular anecdote he told me which made a great impression on me as it concerned my Melamed and our Synagogue's Gabbi (ritual leader) a seemingly devout and religiously beyond reproach person.

There were a group of men all traveling salesmen who when ever possible would travel together to have some company not only during the train ride but also evenings where they often played cards staying in the same Inn.

This particular trip he was only with that man I just described above and after arriving at th

eir destination they decided to do lunch before starting to work

My grandfather sold hotel and restaurant linens like table cloths towels and bedding so they went into one Inn he knew but as they entered his companion said "I am going elsewhere as it does not look kosher enough for me and left. After my grandfather finished his meal he also did a little business and went to the next Inn to sell some more of his merchandise, he saw his friend sitting at a table with the waitress standing next to him, who in a loud and clear voice enumerated his menu. As it was typical at that time for servers to do that she also mentioned the cost of each item. My grandfather stood nearby waiting for the manager or owner heard every word and as the item, she called out "and

the pork chops cost at that point my grandfather turned around and hurriedly left.

Although they saw each other occasionally my grandfather never traveled with him again and he too kept his distance but grandfather he told me that I was the first person he told about this incident after many years..

He also told me a little about his parents and his home life where he lived in an upper middle class environment in the city of Lemberg capital city of Galician. His father owned a furniture factory and he had a sister and two brothers.

With great laughter he told me when his sister a year or two older than he, became a teenager and got her first corset (a 'must' garment for females at that time) he carried on alarmingly as he too wanted one alas without luck.

He also told me of an episode when a privately hired Melamed (orthodox Hebrew teacher) who was to teach both him and his older sister, often dozed off during a lesson.

During that time envelopes were not pre glued so for mail security people melted some sealing wax with which to seal envelopes and thus secure privacy

While asleep, he and his sister took some sealing wax and they melted some of it with a match and glued a few strands of his beard to the table.

After the sealing wax had dried they shook him saying "father is coming lifting his head he ripped some of his beard's hair but although angry, how could he tell the father who would have fired him for sleeping instead of teaching.

We laughed together as he described in detail the surprised reaction and obvious hurt of the teacher. NOTHING IS EVER NEW

He went to Gymnasium (College) and told me how strict those teachers were with him and that he was among the top students in his class.

His sister had a great voice and became a successful singer -actress on one of the Viennese theaters.

One time his father took him to his factory and showed him how people built furniture and how hard they had to work to make a living for themselves and their family. He said to him stay in school study hard so you will not have to end up like these people who did not have the opportunity you have. My grandfather graduated Gymnasium with what I assume to have been something like our to day's liberal arts degree.

He told me two stories his father had told him to teach him about business which he said he never forgot and he felt had helped him.

A man sent his son to Lemberg (the largest city in Galicia) because he planned to start a

brick making factory and wanted to know if there would be a need for it.

After a few days the son came home and said Dad don't do it there are thousands of brick houses they will not need any more.

Acting on that information the father started his factory and was very successful.

His father asked him what he thought and he was not sure so he explained. As there are so many brick houses they will surely build more and from time to time the old ones will need replacement for repair or expansion.

2. The second story was; a young man applied for an office job in a big factory where the office for this operation was located on the 3rd. Floor.

The boss listened to the applicant's job experience and when he was finished he said to him, I would like to buy a suitcase there is a store next door see if you can find a suitable one for me. So the young man run down to the store and soon came back saying they have one and it costs 25 shillings. How big is it Off he goes again to return and tell him the size what colors are there

Down again he flew and listed the 3 selection upon his return .Does it have wheels to make it easier to pull, barely breathing now the young man came back to say yes.. "Thank you" said the boss we will let you know.

Another job applicant came the next day and was given the same task. He went down to the store and after some time had past returned so the boss asked him what did you find out. "Well" the applicant said they have several suitcases you can choose from there are three colors which he listed; there are also small medium and large ones so it depends on your need they also some come with wheels and some without and finally he said they want 25 Shillings but I think we could bargain a little with them. He got the job.

Why do you think the second man got the job and the first one did not? His father asked him

My grandfather knew right away and understood the meaning of these two stories think before you act and you will be ahead of the next one..

We had a very luxurious family life my grandfather said and although I tried to do the same for my family, I got too many children too quickly and was therefore not able to provide enough to live the same way; I think he felt sad and a little embarassed..

One day I came across a copy of a letter written by my great grand mother to her son Emil who lived in Vienna where she writes that she would like to stay with him for a while as "I do not wish to see the face of your beloved father for a while. I can not ask

Simon” (my grandfather) she continued as they have too many children. I do not know how this situation ended nor if she ever physically left her husband.

There were really not too many things he told me and I am sorry to say I was not inquisitive enough on that subject otherwise I would know more about his parents, grandparents and possibly great-grandparents.

Only one time I remember he got a little mad at me, and that was when one Friday night in their house and as usual everybody seemed to be there when he complained that one or two of his GATKES (Long Underwear) were missing, always the wise guy, I said “may be you are wearing them all” and everybody laughed, except he was not amused. My grandfather was very slim and quickly felt the cold weather especially during the harsh Bavarian winters much more than others, at the age of 12 or 14 I was a pretty ‘smart Alecy’ kid.

Looking back now that I am old myself, I too seem to be feeling the cold more than even a few years ago, although he was in his late sixties at that time, quite old for those days, but I understand it so much better now.

May 26 1934 was my Bar Mitzvah and after having studied for quite a while and did my Parshe and Haftorah, I was told. I did quite well

I had been very concerned about my up coming Bar Mitzvah because of the many restrictions being continually put on us by the government which had everyone on edge. I was however also worried that I would do it properly as my grandfather was a very learned man could at times be quite critical. But he fully approved; as did many members of the congregation which made me very happy.

I had my friends in the afternoon in my house and in the evening the grown ups came. My parents did their best to make it a good and meaningful time for me but the heavyness was inescapable. I was extremely pleased when my grandfather said to me that I did very well and he hoped that I would have a good future. Although we lived through some very difficult and frightening times, I am glad to say his words came true.

As my grandfather aged he became frail and with the advancement of Naziism he got more frightened may be even foresaw what might happen. I often think of him as he must have lingered and ultimately died in the concentration camp at Theresienstadt in 1941.

This concentration camp was located near Prague in the Check republic, which we visited while on a trip to Prague. As I wandered through the camp looking at the barracks the

washrooms and other primitive facilities I was thinking of him how clean and proper he always was and how he must have suffered during that last year of his life.

I always looked up to him and these thoughts make me so very sad..

My grandmother on the other hand was always home and took care of a large household. I really do not remember her before a paralyzing stroke rendered her left side lame. As I had heard it happened while the whole family was gathered at one of those Sunday outings in the woods when I was still very young..

Although they had a day help, she still tried to do things but was really not able to do very much anymore. Her left arm was always in a shoulder sling she dragged her left leg when walking and the left side of her mouth was drooping down slightly. It fortunately never affected her speech but she was a non complaining woman accepting her fate most stoically and was always interested in our stories and told us bit's and pieces from her less than happy life.

Her maiden name was Horowitz and she too was born in Lemberg. Her father was a rabbi and her mother died while she was still very young. Her late mother's twin sister took her in and raised her and although she attended some schooling as an orphan it was extremely difficult for her (she never mentioned her father) They had a number of children but only two survived, a younger brother and she. They must have had one of those Jewish Ghetto deceases, because as soon as a child was born the one previously born died. It is something I had heard from other families too.

At one time when my sister and I visited her after school which we did on occasion as her home was on the way home from school for us we saw her sitting on a low stool next to the warming stove when we asked her why she started to cry and told us her only brother had died and she was sitting shivah. We both stayed with her extra long that day to keep her company she was like a second mother to us firstly in the way she treated us her two oldest grandchildren and also because we lived so close we saw her often.

As we were sitting next to her she told us a little anecdote about her young life which stayed with me to this day.

When she was still a little girl she often went to the cemetery to visit her mother's grave. It was during one of those visits in the late fall she told us, that when after leaving her mother's grave and although she had been there many times before she got lost in the large cemetery. It was getting dark and she got very frightened and started to cry, when suddenly a man appeared and without uttering a word took her by the hand and led her to

the gate and was gone again..It gave my sister and me the chills in the way she truly believed it, who knows.

She must have been a very lonely woman, she was a 'shut in' barely ever leaving her house and I also think she was very unhappy as only one of her daughter was married to a Jew as was another one was engaged to a Jewish law student but the other four were going with non Jews as were two of her sons. The oldest son had already married a converted Catholic and the youngest was too young and her shining light. He was 22 years younger than the oldest daughter my mother, and only six years older than I .He still attended the same school as did both my sister and I.

His given name was Siegfried, but he had a nickname which was Lilly because we were told, when he was a very little boy he could not properly pronounce the name Siegfried which when he said it sounded like Lilly that's the name that stuck with him among family and friends all his life

He was the most dedicated and helpful child any mother could wish for. Often on Fridays before going to school he got up very early and went shopping for his mother buying food for the Shabat dinner and also helped with some of the cooking after returning home from school.

He was able to leave Germany within days of the outbreak of the second world war and changed his name to Fred. Within the family however he remained Lilly as old habits are hard to break. He was indeed a very fine and most helpful individual and we thought of each other like two brothers.

As I said earlier for a period of time my grandparents had a maid about one of whom was a little funny episode .Her name was Lina a young farm girl helpful but not very bright. As my grandmother told us, she had asked Lina one day to get her a pot with water to boil the potatoes they had just peeled.. Lina very carefully carried a pot filled to the brim with water to the stove, but when my grandmother told her how are we going to put potatoes into a already full pot she returned the pot spilling all the water over the floor which took quite a bit of cleaning. Her name after that became 'Lina Flocken (flake) and although she was not too swift my grandmother was too kindly a woman and kept her in service.

Although uncle Karl married a non Jewish woman called Inge, she too had converted to Judaism and after the synagogue wedding they held a small reception in their parents our grandparents home.

I vividly remember the party it was a couple of weeks before Christmas and my sister and I had gotten theater tickets for 'Snow white and the seven Dwarfs'. Both my sister and I could not wait to be allowed to leave as we were afraid we would miss the performance. As long as I am on the subject of uncle Karl I might as well talk about an incident which may be funny now but surely was not at the time.

We received a message that Karl was in the hospital after being involved in an accident. When my parents returned from the hospital, they told us the following series of events. Karl had a friend who owned a leather tannery and through this connection he went into the leather distribution business. He had bought a motorcycle with a side car which he used to transport his material to the various customers such as shoemakers handbag manufacturers etc.

On his way home from an out of city trip his bike broke down and he called his brother Sam who owned a car to come and tow him home.

As Sam arrived they tied a rope to the bumper of the car and instead of fastening the other end to the center column of the bike they tied it to one side of the handlebar. As the car started to move it was impossible to hold the handlebar straight and the bike flipped over ending in a ditch. For the rest of his life Karl had a deep scar from the left side of the mouth down to his chin; lucky he did not suffer worse.

Shortly before my grandmother died she had been hospitalized in a Jewish facility, and many times in the afternoon after work as I bicycled home I detoured and paid her a visit. She was released and died at home at the age of 63 and her death was my first experience of someone dying in the family. Her death left a great void in my life for a long time.

My grandfather a widower now he too must have suffered silently seeing his children marrying or going with so many non Jews. He never made a comment about it that I was aware of, but standing next to him in the Synagogue I sometimes caught him crying as he was praying especially during the high holidays.

Another tradition connected with my grandfather was at the end of the Yom Kippur service on our way home from the Synagogue we always passed the same liquor store. In this store they had a small counter top on the side where customers could buy a quick drink and consume it on the spot. (This is called 'off license' in England)

My Grandfather, my father and any of his sons my uncles who were with us went into this liquor store and all of them drank a Slivovitz all except Fred he never touched any alcohol

nor ever smoked.. The Yom Kippur following my bar mitzvah, I was included in this ‘ritual’ and proudly participated not letting anyone know I did not like it and almost choked on this strong stuff. It did not take me very long before I got used to this great tasting liquid that it is.

All those who knew me will remember I kept up this tradition till the end except during the years when I was working on farms or when my finances would not allow me to indulge. Shortly after my grandparents were married 1891, she was a bride of about 17 and he was 23 when they moved to Munich Germany . She soon became pregnant and when the time approached for her to have her first child, she went to Chernowitz Rumania, to gave birth. This was the city where her aunt the one who had raised her, .now lived and having no relatives in Munich she traveled there and gave birth to a girl on the ninth of September 1893.She stayed only long enough to recuperate and returned to her husband bringing her new baby daughter, my mother, Rosa with her. On September 1/ 1895 she did the same thing again and gave birth to her second daughter Susannah whom we called Sussy After that, as the children came along one almost every year for a total of 10 she stayed in town being unable to travel with two or more children.

I had written a complete family chronology in my first memoirs but I just want to mention one particular aunt whose given name was Carola but we called her Olla.

She had the most beautiful long and thick auburn colored hair and also had a most vivid imagination and a soothing way of talking..

My sister and I sat for hours listening to her as she told us made up stories which were to us as good or better than any stories written by the brothers Grimm or Hans Anderson. We gave her a special name we called her the ‘Maerchen Tante ‘(fairy tale aunt)

Uncle Fred was very mechanical and when I was about 10 or 11 years old he fixed up an old bike for me which I really needed as I started to do more errands for people to earn a little money to help pay for some of my personal needs and wants.

Now that I owned my own bike together with friends we bicycled to different lakes for a day of swimming (I not so much) or woods so plentiful and surrounding the city Only once did we go on a longer overnight trip’ were we slept out in the open, on blankets when we went to the ‘Walchensee’

This is a very large sinister looking mountain lake which had a power plant at one end and was surrounded by heavy shrubbery .

There was no swimming or boating allowed and the color of the water was a dark grey-

green very still not even a ripple most of the time and I believe no living creatures in it either, it looked real dead..

Local people spun mysterious tales about this lake; partially because they claim that not a single body was ever recovered although there were supposed to have been quite a number of suicides in that lake.

Some people also claimed that this lake has no bottom because it is connected to the ocean, but that seems a bit far fetched, as the nearest ocean must be 1000 miles away. It is much more likely that this lake's bottom may have been exceptionably deep, with many craters or caverns at the bottom.

On the way to the lake we had to walk pushing our bikes for a couple of miles on that long and steep hill, which took quite some time and much effort.

After spending some time at the top resting, lunching and looking at this scary lake, we returned to our planned overnight stop at the 'Kochelsee' a nice friendly looking lake always filled with many people swimming and picnicking.

It was that same long steep downhill road, which made our bikes race at a very high speed experienced bikers advised us to take the following precaution.

All downhill bikers tied large tree branches to the back of their bikes to slow them as the long downhill race would heat up the brakes and may cause them to fail These branches were laying in high stacks on the side of the road put there by the highway department for this purpose.

As we got to the bottom we untied the branches and piled them up against the road. I assume some truck picked them up and returned them to the top for others to use. It was fun it was exciting and we were young and fearless anyway so it did not enter our mind that it could have possibly been dangerous.

Dachau, this infamous village, before it became a Nazi concentration camp, was quite a popular Sunday outing spot there were picnic tables and garden chairs at a large meadow for people to use or spread their blankets around a very picturesque lake. There was a nice beach, good swimming, picnicking and game playing and to get there with our bikes was easy less than 20 miles.

During the first world war Dachau had been a garrison town with an army base and a number of barracks to house soldiers.

In 1933 after the Nazi assumed power this army base became the first concentration camp in Germany used for Jews and Communists.

While Dachau was initially only a harsh prison, starting in the early 1940s they

added a crematorium to dispose of increasing numbers of murdered inmates.

In the early 1960s I was employed by a Long Island, New York company which had a facility in Munich. On one occasion they sent me there to assist them in resolving some manufacturing problems.

During the three or four days I spent there, Mira and I went one Sunday to visit this concentration camp in Dachau.

Although it had been highly sanitized and turned into a museum, it was still very emotional for me to visit this familiar site especially viewing the museum and the many photographs with scenes so very familiar to me. As we went through this big place I noticed a lot of non Jewish Germans visiting that Sunday as well, which made me feel slightly more hopeful.

During my early childhood, I was quite sickly suffering from a number of different ailments but apparently the worst one was Rickets and chronic Bronchitis, for which my mother took me to frequent doctor visits. I clearly recall occasional conversations between my parents, when talking about my health and how glad they were that we had national health care, otherwise it would have been a real financial hardship for them or I may not have been able to receive all those considered necessary treatments. Every working person in Germany had an identity card about the size of a postcard. Annual payments had to be made in either the post office or in one of the many health care offices scattered around town. The receipt for payments was a small stamp, which had to be pasted inside this double folded pre marked card. Quarterly payments were accepted and I do recall accompanying my mother on occasional trips to these offices to make payments.

Underage children up to the age of 16 and students till matriculation, were included in the mother's card.

Every time one went to the doctor or a hospital one had to show this card which they checked to see if it was current, after which they copied the I.D. number and that was all that was required. Every person working in Germany had to pay these health care fees and be in possession of such a card.

However anyone who wanted to go privately and pay extra was free to do so but the national fee had to be paid anyway.

I recall a particular scary treatment going to a big medical office almost like a hospital. I was taken into a small windowless room where they sat me shirtless in front of a huge machine. They gave me dark goggles to protect my eyes and warned

me not to remove them until they came in to tell me to take them off. I sat alone in this tiny room when the lights suddenly went out and After they turned off the lights and I sat in this very dark room a blue light coming from this machine for what seemed to me to be hours, but surely was no more than may be 10 or 15 minutes.

This treatment was repeated twice a week for several weeks .

Or another time I underwent what now quite a bizarre ritual. Apparently the doctor's prescribed treatment did not work well or fast enough so my mother I am sure she must have been quite desperate listening to some home cures, put me into a tin bathtub filled with a hot soup made from pork bones which had preciously been prepared It must have been extremely difficult for my mother as we were strictly kosher in the house, but I think under these circumstances she felt it was permissible. One thing I am sure of she must have used a neighbor's stove and pots as she would never cook this stuff on her kitchen stove. The tub was placed on our kitchen table and covered with a table cloth while I sat in it and had to inhale these considered to be beneficial fumes. I still remember the pattern of the tablecloth, but I also still remember crying so my mother periodically stuck her head in for a little while to 'keep me company' gladly this whole thing was only a one time shot. .

It was around that same time and I was once again bedridden and quite sick, when a neighbor stopped by to visit. He did not stay long but as he left I overheard him say to my mother "he won't last much longer".

I was devastated and started crying and it took my mother a lot of convincing by calling this man every kind of fool until I believed her.

PROOF : HE WAS WRONG

Another cure our Doctor recommended was that I should be sent to a convalescent home nearby in another little town not far from Munich called 'Wolfratshausen' It was a beautiful place mostly for children located on a private estate in the midst of a large wooded area covered with pine trees and meadows. I was quite happy and spent two or three weeks there

A year later when it was recommended that should I go there again, my parents took me but this time they also sent my sister for a couple of weeks.

Within a few days after we had arrived, she developed a strep throat and for fear of infecting others. my parents were called and asked to take her home which they did. I was hoping that they would take me as well, but as much as I cried and pleaded

with them take me home too they did not. As they drove off I still remember running after their car inside the fence as they left.

After this incident I became very lonely and unhappy having had to stay and a short time later I am not sure if it had anything to do with it, but I developed a high fever which would not break. The local doctor came a couple of time during the day and even at night I still see him coming to my bedside.

They took a large beach towel and soaked it with cold water and wrapped me in it .I had to keep that on for 2 hours after which they removed it and I laid in my pyjamas after two hours they repeated this procedure.

I imagine it was at that time the only Idea they had to break a fever, penicillin or other antibiotics had not been discovered.

I am not sure how long it took but after a few days I got better and was once again allowed to be with other children.

Telephone service was also extremely limited so after about a week one of the women employees who returned a group of children back to Munich was met by my mother who went to the train station to find out how I was having had no idea of my illness. While waiting for the woman to complete a phone call reporting a safe arrival, she overheard the woman on the phone ask “how is our little Rolf” It was than she learned of my problem and the following Sunday they came and took me home.

This was the last time I ever went there again.

This episode still haunts me from time to time whenever I think about it.

Reminiscing about my youth at my age to day; who knows what it was that gave me such a good constitution to survive all those years. May be some of these things or a combination of them really helped, or it may have been the hard physical labor I had to perform for a good number of years on farms or in factories.

Coming down with scarlet fever was another episode I will not soon forget.

At that time scarlet fever was considered to be a very serious and highly contagious illness and almost always required hospitalization..

Those infected were placed in isolation wards under a strict disinfection regimen for as long as 4 to 6 weeks.

My mother appealed to our doctor to allow both my sister and I we caught it at the same time probably from school, to stay home to which he reluctantly agreed but required her to daily wash all the floors using LYSOL the strongest disinfectant available at that time. My sister and I were confined to our beds for six weeks just a

little daily sponge bath was all that was permitted the doctor visiting twice a week. The two of us going crazy laying in separate rooms but we were close enough so we could talk or sing together much to the distraction of our mother.

We invented our own language by reversing words such as GOOD = DOOG

We translated whole songs in that new language and once in a while to this day when we are speaking on the phone or at an occasional visit, my sister and I still sing a few lines from that time.

One song we composed had words like “I am sooo looking forward to have a bath again” which we repeated over and over.

The big problem was we just had to lie in bed no pain or any other kind of discomfort just the agony of having to lie there for 6 weeks.

Diphtheria was another serious threat from which one boy in our building died. As soon as it became available our mother took the two of us to the hospital to be inoculated and gladly we never got it.

Summer vacation lasted 6 weeks and all of us looked forward to no school just as much as all children still do to this day.

Munich’s Jewish community owned a large piece of property in the countryside about 40 miles from the city near a town called Krumbach.. (crooked brook) A large building stood on it which had many dormitory style rooms where boys and girls slept in separate wings under supervision of what we called ‘Tanten’ (aunts), same as to day’s camp counselors

A professional nurse sister Laura, was in charge of the overall administration and a widow called Mrs Adler, who lived there year round with her daughter Gertrud did the cooking and associated kitchen work as well as general housecleaning .

They hired some local females during our stay.

The age of kids going there was from 9 to 14 years of age, and we were all required to make our own beds and keep our area neat clean and tidy.

Some of the older ones were asked to volunteer to help serving food and clearing tables, and keep an eye on the younger ones.

Mrs Adler’s daughter was a very pretty but a little arrogant girl because she had all the boys running after her

After the end of the war I met a distant relative of Gertrude and learned that she was forced into one of the many military brothels established throughout Germany filled with Jewish women and girls. As much as I was horrified at the news I was

glad she had survived the war.

Adjacent to our fenced in field was a swimming pool and weather permitting we went there twice a week for a couple of hours.

I can't say for sure but there must have been about 70 or more children staying there for a 4 week's vacation. Some of whom rotated on a two week basis. But my sister and I and many others of course always stayed the full four weeks

We had to participate in arts and crafts as well as an almost school room like environment for couple of hours each day but there was plenty free time for games fun and even occasional group walks through some of the nearby woods.

Thinking back at one time we were taken to a large dairy farm where they showed us their cheese making operation. First we went through huge stables filled with rows of cows on both sides always chewing their cud and others with horses from there we saw the milking room which was all done by hand; milking machines had not yet been invented.

After that we went into a not so good smelling room holding huge vats boiling some milk and stuff and on to the next room where they poured that boiled liquid into many molds for cooling.

After that we had to go into the cellar where the cheese was cooling fermenting and aging; there was a large table and we had to line up around it on our way down the stone steps. This table must have been misplaced and stood too close to the opening all I remember falling through the open floor under the table right on to the steps. Luckily someone was standing there breaking my fall so nothing happened except a little scare.

Across the road from our vacation place was a large farm where we watched many activities taking place during harvest time and the thrashing of wheat which was very exciting and lots of fun to watch.

Especially the day when the threshing machine was rolling into place ready for the next day's operation. It looked like an old locomotive and the following morning a very early loud steam whistle blew and the locomotive sprang into life on the side of this locomotive was a large wheel which was connected to the actual threshing machine by a huge long belt and as this wheel turned very rapidly it drove the whole operation. Two men with long pitch forks threw the sheaves of wheat into a huge hopper and on the opposite side of this threshing machine sacks were attached

to spouts out of which poured the threshed kernels while on the side straw bundled and tied was pushed onto a moving belt picked up by two other men and loaded onto a truck. This was a beehive of activity and I watched it being fascinated by the perfect organization and harmony of this operation.

I never even remotely suspected then that one day I would be a farm worker and perform all these tasks as well as milking cows riding horses and carrying heavy loads on my back..

We were not allowed to have any visitors in this vacation home, but one time uncle Fred and a couple of his friends while on a bicycle trip stopped by for a little while. Fred and his friends had also been in this place when they were still in school so no one objected to their short visit.

The internationally famous October Fest held every year in Munich was always a magnet for young and old. This fair was held on a huge field covering many acres and started in the last 2 weeks of September but was always extended by at least one week sometimes even two ending in mid October.

It was world famous and was always jammed packed with thousands of revelers coming from far and wide where many different languages could be heard.

Whenever Yom Kippur came early in the fall and the fair was still on our family always went there together after we consumed our 'break fast 'meal.

When I was a child I always wanted everything but the one thing I wanted most of all was to take a ride on the big cyclone

My father doing business with some of the vendors, frequently went there in the morning hours before major activities started and if I happen to be off from school he always let me come along with him, which was great, he was a real sport. We usually shared a nice lunch and later after his business was finished he treated me to a couple of attractions, which my mother would have never consented to so it remained a solemn secret between the two of us.

As I said I wanted everything but had a big problem which was my sister. May be she was scared of most of the rides or whatever else it may have been, she wanted nothing except a herring semmel. This was a big roll cut in half and on the bottom half they put a few pieces of pickled herring and lots of onions . They were indeed real good but not enough for me so I got plenty of reprimands from my mother for never being satisfied. I believe Brenda and Naomi might remember our visit to

Munich and the 'Kleine Inge' who brought me such a herring semmel (roll) to the train when we left for Italy.

