

FREIDRICH, HEINRICH AND JOHANNA WALDMAN
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(This interview is in English)

Friedrich Waldmann was born in 1927. Heinrich was born in 1926, and Johanna was born in 1922. They had 3 siblings and 6 half siblings by their father. The first contact in the Jehovah's Witnesses was in 1923 and their mother was baptized in 1929, one year after their father died in an accident. In 1934 the family moved to Paderborn, Germany, where their mother worked in bible education for the J.W. The children were harassed by other children because of their faith. In 1936 their mother was arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned; the four children still living at home (Johanna, Heinrich, Friedrich and their younger brother Berthold) were sent to a Catholic orphanage. 9 months after, their mother was released and took them home again.

Johanna moved to Bochum, Germany to work in a bakery and began to go to secret J.W. meetings and to distribute the "Watchtower." In February 1944 the Gestapo arrested her, and she spent 3 months in the Steinwache before she was transported to Ravensbruck in April 1944. She was liberated by the Russians in May 1945 and released one month later. She walked to Berlin and secretly crossed the border to the western part of Germany where she found her mother and sister.

Friedrich, Heinrich and Berthold were taken to a National Socialist Children's home in 1939, where tempts were made to make them renounce their faith. Later the boys were separated, and Friedrich was forced to work for a blacksmith. He ran away to his mother in 1940 and was taken away again. Friedrich was now put to work in an education home for small children but was later able to join Heinrich in Nettelstadt where both worked on farms. In 1945 his mother found Friedrich on the farm and took him home where most of the family reunited. The younger child Berthold is still missing.