

**Fuchs, Franz**  
**RG-50.120#0364**  
**1 video tape**  
**In Hebrew**  
**Recorded January 6, 2000**

### Summary

Franz was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1923. He was the youngest of two sons born to a physician and a housewife. The family was secular. Franz went for four years to a municipal elementary school, and for five to a gymnasium, until the war started. Franz's older brother, Fritz, escaped to France and then to Switzerland during the war. He ended up in Mexico, where he lived until his death.

Franz did not feel that they were affected by Kristallnacht, although after that restrictions on Jews were put into place.

In September 1938, Franz joined the Hachshara run by Young Maccabi in Germany. At the end of the instruction period, the youngsters were assured they would get certificates to immigrate legally to Israel. Franz describes Kristallnacht at the Hachshara. He tells of their proximity to the Hitler Youth School of Gliding.

In July 1939, Franz immigrated to Palestine via Trieste. He joined the British Army and was part of the commando force. He describes operations in Yugoslavia and Albania, in which he participated. Franz was later posted in Egypt. He discusses his marriage and life in Palestine, and the fate of his parents.

### Abstract

- 1:00:00** Franz was born in Vienna in January 1923, and immigrated to Palestine in August 1939. His father was a doctor and the family was well-to-do. He went to public elementary school for four years and high school for five years.
- Franz's older brother, Fritz, was born in 1919. Fritz spent the war years in France and Switzerland, and then fled to Mexico.
- 1:03:06** Franz's father's patients were Jews and non-Jews, and they were from many different social classes.
- 1:04:03** Anti-Semitism expressed itself in taunting of children.
- 1:05:05** Franz talks about his grandparents on both sides of the family.
- 1:06:22** Franz's family was secular, and sympathetic to Zionism. His father was a member of the Jewish Front Soldiers organization from World War I.

- 1:07:29** Franz was a Boy Scout. After Hitler's rise to power, the Young Maccabi was founded.
- 1:08:42** In 1933, the Jews in Austria thought they were exempt from Hitler's actions, and their lives did not change. They did not suffer any restrictions until 1938. Anti-Semitism became obvious. Restrictions began and Jews tended to stay home. A few days before the German invasion, a plebiscite was planned to support the Austrian government. The posters included the word "YES" in large letters and they were posted or painted everywhere. The Germans, the S.A., fearing the vote would go against them, grabbed Jews living in the Second District of Vienna (poor for the most part) to clean all the "YES's" from the city. Then, the Germans invaded Austria before the plebiscite.
- 1:15:53** Schools were segregated by religion. After June of 1938, Jews couldn't go to school any more.
- 1:17:05** Their non-Jewish maid left the family. Franz's father could only have Jewish patients.
- 1:18:00** Young Maccabi organized a Hachshara (training farm) in Germany for young people, with the objective to immigrate to Palestine. Franz convinced his parents and left, with 30-35 others, in September 1938. They had been promised that when they finished the training they would receive a certificate to immigrate.
- 1:19:54** Franz's parents also began looking for places to go in order to leave Austria.
- 1:21:17** Franz discusses the agricultural training farm. The Gestapo allowed it to exist in order to send Jews out. The Gestapo supervised everything, but did not interfere.
- 1:25:00** Franz speaks of the Gestapo's investigation of a letter that was sent to Belgium from the Hachshara. The letter contained money, which was forbidden to be sent outside the country. This was an interesting technique.
- 1:26:56** Franz was in the Hachshara for ten months. It was located 30 kilometers south of Berlin. The family went there often.
- 1:27:49** Franz describes Kristallnacht, the preparation for it, and the night itself.
- 1:30:32** Communication with his parents was through letters and one visit in December 1938, for two weeks.
- 1:32:43** Franz describes changes at his parents' apartment, and restrictions on the Jews.  
  
The gliding school of the Hitler Youth was near the Hachshara. Franz liked to hide and watch them work their gliders.
- 1:35:17** He enjoyed freedom of movement there.

- 2:00:00** The Hachshara youth provided assistance to neighboring farmers. This continued until July, 1939. The young people received certificates and were ready to immigrate to Palestine. Five young people went together from Berlin to Vienna (to visit Franz's parents and get some documents.)
- 2:04:30** They went to Trieste by train. He never saw his parents again.
- 2:05:50** Franz tells of his happiness at crossing the border to Trieste and his arrival in Haifa.
- 2:07:46** In 1942, Franz stopped getting mail from his parents. He resumed contact with his brother.
- 2:10:18** At the end of 1942, Franz joined the British Army, in the Transportation Corps. From Palestine, he went to Italy, where he volunteered for the British commando. Before training was over, he and others were sent to Yugoslavia, to an island, Vis, held by the partisans in Dalmatia. They spent six months there. He tells of the Jewish partisans there.
- 2:14:59** They also went to Albania. Franz describes the activities there and in Yugoslavia.
- 2:17:37** After the war, Franz requested from the Jewish commando to be posted back home, in Palestine. He was posted in Egypt. He tells of operations there.
- 2:18:01** Franz tells of his marriage in the kibbutz.
- 2:29:33** Franz speaks of the fate of his parents. They had been sent to Izbica, where they died.