There were of course a lot of eating places selling anything from a variety of different sausages to fish on a stick or chickens (No Hamburgers they did not exist at that time) These fish or chicken pieces all were mounted on long sticks and cooked over long trenches filled with burning charcoals.

Of course all kinds of sweets, candy cotton chocolate and Turkish honey .and ice cream, but as I said I really wanted to do is ride the cyclone

One day when I was again with my father I got my wish and we went together on that big Cyclone. For the life of me I would never admit it, but I was plenty scared hopefully without showing it but I think my father knew, but he was too kind to say anything about it after we got off (I was glad it was over)

They also had the ox roasting display once a week on Sunday. It was a huge pit filled with burning char coal and above it a motor driven spit on which a whole ox was slowly roasting as it turned.

When it was done people who had previously paid and had lined up with plates in hand could select which part they wanted to have carved. There was a long line of people waiting and before very long it was gone I never waited to the end so I do not know how they got rid of the carcass

And above all the throng the shows and other novelties were the Beer halls.

Scattered throughout this large field were at least four of these huge hangar like beer halls each of them holding more than a thousand people.

These huge tented structures were filled with tables and chairs and inside at the four corners were beer dispensing stations.

Women waitresses carrying 8 or more 1liter size (a little more than a quart) glass steins usually resting them on their well developed bosoms had to really hustle to satisfy the endless need for beer and more beer. This was quite something as each one of these filled Steins weighed over two pounds and are not easy to carry.

In the center of these hangars was a large raised stage where sometimes as many as 15 Leder Hosen (leather pants) clad Bavarian's played the 'UMPA' music and performed typical Bavarian dances to the wild singing, dancing, eating and drinking crowd.

As one can imagine this place was loaded with drunks but with few exceptions

everyone was in a happy mood, friendly and fun filled.

Among the other more popular booths was the target shooting ones .which were large booths with moving target against the far wall and every once in a while you saw someone carry a large stuffed animal which was the first prize from one of these shooting booth. One time I remember while watching I stood next to a man and who claimed he had drunk 8 liters of beer shot the target center one after the other like a machine I found this incredible.

The amount of beer consumed while the Oktoberfest was open, sometimes was beyond belief and newspapers regularly printed the amount which was measured in 'Hectoliters' (1 hundred liters) consumed

Along our whole street, were large courtyards dividing a back and front buildings but most of the children of all ages seemed to prefer to congregate in our yard.

Boys played football (soccer) and girls did hopscotching or rope jumping games, and together we played hid go seek and all kind of kid's games

Our mothers had to call us many times until we finally listened and came home usually not until it was almost dark. It was great fun!

Winter time we had lots of snowball fights but often working together we built the largest snowman in the whole neighborhood.

Being near the Alps, the cold weather lasted a long time, so our snowman stood guard for many months before melting.

There was a good sized pond not too far away, where we did ice skating as it remained frozen solid for months. Sledding of course was the big thing to do as we had many good sized hills all around especially along the banks of the river Isar.

My special friend Franz, (not Jewish) who was a couple of years older than I, always watched over me, often helped me with my school work and we were always together.

Unfortunately my Hebrew teacher Mr. Schapira lived in the same house as we did, which quite often became a big problem for me. Whenever he had problems in the Hebrew school, which was all the time as one can imagine with a dozen boys or more, but most of the time when the teacher came home he complained to his wife about the behavior of the children, he never failed to mention my name.

It would be silly for me to try and justify myself now after 80 years or more, but I know one thing for sure, I was not an angel but not stupid enough to antagonize

him knowing it would go back to my home and mother.

It did get back to my mother more often than I cared anyway and when he complained to his wife, she told my mother and I caught a pack of troubles. Our large extended family lived not far from each other so that visiting one another was quite frequent and a very important part of our social lives.

Not everyone had a telephone so previous arrangements to visit could not be made as is the custom now. (No cell phone text twitter or what else)

We just went and hoped to find someone at home which was mostly the case and if not we went to someone else or if we struck out we just went back home

Friday night's after we finished our Shabat dinner we always went to our grandparents who lived virtually around the corner and most of the time found some aunts or uncles at home, which made it always a good and interesting visit.

We sat around and I listened to the adults tell stories of yesteryear much like our grandchildren and great grandchildren do now, fascinated how they described things about times gone by

Visiting on Jewish holidays with friends or family was a must and although a custom mostly among eastern European Jews people adopted and maintained it in Germany. The Eastern European Jews were a very close knit community and rarely had any contact with German Jews.

On several occasions we spent the high holidays in Hartford with my parents and on Rosh Hashanah in the afternoon when people went to say Tashlich (symbolic riddance of sins) we went to the Kinney park where there were many young people gathering for this event It was a real joy to see so many young Jewish people gathered uin this public park, which a few years later became a real drug and crie invested place, thus ending this gathering.

Although most of the eastern Jews were born in Munich they were nevertheless looked down upon as inferior by most German Jews. The little contact we had with them was with children during the 4 year Jewish school program but even that was very limited. Once the 4 year program ended we rarely if ever saw any of those children again, because they also lived in another part of the city. All of this changed very rapidly after the Nazi regime took over and started it's anti Semitic diatribe against ALL Jews.

Passover was always an exiting holiday for us children. We went to the Speicher

(attic) carrying the regular dishes up and brought the Passover dished down. It was fun for us to see the stuff we had not seen for a year but were oblivious of the huge amount of work for mothers and grandmothers this holiday presented.

As is customary to this day, all families gather for the two Seder evenings and our family did no less but we all met in our grandparent's house Each family brought some cooked dishes as we were 22 people which was much too much to handle in the usually small European kitchens and NO refrigeration.

We all sat around a very large table grouped by family as my grandfather reclined on a couch his youngest son sitting at his feet, reciting the prayers. (To this day I try to emulate his way of reading the (Hagadah)

Some of the brothers or sisters in law had not seen one another for some time much conversation and catch up talk took place so the hardest thing for my grandfather was to establish and maintain decorum..Often unable to control this din of talk his only weapon was "Ich hab Zeit" (I have time) which usually helped for a while as by then it was getting late and all of us were hungry and looking forward to this special meal which was prepared with such loving care.

Much as we do nowadays the youngest from each family recited the MA-Nishtanah and I remember it must have been 1934 or 1935 when I recited it using the modern Hebrew. I am sure I tried to show off but it got the desired response from one and all even my grandfather said and not disapprovingly "every year something new" The Seder in 1937 it turned out was to be our last Seder together as a family. It was also the first one after our grandmother had died and I was glad she did not have to experience this tragedy. This was the Seder which will forever remain engraved in my memory and is as vivid and realistic in my mind as if this event had taken place just a couple of weeks ago..

The apartment my grandparents had lived in for over 40 years was sold to new owners, a couple in their late middle age, Germans who were very anti Semitic and pro Hitler people, especially the woman was extremely hostile and took a special dislike to me.

Often when I left my grandfather's house, she opened the door and yelled at me for walking to loudly on the stairs.

Back to that fateful Seder. It was ver soon after we had started when the door bell rang and one policeman and one in a brown shirt Nazi uniform walked right into

the dining room and wanted to know what was going on. The elders in the family explained to them that it was a religious celebration but they would not hear of it. They told us to stop and go to our own respective homes which we did. Shortly after this incident my grandfather received a legal notice to vacate the apartment by the end of the current month as his rental lease had been cancelled. His daughter aunt Hella, who worked for the Jewish community, was able to obtain another apartment for my grandfather and family in a building which was owned by the Jewish community. It was a nice and large apartment quite a lot further from our house than before, it took about a 20 minute walk to get there.

We did not know it at that time but the cancellation of their rental lease became a blessing in disguise, as eventually we all had to move in with them as Jews had to vacate all Christian owned apartments and were forced moved together creating many overcrowded situations..

By the time I left Munich in June of 1939 all of our families were living together in that new apartment, but it was not too bad as by this time several including my sister and two aunts had left Germany for England or America.

In a later letter received from my grandfather he told us of a very crowded condition in his home as more people were placed there.

The only one who did not have to leave his home was Max who was married to a non Jewish woman and by virtue of this was exempt, which incidently saved his life as it did for most Jews of mixed marriages, because they were not sent to concentration or death camps..

As I wrote earlier, I was quite sickly as a smaller child and did not develop physically until about the age of 14. As a matter of fact looking at old school photographs, I was always the smallest in my class.

And whenever the inevitable disagreements between boys started , Franz was always there to protect me.

The two of us played in each other's houses and his father who was a handyman who had many tools which even at that early age always fascinated me.

His father was also a master kite maker and had the most interesting shapes and multi colored kites, which stood out among the many others, as flying kites was a very popular hobby when I was a boy. Occasionally he took me with him to a nearby meadow and let me watch him. He never let me hold the string spool but I

sometimes touched it and the tension was unbelievably strong. In many kite flying contests, he often got first prize which made him very happy and as I was part of his 'team' I was proud too.

Franz seldom went with us I believe he and his father did not get along, which later on proved to be true

Our school week was six days, and only on Wednesday and on Saturday were there half days.

Because I did not write on Saturday's someone gave me the work to copy at home.

Most of the time it was no problem but after 1933 some teachers made fun of us, but did not force us to write as they did started to do later on.

Alex Katzenell one of my school friends, had an uncle who owned a film distributing and rental company, supplying movie houses with the latest run films. He also owned a cinema not far from our school so on many Wednesday afternoons as there was no school, the cashier who knew Alex let the two of us go in free We saw lot's of movies but one movie which I will never forget stands out among all the others.

The title of this film was 'Storms over Mount Blanc' and like all other movies it was a silent film.

This film too was a silent movie but with one exception. In the last few scenes of this movie a plane flew in and landed near the mountain top to rescue some stranded mountaineers who had been caught in a blizzard. This was the first time we heard the roar of the engine and the howling of the wind; everyone jumped up and applauded as it was the first sound was ever heard in a film it was really exciting.

I was still very young when I developed a love for music, which I probably inherited from my mother's side of the family because she and most of her siblings were all great music lovers

Quite often my mother and I went to the opera which was our favorite and the most popular entertainment at that time.

Many times while lining up for tickets we met friends or family and as seats were a bit pricey we bought the 'standing room' tickets which were high up right under the ceiling but we heard and saw quite well.

I am sure it was a kind of self delusion, but we convinced ourselves that the acoustics

were best way up under the roof.

Whenever a special guest star came to sing in the Munich opera house which happened quite often we lined up for hours and often walked away disappointed as the demand was overwhelming.

We lived a 'GEMUETLICH' (comfortable) life and were fully assimilated and integrated into the our neighborhood and general community.

Although we were orthodox and regularly attended Synagogue service we were fully accepted by our non Jewish neighbors and had quite a number of Christian friends.

Interfaith marriages were at about 35% and there was a greater separation between German Jews and Ostjuden (eastern Jews) than there was between Christians and Jews.

Very rarely if ever to best of my knowledge, did a person from the German Jewish community marry an eastern European Jew

To highlight this point, it came to light after the war, that representatives of the German Jewish community in a last ditch and futile effort to deflect anti Semitism from themselves had sent a letter to Adolf Hitler. In which they agreed with 'Herr Hitler' in his actions against Jews but suggested the problem is exclusively with the eastern European Jews.

The post world war one years were very difficult for Germany. Unemployment was high, inflation raged like wildfire consuming life savings and other possessions for most of the population. The devaluation of the money was so rapid that often within hours wages lost some of their value. On payday many women waited outside the factory gates for their husbands wages (there were no check payments in those days.) and rushed to the food stores before their money lost too much of it's buying power.

After three devastating years in 1921 The inflation was finally halted but the financial pain and suffering lasted a very long time.

German people are generally very industrious, hard working, frugal and always saving money for the future, but the heavy financial post war restitution payments placed upon them by the allied nations created a financial disaster. Added to this national the frustration, the indelible anger and embarrassment for having lost the war, which created a poisonous atmosphere among the proud and arrogant Germans and became a situation which this nation could not accept

I clearly recall unemployed men marching in military columns waving the red communist flag demonstrating in front of government buildings.

President Paul von Hindenburg appointed one chancellor after another who tried in vain to

improve the economical situation by instituting various laws but without ever achieving any results.

Germany's foreign minister at the end of world war one was Walter Rathenau a Jew and a signer of the infamous peace treaty at Versailles. Although instructed to do so by Friedrich Ebert the president of Germany a non Jew, the blame for Germany's plight was leveled at the Jew Rathenau and ultimately against all Jews.

Soon Jews were called war profiteers and draft dodgers and although disproportionately to their numbers, Jews of Germany had a more volunteers and decorated officers than did the general German population, but the lie stuck.

It was indeed a very fertile environment for a maniac like Hitler whose wild promises and effective rhetoric succeeded at the next election of November 1932, and he was appointed chancellor in January of 1933 and subsequently became a dictator.

I met Erwin Greenzeig for the first time in April of 1927 on our first day in school when the teacher sat us together in the first class and we became school mates and life long friends.

Although 8 months older than I, we started at a private Jewish school in Munich which was a four year program and were seated in the first row at a desk built for two

Our teacher 'Herr Adler', a strict disciplinarian and retired army officer who was very 'cross eyed'. When you thought he looked at you he really wasn't however when you responded to a question anyway half turning his head away from you he would say "I am not talking to you.". Quite confusing but a source of fun for us. Erwin, a bit of a prankster, would say or do something without being noticed leaving others and myself to react and often get caught.

Because of newly enacted Nazi restrictions, by the end of 1934 all Jewish children were prohibited from attending public schools, which forced them to go back to the same private school they had left three years earlier.

This school was now required to expand it's educational program from the original four years to a full 8 year mandatory basic education, which found Erwin and myself once again in the same class.

This school was vastly different from the one we had left. Now it had to be restructured in all haste to accommodate Jewish children from the whole city who up to this point in time had attended different public schools.

Everybody was looking for an opportunity to emigrate and Teachers were no exception.

This situation caused a frequent turn over of teachers as those who had managed to leave Germany had to be replaced causing frequent changes in method of instruction as well as curriculum.

Many of those now teaching were either retired teachers or others who had a college degree and acted as lay teachers..

Overcrowded classrooms lack of school books contributed heavily to a mediocrity and a state of confusion resulting in a minimal education.

Luckily I had 7 years of schooling behind me so that my loss was much less compared to those much younger as in the case of my wife who was only in second grade at that time. It had always been planned for me that I should attend middle school (non mandatory high school) followed by Gymnasium (College)

Unfortunately when I reached the age of 13 in 1934 newly enacted laws no longer allowed Jews to participate in higher education which eliminated any further schooling for me. Instead my father found a Jewish owned factory and enrolled me in a four year indentured apprenticeship as machinist- tool and die maker.

The term of this apprenticeship, which started in April of 1935 and should have ended in April 1939 was not fully completed, because in the fall of 1938 the factory was taken over by a Nazi party appointed overseer, which resulted in the owner's 'forced sale' as well as my own instant dismissal.

Things were getting increasingly difficult for Jews by the time I started my apprenticeship we were the only 2 Jews in the factory our treatment by some was pretty bad.

Apart from often being assigned extra dirty work we were also physically abused by workers to whom we were assigned for training.

In January of 1933 after Adolf Hitler became chancellor and the Nazis assumed power, Jews were immediately discriminated against with constantly escalating regularity. The newly established 'Volks Gericht' (people's court) worked diligently to change existing laws removing Jews from their jobs without cause

In 1935 the infamous 'Rassen Gesetz' (racial laws) were instituted whereby all mixed marriages could legally be annulled. It did not matter if there were children which was often the case. If a German partner felt the desire to end their marriage to a Jew it would be immediately granted and the marriage annulled not divorced. This meant that in the eyes of the law that German person was never married.

Although many took advantage of this new law leaving the kids stranded and marked as

half Jews, to my knowledge the majority did not.

Interestingly in those marriages which remained intact the Jewish partner was not sent to the death camps and most of them survived the war.

By 1936 Jews lost most of their civil rights and they could no longer take a German person to court no matter what the reason. In addition Jewish lawyers were stripped of their right to represent anyone in court. Therefore disputes between Jews had to be handled by a non Jewish lawyers.

Schools, colleges and universities removed all Jewish teachers as they did with all government employees and those working for major corporations.

According to recorded history Jews had settled in Germany as early as the year 300 C E and after a very tumultuous existence from expulsion to readmission, they had lived as part of the German community for over 1000 years having been granted full German citizenship in the year 1848.

As time went on even the most 'diehard' German Jews, many of whom had no longer considered themselves Jews, began to realize that the Nazis are not just another temporary event and began to accept the hopelessness of their situation trying now desperately to leave the country, but unfortunately all countries had closed their borders to all Jews I started my job as apprentice on the 15th of April 1935 and at the same time Erwin got a job in a restaurant to become a chef.

Training centers were opened offering evening classes to teach adults some rudiments of mechanical work, which might give them a better opportunity to find employment should they be able to emigrate, therefore among the first step was to learn a trade as many Jews were professionals business people or merchants..

In early 1935 The Jewish administration of Palestine (Yishuv) began to send representatives (Shlichim) to Germany where they founded a quasi Palestinian consulate in Berlin, called the Palamt to facilitate Jewish immigration to Palestine.

There was no hindrance from the Nazis to operate this office just the opposite, they encouraged this operation as it was helping them to get rid of Jews.

This operation worked quite well and many Jews were able to go to Palestine to start a new life there.

The 'League of Nations' which was formed after the end of World War one (1914-1918) and was the forerunner of the United Nations, designated Britain as the administrative power over Palestine giving them the mandate over that territory.

All seems to go fairly well until in 1936 when yielding to Arabs pressure Great Britain stopped any further Jewish immigration into Palestine.

This Palamt had a very amicable working relationship with the British consul in Berlin who cooperated with them as much as he could.

This became especially important after Britain had issued the white paper shutting down all further immigration into Palestine.

This British action was in complete violation of the terms of the mandate but no other nation interfered so it was left standing

This British consul in a kind of “off the record” way continued to issue visas as often as he could without arousing suspicion but this time the visas were for England.

My mother had always been a Zionist so that it was not new to me and at the age of 12 I joined the Habonim movement. Because of the increased need to emigrate, many people now looked to the Zionist movements to help find a way to leave Germany.

This brought a great influx of new members and by the time I was 15 I became a youth leader. In response to the British whiter paper, the Palamt immediately organized an Illegal way of getting into Palestine ,which they called Alliyah Bet.

It was in early 1937 when the Palamt in Berlin contacted me and asked me to be their representative in Munich, which I readily agreed to.

They gave me a small office in the Jewish community house where I spent several hours a day interviewing parents and children explaining how their children could become eligible for this program. Anyone interested had to fill out a form supplying a full background and current photograph and submit it, which I sent to Berlin on a weekly basis. This also required me to be in constant contact with them to update information. There was also a Hachsharah program, which meant that eligible candidates would be sent to either England or Sweden to train as agricultural laborers.

England’s purpose for admitting these refugees was to send them after completion of the three year training course to Australia, which at that time was still a British colony and hoped to populate Australia with Caucasian people..

Sweden on the other hand also admitted young people for agricultural training but had no objection that their final destination would be either Sweden or Palestine.

On the 3rd of June 1939, I received an official notice from the Gestapo headquarters terminating my permission to remain in Germany effective July 1st. 1939 and unless I leave the country by that date, I would be arrested and or deported, which meant Poland.

Following a successful military action against China, Japan occupied a large part of southern China which included the major port city of Shanghai.

The Japanese opened the border to this occupied part of China in 1937 and allowed Jewish refugees to immigrate to Shanghai from Germany without much difficulty..

I knew of a few people who had gone there and having no other opportunity to leave Germany, so I decided to go there as well.

As I started to make the necessary preparations, which included notification to the Palamt. I called Moshe, the head of Palamt with whom I had worked for almost 2 years and told him of my expulsion and also my decision to go to Shanghai. He urged me not to go there, but to come to Berlin and work with him promising me that they would take care of everything in my behalf

I happily accepted and I am very glad I did, as I really had no desire to go to China and after getting Moshe's OK to bring Erwin as well, we left in mid June of 1939.

After saying good by to my parents and other relatives, we took the night train to Berlin arriving there after a 10 hour trip early the next morning.

My sister had left almost nine months earlier and now lived in London England working as a housemaid, which left my parents of our immediate family alone in Germany.

It was the first time I met Moshe in person when he met us at the train and drove us to the office, where we met some of the other people working there.

He instructed someone to drive us to 'Nierderschoenhausen' an upscale suburb of Berlin consisting mostly of private villas, and take us to the place they had arranged with the owner for our lodgings.

This villa was owned by a single man named Jaap, who gave us a small attic apartment a little galley kitchen, an adjacent room with two cots. And a small bathroom with sink for washing.

This seemed quite adequate and as he showed us our new abode, he instructed us how we must conduct ourselves in his home.

No excessive noise, definitely no visitors and a 'must' replace anything we might break, and to be especially very mindful of the fact that he just had this apartment painted.

There was no talk of money so we assumed that the Palamt paid for us.

He did not strike us as super friendly or happy for us to be there, so we felt that he had been pressured into letting us stay there.

Every morning we went to the office using the S- Bahn' (underground) and started to work by going through piles of applications

It was a heart wrenching job as we literally had to select those who could leave and rejected others whose fate we could not even imagine. The accompanying letters written by parents pleading for their son or daughter to be accepted or in some cases written by the applicants themselves.

Whenever someone had been selected we immediately contacted them and instructed them of all the necessary preparation including how much luggage they could bring where they must go to meet a representative when notified and must be prepared to leave at a moments notice.

The Alliyah Bet situation was especially critical for as soon as they found a ship ready and willing to take a small group to Palestine it was a matter of hours that they had to be on board ship and leave.

These ships went as close to the Palestinian coast as possible discharged the kids onto life rafts and off they went. The area where almost all the Alliyah Bet people landed was near Haifa heavily patrolled by British ships and people who lived in Palestine, who had been notified in advance waited on shore signaling with flashlights for shore directions. There were two trucks one took of at once with the kids and the other had 3 or 4 people who took the life rafts deflated them and off they went Many years later on a visit to Israel and Haifa a relative Tally, took us to the ocean and we saw 2 perfectly parallel lines of trees planted from the edge of the ocean for about a 1/4 of a mile inland. This was the landmark for the captains to deposit the kids being smuggled into Palestine.

Both the British and the Swedish consuls in Berlin were very friendly with Moshe and extremely accommodating. On more than one occasion I saw Moshe leave with a small suitcase full of passports and deposited them with either one of those two consuls who than notified him when visas had been granted. As soon as he returned with those visas we got busy calling those people selected with the good news and told them to await final instructions I had written previously about the sad ending of my uncle Daniel whom I had tried to rescue but who was taken to concentration camp one day before we received t his final travel plans He did not survive.

The building next to our office was an O.R.T. school these initials stand for 'office of rehabilitation and training' and is a world wide Jewish organization dedicated to teach young people a trade so they can become self sufficient, this training program was open to all regardless of religion race or national origin

We were invited to this school for our daily lunch and went there everyday and ate good institutional food except Saturday and Sunday.

Although we usually left no earlier than 6.30pm Moshe always stayed on and was always there when we arrived early in the morning. I rarely remember a man like Moshe who worked as many hours and smoked as many cigarettes as he did.

One Sunday morning I wanted to show off, remember Erwin was the chef, and I offered to make breakfast. I made my pancakes (Naomi named them Papa Pancakes) and flipping one up to turn it over I must have been either too strong or the ceiling was too low as it went up and stuck there. Now What?

No choice but to go down and tell the owner who after a little ranting accepted our offer to repaint the ceiling which we did. Neither one of us ever made pancakes in that house.

We spent a little over a month in Berlin and being young and invincible although events all around us were very frightening, we somehow were able to take things in stride. After leaving work in the evening once in a while we did a little shopping for our breakfast, supper or weekend food and also did some sightseeing.

Besides being the nation's capital Berlin had well over 3 million inhabitants, it was an international cosmopolitan city and in many ways completely new to us. I was always mindful of my dangerous situation should I be picked up by police we therefore tried to keep a very low profile but still managed to have a little fun

The first difference we noticed not seen in Munich at that time, were a couple of yellow park benches marked 'Juden'. The other thing were the drinking fountains which could always be found in most parks. These fountains had a metal cup attached to the fountain by a chain for people to have a drink of water but now had a big sign 'Juden verboten' (Jews forbidden) mounted on it.

Not far from the office was a large and very famous department store called K D W (these initials mean 'department store of the west')

It is to this day a huge and very upscale department store the likes of which we had never seen before only here in the states do we have stores that size.

The 8th floor which was entirely dedicated to the sale of food, cooked or raw, bread,

cakes, chocolates, wines and liquor. Along the windowed wall which went the full length of the hall were tables and chairs used as a self service area for a quick coffee or snack.. Everything was most attractively displayed and the service personnel extremely professional polite and knowledgeable.

As often as we could afford it we went there and bought some specialty items for our supper but also went there sometimes just for passing time

It did not take us very long till we found two girls two sisters about our age who lived not far away from our lodging and invited us to their home and large back garden.

I never remember seeing either one of their parents but they often invited other friends and we had some pleasant times with them..

I sometime wondered what happened to them as they too tried desperately to leave. I also took them to the Palamt for registration but lost touch after we left Berlin for London.

One of the reason that Moshe had asked both Erwin and myself to come to Berlin was to ultimately lead a group of younger children on an 'Alyah Bet' trip to Palestine.

I had some good news from my parents. My father who had retrained as a furniture restorer was given permission to come to England where he was sent to the Kitchener camp.

Through some research by a Jewish lawyer it was discovered that Italy and Poland had a cross border agreement whereby citizens of either country could travel to and from each other's country without the need of a visa.

Since we had a Polish passport it was easy to go to Italy, which many people including my mother and some other relatives ultimately did thus saving their lives that way.

As I had said earlier, the British consul had a stack of passports on his desk and randomly issued visas. One day Moshe came back from the British consulate and brought home a bunch of visa stamped passports which included Erwin's and mine.

I was really lucky as my Polish passport had expired but he still issued a visa in it.

As both Erwin and now had our visa, Moshe arranged a passage on a freighter for us, and two days later we were driven to Hamburg by private car where a British cargo ship was docked. As we said good by to the people we had gotten to know, I often wondered what happened to them as I never heard another word from any of them because the war had started only about 4 weeks after we left.

