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My father was among those who were rounded up and interned. He ended up in a camp on the Isle of Man together with many, many others in the same boat. And my father's mail to my mother was censored. I have a stack of his letters with the censorship marks on it at home. In it, he often wrote about some of the people he met. And he met some rather auspicious persons, writers and musicians, all kinds of people.

And also, there was quite a rumor line going on in the camps, all kinds of information as to where to go and whom to see if it was your turn to leave Great Britain and emigrate and so on. And eventually, when our quota number came through, that summer of 1940, my father was able to tell my mother which offices she had to visit in order to process him to get him expedited, insofar as I think he had to pass a physical and had to see some authorities in London. And she was able to accomplish all this because of the information that my father wrote to her from camp.

I was very upset hearing that my father once again had been arrested, so to speak. And I was quite anxious to get back to my mother when school ended in June. Even though the roundups had taken place and Dunkirk had been a very negative aspect of the first war years, nothing much had happened to London so far.

The school year ended in June and I returned to my mother. But soon the air raids began. As I said before, we lived in this rooming house where lots of other refugees lived as well. It was kind of a humorous situation at times. The owners of the house were a couple who were schoolteachers. They lived in a house nearby, a few blocks away. They had a daughter my age, and sometimes they invited me to come over and play with their daughter, as a matter of fact.

And they had invested in this house, taking advantage of the need that refugees had to live someplace. And most of the refugees couldn't afford to pay for a whole apartment. They made do with a room in a rooming house.

Next door to us lived a Polish opera singer who was also an air raid warden in his spare time. And across from us lived a family from Cologne. And downstairs lived a Hungarian opera singer. And upstairs lived some Irish prostitutes. And after the invasion of Belgium, we got some Belgian refugees into the house.

There was only one bathroom on the second floor and one bathroom on the first floor, and everyone had to share that bathroom. If you wanted a bath, you had to pay money in a slot in order to draw hot water. If you wanted heat, you had to put money in the little heater. If you wanted to cook something on an electric burner, you had to put money in that. If you wanted to put the light on, you had to put money somewhere. All utilities were well-monitored with little slots where money had to be deposited. Of course, also, telephone downstairs in the hall was a paid telephone.

The only good thing about all this was that lots of these money-devouring slots didn't work too well. And you often got more back than you put in, which was a blessing. And the idea was to find out which machines were so blessed.

My mother got busy trying to get all the things done she had to do once it was clear that our number had come through and we could possibly leave England within a short period of time. She would go into town, and if there were any phone messages, she would call in once in a while in the public phone downstairs in the hall and. I would take the messages for her.

Also, some of the pennies that I had earned carrying shoes out for Mr. Whittington and money that I earned together with my co-students in the school helping the farmers, were quite helpful to my mother in order to have car fare and to use the telephone.

As the spring came along, the students in the school were told that we must help the farmers. And so there was a period of time where we got up at 5:00 in the morning and were out in the fields picking currants and picking peas and various other vegetables. And for a certain amount of fruits or vegetables that you picked, for a certain weight, you got paid. And I put the money away, and I was happy that I could help my mother a little bit that way. It was, unfortunately, not pleasant for her to have to take from me. But we had to do what we had to do.

As the summer progressed, the bombings increased, and today we know this period of time as the Blitz of London. We lived in what was essentially a private home, and it had a backyard. And homes like that all over London had what was called an Anderson shelter. These were hastily built at the beginning of the war.

And what it was was a hole in the ground, perhaps three feet into the ground. There was an area that was dug out that would eventually hold perhaps six people along each long side and two people across the bottom. There were benches, so to speak, installed, which were really boards mounted on some bricks to sit on. And then the whole thing was covered by a corrugated metal dome. And that corrugated metal dome was covered with dirt so that from the sky, you couldn't see that it was anything than just a yard with dirt in it. You couldn't tell that these were shelters where people were hiding from the bombs.

And starting in late June, my mother and I would pack a brown bag with sweaters and long slacks, and perhaps a blanket and something to eat for a snack during the night and for possibly breakfast in the morning. And no sooner was it bedtime, perhaps around 10:00 at night, the sirens would sound and everybody scrambled out into the shelter. Many people in London went to the undergrounds, the subways because they were very far below the street level and were pretty safe from bombing.

But in these private homes, people usually sat in their Anderson shelters. In our case, there were about 20 people living in that house. And most of the time, the men would stay outside and the women and children sat in the shelter. But I do remember one night when we had fire bombing. The bombs would burst into flames just before they would hit the ground, and you could see these things coming down en masse. And it was very, very scary. And I remember that the men all jumped into the shelter when they saw those firebombs dropping.

By the time we were ready to leave England, my mother and I had not slept in a bed for a full night for close to three months. And as the end of August approached, it seemed that all was ready for us to leave England. We were told that we would take the train from London to Glasgow and that the men had been brought to Linfield, which was a camp much closer to London, and were going to be taken onto the train and would be traveling in the back of the train in a sealed car under guard of Scotland Yard as though they were common criminals.

