Meyer Max Ganemy was born in Sousse, Tunisia on December 14, 1934. He was about 8 years old when the German army occupied Tunisia in November 1942, which had been under the control of the French Vichy government until that time.Due to the increasing anti-Semitic laws of the Vichy govt in the early 1940's, his father was forced to sell his artisanal jewelry business. During the battle for Tunisia, both the family home and the new business his father ran with a gentile partner was bombed. Immediately the family became refugees. His father was forced into work camps and after being badly injured being taken in and hidden from the Nazis by an Arab family. He recalled being told by his mother to take off their yellow stars and to only speak Arabic so as to blend in and not be identified as Jews. The occupation lasted for half a year, but Ganem's father never fully recovered from the impact of having been forced to sell his business.