One fo the older men drove us to Hamburg and as we arrived at the dock he took our papers and went onto the cargo ship As instructed we stayed in the car while our escort took sometime till he returned and I began to get worried if my expired passport would be a

problem. After a while he returned and told us to take our belongings and go aboard. After a quick but hearty good by hugs, we quickly walked on to the ship. I still feel the lightness of my steps as I went up to the ship being now really free of this nightmare. we had lived through.

I had written in greater detail about my crossing the English channel to London in my first memoirs.

After 3 days, crossing the north sea, we arrived in London in early August and were met at the dock by my sister whom I had not seen for a long time. After a short reunion we left promising we would visit as soon as we could.

There was a Jewish help organization called the 'Bloomsbury House' which was created to look after Jewish refugees who arrived in London. This organization had sent a representative to meet us at the ship and took us to a youth hostel located on Walm Lane Crickewood..

This hostel was set up as a transition center for newly arrived refugees from Germany who had immigrated through the Zionist movement, and. were housed there until placed at a more permanent locations.

This hostel was in a private house, owned by a middle aged Jewish couple and must have been modified to make a number of bedrooms which accommodated about 12 or 15 men beside the husband and wife the two owners.

Not far from this hostel was another similar one for females only, it was located on Willesden lane with similar arrangements.

The woman with some outside help did the cooking and general cleaning. We were expected to make our beds and keep our personal place in order.

The husband was a very nice easy going man who became one of the 'boys' whereas his wife was all business and a strict disciplinarian.

She had instituted a 10 pm curfew after which time she locked the doors requiring any latecomer to ring the bell and face a dressing down.

Most of the people staying there were 18 years or older so it did not sit too well with us to be treated like children or almost prisoners, now that we were once again free after having left the nightmare of Nazi Germany.

The husband usually hang around the kitchen at night with his nightly cup of tea and when some of us came in late he opened the door for us and we snuck upstairs.

One fellow from Berlin who had been there quite a while he may have had connections with the administration, became the woman's pet and often tattled on us.

Erwin who was by now a skilled chef sometimes volunteered to help the woman with the cooking. One evening Erwin and I went to a movie in Kilburn about a 20 minute walk away, We had never seen such a large auditorium and during intermission (they always had 2 features) in front of the stage a man was raised up from below on a platform, by a hydraulic lift sitting at an organ and playing a number of different songs. When he was finished he was again lowered down below the stage and the second feature was shown.

This was all new to us and most captivating so we lost track of time and got back just around 11pm. The man opened the door for us and Mr. Sneak was sitting there too, who promptly told the woman the following morning.

By that time we had already been given our traveling instruction to leave for Yorkshire within 2 or 3 days so we were not overly concerned. But not Erwin, he had to get even.

The following evening he volunteered to make the salad and as he placed individual portions into little bowls. He asked me to help him place those dishes at each person's place but gave me one dish with the strict instruction "this for our friend" he said make sure he gets it, which is what I did. I had a feeling something was up but, I did not know what he had in store for Mr. Snitch.

We noticed as the meal progressed that this poor fellow kept running to the bathroom all night. Erwin told me later when making the salad, he had found some mineral oil which is tasteless and can not be detected mixing a salad especially for him.

Maybe it cured him but for as long as we were still there he never ratted on anyone again.

As pre arranged with my sister, Erwin and I went to visit her at her place of employment where. she like many other females were able to come to England from Germany as a house maids. In 1938. This was another idea, which helped a number of women to leave Germany. Advertisements were placed in a number of British newspapers offering their services as cooks, housemaids gardeners or chauffeurs and with a job offer in hand they quickly received a visa from the British consulate.

Although she had given us good directions, once we got off the bus it was a bit tricky.

There were a number of little streets and alleys and as we walked we saw a man inside his garden cutting his hedges.

I must emphasize, that by this time war with Germany was imminent and therefore on everyone's mind therefore people were very apprehensive.

Visualize for a moment Erwin was wearing his Bavarian style yodeler hat with a feather stuck in the band and I am, not sure how I was dressed, probably also not very British.

I thought at the time I could speak a little English so I asked this man for the way to 'Turner Close' he looked at us. I am sure he must have imagined us to be German spies or something like the movie "The Russians are coming" so he picked up his shears and without a response he went inside his house probably locking his door.

As we walked a little further we saw a lady walking her dog, who after I asked her, turned out to be my sister's boss and she took us to the house.

We had a very short but nice visit and other than an occasional postcard or letter we did not see each other for about a year.

Lord Kitchener a member of the house of Lords a Jew had large holdings in Kent a short distance from London. He persuaded the British government to allow some male German Jewish refugees to come to England as his guests.

He had made his entire estate available so that these refugees may live there on a temporary basis until they could find employment elsewhere in the country.

According to records, during the first world war lord Kitchener had loaned his estate to the army who had built barracks and quartered soldiers there. For training prior to be shipped off to Europe.

The interior department agreed to lord Kitchener's request and some 300 men were allowed to come and live there under the condition that none of these people would become a financial burden to the state.

This responsibility was taken care of by the Bloomsbury house, but in addition many people made private donations in both money, food, medical supplies, blankets, cots etc.

I mentioned earlier those re training schools in Germany which was how my father and my uncle Karl and uncle Fred got into this camp.

I was able to visit with them once for two days. and found it to be a beautiful estate large areas of trees and meadows and I seem to remember a formal garden as well an area which must have covered a couple of hundred acres.

In addition to my father and uncles I also saw several people with whom I had been friendly in Munich and I was glad to see so many had been rescued.

The men living there had organized themselves into various groups of responsibilities like a micro government. Managerial people were elected and they assigned everyone different tasks rotating people so that no one was locked into the lesser pleasant job..

Fred who had been a trained in first aid was put in charge of a small walk in clinic handling all minor problems .

Everyone in this Kitchener Camp was grateful to have been rescued from Germany and there were no complaints as I remember except one thing some of them talked about negatively. One of those philanthropist's who had made a donation to this camp, owned a large canning factory in northern England and had sent them several thousand cans of sardines in tomato sauce. While I was there we were indeed given these sardines for supper and although I found them to be quite good I could understand their complaint about the repetition of this food. As long as I remember neither my father nor Fred would ever look at another sardine because while they were in the Kitchener camp they were eating them almost daily.

The start of the war changed everything most rapidly as people were needed to fill factory jobs and military personnel some of the restrictions for refugees began to be lifted..

The Kitchener camp was dissolved and again used for military personnel while many of the younger men immediately volunteered for the army.

Most of those who did not go into the army my father included, were detained and sent to the Isle of Man into a internment camp where they were placed together with non Jewish Germans who had resided or worked in England.

The British war board had designated those who had a German or Italian passport as enemy aliens and those who held a passport of a country which was part of the allied forces as friendly aliens.

My father and others who had a Polish passport stayed only a short time as they were considered 'Friendly aliens' and were released within less than two months

Those who had a German passport had to undergo a more intensive interrogation especially those who were not considered Jewish refugees. In the case of Christian Germans quite a few of them were indeed found to have been part of the fifth column (spies) and remained incarcerated for the duration of the war..

To the best of my knowledge within a few months all Kitchener camp residents were released and started to work.

Brings to mind another episode closely related to the one above.

Before they married uncle Fred's wife Lola had a German passport. She too worked as a housemaid and apparently failed to give timely notice to the police of her change of address which was required for aliens.

She was given a lawyer by the Bloomsbury house and as this was a minor infraction and should have been dismissed, but this lawyer was a real schlemiel. When the judge asked Lola, whose English was not very good as yet, if she was guilty instead of the lawyer saying no he

told her to say yes which got her a fortnight in the Holloway woman prison. She was placed in a dormitory kind of cell with about 10 women all Christian Germans .As I related elsewhere London had air raids all day and all night for weeks and weeks on end. Lola told us later on that these women prisoners were jubilant when the bombs fell saying “they are coming to liberate us”. She was afraid to reveal her real identity and a woman guard who apparently recognized the situation removed her from that cell.

As soon as she was released, Fred and she went to the registry office and were married no more German passport.

The ‘Bloomsbury house’ was very effective in helping to find housing and jobs for all those who could not manage on their own. By this time it was much easier as the war had started and people were needed to fill all kinds of jobs..

My father found a job in a shoe factory as warehouse man, which was the same kind of job he had when he became an apprentice in Germany 30 years earlier.

Karl became a carpenter and Fred a welder and both were soon taken into defense plants.

KIBBUTZ LIFE & HACHSHARAH IN YORKSHIRE

ENGLAND

After having been assigned to a job at a farm in Yorkshire in northern England, we left Walm Lane London in early August The name of the village we were going to was Norton le Clay, a place we could not even locate on the map. Our luggage was sent by truck but after getting a little pocket money for emergencies, we had to make our own way up there.

Erwin and I took the ‘Underground’ to it’s last most northern station and started to walk. I think it was the first time for both of us that we had to hitchhike and it felt a bit uncomfortable but as they say ‘necessity is the mother of invention’ we undertook this new adventure in a good frame of mind and high expectations.

We were pretty lucky, shortly after we had left the underground a truck driver stopped and took the two of us more than half way up to where we had to go, he even treated us to a little lunch. I believe he felt sorry for us as we tried in our limited English to tell him our story using both words and body language. He soon understood what we were trying to tell him as by this time everyone in England had heard of the refugees coming to their country fleeing from the Nazis.

After he dropped us off we walked for a while when a car stopped but would only take one of us; as Erwin was the older we agreed he should go first which he did. Although the owner of the car was alone, I think he was a little nervous about taking both of us after all we did look foreign and seeing that there were war jitters all over the country, I really did not blame him..

Just a short time later I got a lift with another car who drove a Vauxhall a very upscale car in England at that time, and luckily he dropped me off about 20 miles from my destination. As I started to walk for a while without any luck it started to get dusky as evening was approaching a car stopped for me. It was a traveling salesman who was going to Northhallerton a Yorkshire district town, he went a little out of his way and drove me directly to Norton le Clay our new home town.

Once I found the farm building it was the largest of all the houses built along the roadway, I introduced myself to Mr. Swyers our new boss. He came out of the house and pointed to a building in the middle of the field across the road and said "Go There"

It had gotten dark by that time and as I got closer to the house I heard voices definitely speaking German I knew I was in the right place. With the exception of 4 people all had arrived and the other four came early the next day.

Coming to 'Norton le Clay', a 'metropolis' of some 99 people, was quite a revelation for us as we had lived in cities all of our lives.

The nearest town Helperby, a town of a few thousand people approximately was 5 miles away it had a cinema and stores.

While coming to this little Hamlet Norton le Clay was a revelation for us, it must have been the same or worse for the locals.

Suddenly this little spot got an influx of 10% to its population and as if this was not enough, we were Germans, a fact which the looming war did not enhance our position, nor did the added fact that we were Jews enhance our position.

Besides all this we are talking about a people who have never ventured very far from their little village and for most Helperby may have been their furthest travel.

Needless to say we were looked upon with suspicion, which, however I need to emphasize, they did not show a trace of hostility just great apprehension, which also only lasted a very short time After working together just a short time with the local farmhands we soon proved to them that we really were hard working people and very quickly a trusting work relationship developed which soon extended to all the people of this little hamlet. Quite quickly when

encountering the locals friendly greetings from them even from their children made us feel quite welcome..

The owner Mr. Swyers, was a much more pragmatic business man because all he saw in us was cheap labor, which he used to his fullest advantage.

Living in a kibbutz was not only revolutionary for most of us, but it must have been a big shocker for our new neighbors, a lifestyle which Mr Swyers completely ignored.

We were 11 people two of whom Miriam & (Shaul) both were in their mid 20s and had been living together on another kibbutz for some time. We therefore elected them to be our lead couple, a fact which pleased Mr. Swyers no end, as he looked upon Miriam and Shaul as our married chaperons he did not know or wanted to know the truth.

We must bear in mind, we were living among the most Victorian thinking people.

We were 7 males and 4 females and mutually agreed to a working schedule

All males went out into the fields and three girls were required to take care of the large household which included cleaning, washing, shopping, and cooking the other girl worked in the fields with us however they rotated on a by weekly basis..

Having spent all our life's in a city, and starting a new life on a farm, we soon discovered that these new experiences are 180 degrees opposed to each other.

Firstly, we were now in a new country where none of us really spoke English very well, and working all day long with people who had never gone very far from their hamlet proved very difficult.

Secondly we now started life in a commune, where both males and females all in their late teens lived under one roof not related and without adult supervision or guidance presented somewhat of a revolutionary change. Added to this, we now lived in a house where the hitherto 'taken for granted' everyday basic amenities did not exist.

We had no indoor plumbing, our water needs had to be gotten from outside of the building using a rusty old and very temperamental pump which was mounted on a concrete base out back. The toilet was a hut with an inside door latch, a board across to sit on with a hole in the middle and a deep hole dug below, which especially in bad weather or on cold winter nights was a lot of fun

Although none of these primitive conditions were very attractive, we were all eternally grateful to our host country, for admitting us and enabling us to escape the German nightmare, everything we now faced was overshadowed by this fact.

However being human we still complained about the many obstacles we had to face, but

ultimately accepted the inevitable and lived our lives as best as circumstances permitted.. We really adapted well to our new environment and except for an occasional outburst of frustration or a short lived romance we all acted very proper and adult, well disciplined and everyone discharged all of their responsibilities without complaint .

It was also agreed that Miriam was to become a permanent indoors person only the other 3 rotated at two week's interval, which worked out very well and never created any friction during our whole stay in Yorkshire, which lasted a little over 9 months.

We pooled our money and developed a budget, over which Saul was elected to administer. Three Cigarettes per day for smokers and everyone received a little pocket money.

Having little choice it is amazing how one adapts to situations and accepts it although sometimes grudgingly.

After a few weeks near the end of September one pleasant Saturday afternoon I walked to Helperby by myself just to look around and see if there still is some existing civilization. I had saved a little from my pocket money and an extra two shillings I got from doing a repair on one of the machines, which in appreciation Mr. Swyers put into my pocket. He must have known about our community arrangements because he said " that's for yourself" Once I got to Helperby and looked around the town I looked at different stores (no chance of me going in) but stopped short outside a small grocery store on a side street, which displayed a large billboard displaying a 'Cadbury chocolate' advertisement.

I had not seen any chocolate for a long time, let alone ate some so I went in and my money was just enough to buy a 1 pound bar

This was a real 'find' as slowly more and more food items were rationed.

This old fashioned looking neighborhood store had a double door entrance and was above street level. One had to climb about three or four steps to enter so after buying this chocolate bar, and as I left the store I sat myself on the extreme side of one of those steps and proceeded to eat. Even to me It seems unbelievable to day as I reflect back, bu I finished that whole bar without feeling the slightest bit sick and happily walked back home being careful not to reveal my secret to anyone.

I am still amazed that I was able to do that, but being young, strong and always hungry took care of that problem, which. I could never do to day for any money.

To buy underwear and other personal things had to be approved by Shaul and all larger expenses required the approval of all.

The wages the farmer paid us were pitifully low although he supplied milk and coal but even

with that it was still a real struggle to make ends meet.

During monthly meetings, which normally occurred on Friday's after a dinner all matters including our financial status were discussed, complaints aired and were possible corrected. Walter Mainz a former medical student in Germany, suggested one day we buy one or two records as Mr. Swyers had given us an old record player but no records..

This idea started a very agitated discussion but finally the yes had it and Walter was designated to arrange for the purchase.

He bought some records Chopin List and Tchaikovsky. There is a funny story with that Tchaikovsky record which had the '1812t' overture in it.

One time some of us diehards who always stayed up a little later, decided to play a record we selected list's overture, if anyone knows it they will understand the forceful music and the canon fire attached to it.

During the potato harvest a grueling back braking job, Herbert Witlin a slightly built fellow from Berlin often went to bed sometimes even without eating, he was that exhausted.

As we played the record all of a sudden he came running down half asleep and said "air raid sirens" We calmed him down and back he went but we lowered the volume.

This new and restricted way of life I believe was most difficult for me as I was used to managing my own affairs and thus felt like being back in my childhood. However necessity is a great teacher and having few options I readily adapted. We had arrived in Norton le Clay just in time for the wheat, barley and oats harvest.

This was indeed a very hectic time working literally from sun up to sun down for several weeks First the wheat was threshed and the machine automatically filled the sacks as a constant flow of these kernels came out of spouts mounted in the front of the machine. The bags were placed onto a scale and when it reached the right weight removed and replaced with the next one and so on.

Each bag of wheat contained 212lbs. And after they were sealed had to be carried up a ladder into the upper level of a huge barn. The first time they put one on my shoulders I collapsed right down with the load. After that the head guy showed me how to carry them and before long I was able to do it for hours. After the wheat was completed came Barley and Oats which were much easier as they put only 100 lbs into these bags. At the opposite side of the threshing machine straw was bundled and ejected, which had to be pitched onto a waiting truck and taken to the middle of the field for winter storage. And used as cattle fodder While doing this very hard and exhausting job I often thought of my days in Krumbach and how I

watched the farm people across the way doing this work. Our machines however were much more modern and faster which caused us to work at top speed day in and day out. I had no sleeping problems in those days.

No sooner was all the threshing finished, the next thing waiting for us was the potato harvest a back breaking job which made the other harvest look like child's play. We worked very hard and fast and again from sun up to sun down without a complaint following a tractor which loosened the earth and brought the potatoes to the surface. We set ourselves up in teams and handled the job masterfully. To store these potatoes we built a 'pie' in the field which means we piled the potatoes like a pyramid about 6 feet high and about 8 feet wide on the bottom coming to a point forming a triangle.. This pie as the locals called it was about 200 or 300 feet long.

We first covered the potatoes with bundles of straw and on top of that we pile soil and packed it down solidly.

This was to protect the potatoes from freezing. Many times during the winter when orders came in for potatoes we opened the pie and shoveling the into a machine called a 'riddle' which selected different sizes we than filled 100 lb. Bags and carried them to a waiting truck lot's of hard work. At the end of both the thrashing and the potato season, the farmer told us never ever had he seen these jobs done as well and as fast before.

NO BONUS JUST A THANK YOU.

During the potato harvest some people were so exhausted they went to bed right after dinner. Occasionally some of us sat around and talked or listened to the radio or we played some records all classical music, when suddenly one of us said I am hungry.

We all made a bee line for the kitchen and took a loaf of bread and jam they bought that in half gallon size, and ate a whole loaf in a matter of minutes much to the dismay and scolding of our kitchen staff whose supplies were now even shorter.

They say 'necessity is the mother of invention' and invent we did.

We always took a couple of sandwiches with either jam or margarine but VERYrarely got bologna or salami for lunch. These Sandwiches should not be compared to the U. S. deli sandwiches because ours had only one paper thin slice of bologna or salami that's all there was. The trick was to try and have that piece of meat last us to the final bite of bread, so with the help of our tongue as we took a bite we pushed the meat back until the last bite we gave them a title 'push sandwiches'. (Schiebebelag)

As the days got shorter and the colder weather started it became a real problem for us being

out in the field a whole day this time we did a lot of field work to ready them for the winter and the next season..We found a couple of old oil metal drums and poked holes into the side of them. We filled them up with twigs branches and wooden logs, lit a fire and speared potatoes on the end of sticks which besides warming us, also gave us some semblance of a baked potato one side was raw the other burned but being hungry need I tell you more, we ate with gusto. All I remember about these days, I was constantly hungry

As I said we had little money and little very bland food. Once in a great while the girls shopping came across a few cans of peaches or other canned fruit which was a very rare Friday night treat. So we came up with a trick which we perfected to an art and that was to gross out the girls.

We told the most gruesome stories which made some of them abandon their desert and we eagerly divided the spoils, but in time it wore off or we realized the unfairness of it I am not sure which it was but we stopped it..

We must have become something of a sensation in the area, just imagine, a group of young German Jews, living together like gypsies, so word must have spread far and wide, which brought the Rabbi from the Harrogate Synagogue to pay us a visit.

Harrogate was then the second largest city in Yorkshire, Leeds was the biggest, both had a good sized Jewish community and a functioning Synagogues and Harrogate was not very far away from where we lived.

I believe I wrote about our Harrogate experience in my first memoirs, but I think it is worth repeating, because it is quite funny now, although it was far from funny then.

This Rabbi of course had heard of kibbutz live in Palestine but this was his first personal experience. Talking to us at our dinner during which he limited himself only to a cup of tea and in conversation discovered about Miriam and Saul's cohabitation.

Now he found something to preach to us about and urged Miriam and Saul to consider marriage.

Surprisingly they both agreed at once to be married. and after some discussion a wedding date was set right then and there

One has to be lucky sometime but we hit t the jackpot big time as you will see considering our circumstances.we were indeed a lucky bunch of people

Mr. Swyers was told the next day about the upcoming wedding and he too was very pleased and promised to drive the couple to Harrogate himself and gave the rest of us a loan of one of his trucks. It was all set and a short time after all the potatoes had been picked we would go

there a few Sundays away..

The day arrived and miraculously Miriam had managed to find some material and made herself a white dress. Mrs Swyers the farmer's wife lent Miriam a veil and all was set to go. As is the case so often in Yorkshire it had rained all night and the day before the wedding was no exception so the field we had to cross to get to the paved road was a mush.

Here we were Miriam and Saul in the lead with rest of us following all dressed in our BEST wearing high rubber boots carrying our shoes overhead as if were crossing a river, but all went well and we found the synagogue.

The Rabbi and some of the dignitaries were all pleased to have us come and many people surrounded us bombarding us with all kinds of questions.

The ceremony ended and the Rabbi announced that at the house of one of the members a reception had been planned and we were all invited.

As we entered the house a big and very well appointed home smelling of money everywhere we looked. Best of all was, pots of tea, sandwiches, cakes, cookies and trays of cigarettes placed all around the very large room.

We would have all passed the test for admission to a circus in the way we balanced the tea and sandwiches, cakes and managed to stuff ourselves but above all we filled our pockets with lots of cigarettes.

I am certainly not the type to act like that, but in the face of opportunity I threw all good upbringing to the wind and stuffed and stuffed and took cigarettes. (I was a big smoker than) I am not sure what these people thought of us, but one thing I know we were never invited to Harrogate again but with our rationing we had cigarettes for a few weeks.

As I mentioned earlier we had this old long handled water pump in the back yard, which harbored a definite hatred towards us and needed all kinds of coaxing before it gave up water. Many times we had to prime it several times in order to give us any water. To prime means to take a jug of water and while one of us furiously worked the handle of the pump up and down the other poured some water into the top of the pump till it finally and grudgingly started to produce water.

This joy increased dramatically as the winter slowly descended on us but water was needed so cold or not, rain or snow, pumping was needed and the colder it got the more this pump became reluctant and now we needed hot water fro priming.

Once we got the water to flow we collected all available vessels and filled them for an emergency standby. When we needed water to wash we put a bucket on to the gas burner and

warmed it a little to make it bearable.

If Cleanliness is next to Godliness we were nearer to the devil than the other way around. It was no more than a day or two after we started to work on the farm, when the man to whom I had been assigned as his helper very excitedly came running to me and started to shout something running back and forth in front of me. All I heard was bull but not a clue what he said or wanted. With a shrug of his hand he disgustingly gave up and motioned for me to jump into the back of the truck, which I did.

With a jerk he took off and going at high speeds over the fields sending me flying from one end of the open truck to the other. He suddenly stopped and pointed to an adjacent field. I saw what looked like a cow to me standing alone in the field looking closer I saw it was our bull. Now I knew what he wanted apparently the bull had broken out of his stall and escaped. Most carefully we approached I selected the rear of the offensive but surprisingly the bull was not belligerent and let the farmer put a rope through the ring embedded in his nose. Attaching the other end to the truck, which he now very slowly this time drove back to the farm and led the bull into his stall. Now I understood what he had been trying to tell me about the escaped bull but I was still glad I did not understand him right away.

One of our member's Moshe was sent to Mr .Swyers' brother's farm to work there. It was a couple of miles from where we worked but he was given an old bike and used it to get back and forth from work

This was an egg farm which delivered to local stores. In addition they also had an egg supply contract with a newly built Aerodrome (Air base) located in Hatfield which was also not too far away. After learning the routine, Moshe was given the job to take care of deliveries and driving often by himself. he began his little larceny.

One of Moshe's tasks was to collect the eggs every morning and pack them for delivery. After a while he found a way to kind of 'LOSE' some eggs in a safe hiding place picking them up on his way home.

He was too smart to overdo it but occasionally we had eggs what with our meager rations it was a boon indeed but there was also a little more to it as this farmer paid Moshe 5 shillings more a week which helped greatly as well..

Once in a while I too was sent to neighboring farms to help out with some fixing and repairing of machinery and when there was a problem they sometime called my boss for me to go there and see if I could help them. I received a little extra money for this which I too

gave to Saul and things got just a tiny little bit better.

One evening on my way home I came across a chicken who had gotten tangled up in a wire fence. This poor thing was so scared that I felt compelled to take it out of its misery.

Accidentally, as I pulled it out of the fence its neck got broken. What a shame but just to leave it lay there would have been criminal so I took it home and we had a little chicken, I was the hero for that day.

Thinking about this as I am writing it down, I could never do this today amazing what hunger makes one do without much thought.

My most unforgettable but certainly not most favorite character was Wabble. This of course was not his real name but it was the one we gave him as it fitted him to a T. I don't think anyone of us who lived in the Norton le Clay Kibbutz would ever forget him or his antics. He was tall, heavy and very fleshy and when walking around without a shirt which he often did everything was 'wabbling' on him, hence his name.

Although I don't think of us ever knew his real name, but the Wabble one someone gave him was a perfect fit.

Besides being very ungainly to look at he had the worst personal habits on cleanliness and orderliness and was in frequent conflict with one or another. He also seemed to be oblivious of his surroundings he did whatever it was he wanted to do, whenever it suited him.

We had a laundry room which held a large cauldron for boiling the wash and two buckets. One bucket was blue enameled and was the one which Erwin or I filled with milk for our use; the other a tin one was for washing and carrying water to the cauldron.

This was the only washing facility and since we had both males and females living together we scheduled the times and days for each gender to use this room.