All along the trip to Scotland, we really weren't very sure whether or not the men were really there. It was just hoped that they would be. It was a long trip, an overnight trip, and three times this train was stopped because of air raids. And finally we did arrive in Glasgow, which seemed a very dreary city.

We were taken to the port, and there the customs officers examined us very thoroughly. The lining of my coat was ripped open to look for possible hidden money. We were not allowed to take out any valuables or anything that could possibly incriminate us as spies, and so on, as though anybody had any money.

But then there were some exceptions. For instance, we were traveling together with a lady that my mother had befriended. And she had a young child, a little girl who was carrying a doll. And this lady had confided in my mother that she had hidden money in the head of the doll and then pasted the wig back onto the doll's head. It was one of these porcelain dolls.

My mother got terribly nervous about this information. It would have been so much better if this lady had never confided in her because why should she have been nervous for somebody else's daring? At any rate, in spite of the bodily examinations, nobody thought to take the hair off of that doll, and the lady got through with flying colors. But too much of a worry to my mother, which shouldn't have happened.

We boarded the ship, and we were anxiously waiting to see my father. Nothing happened, and ship was ready to leave toward evening when finally the men filed on board. And what a wonderful and moving reunion that must have been. I know only that I was just overwhelmed to see my father. And my mother has told me many times that the reunion of the men with their families made the sailors cry.

What had happened was that somebody had decided to put this carload full of men from the internment camp onto another ship that was going to New Zealand. And the men had actually started a mutiny because they were not going to

put up with that sort of thing. You see, the British deported many of the younger men who had been rounded up from among the Jewish refugees and shipped them out to New Zealand and to Australia, where they were then not confined, but where they were out of any sort of area that could be harmful to England.

And somebody took it upon themselves to put all these men who were, for the most part, older, and family men whose families were waiting for them on the ship, and thought they're going to ship them out to Australia as well, or to New Zealand. At any rate, the outcome was happy, and our reunion was ecstatic.

I think that the Jewish organizations had paid for the tickets and that at a later time, my parents and the families reimbursed these organizations once they were in a situation to do that. Our cabin was on D deck, which meant no porthole, inside cabins. We had many, many children on board. As a matter of fact, this ship was a Scottish liner. It went under the Scottish flag, and the name was The SS Cameronia. Did not have a first class. It had a tourist class and a third class, and of course, we were in the third class.

We had a small cabin. Again I was in the top bunk. And we had to take the elevators up to any of the public rooms into the dining rooms and so on. The tourist class was booked in almost entirely for British children who were being sent to the United States, and more so to Canada for the duration. Many people assured their children's safety by sending them to the Western hemisphere.

Had we been attacked by a submarine, I am certain that anybody on D deck, which included ourselves, could have never made it to the upper decks at all. We did have convoy, and we made the trip safely. The ship before us and the ship after us were not so lucky. They were followed by German submarines, as we were as well. I don't know if they didn't have convoys with them. At any rate, we made it and unfortunately, they didn't.

On the morning of September 10, 1940, we sailed into New York Harbor. It was still a little bit dark, and we saw a city lit up. And it was a sight that was unbelievable. We hadn't seen a city lit up for years. Already in the last years before the war in Germany, there were semi-blackouts. One had to have an air raid shelter in one's home, mostly in a cellar or in a basement. And the house had to have blackout facilities.

And many times there were inspections. And as I remember it, there was semi-blackout the last months that I lived in Germany. Came to London, sure, it was all lit up, was wonderful. But when we came back from York at the end of August, the war began, and again there was complete blackout.

As a matter of fact, the headlights of cars had to be covered with a blue paint. And when we had some really foggy, real pea soup foggy London nights, there were squads of people who were employed as guides for the buses. They walked in front of the buses with subdued flashlights so the buses could get through because there were no streetlights, and it was very dark. The only light that came from the sky were the searchlights that were constantly strafing the skies every night. It was a kind of ghostly atmosphere.

And to see a city like New York with the lights on was like getting to Oz, I suppose. Maybe that's a good comparison. And so we sailed into New York Harbor, passed the Statue of Liberty, and finally, finally we were really in America. My concept of America, I think, had been fed, perhaps, by movies. And I thought that everywhere would be skyscrapers, and cowboys would be running around the streets. And so I was in for a brand new adventure of exploring my new country and my new surroundings.

Our relatives who had furnished our affidavit were at the pier to pick us up and took us immediately to Philadelphia. The first few days we stayed with them. They had a house in Oak Lane. They had two little boys. One was two at the time and one was six. And I was to stay with them for awhile until my parents could settle down and manage to have a home.

In the beginning that wasn't really possible because, of course, my father had to find something to do. He obviously couldn't practice law. And my mother, who had not been a working woman in Germany and had herself two servants at home, had not much of a choice as to what kind of work she could do.

