

August 29, 1991

Slate # 1349-011

Interviewee: Mr. Gerald Jablon

Interviewer: Ms. Jean Brock

Notetaker: Dr. Rose Shames

0:00 - Gerald Jablon born June 1906 in Breslau (sp.?)

0:22 - Only child. Father was a pharmacist. Mother from a wealthy family.

0:48 - Attended public high school and college until 1924.

1:16 - In school, 300 pupils and 25 were Jewish. Antisemitism in school described.

3:16 - After 2 years of college became apprentice in family wholesale grocer business.

4:15 - Lived in Hamburg and London during apprentice years.

4:41 - 1933-1938 Lived through Hitler years. Father didn't think anything bad would happen.

6:03 - Bank wouldn't do business with Jews so in 1937 business was lost.

6:50 - Living in Hamburg. Found telephone book of New York. Looked up Jablon name. Found the name, but no relation to family. Requested help of this stranger, and by luck received papers in 1938.

9:11 - During Kristallnacht, picked up and taken to Sachsenhausen (sp.?).  
Description.....

10:42 - Unloaded concrete bags 8 hr./day. 15,000 inmates, mostly from Hamburg.

11:40 - People had known about camps before, but nobody believed that they would end up there. Only men in camp, mostly Jewish.

13:25 - Digging 30 ft. ditches for unknown reason. Description of barrack - sleeping on floor, very little room, coffee and dry bread in morning, soup in the evening. Lost 25 lbs. in 6 weeks.

17:00 - Wife sent him money, but never reached him.

18:24 - Father-in-law had contact in Nazi Party who he paid 5000 marks to get Gerald out of the camp.

19:20 - Father had been loyal army officer. Could have gone to Zurich, but didn't think anything would happen. In the end, both father and mother went to Theresenstadt in Jan. 1939. No one knows what happened to them.

21:50 - Kristallnacht - didn't see too much, but was picked up by police the next morning.

23:40 - Wife sent furniture to New York, but needed \$250 to retrieve which they didn't have. Family of Baron de Hirsh gave them the money they needed.

26:40 - In New York, worked as bus boy in restaurant. Then got job as oboist in Charlotte Symphony 1940 for two years. They was pay master in a hosiery mill.

28:11 - Went to Spartanburg and worked as an accountant. Not taken into U.S. army because considered enemy alien. Met many Germans in Spartanburg army camp, including Henry Kissinger. Have 2 children and 4 grandchildren.