One evening it was the girls night to use the washroom we heard an unbelievable scream coming from this room. Heaven knows what happened now All in earshot ran into the washroom and there a girl wrapped in a towel screaming her head off while Wabble unconcerned sat on a stool both feet in the milk bucket washing himself.

Endless and repeated scrubbing of the bucket put things to right again.

Eva and her twin sister (I forgot her name) were part of our team, they had come from Koenigsberg a city in the most northern part of Germany called Silesia. They both were very beautiful girls and were never short of boyfriends. One day Eva was walking back to the house from the cowshed carrying a large bundle of firewood which was stacked in back of the barn

for our use. As usual it had been raining and the ground was very slippery no one ever knew how it happened but she slipped and fell right into the open cesspool pit adjacent to the barn full of human and animal excrement. As she fell she screamed and luckily someone was nearby and pulled her out. They hosed her down and then 2 girls took her into the washroom and cleaned her completely. This poor girl was sick for days constantly vomiting as the memory brought her back to her accident. She was given permanent house duty after that. The seriousness of this accident can not be underestimated as within minutes the sewer gas would have killed her.

One time in late November, we saw an announcement in the paper that the York Minster was offering a Sunday afternoon concert "Handel's Messiah and the St. Mathews Passion". Since there was no admission charge this became a must for some of us music lovers and we persuaded the Farmer's Son James to drive us there with his promise to pick us up again at the end of the concert.

He took us there alright but never showed up to take us home. It was at least 25 miles away and although we all managed to get a lift which brought us closer but we still had to walk miles getting home very late at night. It had been a wonderful experience and in spite of the walking we felt elated.

When chastising James the next day he laughed and thought it was very funny.

He had a very mean streak in him against us because his father liked the way we worked and must have held us up as an example.

He was not the best worker and often showed up late for work well into the morning.

I remember one hot day in late September or early October while picking potatoes we were very thirsty and waited for one of the girls to bring us some water which they usually did on days like that.

He stood in front of us holding two soda bottles in his mouth and drinking while much of it ran down his shirt "want a drink he heckled". We tried to ignore it but it was very difficult.

One morning as we woke, it was as if someone had pulled a huge curtain aside; the whole area was white and covered with several inches of snow.

Winters in Yorkshire are brutal cold damp lots of ice and snow but out into the fields we had to go and pick sugar beets. There was a plow like machine ahead of us that loosened the soil and we followed pulling sugar beets out of the ground banging them together to remove as much ice and snow as possible and throw them into large containers.

As we filled these containers a truck followed along and it took four of us to lift that heavy container and dump it into the truck.

Most of the time James drove the truck but once in a while when he was absent I was given that job as I was the only one who could drive a vehicle with pre-select gearing.

We thought the potato harvest was hard this was near impossible.

On a rotational basis one of us accompanied the hired driver to take these sugar beets up to a processing plant near Edinburgh Scotland.

Sugar was also in very short supply so the whole area had planted sugar beets and this factory was running a three shift schedule seven days a week. It was a real opportunity to go with him and while the unloading was very hard work, the trip was interesting and restful. All we had to do drive for about three hours one way and on the way back the driver asked me to give him a spell so I drove for a while. It was indeed better than standing in damp and even wet clothing all day freezing while pulling these frozen beets.

Erwin and I shared an attic room with a double bed. There was no electricity in that room and the cover given to us it was very heavy and must have been filled with stones,. Usually when getting up in the morning we joined forced to get that thing off us although it kept us warm all night..

After getting out of bed we lit a candle firstly to see and secondly to warm our socks which had frozen solid from the previous day's perspiration.

In anticipating your question, NO! we did not change our clothes or underwear every day lucky if we did it once a week. First of all none of us had nowhere near enough clothing and who would stand and wash clothes every day and how long do you think it would take to dry hanging on a line strung across the laundry room.

Did I not say earlier we lived the height of luxury ?

One of our biggest problem being out in the field all day regardless of weather rain snow it mattered not we did what had to be done but our raincoats were no longer waterproof.

I had a trench coat I had bought in Germany shortly before I left but even that was now insufficient to keep out the wetness.

Trying to figure out what we could do to make our coats more waterproof we searched all around the farm and found some kind of fish oil with which we painted our rain coats.

Most of the coats looked OK but mine turned black and shiny and stiff like a board but it helped to keep me dry.

Although it happened some years later, but before I forget I have a very funny story connected with this black shiny coat of mine.

After I had ended my agricultural working life and returned to London the first thing I wanted to do was to throw this hideous coat in the garbage.

I had a brother in law named Eddie a bit of a character to say the least and a supreme pack rat, who took the coat from me and that was the last I saw of it I thought. Some time later I was working in a factory in 'Camden Town' London which had a large and very busy street called high street and was lined with shops on both sides.

I often walked along this high street during my lunch hour and watched people mostly women pushing their babies in prams walking, shopping or queuing up for food on this busy avenue.

One day it was a especial nice and sunny day a rarity in London anyway, a distance away I saw a little guy walking towards me on the opposite side of the street wearing a hideous black shiny oat which immediately reminded me of my own coat in Yorkshire. As it came closer I recognized it at once and sure enough it was my brother in law Eddie wearing this monstrosity.

Try to visualize, I am not very tall anyway, but he was about 3" shorter than I, and was wearing this ugly black shining coat reaching almost down to the ground. On his head he wore a German style 'yodeler' hat with a feather stuck in the side of it and carrying a German style briefcase. He looked like a real movie caricature of a German spy.

"What are you doing here Eddie, and why are you wearing this terrible coat on this sunny day" was my logical question .

First he thought it might rain later on, but to my question what he was doing came this reply. He worked in a factory producing flash light batteries and they used enamel jugs to pour acid into a graphite mixture which formed the body of these batteries. He said the jugs do not last very long and they needed some more but he had no luck finding any and to my second question what are you asking for he replied. "Emiel cans." I could not control myself but laughed out loud but let me explain.

Hopefully you will understand as the language translation is quite difficult, but firstly try to imagine, whenever Eddie spoke English he made a great effort to always speak in a sophisticated 'King's English' laced with a terrible German accent hillarious. This made understanding him much more difficult especially for local people who never had any contact with foreigners in the first place.

Now to the translation: The German word for enamel is email (sounds a bit like A mail- I

immediately got the problem because no one understood what he wanted.

I walked with him across the street to a large hardware housewares store, but he told me not to go in there as he had tried this store before but had no luck.

I knew this store well, because very frequently I went or sent people there to purchase odd items needed in the factory and knew that they had a terrific warehouse full of supplies. As I went into the store I saw the salesman whom I knew behind the counter and I asked him for an enamel jug. All he said what size and how many after I told him he went to the back of the store and brought the two he had wanted Eddie paid and we left.

Outside the store he was simply thunderstruck and outraged that they would not give them to him. "They had no idea what in heaven's name you wanted" I said and shaking his head in disbelief he walked off..

This joke lived on in our family for years and temporarily his name was
A MIEL CAN.

Very soon after getting into our routine back in Yorkshire, Erwin and I were assigned to the cowshed and to milking cows. This was a twice a day seven days a week job, which meant we had to get up at 1 1/2 hours earlier than the others, We washed and cleaned the milk cans and poured the fresh milk through a large filtering system, filling the washing cans which held about 15 or 20 gallons.

We loaded these filled cans onto a small pick up truck and either one of us drove them to the train stop, which was about a 5 mile distance. We put the filled cans onto a platform for the milk train pick up, and brought the empty ones, which the train employee had left the night before back to the farm for the next cycle

While one of us drove we took turns, the other one cleaned the filtration unit and washed all the buckets let the cows out onto the field by that time the other one had returned.

Once in a great while when Mr. Swyers walked by to check on us and invited us to the farmhouse for a GOOD breakfast not like what we had in our house and after that we joined the others for the field work

This milking routine had to be done on both Saturday and Sunday as cows needed to be taken care of 7 days a week twice a day. Except Sunday the train ran one hour later
Yippee! How lucky one whole hour of extra sleep

This morning routine milking driving cleaning etc. was repeated again in the afternoon so that Erwin and I often came a little late for dinner, which was always kept warm for us.

While I am thinking of our time and milking experience another one of my friend Erwin's little pranks comes to mind.

All Hachsharah 'Kibbutzim' there were several such places throughout England, came under the jurisdiction of the Jewish Agency which was responsible to oversee our activities and worked in close contact with the ministry of agriculture.

We did not know this but there must have been a couple of people assigned to periodically visit these establishments and report back to the central office

We had no advance notification except that one day a young fellow stopped by and declared himself to be a representative of this Jewish Agency

I am sure after talking with Saul who introduced him to us at dinner that he had the necessary credentials and was given a spare room in our house for his two day stay.

After Saul's introduction this fellow talked a little about the agency and that he too had worked on Hachsharah at different farms for some time, which I thought that he was trying to show off. That next afternoon this fellow followed Erwin and myself around while we were doing our afternoon milking. All the while standing around and telling us how hard he had worked and how he had done this same job we were doing for a long time. It was very annoying and the way he talked we knew he was bragging.

Erwin always the joker had a plan. He asked him if he would be willing to assist us on the following morning in milking so we would get done faster and help the others out in the field a lot sooner. He hesitatingly agreed having been caught off guard.

We had a mean bull in the cowshed (the one I helped catch some time earlier) who was kept in a special reinforced stall and only one or two of the experienced farmhands would take care of him.

During the evening meal this young 'inspector' started again telling everyone about all the things he had done on different farms before he got this job.

Erwin took him aside after dinner and explained our particular duties so he would know what to do the following morning.

We did not know it for sure but we highly suspected that this fellow had some kind of connection in the agency and judging from his talking had very little if any farm experience.

The following morning Erwin went to his room and woke him to come and help. Half asleep this poor guy came down to the cowshed with us where Erwin gave him a stool and bucket and pointed to that stall where the bull was kept "in there" he said and walked

away.

I don't think this fellow was in there more than 2 seconds when a huge bang and screaming started, I raced in there and pulled him out shaking like a leaf and white like a ghost. Calmly Erwin said to him sorry wrong stall and walked away.

This guy went back to the house got dressed and left we never had another visitor from that office as long as we were in Yorkshire

It was a long and hard winter and in late May we received instructions from the agency in London to leave Norton le Clay and report to Braunton in Devonshire which was another place that agreed to employ us.

We packed our belongings and a truck was hired to ship our belongings to the new place and as before we again had to make our own way to Devonshire. We all started to hitchhike and were given a few days to report to that new Kibbutz.

The evening before we left Mrs. Swyers invited us all to the main house for a farewell party. She made a nice spread, tea and mince pie and the following morning we headed south saying good by to Norton le Clay.

This was I thought a great opportunity for me to hopefully visit my family in London. By this time my father, my sister, my two aunts Laura and Frieda as well as uncle Fred and Lola lived in or near London and so I made up my mind to stop over and if possible try to see them all.

We had all been given 10 shillings (about \$2.00) just in case of emergency and that was our total wealth.

As luck would have it the first truck which stopped for me went all the way down within less than 30 miles north of London, and within a few minutes a car stopped for me and put me near the most northern underground station.

I had been in touch with most of my family by mail so I knew where they lived and worked and it was a little before noon when I went down into the underground and took a train to where my two aunts were working. I arrived at that station and easily found the factory and positioned myself across the narrow street so I would not miss them coming out at lunch. This was a small factory which manufactured uniforms and tents for the military and had very few women working there. As I stood there waiting I saw my aunt Laura emerge from the building looking straight at me I waved to her but she ignored me and continued walking As I tried to cross the street the other aunt Frieda came out and recognized me at once. It was a nice reunion we had not seen each other for more than two

years and Laura was besides herself for not having recognized me.

I must admit I had changed quite a bit, I was stronger and very tanned so I can understand her failure to recognize me. They insisted on treating me for lunch which I readily accepted.

After lunch I walked to where my father was working and spent a couple of hours with him. He left work early and we both went home to his furnished room not far from my sister's place. After she came home from work we went to her place, which she shared with her friend Esther also a girl from Munich whom I knew and we had supper together. It was really nice to spend a little time with them almost like old times. I could not manage to see my uncle Fred his wife Lola and my cousin Rolf as they lived on the other side of town and I had little money left and also had to be on my way the next morning. Although I would have had a couple of hours, but did not know how quickly I could get to Braunton which is 210 miles south of London I decided not to visit them this time around hoping to be able to do so again before long.

Hitchhiking down to Devonshire was easy and uneventful and I got to our new home on South Street in plenty of time.

This new house was really a lot better than the one we left in Yorkshire and glad to say we had indoor plumbing regular bathrooms and lived in a town of about 3000 people with paved streets shops and a movie house.

Braunton is about 6 miles from Ilfracombe which is right on the Atlantic coast, and a busy seaside tourist vacation place; it has many hotels restaurants and about 15000 inhabitants a very busy place. DELIGHTFUL!

To the north is Barnstaple also about the same distance from Braunton about 20,000 people live there, and it a busy commercial / industrial city.

Although it was not the easiest way to go to either one of these two towns, about a 2 hours walk, but we often did so anyway and usually found someone to come along for company. Once in a great while we even got a lift, but never really looked for a hitch as I did not like that idea too much.

Slowly our group managed to get down there except Wabble had just disappeared and we never saw or heard from him again..

This time we got a number of other people to join our group and we became a total of 32 of about 20 fellows and 12 girls.

It must have been decided between them before we left Yorkshire, but Erwin and Soso the

girl from Czechoslovakia requested to live together, which was no problem, but I lost my room mate and now shared one with three other fellows which worked out quite well. Braunton too was built along the Atlantic coast had a large dune covered beach, which was a beautiful spot to walk evenings or on weekends of which most of us took much and frequent advantage. I too very often walked the dunes as well (I did not mind walking barefoot in the very fine and soft sand then) or I sat by the beach reading or being with a friend or two.

Our new place of employment was also completely different. It was a large flower 'Bulb' farm which was heavily involved in exporting their products..This was a very big company having huge properties. Because of the critical food situation in England they had turned hundreds of acres into a vegetable growing business for which we had been hired. . Every morning we were given different assignments so we never knew ahead of time if it was the bulb farm or the vegetable one.

The wages were better and our hours regulated from 7A M til 5 P M giving us ½ hr for lunch and 2 short breaks mornings and afternoon so that our work day was 9 hours. We were picked up and brought home every day by one of their trucks so it worked out a lot better and the work was much easier too at least in the beginning.

The work was tedious and very boring especially being on our hands and knees for hours weeding the onion beds for days and days.

The weather too was getting very warm nothing like Yorkshire but really no complaints Now that we were 32 people we elected a VAAD (executive board) 2 men and one woman and very soon after their election they came to us with a number of proposals.

The first and most revolutionary for me was 'Machsan Aleph', which is a true Kibbutz community in every respect. With the exception of a few personal items nothing belongs to an individual and everything belongs to all. To me this was much to much like communism but the few who were against it were outvoted and it became a true Kibbutz.

Now if one needed something personal it had to be approved by the Vaad or one of them could make the decision if it was a small item.

I really was not very happy with this situation but thought to try it for a while as we were just settling into this new place.

I seem to be gifted in learning foreign languages, so I was among the few who mastered English rather quickly and I gladly volunteered to help those who had difficulties.

Most Saturday afternoons after we had come home from work (1/.2 day Saturdays) I spent

about 1 hour helping others to write read and properly pronounce English.

Among the people who came regularly was Henny Katz and soon the two of us became quite friendly. We used to go for walks and had nice long talks and little bit of romancing but it soon ended as we did not seem to fit too well with each other..

She soon started up with another fellow Herbert Witlin also from Berlin and these two seem to have had much more in common. On one of our trips to Israel I found the two of them again. They were living outside of Tel Aviv in a little house they had married but were childless it was a short and friendly visit but our only one.

I soon settled into a routine which is my favorite way to live; unless we had some activity in the evenings or I was reading a book I would go for walks through the town and soon discovered that Braunton was quite an affluent place. Walking through some of the residential streets I saw some very impressive homes with well manicured lawns always a British pride anyway.

On one of those walks I met two girls who stopped me and asked me if I was one of those people who just moved into South street, but I am sure they knew and just wanted to start a conversation. When I answered in the affirmative they were very curious to find out all about us, about Germany and the Nazis of course.

It seems they were on their way to the movies but must have found me to be more interesting so we talked for quite a long time.

After this encounter, it appeared to me that it was more on purpose than accidental that I saw one of those two girls all too frequently when walking in town and often stopped and talked with her.

She was very interested in my background and I had much to tell her. After some time as she seemed to know my habits we started to meet more regularly and one evening I invited her to go to the movies with me to see the Wizard of Oz which she accepted.

Her name was Jean Ellis and she was the daughter of the butcher shop proprietor at the corner of South and Main street a few doors from where we lived.

She was 16 years old very pretty and smart attending a sort of private college in Barnstaple I took a real liking to Jean and although 4 years my junior she seemed very mature intelligent and a good conversationalist and we soon became very friendly.

Meantime life in the 'kibbutz became more difficult for me as I saw many inequities in the way funds were dispensed.

The straw that broke the camels back as they say I believe it was when I needed a new

toothbrush or something simple like that but was put off repeatedly while I saw others getting things more easily.

My complaints seem to fall on deaf ears so one evening at dinner I announced my resignation from the Kibbutz.

I did not realize it before, but I seemed in the eyes of some to have been an important member as they all strenuously tried to dissuade me from leaving.. Being who I am, I had made plans ahead of time and had rented a small hut in the backyard of a one family house. They called these houses 'council houses' as the municipality put them up in a string like sameness all over the country.

This house was occupied by two very nice elderly ladies who had built this little hut for a nephew but he had joined the army and this little hut was now empty.

They were very happy to rent it to me and although my indoor plumbing was limited to running cold water the toilet was once again a little but private out house in the back yard..

This little hut had very few amenities, it was a one room approximately 10 feet by 8 feet uninsulated place had a kerosine heater, as a ceiling light there was one small naked electric bulb as a hotplate like stove also electric, running cold water and sink, and a cot to sleep on as well as a small table and a couple of chairs. While it was not the Waldorf, and having learned during the last few years to do without a lot of luxuries it was all mine to do as I pleased.

I notified Mr Ellis the butcher of my change, because we had to register with a butcher for meat rationing, who knew that I was friendly with Jean, but he readily and most cordially accepted me as a separate new customer.

Although Jean had told me that her father frowned on our relationship, I felt he often favored me with a little bit extra during a very strict and short of supply rationing period..

I also had quite a number of visitors from the Kibbutz who where equally unhappy and many envied me for having taken this step as they too were not pleased with what was going on there and how unfairly the Vaad had acted.

One of my visitors was Walter Mainz who was part of the Vaad a little older than I and had come from Berlin where he had completed Gymnasium. As we discussed the Kibbutz and the administration of it, he agreed with my conclusions and reason for leaving and told me he too was leaving because he had found a relative who sponsored him and would pay for his completion of medical school to become a Doctor.

I am sure my leaving had nothing to do with it, but within a couple of months after I had

left, many others did the same, and the group dissolved quite quickly everyone going off in a different direction while some joined other existing Kibbutzim. I heard later on the Shaul and Miriam had gone to New York

I no longer needed permission to buy for myself whatever I wanted and could afford, I managed quite well to cook and eat as well or better than before and had enough room to entertain an occasional visitor, and even began to save a little money for extras

As Jean and I became real close she was a frequent visitor in my abode, she often darned my socks and we ate together it was a lot of fun.

She sometime brought me 'clotted cream' a Devon specialty and is like whipped cream excellent on cakes pies or in coffee, but as she told me her father totally disapproved of these visits. At that time I felt that his disapproval was because of my being Jewish and a German refugee totally unacceptable for a respectable English family, but looking back now as a father and grandfather I more readily understand his misgivings.

Mr. Ellis however never mentioned anything to me whenever I went to his store, he always treated me with friendly respect and we often engaged in discussions and he always took splendid care of my rations.

As it turned out, there was really no need for Mr. Ellis to worry, as around that time an air force base was established nearby and Braunton, and Ilfracombe and Barnstaple swarmed with blue air force uniforms and soon. Jean preferred a uniformed airman over me and that was the end of that.

A nice thing I would like to mention, happened to me one Sunday as I walked to Ilfracombe an elderly couple stopped and although I did not hitchhike they asked where I was going. When I told them they invited me to ride with them. As we drove on we had a very nice conversation in the car about my background and my life here in England. To this day my German accent immediately gives me away. They were going for a vacation to Ilfracombe and Torquay and invited me to have lunch with them.

This was the first time I was in a hotel there and I liked the idea very much.

Many years later on our first vacation trip back to England we met my cousin Rolf and his wife Edith in London (she died very young) and we took a week's trip into the 'west country together.

Although we both did the B&B route everywhere we traveled but when we got to Ilfracombe it was different. While Rolf and Edith stayed in a B & B I insisted on a hotel where Mira and I stayed. I just had to go to a hotel there if only for my memories sake

back to a time when I could barely afford to buy an ice cream

We also went on that trip to Cornwall and down into Clovelly. After parking our car in Clovelly, we took a fairly steep climb down to the ocean and explored its smuggler's cove. However we had to climb back up again to the roadway. This narrow climbing way is filled with shops for tourists on both sides. This was heaven for both Mira and Edith who were looking for antiques and having a generally good time, browsing through the many shops while Rolf and I followed grumbling good naturedly both ways.. From there we went on to Ilfracombe but first stopped at Braunton and visited the still existing 'Ellis' butcher shop. I went in and spoke to a woman behind the counter asking about Jean and Mr. Ellis. Jean had married an airman and lived somewhere overseas and Mr. Ellis had died.

.Back to my life in Braunton; where things have changed dramatically. There were no more kibbutz members left, the last two had moved to London a few weeks ago so it became a little lonely for me..I was however still obligated to stay within the agricultural employment a requirement of my visa, but I started to look for different employment closer to London It did not take very long before I found a new job with the Hertfordshire Agricultural War Committee in Wellyn Garden City. Although still registered as a agricultural laborer, I was now given additional responsibilities as a mechanical troubleshooter, where I went to different farms..I frequently drove around the county repairing and maintaining agricultural machinery wherever needed.

This job was much more appealing as it gave me more freedom and opportunities to meet different people a little more money and especially nice was the fact that Hertfordshire is not far from London and enabled me to see my relatives more often.

There was a kibbutz in St. Albans to which Erwin and by now his wife Soso had moved after they left Devonshire.

I approached them if I could rent 'room and board' on a weekly basis they agreed and I stayed in that Kibbutz for a short while

St. Albans is only a bus ride from London, which enabled me to cheaply visit someone of my family, which I did most weekends..

It was now 1941 and the war momentum increased tremendously; newspapers constantly advertised a desperate need for skilled or unskilled people to work in defense plants.

As I had completed my Machinist- Toolmaker's apprenticeship in Germany, I felt I could be of more value to the war effort by working in a defense plant while awaiting my expected call up for the army..

I went to the 'Labor Exchange' (unemployment office) and applied for a job.

During the interview the clerk called a supervisor and asked if I would be acceptable to work in the defense industry seeing that

1. I was not a British subject but designated a 'friendly alien' and
2. The condition of my visa was limited to agricultural work

I was told to report back within a week as they had to investigate this matter further.

When I returned the following week they told me all was cleared and offered me a job in east London.

The name of the company was 'safety tread corp.' and they built all kinds of manufactured items made out of steel for the building and construction industry.

Before I moved back to London, my father had been renting a furnished room but as I was coming to London he found a Flat (apartment) on 65 Ravensdale Rd. In Stamford Hill. It was located in a 3 story building in an area which in the past was mostly occupied by the carriage trade (Upscale). This means that people of higher social and financial standing lived there..

However now with the shortages of apartments these buildings were converted into multiple dwellings

This was a one bedroom, living room, kitchen apartment, and except for the kitchen which was a little small the rooms were very large and most suitable for the two of us. Half way

between the second and third floor was the bathroom toilet and bathtub a schedule was worked out so we would not conflict with the owners who lived below.

There was Mr.&Mrs Lukomski her son a late teenager and another a little younger. Lastly there was her sister a seamstress who had a home shop in the basement apartment. The woman kept some chickens in the backyard so once in a while we could buy a couple of eggs from her. This arrangement worked out real well and we became quite friendly with one another

To me it felt like we were starting to rebuild our family as it was some years ago..I did not know it than, but in time it really became again a routinized life for us except that the war raged on unabatedly. All to soon minor changes were coming which almost ripped everything apart we had so carefully built

My sister married a man whom we called Eddie his real name was Edwin Edouard

Oshitzky and like all of us refugees as soon as we could he changed his name to Osborn. He

had joined the British army and was assigned to the pioneer corps came through the evacuation of Dunkirk and shortly after that entered a military hospital.

It was out side of London and I went one day to visit him which required about a one hour train ride. Two medical orderlies half carried him into the visiting room but left us alone for a visit. As soon as we were alone he jumped up and down like a young kid and told me there was nothing wrong with him he just wanted out of the army an effort, in which he shortly afterwards succeeded

As he was now discharged from the army, hey lived together with their first born son Ronald in a furnished room but were looking to move.

It did not take very long after some discussions before they moved in setting up our bedroom as theirs, while my father and I slept on a convertible couch in the living room. We made a simple arrangement, both my father and I paid the whole rent while my sister in leu of paying any rent would take care of the house laundry cooking shopping etc. which seemed to worked out quite well for a short while.

Our family seems to have had magnetic effect on people, because before very long a number of European refugees living in the area became regular drop in visitors in our house. While these visits were initially sporadic, things changed on Wednesday evenings.

Every Wednesday evening the radio presented 'Victor Sylvestor and his band' playing dance music for 1 hour which became a fixed evening in our house.

As regular as clockwork, we moved all the furniture against the wall and cleared the floor for dancing. At eight P M .every Wednesday found a good size group of people at 65 Ravensdale Rd. dancing, shmoozing and having a good time. It was always a very nice evening but unfortunately because of the very strict food rationing no refreshments could be offered, but everyone understood this situation.

Although I liked my job and the work I was given at 'safety tread', I was not satisfied, because I felt that I should be more directly connected with war work.

