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**Oral history interview with Martin Gruenzweig**

**Conducted in Yiddish and English on January 10, 2016 by Rabbi Jonathan Gruenzweig and Ina Navazelskis**

**Summary**

Martin Gruenzweig was born in Sedrish, Austro-Hungary, Habsburg Empire on July 16, 1922. He also lived in Ger, a nearby shtetl. [In his recollection, there were 300-400 Jews living in Ger and he knew them all]. He was educated as a mechanical engineer, although he did not practice. Martin married Golda in 1949. He spoke many languages including Hungarian, German, Yiddish, Yinglish, Bessarabian and Biblical Hebrew.

His father, Yanosh, was also born in Sedrish, Hungary in 1890; his mother, Anna Polash, was born in 1893.

The family lived in a big stone house in Budapest, which featured four kitchens, but no Passover kitchen. Budapest was a relatively modern city with sidewalks and gutters for wagons and cars. The family owned a radio but had no electricity or indoor plumbing. They had a wood-burning stove and grew their own fruits and vegetables.

Martin was the second oldest of nine children. Hindi, was oldest, then came Manchi and Iris. His only brother was Yossi. [No other siblings were named].

His grandfather was an advisor and writer for the Austrian Hungarian emperor, Franz Josef. Martin witnessed the reading of the will but didn't inherit anything.

Martin was conscripted by the Hungarian army. Their first mission was to delouse clothing for the troops. Martin said, it was obvious that the men chosen for the detail were all Jews. Martin's high-economic status got him the rank Uber Lt. The conscripts were assigned to delouse clothing for the military and brutally beaten for any infractions. They were then relocated to an area near Switzerland to build an airstrip. Martin escaped and eventually joined his family in the US. He was kicked out of Switzerland and then moved to the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn.

He was in a Displaced Person's Camp after the war - location unknown. It was run by UNRWA (United Nations War Refugee Agency)

Translated by Jacob Neufeld.