

Kluger, Solomon
RG 50.029*0004 (Larry Papier Collection)
One Videocassette
In English

- Abstract: Solomon Kluger, referred to as Sol, was born June 7, 1910 in Dusseldorf, Germany. He had one sister and one brother. His family was middle class and his father owned a business. They lived in an area without many Jewish neighbors, but were nonetheless very observant. Sol belonged to Young Maccabee and traveled to Israel to play in a sporting tournament there. In 1938, Sol was told to leave Germany. He managed to get passage to England, where he temporarily worked for British Intelligence. He eventually got a visa to the United States where he stayed throughout the remainder of the war. He lived with various American relatives. Sol was inducted into the U.S. army but was honorably discharged due to medical reasons. After the war, he was able to find his parents (his entire immediate family survived) and bring them to America. He married and had one daughter.
- 00:51 Solomon (Sol) Kluger was born June 7, 1910 in Dusseldorf, Germany. His father, Moses Kluger, had one of the largest wholesale tire, metal, and rubber businesses in Germany. His mother's name was Rosa. Sol had an older brother Hermat and a younger sister Friedel.
- 00:54 The Klugers lived in a middle class neighborhood in an apartment in the city. They were very comfortable. Most of their neighbors were not Jewish but everyone got along well.
- 1:03:00 Sol went to a Hebrew school until he was ready to go to high school. He attended a private school where he learned French and English. There were very few Jews in this school. He was 19 when he finished his schooling. He wanted to become a lawyer, but his father wanted him to join the business.
- 1:05:31 Sol's family was very observant. His father was a leader and financial supporter of the synagogue. His family was well-liked and had many relatives in Dusseldorf. Sol had a big Bar-Mitzvah celebration.
- 1:08:30 When Sol finished school he went into the family business and made a lot of money.
- 1:10:01 Sol belonged to Young Maccabee. He played all sports. In 1932, Sol tried out in Berlin to go to the Maccabia games that would take place in Jerusalem. He won a spot on the team and went to Jerusalem via Trieste and Haifa. Martin Buber was on the same ship and talked to everyone.

Most of those traveling with Sol thought about staying in Palestine, but he decided to go back to Dusseldorf so that he could earn money.

- 1:14:00 Sol describes his first memory of Nazi restrictions. In 1934, his father lost his business because everyone was forbidden to buy anything from him. His father tried to get a visa for the United States.
- 1:18:17 When Sol tried to get a visa, he was given a number that would make it impossible to get to the United States for at least 10 years. However, he was allowed to go to England for one year and wait for immigration papers there.
- 1:19:50 On November 10, 1938 the Nazis came to his house and threw everything into the street. They also looked for hidden money. Sol and his brother left Dusseldorf, but his parents were sick in bed. His sister, Friedel, had married and was living in France. Ultimately, she went to Israel on the ship the Exodus. His brother and he went back to Dusseldorf. Neighbors said that their parents were in a Catholic hospital.
- 1:22:35 Sol stayed with a neighbor's niece, but her son was in the Hitler Youth, so Sol had to leave in the middle of the night.
- 1:26:31 His brother and he moved to their uncle's apartment. His brother went to France near the Belgium/Holland border.
- 1:28:15 Nazi Police ordered Sol to leave Germany within a month. He left in eight days and went to England. The war broke out a few weeks later. Sol was with a group of young people in a camp near Dover. He helped the British secret service by listening to radio messages.
- 1:31:39 Sol was asked to join the British Army but did not want to go because he feared returning to Germany. He was able to get on a ship that went to Hoboken, New Jersey, where a cousin from Philadelphia picked him up. He had no money. He earned \$6.00 a week fixing tires and gave his aunt \$5.00 of it.
- 1:35:07 Sol had no word about his parents.
- 1:36:41 He went to Buffalo, New York in 1942.
- 1:37:45 Sol was inducted into the army. He was first assigned to Intelligence but later to the Infantry. However, his feet were in such bad shape that he was honorably discharged.

- 1:39:28 He moved to Washington D.C. to work for a cousin. He met his future wife Bertha (born in Vienna). They married in 1944. They have one daughter.
- 1: 44:00 He was notified by the Red Cross that his parents were in Antwerp. He brought them to the United States. His brother went back to Germany.
- 1:46:24 Sol trained to manage a dry cleaning store.
- 1:48:50 Many of his relatives were killed in camps. Sol does not like to talk about the war. He feels very fortunate that his immediate family and he survived.
- 1:56:42 His family's silver was smuggled into Belgium by former neighbors. He thinks that his parents brought pieces here. He finishes his interview with the saying, "Freedom is everything, money is nothing."