I am not suggesting that this was unimportant work as it was connected with the infrastructure, which was in constant need of repair especially now as these unrelenting air raids inflicted mounting damage to buildings needing constant repair, all I wanted was to be more directly connected with the war effort.

I therefore went back to the 'Labor Exchange' and speaking with the same clerk I did before, I stated my concern about not being employed too directly impacting defense. He

seemed to understand my feelings, and sent me to another place in Camden Town where they made different hardware items for aircrafts especially guidance systems.

This was much more satisfying and as predicted within a few months after working at the 'British Unit Heater Co..I was called up to report to the army's recruiting center.

In the interim I had been promoted to foreman and the company successfully received a deferment for me which they repeated successfully two more times and kept me out of military service as they felt I would be of more value where I was .

To this day however I have a little guilt feeling for not having served in the military but I think I may have helped in some small measure where I was.

By now our life was pretty well organized, with few exceptions we took our meals together and my sister took care of the household. My sister was always a very busy person there were never any idle hands and she discharged all her responsibilities and so much more with good humor and cheer. She also did some home work mostly sewing but also making shopping nets. During this time, there were extreme shortages of so many things that when people went to stores to do their shopping they had to bring their own bags.

One of the popular sayings during that time was "Don't you know there is a war on"

Someone figured out a way to make shopping nets from thin string which became very popular, and my sister was among many who made them as part of her homework activities to bring in a little extra money..

It must have been on one of her shopping days when my sister met a woman and her daughter named Leah Singer. Women had to queue up in front of food stores to get their daily supply and as these queues sometimes moved very slowly many a friendships developed there. However it started I began to see Leah around the house quite a lot as well as at our Wednesday evening dances.

She was I believe 14 years old and looked like a nice nondescript schoolgirl who wanted to learn sewing, knitting or other needle work from my sister.

She was very quiet and pleasant enough and soon became a fixture in our house..

These constant air raids on London and other cities in England were very nerve racking and hazardous but I can speak only with the highest admiration in the way the Londoners as indeed all the Brit's conducted themselves during those years was most admirable .

They built rows of double bunks along the whole length of both sides of the underground station platforms and night after night, women pushing baby carriages as well as many other people went down into the underground to spend the night. It became a ritual where

everyone selected their bunk and kept the same one night after night. Many people even left some of their belongings down there all the time and to the best of my knowledge nothing was ever taken

Once in a while when I came home late I saw the people sheltering at the Manor House station and quite often saw one or two younger people playing an instrument to entertain the crowd. .

Many times someone would come out of the underground shelter in the morning only to discover that their home was damaged or completely destroyed. It was simply amazing how stoically these people took these disasters in their stride. As soon as it was safe for them to go in they tried to save all they could and usually moved in with relatives.

Air raids often lasted several hours and initially came mostly during the night but later on another favorite time was during the working hours for the purpose of interrupting production. Very quickly people found a solution to that problem. During the night each facility be it office or factory required to have air raid fire watchers on duty as incendiary bombs caused much property damage. These night fire watchers were given waterproof coats helmets, sand filled buckets and a shovel. As soon as an incendiary bomb fell we raced out into the street or wherever they may have fallen and quickly covered them with sand thus chocking off the flames. But now when the air raids sounded during the day they had trained roof spotters. These people stood on the roof with binoculars and scoured the sky as long as there were no enemy aircraft in the immediate vicinity work continued, but as soon as a plane came close to their building they pressed a buzzer giving people enough time to go to the shelter. This meant that most of the time, work went on uninterrupted even though air raids may have been going on in London.

Like everyone else I too took my turn at both fire watching as well as roof spotting. But in spite of these many problems we managed to continue a relatively normal life. Amazing how one can adapt to any situation if necessary.

“FAMILIARITY BREED’S CONTEMPT” is a very good and descriptive phrase to which we were no exception.

To be charitable, my brother in law, was a very difficult person to live with, and although he never approached either my father or myself with a problem, he made things difficult for my sister and pushed her to talk to us.

True, their room was crowded with all the required paraphernalia for a baby and slowly things ended up in the living room first one thing than another until most of their stuff was

in our room. Seeing that it was after all his child it came to an unavoidable showdown and we all agreed that they should move.

They very quickly found a place not very far from us may be a 10 minute walk also near Stamford Hill, which was a perfect solution and we saw each other quite often visiting back and forth. But best of all once again my father and I had a bed to sleep in and we managed very well doing the housework cooking etc. I am not sure if we would have passed an inspection by a seasoned housewife, but it was more than adequate for us.

There was a sizable refugee group in London most of whom had settled in Golders Green, Swiss Cottage or Stamford Hill, which created a need for places of entertainment or restaurants where these people could meet get together and reminisce about the past.

One very nice place which opened in Golders Green was called the Laterndel translates (little lantern) which was set up in an Austrian motive. had a nice restaurant, some dance music and a floor show. I had gone there a number of times and on one evening I convinced my father to come with me which he did.

As the evening progressed I noticed a very attractive young lady smiling at me or at least I thought she did.. During the evening we exchanged a few casual words and that seemed to be the end of it. But as we got into the underground, which was quite crowded as it was the last train for the day (the trains stopped running at midnight until 5.00AM) and she stood right next to me and now more bravely I started a conversation. To make sure I will not miss the chance, I quickly asked for and got her phone number which I was glad I did because soon after that she got off the train much earlier than did I

Shortly after I had met Margot Hurtig I called her and we met the next Sunday in the West End (London's downtown) for a pleasant walk in Hyde Park and tea at Lyon's corner house. She was also from Germany and we met several times during the next few weeks going for walks to museums and concerts we seem to have had a lot in common but suddenly something happened which I do not know for sure to this day.

I believe that she felt we were getting a little too close and she (thankfully) handed me her alien registration book and told me to read it. I looked at it but did not really understand what she wanted me to know. As I started to hand it back to her she said look at my birth date. I was in shock. According to her records she was 34 years old whereas I was just 20.

Now I understood and thanked her profusely for her honesty. She was extremely attractive and very youthful looking. She had been married and had lost her husband in an German concentration camp .I had always assumed that she was a little older than I may be 2 or 3

years but never that much, no way did she look or act her age.

This brought an immediate end to our romance and I must admit quite shattering to me. (worse than Jean Ellis of Branton)

On a later visit back to that Austrian night club I saw Margot sitting with another man somewhat older than she and we acknowledged each other with a friendly nod.

It was on a weekday afternoon and as so often, Leah was doing something with my sister and I thought of going to the movies. I knew my sister would never go without her husband, so I casually asked Leah would you like to go to the movie's with me. She flushed and said no thank you, so I went alone. No big deal it was not the first time I went by myself. A short time later I don't know exactly how much later Leah asked if she could bring a friend whom she knew from Germany to meet our family. We agreed Of course especially another refugee like ourselves was always welcome. the following Saturday afternoon she came as promised bringing this girl friend of hers with her.

I went down to let them in and Leah took the lead followed by that girl and me coming behind her. She looked much more womanly than Leah although she had said she was barely one year older than Leah.

We all had a nice conversation and found out that she had come to England with the Kinder transport leaving her mother behind in Krakow, Poland

A quick explanation of 'Kinder transport': England had agreed to allow up to 10,000 children ranging in ages from 3 to 16 to come to their country provided a home could be found for them which would take them in and that they would not become a public charge. These children came from Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia but the program came to an end when the war started on September 3 / 1939. By that time about 8000 children had been settled in England.

Mira and her mother who had a Polish passport were deported from Germany in October of 1938 and were settled in Krakow, living with a Jewish family in a furnished room. They spent their days in a Jewish community center where they got their meals and spent time with others who were in the same situation. It was there one day when her mother heard of the Kinder transport movement and registered her daughter.

They were called in early January of 1939 and shortly after that her mother put her only daughter Mira on a train to London never to see each other again.

She arrived in London and was taken in by a family living in London near Stamford Hill. To the best of our information we learned that her mother was murdered in an death camp

called Treblinka near the infamous death camp Auschwitz in Poland..

Now I relate Mira's version on how we met.

"I spent many weekends with a girlfriend called Bella Preissman one or two years older than I, wandering around different places in search of boys. A frequent 'hang out' was Springfield park not very far from Stamford Hill which is a large park and had a big lake where people could rent row boats.

On weekends, many people went there walking, picnicking or rowing which made it a very popular place for both young and old..

Accidentally one day while walking in this park we met Leah Singer, a girl with whom I went to school in Germany, and who lived in the same area, while talking with her she began to brag about her boyfriend. Not only did she have a boyfriend but he was much older and she raved about all kinds of other good things about him..

More in denial than anything else neither one of us believed her and we completely rejected her story. How could it be possible; here is little Leah who looks like a little girl and we are much older and more mature. Leah must have surmised their disbelief and insisted that it was true and invited me to visit him as soon as she could arrange it."

That Mira said is how it happened.

After spending some time in pleasant conversation together, I believe we may have had 'Tea' it had gotten dark, so I offered to escort them home.

I first deposited Leah at her home and then continued on with Mira. As we came near her house I invited her to come again and telling her about our Wednesday get-together's.

She gladly accepted but asked me how come you took your girlfriend Leah home first?

"Girlfiend" I exclaimed "where did you get that idea"

"She told me" was her reply. It was inconceivable to me how she could have possibly gotten that idea and I assured Mira that it was not true.

She is a girl who came to visit my sister and as I happen to live there as well and had occasional conversations with her which must have given her that idea.

I found her to be a very friendly girl as well and I was glad that she had a friend in my sister and that was the full extend of it..

Mira too seemed to be a very pleasant girl and appeared to be glad to have met my family and came back for another visit.

As I took her home I asked her if she would be interested in a date but she refused so I

thought she must have her reasons.

But she came again and after a while I asked her again thinking let me give this one more chance if not it's not. This time it was a very positive yes

It was many years later that I found out that there was some kind of a code of behavior whereby a girl must refuse a date three times for fear of being thought of as 'Easy'.

Glad she did not wait three times as there would never have been a third time as far as I was concerned. Silly the things girls made up for themselves in those years but that is the way it was.

It did not take very long after Mira & I had first met that we became serious in our relationship and we celebrated her 16th birthday together..

Mira had some cousins living in Kilburn named Herling who were actually her mother's cousins but she knew them as well and had visited them several times on previous occasions before we had gotten to know each other.

It was one Sunday that she asked me to come with her to visit and meet these cousins as they were among the very few relatives she had left.

There were three siblings two men and a woman who occupied the main floor apartment but lived mostly in the basement of a converted two family house. For my first visit I was entertained on the main floor but after that always went to the basement. All of them were indeed at home when we arrived that afternoon and it became pretty quickly obvious that these were highly intelligent people and well informed on a multitude of subjects

The oldest named Chaim an attorney from Leipzig who was at that time working as a CPA while awaiting approval for his lawyer's license, so he could once more resume his legal profession.

Next came his brother Schmielick (Samuel) who was at that time almost blind and could no longer work. He was however completely up to date on the latest news and events and seemed glued to the radio for music and information all the time .

The last and youngest one was a sister Sara also virtually blind but still giving language lessons to pupils coming to her house. These three people were among the most interesting I had met in a long time and apart from being super intelligent, they kept all kinds of interesting conversations going for hours on end. As this was always my 'meat' I chimed right in and spent a great afternoon and evening with them.

Their lifestyle was very lay back and relaxed almost Bohemian and there were always visitors in their house where active debates were going on all the time on any subject

under the Sun. There had originally been a total of seven siblings in that family three of whom had remained in Poland and perished in one of the death camps.

One other sister lived in Paris but her final fate was at that time unknown. I do not recall if she was ever heard of again after the war or she may have possibly been another casualty of the Holocaust.

Shmielick was the only one of all seven who never went to college but he was the business man in the family. He had paid for the education for most of his siblings as he was a very shrewd and apparently quite successful business man in Germany.

He had a fiancé who had remained in Germany and she like so many others was unable to emigrate and perished there as well.

As I said earlier both Sara as well as Schmielick were slowly going blind as had another brother who had remained in Poland.

Undergoing a series of medical examination revealed that their blindness was caused by a 'Jewish decease' stemming from the in breeding during their lives in a Polish Ghetto where all of them they were born, it was therefore a definite genetic defect and incurable. at that time

But in spite of this blindness they were both lively, active and had a lot of different ideas which they lavishly offered during our many discussions and of course disagreements..

Shmielick and I became fast friends and he often made his way to our house visiting and discussing many of his business ideas with me.

Being good natured I helped him with a number of ideas but unfortunately none of them proved successful until I finally discouraged any further experimentations with him.

After the end of the war the university of Leipzig Germany where Sara had studied, sent her the PHD certification she had earned but had been denied by the Nazis.

Chaim was seldom at home he had a woman friend elsewhere, but when he was home he was always given the honor as the oldest and respected brother.

He was a brilliant man in so many subjects and had also been the secretary to a group of scientist which included Dr. Albert Einstein whom he knew quite well.

He had an inexhaustible supply of stories which he very generously shared with the often large group of visitors present.

His wife and two daughters had escaped Germany to France and survived the war there.

After the end of the war the mother and younger daughter moved to Israel as soon as it

became possible to do so, but the older one came to London for further studies and stayed with her father in Kilburn..

She was an outstanding student and after completing her studies she too went to Israel . We met her quite often while visiting Israel where she had married and had three sons. Remembering one visit with Schmielick when he told me a story about his brother Chaim which showed that in spite of his superior intelligence, he was totally inept when it came to even the simplest of mechanical things

This story starts with Chaim attempting to open a scouring powder container but was unable to do so. Cursing under his breath as he struggled, Schmielick finally asked him what he was trying to do so here is the story.

” Scouring powder was packaged in England in a hard paper cilinder about 3" in diameter and about 8" tall. The top had a thin metal cover embedded in this cilinder with small indented circles to be pushed through so that the powder can be dispensed .

Asking Chaim to show him what he was using to push these holes open he gave Shmielick a long rusted bent nail and a very small toffee hammer. “give me a pointed knife” Schmielick said and with very little effort opened the holes of this container .Chaim still muttering under his breath walked away dumbfounded

A couple of houses next to where we lived on Ravensdale Rd. was a family whom we barely knew, seeing one or the other of them on rare occasion we simply nodded to each other. We, found out from Mira, that these were her uncle, aunt and a couple of cousins. One Saturday afternoon she took me up to their house and introduced me to them. They seemed to be very nice people but I could not understand why Mira had to live with strangers while they had a large house for only the four of them

She herself could not understand it either but accepted the situation as it seemed to have been this kind of relationship with them back in Germany.

As we began to see each other more frequently the woman of the house she lived in Mrs. Marx, became increasingly hostile to her and made her already difficult situation almost unbearable, verbally abusing her.

It had never been easy but after she returned from her 3 year evacuation in the country it had gotten much worse.

She was sent to work in a factory, where they manufactured ladies coats. The owner of this factory was Mr. Marx’s brother and this place turned out to be a real sweatshop. At the age of 15, she had to work five eight hour days a week and was often required to work

an additional half day on Saturday as well.

When she got home the woman made her clean the house while the daughter sat and read often spilling cigarette ashes on the floor she had just cleaned.

After she was finished cleaning and wanted to take a bath there was no hot water for her and she had to go to a public bath and paying for it out of her very little pocket money.

Once in a while Mr. Marx made a comment but was quickly shut up by his wife.

Mrs Marx had kept all her wages promising to save them for her giving her only barely enough pocket money to pay for the bus and other personal; things .

Although she worked there for quite some time she never gave her any of her money.

I strongly urged Mira to leave and find a furnished room near where I lived but being so very young she was understandably too frightened.

As we saw each other more often things got worse all the time It therefore did not take very much longer when she finally agreed to move out and we found a furnished room two houses next to ours which she rented.

I went with her to the Marx's house to pick up her few belongings and while waiting stood outside the house when Mrs. Marx came out talking to me using quite abusive language. I chose to ignore her which made her more angry and she told me to go away from her house. I quietly reminded her that I was on a public sidewalk upon which she went inside slamming the door behind her.

Within a few minutes Mira came out carrying a very small suitcase she still had from her Kinder transport days and we left.

It was too bad that Mira was forced to leave on such a sour note but Mrs Marx was a faddist and whenever new things appeared she became involved in it.

The money Mira had earned in the factory which Mrs. Marx had promised to save for her was never forthcoming but we decided to put a bad situation behind us and let it be.

It had been about six months since we had first met and found that besides our strong attraction for each other, our similar backgrounds caused us to have much in common.

She now lived next door with a an elderly widow originally from Russia and had no problem living there. By now we spent all our time together, we ate together and she only went to her room to sleep, so it did not take very long when we settled into a nice routine that we considered ourselves engaged, starting slowly to plan a little engagement party.

This was the time when Mira;s family living next door really showed their true colors.

May be it was a remark I had made about her having to live with strangers or something

else, but once she moved into the furnished room and we were constantly together they stopped talking to us.

It is hard to fathom some people, but Mira said that they always had that superior behavior towards them even in Germany seeing they had been extremely wealthy there and moved in high social circles.

We also surmised that they feared that Mira might become pregnant and I would drop her before we were married which may have saddled with a problem.

Shortly before we got married however and after they received an invitation, the relationship mended again and I was glad for Mira as they were her only real close relatives to me however they were always less than desirable having completely ignored his only sister's orphaned child

Unbeknownst to me one day Mira decided to go to Kilburn after work to visit the Herlings and probably wanted to invite them to our engagement party.

She thought she had told me but either I forgot or she did not tell me but as it got later and later I got really frightened as to what might have happened to her.

She worked in a factory in the West end of London which manufactured uniforms for the military. These factory buildings stood in an industrialized part of London and had lot's of bombing raids, so my worries were well founded.

Almost immediately after the outbreak of the war, England had instituted double summer time to firstly preserve energy because daylight lasted till past 10pm in mid summer and it therefore was not quite dark by the time she finally got off the bus

I had been waiting in the street near the bus stop and was glad to see her as I had feared that she may have been hurt in a raid or worse

With our very few friends and family in London at this time we set about planning our engagement party for September 1943

Among the first one's we invited was Hella and her husband Dolph Hecht.

Hella a very good friend and former neighbor from Germany, the daughter of my Melamed (Hebrew Teacher) who although a year or two older than I, we grew up together and lived in the same house till leaving Germany they agreed of course to come to our party. We had visited each other once or twice in the past so they knew Mira..

I remember on one occasion being in their apartment in Munich, she tried to give me dancing lessons; but unfortunately I was a hopelessly inept dancer that she gave up and I remained a poor dancer my life.

I am not sure how it came about, I think it may have been a German custom, but she talked me into giving Mira the engagement ring by hiding it in her salad.

Every one was of course clued in to this plot and coaxed Mira to eat her salad but she just poked around in it apparently to excited to eat I finally gave up and took the ring out of the salad and gave it to her. In the evening after everyone had left Mira said to me that it would have been so much nicer had I given her the ring alone together; I agreed

LIVE AND LEARN.

Being foreigners but considered friendly aliens we had been issued a police identification book a kind of 'alien passport' and were required to report any changes which we had made to the police such as changing our home address or our jobs.

It was simple enough for us to comply, but I am sure the purpose of this requirement was to track our movements more easily.

We had about 12 or 14 guests at our engagement who came to tea, a small salad, little finger sandwiches and home made cakes and cookies which both Mira and my sister had managed to produce. Although extremely sparse as far as food was concerned, It was still a very cordial, friendly and lively party. Mira's cousin Sara was seated next to my brother in law Eddie and after the party had ended asked Mira "I could not see but who was that strange guy sitting next to me" When Mira told her it was my brother in law she was full of apology but she calmed her down being fully in agreement with her conclusion.

Now that we were engaged we started to plan our marriage and as my mother was in America by that time I thought we might want to wait until she could join us. Mira sensing problems ahead urged to marry as soon as possible and as I understood her anxiety I agreed and the date was set for July 2 / 1944.

We decided shortly after our engagement to pool our earnings and prepared for our wedding. It might be of interest to the reader to understand the archaic and cumbersome money system England used at that time so I will try and explain.

The top money unit in England was and still is the pound which was a paper currency and was issued in 1, 5,10, 50 and 100 units The pound was a simple note like most money unit is in all countries whereas the 5 or 10 pound was a large tissue like paper as was the 50 and 100 (never saw any of those last two) there was also the guinea which was 21 shillings a pound plus one shilling is a guinea. Then came the coins a shilling or the Florin which is 2 shillings half a crown 2 1/2 shillings and sixpence is a smaller than a dime threepence was a octagon brass coin than came the large copper penny the smaller half penny and the smallest

1/4 penny known as Farthing. A shilling had 12 pence and weight units were lb.(Pound) or a one stone is 14 pounds confusing ? you bet there may be more but I can't remember any others right now.

Every day life seemed to become increasingly more difficult, as the war dragged on and people began to get weary of queuing for everything or being unable to get even some basic every day needed items the slogan "Don't you know there is a war on" was on everyone's lips. Understandably a distrust or even hostile attitude towards anyone or anything foreign became immediately subject to suspicion. People with foreign sounding names or those speaking with a foreign accent were looked upon with some resentment, but I do not remember or heard of any physical or even verbal confrontations.

Coal registration was an annual requirement and it required long waiting lines on queues and as I was home that day I volunteered to do it for our building..I remember standing in line for quite some time almost the only male among housewives many of whom gave me a sidelong glance probably because I was not in the army nor even in uniform. The grumbling by these women who were anxious to get on with their daily tasks and needed food shopping blamed everyone for their plight especially the foreigners and draft dodgers. I felt quite uncomfortable as the names of the people in the house were Lukomsky, Kammelman and Grajevski and anticipated some unpleasantness. When my turn came I went up to the clerk and handed him the papers, which in as loud a voice as he could muster slowly and carefully read out the 3 names. There was a total silence and as I left one woman a little behind me said with a smile "yo really took that on the chin" smiling back I said "that's the way it goes" and left.

Wedding plans were made and house hunting as well as furniture shopping was high on the weekend agenda. Going into a regular furniture store was prohibitively expensive and way out of our budget. One had to be registered to be able to buy 'utility furniture', which were plain but quite nice and comfortable. One was issued a number of points which entitled them to buy some pieces of furniture. As newly weds we would get the maximum points which entitled us to furnish a bedroom set consisting of one double or two single beds and two night stands a living room with table four chairs and two upholstered side chairs (fireside chairs) Every room in most houses in London had a fireplace which was the only means of heating one's home, which was most inefficient and highly polluting. The constant smoke from all those open fireplaces often created a black smog which at times turned day into night. I recall on several foggy nights (another one of London's bad weather contributor) a

man walking with an open flame torch marched in front of several buses guiding them through the streets. What a sight!.

In searching for our furniture we were introduced to a Mr. George who was a furniture dealer and most accommodatingly equipped us with nice furnitures to make a pleasant home for us. In the course of conversation we mentioned that we were also anxiously looking for a flat as we had not been able to locate one. He took us to the basement of his house which had two

nice rooms a kitchen and bathroom. There was another bathroom but that was not accessible as it had been severely damaged during an air raid. One bathroom was more than enough, so we happily rented this place from him ready to move in on the first of July. As his furniture showroom was one floor above us the moving was no problem and he supplied us with two men and in a couple of hours this job was completed.

We were so happy our own place brand new furniture and getting married, life could not have been better.

In the interim we took care of some legal matters like reporting to the police notifying them of our intended move and marriage. Our new address was going to be Highbury new park. And as he entered the details about our marriage he noted that Mia was still a minor at 17 years of age .He gave me some documents to sign in which I had to certify that I shall become her legal guardian and be responsible for all of her actions. WHAT POWER!

Stamford Hill is a major intersection of two busy streets one leading from Stoke Newington to Tottenham and the other from the Manor House subway station to Hackney. There were two large movie houses a number of smaller super markets a couple of fruit and vegetable stores and a small coffee shop quite a busy place.

Outside one of the movie houses was a taxi stand and every day of the week including Sunday two or three taxies stood there .A couple of days before our wedding day Mira said “don’t you think you should reserve a cab for Sunday”? “What for, they are always there” I said and let it go at that. The distance from our house to the Synagogue was may be 1/4 of a mile so it was no problem when I left that Sunday morning ½ hour before the appointed time to get the cab. NO CAB IN SIGHT! I was devastated and had to run home to give Mira the bad news. What a tumult carrying on and together with our friend Helen she walked to the temple. As Helen told me later she complained about me all the way to the Synagogue so she said running to get married and complaining about him does not make much sense but we laughed about it. On the next day as always dutifully and ready for pick up there

were the three cabs standing in a row.

My father walked me down the aisle to the chupah and Mira was escorted by Mr. & Mrs. Lukomski our landlords.

True to form, her uncle and aunt had left a few days earlier for Harrogate to escape the bombing and their son Leo dutifully went with them; it was only their other son cousin Sam who attended our wedding.

The party following our wedding was much like our engagement only a few more people came but otherwise it differed very little.

Late afternoon or early evening after the party we walked to our new home now happy newlyweds. From about 11am on this Sunday until almost midnight there was not a single air raid during the whole day.

As we were getting ready for bed the air raids sounded and Mira asked should we go to a shelter? "Not so bloody likely not to night for sure" was my firm response and we did fine.

As no bomb dropped anywhere near us that night.

As is customary newlyweds usually have a honeymoon and we were no exception.

Shortly after her first son Ronald was born two years earlier my sister was evacuated to the nearby country. The farm she had been she told us, was very nice and the people very friendly. So we had made arrangements for one week at this same farm. We had to work the week following our wedding but had the next one off.

That following weekend we took a train and found the place, which was indeed very pleasant and although the food was not much to talk about, being in the midst of a war we had no complaints

On one of our walks we saw some bicycles standing in a barn and to our request if we could borrow two the owner agreed of course and we planned to go for a bike ride the next day.

As we took off on a gravel road a farm worker came out of another building followed by two large dogs. As soon as these dogs saw us started to run and jump all around making Mira very nervous and she fell off her bike. Full of apology the farmer ran over and picked her up carrying her into our room. Fortunately she was not seriously hurt just bruised and a couple of lacerations which looked worse than they were but it still put a damper on our remaining vacation/ honeymoon.

