

## Oral history interview with Dr. Steintal

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### Summary

Dr. Steintal, born in 1925, discussing moving with his parents and two sisters into his grandparents' home in Weilimdorf (near Stuttgart); being the second of three children. In 1932, Dr. Steintal attended grammar school in Weilimdorf and, from 1936 to 1942, he attended Gymnasium in Feuerbach. Being classified as 1st Degree Mischling, and mandated by law, he was forced to leave the Gymnasium after 10th grade, in 1942, not finishing his Abitur.

Not being allowed to join the Hitler Youth groups that met on Saturdays, Dr. Steintal was required to spend the summer of 1941, on farms in the Allgäu (Bavaria) and help with the harvest. While there, Germany declared war on Russia. The people on these farms were simple with little interest in politics. They've accepted the fact that Germany is now fully engaged at war and went after their usual field work.

Dr. Steintal did not have any contacts to Jewish organizations, as he grew up as German and not Jewish.

Dr. Steintal is fully cognizant of the events that happened during Kristallnacht. In the morning of November 10, 1938, he saw a car coming by their house and the men in there took his father away to Dachau. He was released again in December of 1938, under the promise to immediately leave the country. This was not as easy. Originally the family decided to relocate to Rio, Brazil. His father's sister had already relocated to Brazil in 1934. In the end, though, his father did not want to leave Germany. He was and felt German. He fought for Germany during WWI. His mother did not want to leave also. In December of 1941, Dr. Steintal began to witness deportations leaving Stuttgart, first to France, and then to the East. None of his close family members were included in the December-Deportations. Initially, in 1942, it was not easy to find a place to live. The family split up; he and one sister went to stay with friends of his father in Cannstatt (*near Stuttgart*), his parents with a different family, and his other sister went to a third family. After four months they then found and rented a flat in Stuttgart, near to Kräherwald (*suburb of Stuttgart*). Dr. Steintal found work as a help in a small machine-factory, in the Rosenberg Straße (*Stuttgart*).

Dr. Steintal's father was arrested and sent to concentration camps two more times, after Dachau. First, to Welzheim (*near Stuttgart*), and then, in 1944, to Theresienstadt. At the end of 1944, Dr. Steintal was taken to Wolfenbüttel, where he was required to work repairing water pipes.

Two to three days before liberation, Dr. Steintal and a friend, Mr. Meier-Leonard, fled Wolfenbüttel on foot. At that time, there were hardly any guards watching.

His father, too, came back from Theresienstadt.

Dr. Steintal was not raised in the Jewish believe. Not like his father, born 1897, who was raised according to the Jewish faith. In 1918, however, he converted to Christianity, and got baptized. Both of his sisters were not deported. The oldest sister worked in an office by Dietzenbach, and the younger sister made an apprenticeship as weaver.

In 1946, Dr. Steintal went back to school and completed his Abitur.