Our apartment was quite comfortable except the sealed bathroom which had no windows and was a meeting place for all the stray cats in the area. The meowing and sometimes bad odor was a little bother sometime but we got used to it soon enough. Although I spoke to the

landlord about it he refused to do anything for us nor did I want to try, as we still favored the idea of going back to or nearer to Ravensdale Rd. as soon as something would become available. Since our first child Brenda was born 11 months after our wedding Mira was pregnant most of our first year of married life, but she kept on going to work.

This very young wife of mine was incredibly capable in domestic matters she was an outstanding cook and baker making Challah and cake every week (too expensive to buy from a bakery) and a capable seamstress. I remember one day she bought some material to make something for Brenda and worked till late into the night finishing a coat and hat to match all in one long day.

The constant air raids were always frightening but one learned to take things in stride and although I had to be away from home many a night to perform my fire watch duty we found life to be OK

As often as we could we went to the 'West End' walking on Oxford Street seeing all the people and as often as not going into Selfridges (department store) looking things which we wanted but had to be careful to watch what we could afford.

On the Marble Arch end of Oxford Street was the Cumberland hotel in which American officers had a headquarters not far from the Hyde Park 'speakers corner'.

We walked a long that hotel a number of times and looking down from the street we could see through the street grates the basement windows where American Soldiers were preparing food for the Officers.

With envy and mouth watering desire we looked at all the food laid out there. These were the kinds of foods deserts and other goodies we had not seen in England since the first couple of months of the war. There were also push carts selling mostly fruit or some ice cream etc. One time they sold grapes which only American soldiers could afford to buy and many an English girl went with the G Is for just those kinds of benefits.

Speaking of lifting the spirit Winston Churchill ole 'Winnie' when he went on the radio and gave one of his many addressees the whole country seem to take a deep breath and refreshed they started to go about their daily routine

One time I was called to do fire watching and Mira was now very pregnant and was often scared to be alone at just about the age of 18. Having no close families nearby it is of course understandable for her to feel that way.

I asked my aunt Laura to sleep over which she gladly did. When I saw her later on however she said "I gladly do anything for you but please do not ever ask me to sleep over". I was

quite puzzled over that until Mira relayed her morning routine to me, which I never knew about as I always left much earlier than she did.

It must have been a very interesting early morning, because when one is young, mornings are the most precious times for sleeping and this hateful and merciless alarm clock shows no sympathy. Mira was no exception to this, as a matter of fact I think she can easily be rated a top performer in sleeping to the absolute last minute.

Item one; the clock was set 15 minutes ahead of the regular time

Item two; the alarm was set 15 minutes ahead of the required get up time, giving her about ½ hour before get up time and lastly the alarm clock was placed on a dresser across the room which required a constant jumping out of and into bed.

Here is the ritual.;

The alarm rings ‘out of bed shut of alarm, followed by a very frequent in and out of bed exercises, until the real get up time arrived.

Luckily for me I always left the house before she needed to go to work so I was denied this performance although I think had we had to get up at the same time I would have killed this practice early on. Now I understood my aunt’s comment.

Mira found another job much closer to where we lived so she gave up sewing and started working in a dry-cell battery factory.

Batteries at that time were filled and compacted with Graphite powder which is a very black and dirty substance penetrating clothing right to the skin.

She often came home looking more like a chimney sweep and with our limited washing facilities it was quite an effort to keep herself clean.

I was very unhappy having my wife working at all, let alone in such an environment but we had little choice as her income was necessary to supplement my income at that time.

Slowly the news became more encouraging and the German’s started to lose more and more battles and territory when we began to hear stories about missing people being found in Europe we intensify our search for information about Mira’s mother.

We wrote to the Red Cross international to see if they can give us any news about her whereabouts. We anxiously awaited an answer and when one came it was quite traumatic for Mira. It was on a rare Saturday that I was home usually I worked overtime ½ day every Saturday as we sat at home together when the mail was delivered Mira went out side to pick up the mail and after a few minutes let out a scream “she is alive they found her”.

I jumped up and quickly took the letter from her and as I read she must have missed the

word NOT where they notified us about their search for her mother and said “It must therefore be reliably assumed that your mother Mrs Nettie Blaustein is not alive.” This became quite a shock for Mira and took a long time for her to regain her balance. To this day as she surely will to the end of her days Mira will never ever fully recover from the loss of her mother.

After living only a few months in Highbury New Park a flat became available on Ravensdale Rd. and we started to move back to be nearer to the family.

Although it was only about a ½ hour walk we were happy to be back closer to them.

Although the war picture looked a lot more positive the German's were far from being beaten. As usual listening to the morning news we heard of a new single engine plane coming across the channel and flying towards London and in it's first air defense British fighter had shot down more than 20 of these planes before they hit the British isles. This looked very good and we thought this would be a quick victory. Within a day or two however the picture had changed dramatically. The planes were pilot less robots loaded with explosives and given enough fuel to reach London and than crash indiscriminately wherever they ran out of fuel exploding on impact These V1s as they were called had been manufactured in Germany by the hundreds and endless waves of them came down on London and surrounding areas causing heavy damage and loss of life.

As we started to pack for our move I borrowed a pram from a friend and loaded it up with small stuff so that the movers would only require to take furniture saving some money and moving time. I did this for a couple of days and was getting down to near the end of it when one Sunday morning I saw a ‘flying bomb’ heading straight for me.

To take a short cut from our place to Ravensdale Rd we cut across a fairly large field which was used for playing out door sports. And was ringed by trees

I had just left the last of the trees when I spotted this plane swooping silently down as the engine had stopped a sure sign that it was ready to crash. This thing was no more than 200 yards away from me and about the height of a four storied building when suddenly the engines restarted and this plane climbed slightly flying on. Within seconds I heard a major explosion and knew it had crashed and blown up taking God knows what with it

Quite a bit shaken I marched on with my load and after a couple more days we had finally moved in and settled in our new flat.

This house was exactly the same style and arrangement as the one I had lived in before and our number now was 47 her uncle and aunt's number was 55 and my father lived in 65 so

we were all pretty closed together

In the basement of this house lived a Mrs Daley no husband several kids and a large ginger and black cat. Entering the house to the left had a large room rented by an elderly single man and to the right was a widow with 2 boys one of whom had Down syndrome. One flight up was the family Gardin husband wife and daughter about 10 years old and a baby expected about the same time as ours. We occupied the top floor, one bedroom, living room, small eat in kitchen and a nice size landing for storing things where we later put our 'washing machine'. the sink was also on that landing and under it we kept the garbage can. Half way up the stairs between the Gardins and us was a toilet-bathroom which we shared with them as well as the others in the house..

Things progressed very well I got a small promotion and little more pay so Mira stopped working about one moth before giving birth.

Enter 'V II' The first of the German rockets started to fall on London which was a most unusual experience. Standing out side one saw a flash of light flit by and a moment later we heard the swosh of the flying rocket and closely after that we heard the explosion. By the time the VII's started to rain down on London the flying bombs had stopped as they must have run out of them by that time.

One Saturday we took the bus to the West End of London for a little sight seeing and also to visit the newly opened Salad bar at the Lyons corner house in Marble Arch. This is at the south end of Oxford Street and adjacent to Hyde park and the 'Speakers Corner' so we planned a nice afternoon and evening.

The bus route took us along Seven Sister's road and Finsbury Park right past the house where aunt Laura lived..As we crossed her intersection we saw major destruction and got off the bus at the next stop running back to find out if she was OK. Although her house was still standing many of the windows had blown out and in her room (she had rented a furnished room) the bricks had loosened and she pulled a few of them out to show us how close she came to disaster.

We spent a little time with her and as she seemed quite ok we left carrying on with our plans. We spent a nice afternoon and later went into the Lyons corner house to partake of a newly instituted 'Salad Bar'.

As we entered the huge dining room we paid a half crown admission each and than were turned loose at a very very long table filled with large bowls of all imaginable salads. We met some friends there and as most foods were always in short supply we enjoyed ourselves

immensely overeating of course.

The date was May 7th and the war seemed finally come to a close. For the last couple of months we had no more air raids once the Allies had neutralized Osnamuende the base from where both V1s and V2s were launched and our life became much more relaxed.

Admiral Jodl the highest German officer signed an unconditional surrender on behalf of Germany and with that the second world war ended in Europe.

This was the worst conflict in human history in terms of lives lost, claiming more than 70 million people dead not counting wounded or disabled.

Adolf Hitler and his mistress Eva Brown were found shot to death. in Berlin in an fortified bunker

It has been determined that Hitler shot Eva Brown and than took his own life thus ending a 12 year long international nightmare

His dreams and ambitions to create a one thousand year Reich was drowned in the blood of millions of innocent victims

May 8th 1945 plans were made all over the country to have a true V E day celebration with bonfires music and dancing. Across the street from our house was an open field and children from all over went from door to door and collected any rubbish and other burnable materials which were piled high in the middle of that field.

Three years earlier this field was a row of houses when a landmine dropped from a German plane exploded taking out a whole row of one family houses.

A landmine was a bomb dropped from a plane but was slowed down by a parachute and timed to explode when it reached about roof top level thus increasing the power of explosion.

It took quite some time to clear the area but was left open and we used it as a shortcut to go to the bus stop on Stamford Hill.

Came the evening and as darkness fell they lit this bonfire

THE WAR HAS ENDED!!

NO MORE DARKENED STREETS AND NO MORE AIR RAID WARDENS

What a jubilation as people danced around hugging and kissing one another forgotten was the horror of the war only my poor Mira could not participate she sat on her chair very very pregnant We had a great party everyone brought something from home to share with all, hugging and kissing, dancing and laughing while poor Mira sat highly pregnant and watched the goings on from the side line.

May 29 I came home from work on as usual and Mira was really quetchy, and thought that her time was near.

'Johnny on the spot' I said let's go and take a taxi to the hospital, "oh no a bus is fine" she said and with the bus we went.

I was a nervous wreck expecting her to give birth right here on the bus, but what I did not know was the reason for her wanting to take the bus, because she was very much afraid being only 18 and was therefore in no rush to get to the hospital too quickly.

As we walked in a nurse met us at the door with a wheelchair and we went to the reception to take our personal information We had of course been registered so it went very quickly and I was told in no uncertain terms to leave; no amount of pleading to let me stay moved anyone Yes I could have waited in a waiting room at the other end of the building, but I left and took the bus home.

She was given a bed in a ward of may be 20 or more beds all filled with new mothers. When I got home there was very little thought of sleeping and finally about 1.00 am I dressed walked to our nearest public telephone booth and called the hospital. The man who answered the phone said hold on I'll; tell you what she had" and indeed he told me that at 12.20 AM she had a little girl. "Are you sure" I asked "listen young one" he replied I have been in this job for a long time I should know by now.

Most excitedly I went home and could not wait to tell my father and anyone else I could think of.

I was also told not to even try and come till evening visiting hours as I would not be admitted. (War time imposed very strict rules especially in public Hospitals)

I went to work and told everyone who would listen about my new daughter, but could barely concentrate on my work.. I left as soon as I could and bought a big bunch of flowers and went to the hospital anxious to see my new family.

As I stood at the open door looking into a ward with at least a dozen beds on each side I saw Mira in the first visible bed on my left and a baby next to her right side. As the door was large and open it blocked the view of anything standing to the right of that baby crib.

Beaming at each other I walked straight up to her bed and looked at the baby girl , which was light skinned freckled and had red hair. To say the least I was surprised as I did not expect that but Mira was very fair skinned it could be possible. Leaving me dangle for a moment she said to me " go look at the other side" and there was a beautiful little doll darkish skin a some black hair. "That's better" I uttered softly and I held my little baby

Brenda feeling an immediate closeness with her. The open door had blocked another bed which was the mother of that freckled baby.

As she was only 18 years old, the following day they moved both Mira and Baby outside of London for security against air raids to another hospital so I did not see them for a few days and after one week they brought her back and I picked them both up and we went home. Our family was now intact and we started to get busy with our new daughter and our new changed but improved life.

Shortly after we had come home impatient as always, Mira took our brand new maroon colored baby carriage down fixed it all up and off we went to Stamford Hill to do some shopping and hopefully for her, find some friends or people we knew to whom we could show off our new price.

Among the stores a new open pass through windowed ice cream parlor had opened and as we looked in we saw Mrs. Marx standing there selling ice cream. Although she clearly saw us she pretended not to and we certainly had no interest in her either but it gave Mira some kind of satisfaction.

Although the war was over in Europe and the allies had won the situation in England could not have been worse.

Quite often we had power outages lasting several hours. Many factories shut down for lack of work or material coupled with those frequent power outages .

In no time unemployment was veery high.

I was lucky for a while and worked but soon it happened that I too lost my job and was anxiously looking for work.

Mr. Taback my quater (god father) who had also come to London and worked as a traveling salesman offered to give me some of his merchandise to try and become a traveling salesman, which I gladly accepted. The problem was how to get around the little towns and villages outside of London.

My cousin Rolf Penzias had a car and I asked him if he would lend it to me for one week, which he declined but offered however an alternative.

He would take a week's vacation and drive me around all I would have to do pay for gas and any overnight stay we may have.

I was very happy with this arrangement and we went around for one week, which was a lesson I shall; never forget. I should have known after the first day that this was not for me but I tried and tried without a single sale.

More dejected than ever I returned the material to Mr. Tabak with thanks as I did to Rolf and went to look for other work.

My brother in law had a nephew who too was out of work and we saw an ad in the newspaper asking for “two smart lads wanted” we both went there but soon found out it was a ruse and that ended this one. I saw another ad in the paper looking for a salesman for new plastic products which I pursued and found that this man had plastic letters and numbers to sell but he had one item which I liked very much.

All Jams in England were sold in two sizes 1 pound and two pounds. These glass jars had a lip around the top to hold the cover and were a standard design for the whole country. This man had made a number of lids for both sized which snapped on the rim and when something hot was put into the jar the lid sealed itself around the jar creating an almost perfect vacuum.

Fruit and vegetable preserving was a big thing in England and with these jars people could simply perform this task unlike the current method of boiling the items in the jar and sealing it with a cloth which often tore or leaked.

I saw it's possibility at once and went to the consumers union store which had several hundred stores throughout the country.

I devised a system whereby I put a candle into the jar and lit it. After that I put the lid on and within seconds the flame went out but the lid was sucked on tight to the jar. I told him this would be an ideal product for your organization and he agreed and gave me a sample order of thousands of these lids.

I was elated and was sure I had struck gold. When I approached the man who made them about it he told me he had nowhere near the capacity to make that many and that ended that.

Looking back on this incident many times I realized much later that I should have found someone and we could have made those things ourselves

It just goes to show I was too young and inexperienced to take advantage of a good situation. but hindsight is always 20/20

I worked in a company where we got paid by the amount of finished pieces we could produce per week. Graham Enoch was the name of the company and was within easy walking distance from our home and being a fast worker I made good money.

There was another man working there a Jewish fellow called Paluszack, several years my senior but he was a man with poor social attribute's. he was not well liked and worked right next to me so we became very friendly something that did not help me very much in the

long run. I usually got along with most people but because of this friendship they lumped us both together and after not too much time had passed he was asked to leave.

I did stay on but did not have to good an environment so I looked elsewhere.

I should have listened to my wife who always said “don’t be too friendly with him it will hurt you in the long run” and she was right.

However I did stay in touch with him and met a distant relative of his whose son in law was in need of work. This man was a butcher and had lot’s of money and was going to buy a business for his son in law but wanted this fellow Paluszack to be his partner and take care of the business.

Apparently this new business did not go too well because after a couple of months this butcher came to me and said would you take on this partnership as your friend knows not enough and I am thinking of buying him out as this business is going down the drain.

My friend on the other hand had told me that this was a bad business and he regrets ever putting money into it.

I told the butcher that I would be willing to go with him but had no money to buy out “I’ll take care of the money” and you can pay me back as you go along, which is exactly what I did.

Once my friend found out that I took over his position it ended our friendship I was not sorry about it as I had realized sometime ago how right my wife had been about t his.

It did not take very long before our business really took off and we hired a couple of men to work for us and my take home pay was pretty good. even after I started to repay the butcher One day I accidentally read an ad in the London Times where a business man was looking of a machine- sheet metal working company to manufacture items for his sales staff.

I contacted him and we met in the city for lunch. It turned out he was a Jewish man who had connection with the poultry industry and required a number of metal breeders for hatching and subsequently rearers for raising little chicks. I spent a couple of days reviewing the sketches and pictures he gave me and found that we had the capabilities to make these items.

This developed into a really good business and enabled us to become a viable manufacturing plant. Our place was located in Surrey Docks about a 45 minute bus ride from my house and directly across the street from a company called ‘Mollins machine’ a major cigarette making machinery company employing several hundred people and a place where my cousin Rolf worked as an engineer.

He introduced me to the maintenance foreman a very jovial fellow, who had many needs and was glad to have someone like us so close by. It was a boon for both of us and we were extremely busy and quite successful.

My friend Erwin and his wife Soso' meantime had come back to London and he was looking for work, which I was happily able offer him and to work with us.

He fitted in very well and became my eyes and ears whenever I had to leave to meet people buy material or do some more selling. He was a very honest and reliable friend and I often wished that he would be my partner instead of that useless fellow I was stuck with.

Although I often thought about it but I did not have enough money to buy him out.

Anyway our plans for going to America became more of a reality as did Erwin's plans to go to Israel so I never pursued it any further. My partner, the butcher's son in law had gotten married about 1 1/2 years earlier had become a father and apparently had married a woman who needed him around more than the job could afford him to be away.

Even when he was at work I had to instruct him on any and all jobs that needed to be done or else he just sat around waiting for me.

I was glad to have Erwin with me because when he finished a job he never waited for me to give him another assignment but found always something to do till I got to him.

Being the joker that he always was, Erwin soon started a little limerick about my partner and often sang in German "He scratches his head he is a big jerk" only it rhymes in German We introduced him and his wife Soso to the Herlings and they too became fast friends with each other spending much time in Kilburn.

In the meantime our life took off very well and we took Brenda very often to Hyde Park corner in the city and listened to the famous 'speaker's corner'

There were some food adventures early on which I might tell you about as well.

When Mira came home from the hospital with Brenda, I went to the kosher Butcher and bought a chicken. This had to be bought on the black market and although we could not really afford to spend almost a week's wages on this bird I thought she needed the strength and we needed to celebrate. I knew little about buying a chicken and he must have given me one that had been on social security for a while and it was also Mira's first attempt ever to cook chicken. She filled the pot with water added some ingredients and started to boil it without a lid as the water boiled down she added cold water and that went on for a long time. When we finally thought it was done we started to eat the soup was so so but the chicken was like a piece of wood "OH BUT FOR THOSE GOOD INTENTIONS"

Food was scarce, rationing was strict and long lines the order of the day. The only item not rationed and plentiful was fish, potatoes and most bread. Fish, which was not my favorite food but as it had to be eaten almost every day of the week, I learned to accept.

Our down stairs neighbor Mrs. Gardin several years Mira's senior, told her of a recipe to cook the fish differently. I believe they put this fish into a soup plate put an onion slice on it cover it with milk, cover it and boil it for a while.

When I came home I was horrified but her ultimate weapon her tears, won me over and I ate this stuff using lot's of horseradish or some equivalent but eliciting a promise that it should never be repeated again.

Lo and behold a few days later the same stuff appeared on my dinner plate but this time nothing, neither tears nor anything else would move me and we never had this stuff again, when the French say "food a la anglais" meaning lousy, they know what they are talking about While we on the subject food a couple more anecdotes: years later, living in Levittown in the U.S. David became friends with a boy called Harlan whose father was a dentist and a mother who was a home economic's teacher This lady represented the term 'weirdo' in many different ways. She was a character about whom one would read in the Dickens kind of stories.

She had some work done in the house and the workmen took much longer than they had promised so she got herself some 'Voodoo Dolls' named each after a particular worker and whenever they were late or did something she disapproved off, she poked needles into them. Or when she was fighting with another driver over a parking space which both entered about the same time as the other guy would not budge she took out her knitting bag and started to knit the other guy took off.

One time she recommended a lamb stew recipe and although Mira knew that I hated lamb she convinced her to make it her way.

Coming home that evening to a very questionable odor in the house. As the miracle stew was put on the table I cautioned both of my children not to touch this stuff until I tasted it. Vile is the understatement and I told them do not touch it, I took the pot with it's contents outside next to the garbage can. Even though dogs roamed freely around the area and often turned over garbage cans rummaging for food remnants making a hideous mess, they gave this thing a very wide berth and did not touch it.

We threw out the pot and it's contents and replaced it..

When next I saw Mrs. Meinwald I asked her "why she did not like us " giving my wife

such a terribly tasting recipe

By that time milk delivery had graduated from the horse and wagon to small vans. This particular morning after a heavy snowfall the milk van got stuck at the end of our street and by the time people managed to get to this van the milk was gone.

Some hysterically screaming women “my poor children I need milk for them” I could not help wondering how people in this country would have acted with constant air raids, strict rationing and many things such as oranges, or bananas or grapes to mention just a few not available during the entire war.

All this time my mother was living in America and periodically sent us a care package, but she could not come to England as shipping space was at a premium with all the returning soldiers so we waited for the time she would hopefully be able to come..

At another place I wrote in detail how my father contacted Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt who was human rights commissioner for the united nations and how she quickly got my mother a passage to come to England

It was in May of 1946 when Brenda was just one year old that the whole family gathered at Waterloo station to meet my mother who had arrived from America the previous day in Southampton. My father had taken an earlier train to Southampton to meet her as she came off the ship and was now coming back on the ‘boat train’ to London with her.

It was great to see her again after seven years and she was overwhelmed with her three new grandchildren, a son in law and a daughter in law (age before beauty).and things worked out quite well for a while, except that she said at the station as she got off the train, “we all must go back to America .the golden land”

London is not very far from the ocean and there were two popular places people went to for a week, weekend or a Sunday outing.

One of them was Southend and the other was Brighton Beach. Some time earlier Mra and I had spent a day at Brighton Beach but had never been to Southend so we thought it would be a good thing for all of us to go there for the day.

Arrangements were made during the week, for the three families, my parents, my sister’s family and us to go together and take the train to Southend for a day at the beach.

Sunday came and we waited packed with food and beach toys for Brenda.

Although my sister is usually very punctual we had to wait at the appointed time to go to the train but no Ruth After a while she came without her husband a little bit teary and said she could not go with us. We were sure it was another altercation or spat, which in their

relationship was not unusual..

We thought we should go without her but my mother would not hear of it and it was a little late anyway so no body went.

The following Sunday without making any arrangements we went by ourselves and had a great time. After my mother heard of it she started to get angry with us and complained to us, but no way would I accept that. We were not going to be governed by my brother in law's extreme mood swings and his panic fear of spending a little money.

From that time on we made our plans and told them if you want to come along which they never did so we happily went by ourselves.

Although we saw each other quite often we mostly did our own thing especially in weekends and let my parents and sister who seemed to be inseparable do their's together. As I mentioned earlier there was a pond not far from our house and I had made a little wooden boat with a string attached to it. Quite often I took Brenda to this pond and we walked along the edge she happily pulling her boat along.

My mother's constant raving about America and the 'Golden Land' and by now the frequent good by's to friends and family who did indeed emigrate to the U S started us thinking along these lines as well.

A couple of years later as America loomed higher and higher on our horizon we started to seriously think about emigrating, which we did in June of 1948.

But prior to our departure we had lot's of things to take care of not the least of which was to sell my part of the now well going business and of course our personal belongings..

The butcher was not happy about it knowing what a Schlemiel his son in law really was, but I found a buyer and we left on June 26 / 1948 for Southampton and boarded the Dutch ship 'Veendam' for New York.

I had left my forwarding address with the people in the shop and soon got a letter from the man who had bought my part of the business my buyer complaining bitterly about this partner and told me that he should have gone to America and left me here with him.

I found out through my cousin Rolf that the place closed in less than year after I had left. Too Bad!

We had a wonderful crossing our own little cabin with a cot for Brenda on a beautiful ship (our first) plenty of good food and gorgeous weather.

The first night out as we crossed the Irish sea where the water is always quite turbulent and most people laid in their bunks being seasick.

Poor Mira was no exception and she was crying to me convinced that I only took her on this ship so I could kill her.

Brenda and I were unaffected and headed to the almost empty dining room to be pampered and catered to by the many idle stewards.. By mid morning the next day the water had calmed down and it was smooth sailing from than on finding all the 'sickies' including Mira back to normal and happy cruisers..

Brenda always the precocious little three year old doll that she was, spent most of her time roaming all over the ship and as we found out after a while, she had made friends with some people in first class who pampered her no end .

A man taught her a little limerick "You like Apples you like pears? I throw you down the stairs" she repeated it all over to whoever would stay long enough to listen.

To think back we would never even dream about letting our little girl roam freely on her own to day but we gave it no thought and it worked out perfectly.

Our crossing was smooth and most enjoyable. I did not know it then but this turned out to be our last vacation for many years ahead.

The ship issued a daily paper bringing news from America and among the news is one item which staid in my mind to this day, which said:" Effective July first 1948, the subway fare in New York will increase from 5 cents to a dime"

We arrived in New York in the early evening of the end of the fourth of July weekend and anchored in the Brooklyn straits at the spot where to day's Verrazano bridge is located which had not been built by that time

I stood on the deck looking out over the Belt parkway (I did not know the name of it than), but saw more cars going by that evening than I had seen in my entire life.

A New Yorker who was returning from a European vacation stood next to me and in his effusiveness to tell me as much as he could, laughed at my question about the extreme and uncomfortable heat. "This is New York in the summer, hot and humid" he said "get used to it" he also told me that this is a big weekend hence the endless traffic

The next morning we docked at Hoboken New Jersey where we disembarked.

They had kept us on the ship overnight because of the excessive overtime cost they would have had to pay if they had let us off and to unload the ship on a national holiday.

As we left our ship we found to our surprise my mother, uncle Fred and Mira's cousin by marriage Rolf Fein awaiting us. Rolf came by car and offered to drive us to our new furnished room in Brooklyn.

A cousin of mine Erwin Wainer, who had come to America a couple of years earlier, had found a furnished room for us on Eastern Parkway not far from where he lived..

As we arrived Rolf deposited our luggage and with our gratitude and our promise to visit soon, he left having business to attend.

There were three flights of stairs to walk up with Fred and I carrying our suitcases and my mother and Mira with Brenda following .As we entered the apartment a little very fat lady met us and after a few simple greetings led us to our room.

The name of the people was Rushbaum and our room was very small looking out into an air shaft extremely hot and very cramped loaded with their stuff. But that was the good part!

We obviously could not stay so we went into the living room and as it was already afternoon, we were all hungry, Fred accompanied Mira to a store and she returned with frankfurters kosher of course and some potato salad and having kitchen privileges Mira also bought a little pot and tarted to make lunch,

WELCOME TO AMERICA !

After eating and doing a little visiting both Fred and my mother left with the necessary information how we can reach them.

After they had left Mrs. Rushbaum took me to the wall and showed me the light switch explaining how to put on or shut the light..

Living with the Rushbaum's was an experience I shall never forget. They had an unmarried daughter living with them and her husband had a job someplace in Brooklyn as well as a large hairy white and constantly barking dog called Grover..

She was home taking care of the house and in the first couple of days took Mira with her to show her some of the shopping places after which Mira went on her own.

The building was a large 4 story apartment house with 2 apartments on each floor, which was one of rows of quite a stately similar looking houses .

Eastern Parkway is a very wide avenue with a four lane traffic center, two tree lined pavements with park benches on each side and another additional one way traffic lane followed by another pavement at which point one reaches the building line.

Brenda a little girl of three was overwhelmed with this big dog racing around the house and barking most of the time.

The daughter to be charitable was not very attractive, worked in an office and had peculiar habits and lot's of phobias like never going into a subway. I believe they rented us this

room hoping that my cousin might become interested in her.

Mrs. Rushbaum usually ate very early in the afternoon in the following manner. After she had prepared her meal she carried it to the table decorated on the top of the food with her false teeth. When she sat down she put her teeth into her mouth and started eating. As often as not she quickly tarted to gag and quickly pulled out her dentures placing them once again on her plate but proceeded to eat without them. We tried her best to wait with our food until she was finished, but to no avail. Possibly in a gesture of friendliness she always brought a plate with something and sat with us as we ate faithfully executing her denture ritual as described above. T'WAS NOT EASY.

With food rationing having gotten much worse in England after the end of the war we were overjoyed in all the different varieties and unlimited quantities of food available here in the U.S..

.I personally love cold cuts including frankfurters or knackwurst, something I had not seen in England for 10 years. I asked Mira almost every evening to make these with bought potato salad and for desert canned 'cling peaches'.

Mrs Rushbaum offered to teach Mira to make something else as if she needed her teaching, but I would not hear of it for at least a couple of weeks Some evening after supper Mira and I would take a little walk while Mrs Rushbaum or the daughter offered for a small fee to babysit Brenda who by hat time was sleeping.

Most of the time we went to an ice cream parlor around the corner for a big Sunday and even ate another ice cream cone on the way home .Lo and behold our bodies grew and grew until we finally got the message and our bad habits stopped

Mr Rushbaum approached me one time and told me that he is in the process of buying this building but needed to borrow some money from me, would of course repay and also give me the first available apartment after he became the owner. It must be understood, that apartments were in extremely short supply and therefore at a premium. There had been virtually no building during the war and with the returning soldiers getting married and wanting to get their own home it was extremely difficult. I agreed to lend him \$ 300.00 a huge sum at that time when people worked for a weekly wage of \$30.00 to \$35.00.

I think I will go back to our beginning in America and relate MY experiences trying to find work and to start a new life.

There were very few job openings and with the returning G I' s it was tough getting work. Following a 'want' ad in the newspaper I applied for a job on the Bowery in the lower part

of New York city.

The business was a one man enterprise and the work he got was primarily sheet metal work repairing existing 'sky lights'. In public buildings. The pay was fair so I took it as nothing better became available. I had met the owner in an office in Brooklyn and after I agreed to start working there he than gave me the address and told me to report for work following morning.

The name Bowery a street in lower Manhattan, is to day of nothing special, but at that time it was a street where all the drunks hang out slept on sidewalks or in doorways plus many prostitutes hanging around it was areal hell hole

People walked on the street stepping over drunks laying right on the sidewalk and rarely was there a policeman to chase them away.

It was July in NewYork the heat and humidity was unbearable and the subway to get to work jammed with sweaty and smelly bodies

When I Finally arrived at the job site the owner gave me a bucket full of tools, some materials and the address of the building needing work and left. He had two young black guys working in the shop also a new sight for me, who stopped working as soon as the boss had left and started to curse the owner as that mean Jew boss.

GOOD BEGINNING

I took my stuff and went to the place to fix some sky lights the name of the building was Webster Hall a large theater which although originally very popular, was now used mostly for union meetings or other large gatherings.

The manager led me to the stage he pointed up to the window in question and told me of the leak. We all know how high those stages are but this was a monster. I carried all my stuff to the top of the stairs on the side of the stage and than had to tie the bucked with my tools to a rope crawled across some planks and than pulled up my bucket and started to work on this sky light.

I am glad I am not afraid of heights but this was a scary experience.. I spent most of the day completing the job and returned to the shop. The two boys had left but the boss was there and was a happy I had finished and gave me a new assignment for the next day, which was another similar building but would be much lower he said and with this I came home.

As I walked in the door, I said to Mira "you will never believe what I saw to day; drunks laying in the street all kinds of low life's walking around do not unpack we are going

back”.

Then I described my job of to day and with that I said “I need to find another job this is not the place for me”. We obviously did not go back and after one week I left this job and soon found something better in Brooklyn in the Bethlehem Steel company shipyard.

This was a great job much overtime and my wages were over \$80.00 per week. This was perfect and although I worked long hours we had money and now where in a position to look for another place to rent.

Mr. Rushbaum asked me for more money and I knew I had made a mistake giving him some in the first place, even his own lawyer warned me not to give him any more

We soon we found a flat in East Flatbush for a monthly rent of \$60.00 which was more than double over what others in the same building paid..

Although all apartments were ‘rent controlled’ but the usual loop hole exempted apartments where the owner himself had lived in which was the case with us. So he could charge this exorbitant rent.

What could we do we needed to get away from these people and as I earned good money we could well afford it.

We went to a department store in New York City called Gimbels and purchased furniture and other household goods and settled in very nicely. We started to go sightseeing in the city and although I had big problems getting used to the different culture compared to the one we lived with in England, we were doing well.

Visiting with relatives even going to Hartford Connecticut to visit my parents was something we were now able to do.

We made friends in the house where we lived and also got to know others around the area. I still vividly remember the first new year’s eve party held by one of our neighbors which was a real revelation. Eating drinking and carousing till the early hours in the morning, leaving me I am sorry to say with a hangover lasting almost two days. I had made the mistake of taking two aspirins hoping to stop my headache which only to aggravate the after effects of the alcohol .

IT NEVER HAPPENED AGAIN!

The company I worked for had a contract to convert troop ships into luxury liners for the now developing cruising vacation industry.

After working there for about four or five months the snapper (foreman) came around and told most of us newer workers “you are laid off” I did not understand what he meant and

lucky for me he was originally from England, so he explained the situation to me. More than that he must have felt sorry for me and told me his friend is foreman in the Hoboken New Jersey ship yard working for the same company and doing the same type of work. He promised to call him for me and thought I would get hired..

I left the place with my tools and went home shaking all over not knowing what would happen next. As I came home I could barely get the key in the lock to open the door and when Mira saw me she thought I was sick.

I explained the situation to her and we were both down in the dumps not having been used to this from Europe.

The following morning I took my tools and went to Hoboken which is about one and one half hours subway ride away requiring me to take 3 different trains.

The new boss took me right in and told me he had a call from the Brooklyn guy, but warned me that this job is only good for about one month.

Knowing that my future in this job was very limited I began to look for another opportunity. Times were not very good in my industry at that time and we visited Hartford to see if things would be better in Connecticut, which at first glance seemed to be the case..

As expected now, after the job in Hoboken ended we gave up our apartment, put our furniture into storage and went to Hartford with the intention that as soon as I would find a job we would move there and once again be together with the family..

In the meantime the plan was to stay with my parents who had a spare room for our use. until I could find a job and we would settle there.

By this time my sister and her two boys had come to America and also stayed with my parents while her husband had to wait for his quota which would allow him to immigrate into the States. He was born in North East (Silesia) Germany at a time when this area was part of Poland and therefore became part of the Polish immigration quota. He had gone to Montreal Canada and stayed with some relatives, working in a hospital while awaiting his U S visa and join his family in Hartford.

The immigration law of this country as it was practiced at that time was as follows.

Each European country was given a certain amount of people who could immigrate to the United States in one year. Once that amount of visas had been granted all further immigration from that country was halted till the following year. As we came under the German quota and no one from Germany had immigrated during the war years the numbers had accumulated and we had no waiting time at all.

We moved into our little spare room and I started to look for work.

The situation in our new living environment was anything but boring or even tranquil. There were 5 adults and 3 children and although the apartment was quite roomy we only had one bathroom, which as one can imagine, presented many and very frequent near catastrophic situations. But with our best efforts and intentions we managed most of the time to keep on an even keel.

It became immediately clear that the job situation in Connecticut was not much better than in New York but we were going to put our best foot forward and give it a try.

The first job I found was in east Hartford with another sheet metal company doing roofing repairs which was almost a complete throwback to my days on the Bowery but with a major twist. This little company was owned by two brothers who worked together on putting on new roofs leaving me with the repairs or fixing leaks on existing ones.

There was however an additional problem they had a younger brother who was in his late teens and mongoloid. His retardation however was not severe physically but mentally was another problem. I had worked there for about a week and my responsibility in addition to doing the job, was to take this brother along and act as a sort of babysitter.

I always knew that I never wanted to become a fireman as high ladders are not my favorite thing to climb or stand and work on, but as it turned out the first few jobs were on low buildings easily reachable with a short stepladder.

The next assignment was a three storied building where gutters had to be replaced. I set up the ladder and managed to carry the necessary tools with me, when I felt the ladder shaking. As I looked down I saw the younger brother climbing up behind me and although I told him that the ladder is not strong enough for two people he did not listen but came up next to me. I put my tools together and told him we are going down together as we descended very slowly the ladder was bending quite badly but we made it down. I went back to the shop and told one of the bosses I am leaving as I can not continue to work under these conditions of taking care of their brother.

A couple of days later I found a very nice job as foreman in a company in Hartford, which employed over 50 people. I came home very happy and asked if we could leave Brenda for 2 or 3 days with my parents so we could go back to New York to get our furniture and settle some other outstanding matters. Unfortunately it was not to be.

(In retrospect probably just as well)

They could not help us out so I left on my own back to N Y while Mira and Brenda stayed.

By this time this congested living got to me quite a bit and I was glad to leave and find something in a place where I really wanted to live.

My aunt Jenny had a one room apartment on Clinton Street in the lower east side and offered me her place to stay. She was working on mink coats and tales with Aaron Weinig the man she got to know in Stuttgart Germany.

While aunt Jenny still lived in Stuttgart she had a 3 room apartment and used one room to rent to people waiting for their U S visa. Stuttgart was the only U S consulate besides Berlin, in southern Germany authorized to issue visas, because of that many people went there in person to hopefully expedite their application.

Aaron Weinig a man from Minsk, came to Stuttgart to do the same and rented a room with Aunt Jenny until he could get his papers. It apparently took quite some time and they became quite friendly. Aaron had a brother in New York who besides being very wealthy, he was a mink coat manufacturer with his own mink farms in Colorado.

When it was time for Aron to leave he told Jenny if she would come to New York he would find work for her.

We all wanted Jenny to come to America anyway, and having no one left in Germany she came quite soon after Aaron, at which time we found out that these two were a little more than just acquaintances. With the help of his brother, Aaron opened a fur shop and Jenny worked for him while she lived on Clinton Street. Aaron also had a sister who owned a large house in Brooklyn where Aaron was staying and when Jenny offered me her place she moved in with Aaron's sister as well. A very short time after that Jenny and Aaron got married and moved into a very nice apartment on 24th street not far from their shop which was on 7th Avenue.

I found a job and lived in Jennie's place doing my own cooking etc. One day every week Jenny came to visit and cooked dinner for the two of us, she was one of the most selfless caring and helpful loving person I met in all my life. Most sadly she died many years later on a very painful cancer spending several weeks in the Francis Delafield cancer hospital in the Bronx which is up town New York.

Every Friday evening after work I took the Greyhound bus to Hartford spending the weekend with Mira and Brenada leaving again Sunday late afternoon back to New York which in those days was a 6 hour trip in each direction.

My place of employment was a 20 minute walk from my home which I did every day stopping on the way home for some food shopping for my supper and 'brown bag' lunch the

following day. Once in a great while I stopped at Ratners a kosher dairy restaurant for a plate of soup which was my supper. The good thing was they placed a basket of rolls on the table which was enough food for me.

After a while the waiter got to know me and in conversation with him found out about my situation so he probably felt a little sorry for me and often gave me a bag of rolls to take home which helped me to save a little more.

After the first week I opened savings bank book and every Friday on my way to the bus I made a deposit leaving just enough for my next week's need.

While spending the day in Hartford on Saturday I took Brenda Ronnie and Brian and sometimes Harry Sunenshine to a park where I spent a couple of hours babysitting them. In the meantime Mira while still in Hartford had found a job in an old fashioned five & dime store called Newburry and instead of taking the bus to work, just like I walked as much as she could to save fare money. Neither one of us were happy with the separation and I did not like for her to live with my family without me there, so after several months we decided she should come back and both of them did.

Now the three of us at last now lived together again in this little one bedroom apartment. While I went to work Mira with Brenda in hand spent day after day going all over New York looking for an apartment.

It was a difficult undertaking as apartments were still very hard to find and those available through private agents had a price tag which was way out of our reach.

It was indeed very difficult in this hot and humid summer weather to trek through the New York streets with Brenda now 31/2 years old tagging along following newspaper leads or verbal tips to find these places offering a possible home.

They needed to take buses or the subways spending very often fruitless hours pursuing a lead or newspaper ad.

Every evening they waited for me at my place of employment, to come out from work and we walked together back to our home trying to cope as best as we could.

Hurrah! Perseverance paid off and Mira found a place in the Bronx while not the best of neighborhoods, but it was big enough for us and affordable.

Because of the extreme shortage of apartment renters usually asked for "under the table money" before moving and this man was no exception.

With the help Mr. Fuentes who became our new landlord he intervened in our behalf and we got away with just a little money buying a few left over but useless items from the former

tenant. Moet happily we were once again together and moved into our own place finally bringing our furniture out of storage.

The travel time for me was quite lengthy but it did not matter we had our own place again and were able to settle into a normal family situation.

I did a few jobs in the apartment especially I had to paint the whole place, in which my daughter was a great help. I made her a helmet like hat out of newspaper which she wore following me all around with a little brush in hand singing songs together .As I did all that work on weekends or evenings it sometimes dragged out for a while.

Mira as funny as always, walked around complaining “a man comes and he paints and he paints” to which both Brenda and I had a good laugh.

The Korean war started in June of 1950 and jobs began to become more readily available so I started to look for a better paying job, which I found much closer to home.

Meantime we got used to the neighborhood and Mira found Bathgate avenue; which was a street filled with push carts selling all kinds of fruit vegetables and other goods one block from Washington avenue and Mira probably because of her youth good looks and blond hair soon became known as ‘Blondy’ to many of the merchants.

During those days employers paid by check , but very few people had checking accounts so we had to cash our checks in a bank.

Payday was Thursday so faithfully every Friday Mira with Brenda in hand walked to the corner of Tremont and Washington avenue a few blocks from where we lived and had our little bank account, cashed my paycheck leaving just a little bit in the account for our future or emergencies.

I continued to travel first on the third avenue EL. (Elevated subway) changing into the subway for Lafayette street where I worked. I had received a nickel an hour increase which made \$ 2.00 more per week and was promised to be promoted to foreman depending on a new large contract which was expected momentarily.

Alas the contract never came and most of us lost our job, which started a new job search. But I was always lucky it took no more than 3 or 4 days before I had found another one as was the case this time as well. Unfortunately the pay was less so we had to mangle by reducing expenses

Just to show the kind of cost of living we had to contend with at that time,.we had to reduce Mira’s weekly household budget from \$ 22.00 to \$ 18.00.

Fortunately she was a fantastic shopper and good housekeeper so she managed by taking

more time to find the best bargains.

Before long I had another job this time in the Bronx and the pay was even better than the one I had originally lost, so things improved substantially.

This company though not very big had a contract to manufacture and install the ticket booths and cash collecting machine stands for the than newly built bus terminal in New York city.

It was a very big contract for the small size of the company and I was given the assignment to take the completed units, drive them into the city and install them in the bus terminal as it was being constructed.

There was again a lot of overtime and the take home pay improved greatly.

After working there for about a week or two, three men approached me and told me that I could no longer work here as this was a union contract project and only union shop employees are permitted to work in this building.

I called my boss who came down immediately and spoke with project manager about this situation. I do not know what transpired but two union men were assigned to me to do the installation. I had to supervise them and ascertain that it was done properly, and as often as not I did all the work and they just stood and watched no longer bothered about me working as long as they got paid. (They called that featherbedding in those days)

Slowly but surely our neighborhood started to undergo drastic changes. Many Puerto Ricans moved into the Bronx and also into our house with lots of children.

Our stairs became a playground for the children who often ran up and down half naked often which made it obvious that this was no longer a place for us to stay and raise our daughter.

She had become a very precocious little girl and was loved by all who knew her. When her mother took her to school and standing in front of the class the teacher introduced her to the children and said "say hallo to our new student Brenda" and as they did so, unabashedly Brenda responded with "halo class"

Two incidents were the final straw which made it obvious we could no longer stay. Coming home one evening I was confronted with two men were involved in a knife wielding fight which was not funny.

The second and final event; We had a gas stove which had next to the baking oven door another smaller door behind which was a warming shelf.

We did not use it as a warming shelf but kept paper bags stored in it, which I used to pack

my sandwich for the next day's work.

I always preferred to make my own sandwiches for the next day, so as usual when it was done I opened that little door to take out a paper bag.

As I opened the door I saw the back of a large rat sitting on this shelf. And I quickly slammed the kitchen door shut as the rat bolted out into the back corner behind the stove.

I was doing a lot of welding on my job at that time, I therefore went down to my car got some tools and put on my reinforced welding gloves to protect my hand in the event that the rat might try to bite.

As I dismantled the stove and started to pull the stove away from the wall the rat shot out across the kitchen and climbed up on the riser pipe (an old fashioned heating pipe running the full height of the building) squeezing through a very small opening and into the ceiling. I had thrown something at it as it was climbing and it turned around ready to jump at me but luckily changed it's mind and disappeared. I immediately took some plaster broke a glass and climbing on a ladder pushed the pieces of glass into the opening making sure that the sharp points stuck into the plaster.

After reattaching the stove I went the next day to Mr Fuentes our landlord and told him about both of these incidents and also notified him of my intention to move as soon as we would find another place.

He was most understanding and also told me that he owned another house in Brooklyn which would be much nicer but the rent of course higher.

The following Saturday we took a ride to look at this new apartment and found it much better and we decided to take it.

This was the time when Mira was pregnant with our second child so we decided while she is in the hospital giving birth, Brenda would stay with my uncle Fred and his wife Lola and son Leslie while I would move in..

The landlord agreed to our proposition and I found a fellow worker who was willing to help me with the painting moving in and all those little details needed for which I paid him.. It just went perfectly Mira went into the hospital and while there, which was usually one week, we moved in and completed all the necessary details.

By the time I brought her home from the hospital with David we were all set and the four of us again settled into our new place.

Although the area was a lot better and still very heavily Jewish and close to shopping it seemed however that a slow change was in the offing there as well..

Nevertheless we were very happy in this new place and Brenda fitted in nicely into her new school. Mira made quite a few friends pushing her new baby carriage through the neighborhood, going shopping and doing all the day to day requirements.

I changed my job again to a company one in Long Island City called Acme Gear company as the bus terminal job had come to an end.

This once again was a monetary improvement but quite a distance to travel as there were no nearby bus or subway connection which took much time walking to the nearest subway. We therefore decided to buy a used car an old Studebaker, which had seen many better days but it ran and that was all we needed and could afford.

It looked like we were slowly becoming Americanized and very glad and pleased to have come to this country. We were in close contact with family and new friends and also managed to visit my parents in Hartford pretty regularly where Ruth and by now her united family as always lived near our parents.

We felt it very important that we should remain in close contact with them to ascertain that our children would have cousins, which seemed to have worked pretty well.

Now it became time for us to look for a Synagogue so that we could become members and integrate into the Jewish community. Nearby we found a nice orthodox Synagogue on Pennsylvania Avenue called B'ney Jacob which gladly accepted us as new members. There were no membership fees only the price of the high holyday tickets and some contributions were needed. This fitted in very nicely with our situation and slowly we got to know some of the younger people where we became especially friendly with a couple the Rothsteins the fellow's name was Seymour. (I forgot hers) both he and I were Zionists and we decided to become active in this aging congregation.

It was on Rosh Hashanah that Seymour got permission to speak to the congregation introducing himself and me as the founders of what would hopefully become a men's and woman's club. This announcement was received with considerable enthusiasm especially by the young rabbi Kamenetzky and before long we had two active clubs.

This Synagogue was a very stately building but very neglected due to lack of janitorial work and had up to now very few new young and active members.

Our two new clubs held a joint meeting and decided to take matters into our own hands. We bought buckets mops soap and some muriatic acid for the tiles and worked together making this place especially the bathroom facilities look spic and span again.

Seymour started a youth group and I volunteered to start a class teaching Hebrew both of

which became very successful.

Together with the ladies we planned a Chanukah party the ladies making latkes and do the decorations and I organized a Chanukah play from the Hebrew school students wrote some songs and everybody participated.

When the day arrived the crowd was so great we had to turn people away although there was a very large hall. The aging president confided in me that they had not seen such a turnout in the last ten years. We were all very pleased and the rabbi Kamenetzky too was very cooperative and happy.

There were quite a number of teenagers children of members in the congregation who mostly 'hang out' on neighborhood streets. We had also started a bulletin in which I suggested a teen group evening in the temple hoping there would be some interest.

Within less than one month there were over 60 youngsters both male and female who came and happily participated in discussions on all kinds of subjects as well as learning and singing Hebrew songs. Together.

Unfortunately one of the board members started to complain that we are using too much electricity and overusing the facility as a whole. Although the place stood empty most of the time and barely had a Minian even on Saturdays.

They disregarded our arguments and the next evening when I went there to meet with my teen group I found the doors locked and a new lock installed to which I was not given a key. My complaints to the president fell on deaf ears and we all dropped our membership. Very soon after this event the Synagogue, closed its doors, which I hope made those old grumps happy it was subsequently demolished.

Due to a lengthy union strike in Acme Gear my employer, the company decided to close its doors, but the owner Mr. Alex Rosenfeld took me aside and told me to go to his cousin's company for a job which he will arrange.

I went for an interview to this company a much larger one located in Astoria with several hundred employees named Morey Machinery, and was hired on the spot.

Slowly but surely our car required me to be more frequently either under the hood or on the street under the car to fix things.

Brenda sitting on the back seat next to David laying in his bassinet one time as the car suddenly lurched causing this basinet to rollover and the baby landing on the floor, so in her usually calm voice Mira declared "You are killing my kids I will never let them go into this car again".

This was my signal to go and find another one and find one we did.. It was a 1949 Plymouth and although not new it was in top condition.

As the years rolled by and our lives became regular mainstream America, the time arrived that we could apply for citizenship. After five years which is the normal waiting period when one becomes eligible, we filed our application and were called to the Brooklyn eastern district court on Schermerhorn street in Brooklyn

The hearing took place on the sixth floor of a very old building and this room had a number of large windows which almost reached down to the floor.

David always the 'wanderer' now almost two years old was all over this big room especially fascinated by the windows and Mira kept chasing him.

Finally the judge sternly but not unfriendly said "you should have made arrangement to leave your child with someone he than excused Mira and as she sat down in the back of the room with David he gave me the business.

This judge really grilled me. He must have been a fan of president Lincoln because he asked me a lot about American history especially about president Lincoln.

Always interested in history especially now as an ongoing American I had read quite a lot about our new country's beginning and was able to answer all of his questions.

His final question was "Why did president Lincoln engage our country in the civil war?"

"To preserve the union of the United States" was my reply

"Well done" he said with a smile shook my hand and welcomed us as fellow Americans.

For reasons which I am relating elsewhere in this narration, we applied for a legal name change and received permission to do so. Effective on the date when we became American citizens our name became Grayson.

A short time after our citizenship interview the four of us together with a lot of other people went back to the court for the 'swearing in' ceremony. There must have been several hundred people in that big hall and after making a short speech another judge asked us to swear loyalty to our new nation and welcomed us 'fellow Americans'

Soon thereafter we received our citizenship papers, which we still have and treasure..

For Brenda who was nine years old we filed a special; application and received her own certificate in due time.

When David was three years old we took our first real vacation in this for us 'new' Plymouth car and drove upstate New York through the Adirondacks to Niagara Falls. Walking over the Rainbow bridge we found that the Canadian side was so much more attractive and well

kept than our own side..

About 5 years ago we once again went to visit Niagara Falls and much to our satisfaction the situation had changed 180 degrees. The U S side was beautifully kept whereas the Canadian side was a mish mash of entertainment booth and low life bars.

We had bought a Coleman stove so we could cook our meals at roadside parking places and thus save money and make our vacation more affordable.

This worked out quite well I had to put some gasoline into a small metal tank and than pump air into another cylinder. Once the pressure was filled to capacity we lit the flame and this little tabletop stove cooked very well and very efficiently.

Kingston was our first breakfast place after leaving Niagara Falls and I still remember the little coffee shop and huge stack of pancakes put in front of us which was great it was at a time when I could still eat everything that was in front of me.

Mira always insisted on staying in better motels and rather spend one day less than go to a 'fleabags' as she called them. On our way home from Niagara Falls which had been the start of our vacation we quietly discussed making a compromise and stay one night in a cheaper place so we could go out to eat after we had fed the kids.

As agreed we did just that telling Brenda to babysit as we needed to go and take care of something (a little white lie).

We found a motel which consisted of little huts called "Dorothy" and stayed overnight.

After the kids were settled we left rather hurriedly lest a last minute catastrophe might scuttle our plans but scuttle them in a way it did anyway.

Cars had to be parked outside of each renter's hut in a wooded field and being anxious to get out onto the road I backed into a tree denting my rear bumper. Although there was no serious damage we went out to eat anyway but the anticipated fun of eating somewhat of a novelty for us at that time, was severely reduced.

POETIC JUSTICE may be?

Much to the displeasure of our children, I have always been an early riser and vacations were no exception. In my opinion the best time to be on vacation is to get an early start and beat the crowd especially when visiting points of public interest and entertainment.

We slowly made our way south and back to our home having had a very nice and enjoyable but hectic vacation.

This was one of the first of many vacations which we took over the years but we always took them with our children staying in one room where David slept with me and Brenda

with her mother.

Another shorter vacation was going to the Amish country in Pennsylvania. This was very interesting to see these bearded Jewish looking men and their wives with had scarves talking in a kind of German dialect. We found 'Ma Moes' home made ice cream and a restaurant called 'Good and Plenty' which served the food family style on long wooden tables and benches.. But especially interesting was the farmers market in Lancaster. All the farm people in their native dress came from near and far selling home made jams, pies huge potato chips and of course fruit and vegetables and lots of different cakes. Especially popular was the very sweet and sticky 'shoo fly pie' it was fun.

Thanksgiving was always important to us and to be with family became a must. Like most people we took turns and this time it was my parents and Ruth's family turn to come to New York to be with us for Dinner. We hunted for the biggest bird we could find as they would stay with us for the weekend and would surely be eaten by the time they left.

We waited for them to arrive and were not particularly worried although it was getting late as my father as often as he came would get lost and had to be redirected.

It was now getting real late and I had to go to a candy store because we were on the waiting list for our telephone, to find out what happened .

They had a 'party line, and My mother answered the phone and when I said where are you she said we can not come. OY VEY Now we were stuck with eating the biggest turkey we could find all by ourselves. When we finally brought this huge bird to the table Brenda got so frightened she would not touch it. It seemed we ate Turkey forever.

On one of my other earlier jobs I remember it was in Brooklyn in a structural metal shop where they manufactured assemblies for warehouse storage racks. Laying underneath a large structure, I had to drill a series of holes for mounting another fixture on top of the one I was working on I was suddenly locked in and electric short circuit.

While the drill was still running the electric current pulled me into a more and more fetal position which would have severely insured me by the still running large drill. I called out for help and luck was on my side someone just past by this large structure and quickly pulled the plug out of the wall releasing my and stopping the drill.

As I crawled out from under this structure pulling the drill out with me the foreman came and asked if I was OK, without answering him I inspected the electric line of the drill and found that it was not grounded which is a violation.

He told me he would take care of it gave me the rest of the day of without losing any pay.

When I came home and told my wife about this incident she wanted me to leave that place but jobs were still tight so instead we went to a local branch of the 'Bowery savings bank' They were advertising a combination insurance / savings. Plan, which may sound unbelievable to those who read these lines but here are the details.

For opening a savings account with one Dollar and making a commitment to deposit five Dollars per week we would receive as follows. A \$ 500.00 life insurance certificate four \$25.00 U S savings bonds and end up at the end of the year bank balance of \$135.00 .

We signed it of course and I felt better in case something would happen there would at least be a little money for my family. One should bear in mind that at that time an annual wage for a factory worker was between \$1500.00 and \$ 2000.00 .

I now worked in Morey machinery and became quite friendly with a recent German emigre called Kasper Achtziger who was married but had no children at that time. We worked in the maintenance department and worked on a lot of projects together. In conversation during our lunch I found out that they had never been to the beach, so one Sunday we decided to go to Jones Beach together. They lived in Brooklyn and came to us by subway after that we drove to the beach together. We had a nice day except that as I said earlier somewhere that David was a wanderer and he got lost on the beach. We all started to search frantically for him and finally found him in the children lost and found area. As the day went on Kasper asked me if I had ever heard of Levittown to which I responded in the affirmative. " Would you like to see it" I asked him and he said yes so we left a little earlier and went to drive through Levittown.

We had been there before but felt it was somewhat premature for us to think of buying a house so soon after having come to this new country.

As we drove through we saw a 'for sale' sign on one of the houses and stopped in to take a look. As we walked through this house it once again renewed our interest in the possibility buying a house in Levittown and moving there.

Unfortunately the area we lived in now started to deteriorate just as the Bronx had done about 3 years earlier and the thought of moving once again while not too inviting, but was nevertheless a reality. Now that we saw this place once again we decided than and there to actively look for a permanent home. Within less than 3 moths we found a nice house on Collector lane and the final clinch to buy it came when a woman from across the street came out and with a very heavy German accent spoke to us.

Her name was Hilde Kaufman a Jewish refugee from Germany like ourselves as was her

husband and they had a son David's age.

November 1956 was moving day and we settled into this new home of ours with much happiness and high hopes for a better place to raise our two children and finally stop moving around. Oh those plans of mice and men.

Later on as it got really cold I went from room to room with a thermometer to check the temperature as it did not get very warm in the house.

I stood by the window some evenings and could not get over it how there was no one in the street only an occasional car not at all like Brooklyn.

The builder Levitt devised a completely new concept of heating single houses mounted on a concrete slab without basements. As they poured the concrete slab for the foundation of the house they buried copper pipes which were connected to the hot water heater tank. These pipes zig zagged across the whole concrete slab and when the hot water circulated in the pipes the floor warmed up and in that way heated the whole house. This was a most inefficient system as much of the heat in the pipes also radiated downward losing at least 50% of the total output. In addition when occasionally a copper pipe cracked or leaked due to poor installation, as it did once in our house they had to drill into the floor hoping to find the right spot which most often they did only after several tries.

Of course, it created a big mess and also ruined tiles which many people had installed.

It did not take very long when most people by-passed this system and installed base board heating which I did as well. It was however very nice to live there as most people had moved in from the city and everyone was looking for social contacts so it worked out real well. After we had moved into our Levittown house I remember our first weeks there and the drastic change from living in a city apartment. It took just a few days before I found 3 other men who also worked in Morey machine and lived nearby and so we started a car pool much to the benefit of all three families

There was a restaurant on Long Island called Link's Log Cabin a very popular place reasonably priced and very good food.

We went there once or twice but the first time was a real adventure. We thought we would never get there as it took forever since the roads on Long Island were not that well developed and most of them still real country roads, but when we got there apart from the long waiting time it was real good.

We also went to Links to celebrate Brenda's 16th birthday where I ordered her a cocktail and offered her one of my cigarettes. It should be noted, that 48 years ago we had no idea

how dangerous these cigarettes really were, but luckily she never got into smoking very much so I am glad of that.

Always on the look out to improve my position I saw an advertisement in the newspaper for tool and diemaker which seems to have been written for me and I applied. It was a box number so I had no idea who the company was but as I had written a number of other applications in the past without ever receiving a replay I tried something different.

My birth name was Rolf Grasjevski which is a Polish name, this time however I sent two applications in response to this advertisement one I signed Rolf Grajevski and the other Rolf Grayson.

Although I used the same home address on both application I received an almost instant reply to Grayson but none to Grajevski.

I finally got prove to the fact that there was a considerable dislike or distrust of foreigners and decided than and there to change my name as soon as I would become a U S citizen which as I related before we did.

I went for an interview and was offered the job on the spot,.which I happily accepted.

This new Job was in Hicksville very near to where we now lived and was with a prestigious company named Sylvania- Corning a combined subdivision of these two companies engaged in the manufacture of nuclear fuels for power reactors.

I worked in the tooling department for about 4 months when my foreman was involved in a car accident. As I had been quite friendly with him I volunteered to bring him his weekly wages which the company paid for the first 30 days..

He had told me in the past that he has a lot of children but when I came to his house I was absolutely floored. there were a total of 14 children.

As it was just about dinner time when I came, I saw tables were set all over and the smaller children sitting at them being helped by older ones it was like a miniature cafeteria. I was further impressed with the orderly and well disciplined way every one of these kids did their job and in spite of all those many children it was relatively quiet.

The injuries he had sustained were more than originally thought, which caused him to be absent for an extended period of time. When I reported this situation to the department head he asked if I would be willing to take his place until such a time that he may be returning, to which I most happily agreed.

For some time I had seen a number of situation which I felt needed correction or improving but the inaction of my foreman prevented my suggestions fro coming to the department

head

attention. Unbeknownst to me there were apparently more problems in the whole factory employing about 150 people, which caused the company president to call a meeting of all foreman and supervisors to discuss possible solutions to some existing difficulties meeting schedules and estimated costs.

It must have been some things I said or may be the way I said them because the personnel manager called me into the office the following day and told me how much I impressed the president and asked me to become the permanent foreman of the tool shop as well as taking on some additional functions, to which I again readily and happily agreed.

Since these new responsibilities necessitated a 'secret clearance' from the atomic energy commission, it would take some time before these new responsibilities could be fully implemented. It took about 3 weeks when my final clearance papers came through and I started to supervise and manage these additional departments.

When the old foreman came back and saw the changes he got very angry and quit his job I never saw him again.

They obviously must have liked my work, because within a very short time a I received one or two additional promotions and of course appropriate salary increases.

This was the opportunity I had waited for as it gave me the start into industrial management from which I ultimately retired to operate my own business

Brenda now being in high school and David in third grade, which gave Mira more time and she was itching to do something.

I must make sure that it should be understood throughout this story and our marriage that Mira always had jobs. She worked in an A & P supermarket or she worked for Abraham & Strauss department store in sales and later as medical assistant for a Doctor or as a Dental assistant, she always worked part time improving our lifestyle, as well as made it possible to save for our future.

Near where we now lived was a large Farmer's market which was open Friday and Saturday from 11AM to 11PM and Mira loved to go there as often as she could..Over time she got to know some people and was especially friendly with a woman who owned the chocolate and candy stand in the center of the market.

She often would say to me how she would love to have a sm all place there but I had very little interest so it was never seriously considered until one day full of joy she told me the candy stand is for sale.

After some heavy negotiations in 1960 we became the proud owners of a candy stand in the Nassau Farmers Market , Hicksville Long Island New York.

The main supplier of our goods was Sam Spiess who had his store in Avenue C in the lower east side of NY.

Sam was a typical old time New Yorker who knew the candy business inside out and once we got to know each other took excellent care of us. Every once in a while he pointed to a pile of boxes and said “take these”. No matter how often it happened he never told us a price and we always found top quality chocolates candies or nuts at ridiculous low prices. “How can you sell it so cheap” I often asked always getting the same answer “they fell off the truck”

David always loved to go with us to visit Sam as he called him colonel and that pleased him no end. This was a great undertaking and at times kept the whole family busy plus even some occasional volunteers.

Originally this market was not air conditioned and on hot summer days our chocolate products took on a very shiny surface making it almost unsaleable until air condition was installed improving our situation considerably.

The busiest time of the year was Xmas and Easter, which involved a lot of preparatory work especially the making of Easter baskets.

We found wholesalers in the city and bought all the necessary supplies to make these baskets and everyone participated in making them...

The work was hard traveling into the city, shlepping heavy boxes loading and unloading and than to stand 2 days a week for 14 or 15 hours was no picnic.

On holidays such as Easter, 4th of July, Memorial day etc the market was open 3 days and during Xmas it was open 7 days for two full weeks

There was a black fellow working in the maintenance department which was under my supervision and I asked him if he would help me fix up this place to make it nicer. He agreed and he was really very handy. At the end of the day we had to lock our booth to prevent theft and he had a great idea. It was a free standing booth open an all four sides so we took eight boards the full width of the booth but only half the height. We attached these board with hinges both top and bottom on all four sides and when they were raised the met in the middle and were locked with a padlock. When open he painted them with bright colors making it look like a real ‘Hansel and Gretel sugar house’

We had a small storage area next to our booth but kept most of it in our house.

The Levitt houses had no basement only attics which people built into additional bedrooms.

Half of our attic was finished and became Brenda's room, but the other half had just plain boards as floor. So we used it as our second warehouse.

It was Easter and the most profitable item were 'Easter basket' but next to that were the molded chocolate Rabbits, chocolate Eggs, and other novelty items, which came prepackaged in colorful boxes.

The weather is usually still quite cool on Long Island until late May and we bought hundreds of these chocolate items and waited for the Easter market to start. A few days before Easter I got a panic call from Mira. one afternoon "It is very warm outside with a bright hot sun shining on our roof and the attic is real hot".

I left my job making some excuse and raced home and found the attic very hot.

The only thing I thought of was to put the water hose on the roof hoping to cool the attic. I unfurled our watering hose and I stood for a couple of hours spraying water on the roof cooling down the inside which worked very well.

All we had was one semi melted rabbit whose ears had flopped and his face slightly dented, but I believe in the last hours before the market closed we even sold that one, No matter how much we had it was never enough.

We had a neighbor at the next stand called 'Sokey' who had owned greeting cards stores for much of his life and was a real knowledgeable retailer.

We had set up about a dozen or so boxes in our booth when Sokey asked us "is that all you have?" "No we have lots." Mira replied " So why don't you pile them up pile them up as high as you can" and surely thanks to him they flew off the shelves. We had some very hard 3 days behind us but the results were very gratifying as we made nice money.

The only problem was that during the slow times we had to be open and pay a heavy rent so we really gave most of it back. One of the results of the heavy boxes carrying back and forth, Mira's back was never right after that.

Brenda had a ball; there was a music stand not far away and to the owners delight because it improved their sales she went there and did a lot of dancing with one or another of the many boys hanging around her all the time.

Some times after the Farmers market closed on Saturdays we drove to that Links restaurant because they had a special late supper, offering twin lobster for a very low price and since Mira loves lobsters we went there once in a great while with Socky and his wife Sylvia

Another place we sometimes went to was a local Chinese restaurant and although I ate there as well, I remember one time being exceptionally tired or unpleasant and did not want to go but reluctantly gave in and in protest ordered an egg salad sandwich.

Mira was furious with me but when the waiter brought it out I had never seen such a concoction. Piled high in a kind of 'Sunday ice cream glass and served with Chinese noodles it was a real joke and we all had a good laugh.

June 3rd 1970 Our second Grandson Jonathan was born and following the 8th.day ritual we had a brit Milah. My parents came of course and as behooves that fammily's traditions my father was offered to be the Sandick on this festive occasion.

Sandick is the person who holds the baby during the Brith Milah the cutting of the foreskin. My father always was a very quiet and gentle man so he declined but gave the honor to me as the new grandfather. Although we wanted him to stand next to me he could not bear to see it and went as far away as he could but still being there with us..

Following this Brith they planned to go on a vacation to Saratoga springs, where my mother who always suffered with severe arthritic pains in her knees, took mineral baths finding them beneficial. A few days after they left, Mira and I decided to take a short vacation and once again visit the Amish country. We had planned to go to the Lancaster area which we liked, take a motel and visit the local little townships using this motel as our home base for 3 or 4 days. It has always been our habit find a room early in the day because at the height of the vacation season finding suitable lodgings often proved difficult.

We had real trouble finding a place and settled for a not so great place in York Pennsylvania. We had done a lot of driving and being veery tired we quickly ate something went to the room showered and got ready for bed.

Suddenly Mira said we did not call the kids something we always did. I decided not to as I was really tired but gave in and as we had no phone in the room (I said it was not the Ritz) went across a courtyard to a bar where the only phone was located. I got myself some change and when I connected with David in an almost shrieking voice screamed where are you Oma and Opa (then name our kids gave my parents.) had been killed in a car accident earlier that day. Shaking and in disbelief, I told him to go straight to Brenda and we will come right home

We went back to the room got dressed packed our things and left returning to Huntington. We made one short stop in an all night rest stop for more coffee and It was well past midnight when we finally arrived going straight to Brenda and Barry's house where David was waiting with them..

After Barry gave us all the details we went home and trying in vain to sleep a little and as soon as it got light we went back into the car and drove directly to Saratoga springs and the local police department. One of the detectives took us in his office gave us a few of their

personal belongings which they were able to retrieve from the car wreck and also told us some of the details of the accident.

It seems as they were driving on the highway making a left turn into the mineral baths a car traveling in excessively high speed coming from the opposite direction rammed right into their car broadside drove them up an embankment which ran along the side of the highway instantly killing them both. To my request wanting to see the car he strongly urged me not to as it would be devastating for us. He offered to take us to the spot of the accident which we accepted and also gave us the address. where my parents had rented a room for their stay in Saratoga. As we traveled to the scene of the accident we were overtaken by a car full of teenagers who were speeding and driving erratically. Although reluctant to stop them with us in the car he had no choice and Mira jumped out of the car yelling at them that our parents were killed here last night which seemed to have had a sobering effect on them. It had been in all the local newspapers so they probably knew about it.

(I still have a clipping of it.)

We continued to the area of the accident and as we got out Mira and I wandered along the embankment she bent down and found a crank handle from their car window

(Still have that too; no automatic windows in most cars at that time)

After a short time he drove us back and we went to find their room which they had rented to pick up their belongings.

When my parents were going to school in Munich Germany they had made special friends with a girl Laura Trost and a boy Edmund Lem. Over the years they stayed in touch and remained friends even after they met again in the U S .

Their granddaughter was to be married In July and we were going to go together to the wedding. They had planned to leave Saratoga and stay with us for a few days returning to Hartford after that wedding.

We drove to the address the detective had given us and as we entered the room they had rented, we saw my fathers tuxedo and my mother's evening dress hanging in closet.

There were two boiled eggs on a counter near the stove ready for lunch, it was a most traumatic experience for the two of us.

As quickly as we could we gathered things together and headed straight to Hartford CT.

My sister and husband with the help of the Rabbi Avigdor a very good friend of my parents, had arranged for the bodies to be brought to Hartford and as we arrived we met everyone in my sister's apartment, where all the family had gathered.

By the time we got to my sister's home we had traveled well over 800 miles in a matter of

24 hours.

According to custom the funeral would take place this same afternoon and we went to the Synagogue for the service.

To my amazement the Rabbi I had permitted both coffins to be placed on a stand next to each other in the Synagogue and after the service and the funeral we went back to my sister's house to sit Shivah.

Mira and I left after 5 days wanting to sit Shivah the last two days in my own house and give our friends in our area an opportunity to visit with us.

This event remains among the most traumatic experiences in my life.

Meanwhile my job responsibilities increased and I was put in charge of all of manufacturing activities which covered two shifts. It was a hectic schedule and many times at all hours of the night I would be called to help resolve manufacturing problems some of which on occasion required me to go into the plant during the night.

Although this job was very taxing and strenuous I enjoyed my work and responsibilities.

One time it must have been in late 1958 we received a delegation of Israeli engineers to study our manufacturing processes and stayed with us for a number of weeks.

This was of course very hush hush and no one who had contact with these men was allowed to discuss it with anyone. I was thrilled of course to meet these people and proud to be able to do something for Israel if even only in a very small way

After having worked in this candy business for a few years we finally decided to give it up and sold it just for the price of the inventory.

Glad to be free again and not having to spend all of our weekends in this market place we started to take drives and to live a slightly more relaxed time .

When much to the jubilation of the country John F Kennedy was elected president in 1960, much of the defense work went to Massachusetts and the new England states and work in my industry on Long Island started to decline considerably.

A managerial change in the company put someone who was friendly with the president in charge over me, who knew very little and I was expected to train him.

I therefore looked for another job and found one rather quickly which however turned out to have been a bad move. The owner a Jewish refugee from Belgium, had two sons who worked there and would constantly interfere with my managerial decisions. Al though the boss reprimanded them several times it was no good and so I left once again having found another job in Norwood Massachusetts.

This was a major and very difficult change for our family. It meant we had to sell our house

which we loved, had to move away from family and friends but necessity demanded it and we accepted the inevitable.

I started to work in Massachusetts around the first of October 1963, but we decided to stay in our house until David would finish school the following June and then relocate.

In the interim I rented a furnished room and commuted from Boston to New York on weekends. When I started my job this time as plant superintendent supervising about 120 employees I got to know three other men from Long Island who like me, had also come for work to Massachusetts..

We agreed to form a car pool and traveled together leaving Friday after work and returning Sunday evening. It was quite a strenuous undertaking, but to say good by to the family and leave for the week was particularly difficult.

The difficulty increased considerably as we came into the winter months where the weather was always unpredictable and often pretty bad.

About six weeks after starting to work there president Kennedy was assassinated and the country went into deep mourning. As if by magic as soon as Lyndon Johnson became his successor work tapered off in Massachusetts, but it did not affect me as our manufacturing plant was engaged in top secret guidance system development for the missile program.

After about 3 months one of our car pool fellows returned to L.I. and shortly after that another one moved his family to Norwood leaving only two of us. Within another month the last one also decided to move to Massachusetts so I traveled alone.

I made a change in as much as I left Monday mornings at 4AM and arrived for work just around 8AM. At least I had Sunday evening at home. I also started to look for a house to move into once June came. And on one or two occasions when I thought I had found something I brought Mira with me to make the final decision. She did of course not stay more than a day or two while Brenda took care of things at home.

We did find a nice house a lot larger than the Levittown once June came and David had graduated we moved to Sharon to start another new life in new England.

Sharon was a town of 12000 inhabitants of whom about 50% were Jewish, but they still had a country golf club where Jews were not admitted.

Once we got settled and had David enrolled in school we joined Temple Israel a conservative congregation who most sincerely welcomed us and made us feel quite happy. After the world's fair had closed Brenda, who had worked there in a refreshment stand came up to live with us although by now engaged with wedding plans in full swing and she stayed with us till the wedding day.

In the interim I was able to get her a job in my company and we settled down to a very nice quiet and what we hoped would finally become a stable live.

We became active in our Synagogue, and they appointed me adult education chairman, and we felt very comfortable and accepted in this new community.

David was busy learning his Bar Mitzvah and the wedding plans proceeded as well which kept everyone quite busy.

Barry was able to visit us frequently and although we knew that once Brenda was married they would go back to NY we made the best of our time together.

Years earlier Mira predicted that we would have to make a Bar Mitzvah as well as a wedding in the same year which indeed happened, but we succeeded well in both parties.

We selected a Sharon caterer for David's Bar Mitzvah and held it in a local hall where his class mates as well as the whole family could attend .

We found a highly recommended and old established catering house on Beacon Street in Boston where the wedding took place. Although new to the new England area at that time, we held the traditional smorgasbord reception prior to the wedding which went without a hitch. The local caterers had never heard of it and were afraid that most people would be drunk and ill behaved during the ceremony but I assured him NOT OUR PEOPLE which proved to be correct.

The party was filled with family and friends from far and wide and was a huge success.

Barry was a frequent and welcome (especially to Brenda) visitor and I especially remember one time when in a secret pact between him and David he planned a surprise visit. It was Friday night and as we most often did we went to the Synagogue for Friday night service. After service there was the usual after service Oneg in which we always participated . David seemed a bit fidgety urging us to go home, but we paid no attention to him.

When we finally got home poor Barry sat huddled in a blanket freezing cold sitting in the breeze way waiting for our return.

The Bar Mitzvah was highly successful David splendidly performing his responsibilities and he became the talk of the town.

My job was also highly successful, we developed a number of guidance systems such as the Apollo mission, minuteman and Poseidon missile programs.

I worked closely and frequently with engineers from MIT to iron out the many manufacturing problems as the intricacy and accuracy of these components were 'state of the art' developments and new in the manufacturing processes.

After their honeymoon, Brenda and Barry returned to New York where both studied for

their final exams Barry in law and Brenda for college.

The Viet Nam war was raging in the far east and many more people were needed so the recruitment went on full speed.

Not wanting to be drafted, Barry with his new law degree tried a number of different approaches but had no luck in any of them.

Coming home from work one day Mira met me at the door with a number of information..

#1 “Brenda is pregnant”

#2 “I am not going to be separated from my daughter and new grandchild as I was forced to be separated from my mother”.

#3 “We are going back ! Back where ? I asked “To Long Island” and back we went.

We found a home in Huntington and moved back to Long Island over the labor day weekend in 1966 and finally stayed in this house for 36 very happy years.

On January sixth 1967 our first granddaughter Naomi was born and we had a wonderful number of years being close to her..

Meantime I had to find another job back in NY, which with the help of a former fellow worker and a couple of trips back to New York for interviews, I found another job rather quickly which also brought with it a considerable promotion..

I was appointed to director of Manufacturing responsible for over 500 employees located in 3 different factory buildings and in different parts of the city..

The name of the company was Kollsman Instrument a major manufacturer of aircraft instrumentation and an employer of over 5000 people.

This was a second tier management position and although I had some extensive experience, the scope and magnitude of this new job was much greater and more responsible which r taxed my abilities to the limit.

In addition of all other considerations I was really glad to be back ‘home’ and once again together with all the people we had not seen for 3 years.

We were having such joy from our new grandchild, soon to be followed by our grandson Jonathan June of 1970 and later by Sara September 1979.

Barry had much traveling to do in his profession and as often as he was able to he arranged fro Brenda to accompany him.

Whenever they went away together we babysat our three little ones which was always a joy and pleasure giving us a lot of fun things to do with them.

Once in a while, even when they were not our of town, we had them sleep over but it was Nomie who always wanted to be with us more than the others

As often as possible we picked up Naomi and took her for a ride someplace on Long Island always ending the day with her favorite ice cream. May be you should ask her about “Tucky fried Silly Papa”

Being a ‘no nonsense ‘kind of guy our house became the “little house on the prairie, the boring house”.

Very often while the Reiss family went skiing and because of the great age difference our youngest granddaughter Sara stayed in our house.I think she often felt left out of her real family but “it was not bad “to be with us (her words).

We are now reaching a point in time where everyone is part of our continuing family life and it would therefore a good point to end my story, Although there are no doubt countless other stories and experiences I did not write about, but they would become too repetitive and possibly even boring.

I hope that all of you who might read this narration get a little picture of our life our time and how different you will find it from your own experience

With love and affection Papa.