As I mentioned before, I think in 1939, in 1940, the country was just getting over the Depression. And for refugees who did not have too many skills, there wasn't a whole big choice of jobs available. So she began at first to be a domestic help in the household. Her first position didn't last very long, but then she found a place and a house in Elkins Park, where she was to cook and to mind the baby and where my father could live with her. There was an apartment on the top floor of the house, and my parents could live there. My father could have his meals there.

And in the meantime, he was looking for something to do. And he began by peddling European homemade candy from door to door. He had found another refugee who was making European-type candy, chocolates. And in knocking on doorbells and then being referred to other people, he made a lot of contacts.

Eventually my father found a job with a German newspaper, which was being published in those days on a daily basis. It was called The Philadelphia Gazette Demokrat. The last word, demokrat, was spelled D-E-M-O-K-R-A-T. This German newspaper was published daily all through World War I, all through World War II until, in the 1950s, it merged with a New York German language newspaper, which was called The New York Staats Zeitung. And that's spelled S-T-A-A-T-S, and the second word is Z-E-I-T-U-N-G.

Eventually these papers became weekly, and then eventually ceased to publish because there was obviously not a public for a German newspaper anymore. But at any rate, it was what was considered then a well-paying job from papers I found among my mother's things. There was an income tax return. And it seemed that my father was earning \$22 a week, and that was considered a very good salary at the time.

My mother had meanwhile graduated from domestic to factory worker to a clerk in a jewelry store, and she enjoyed that job very much, and they were able to rent an apartment. And I was finally, after three years, able to move back to my parents'. I think that first year in the United States, besides being interesting for me-- interesting because the school system was so different-- it seemed very easy to me.

But at the same time, it was also painful because I would visit my parents on Friday evenings. I would take the subway and visit them. I lived further into the city, around the Erie Avenue and 119th Street at the time. And on Sunday nights I had to say goodbye. And take the subway back to Oak Lane, to the suburbs, and stay with the family that was giving me a home.

And of course, I appreciated their hospitality. They were very kind to me. I loved the two little boys. And I also enjoyed the friends I had made in the school that I was attending. But nevertheless, it was hard for me every Sunday to say goodbye. My father would walk me to the subway, and I wouldn't see him again until the next weekend.

I often think back on that, and in remembering that, sometimes tears come to my eyes. It's funny, there were a lot of other experiences that you might think would draw tears. But it was just a child's yearning to be back with her parents and to have a real home together.

And I was so happy when that finally became a reality. We moved into a third floor apartment in a neighborhood which, at that time, had these beautiful old brownstone row houses with porches three and four stories high. And it was near the synagogue that we were attending. And many of our neighbors were also refugees. As a matter of fact, it had the nickname of being the Fourth Reich. Hitler's Germany was the Third Reich, and they called Park Avenue, at the time, the Fourth Reich. And Reich is spelled R-E-I-C-H.

So there were also children of refugees in that block, or in those two blocks where so many of us lived. Quite a lot of Jewish people lived there. It was near the original building of Adat Jeshurun on Broad and Susquehanna, and also near Gratz College, near Dropsie College. And the rabbis of these institutions lived on our block. And it was comfortable to live there.

We attended the Clymer Public School at 12th and Cambria, which was kind of a blue collar neighborhood closer to Lehigh Avenue, not in our immediate neighborhood. And I did like going to school there very much because the teachers were much more progressive, much younger than they had been in the school that I attended in the suburbs. And even though some of the student body was a rather tough student population, I was kind of a novelty to them. And I

made friends, and I was happy there.

I graduated from the Clymer School in eighth grade and received the American Legion Award, which was a source of great pride to my parents. From that school, I enrolled and attended the Philadelphia High School for Girls. And for me, that was one of the happiest time in my life. Four years I attended the school at 17th and Spring Gardens. It was a college preparatory school only offering the academic course. I majored in languages and art.

And I found that American schools could really be fun. You could choose some of your subjects. And after school, there were so many things to do that were fun. German and English schools just simply weren't like that at all. In England we had a sports day on Wednesday afternoons. But to be able to choose some of your subjects, and to have clubs and all kinds of fun things to do after classes, that was not in the picture in European schools. And I had the time of my life there.

Besides that, though, I also found myself an after school job as soon as I was old enough to work. And Wednesday afternoons and Saturdays I worked in a department store. And except for \$2.00, I gave my mother my earnings because she needed it.

Unfortunately, my father did not live too long once we came to this country. He lived only another five years, and then he passed away. I was only 17 years old. I was a junior in high school, and I had to help my mother as much as I could.

I would have liked to go to college, but it was not possible for my mother to support me, even though I had a scholarship opportunity. And eventually, after I graduated, I married almost immediately after I graduated high school. I had met my husband, who was a GI and had been in the Army Air Force during the war.

And I met him in a place called the Central Club. The Central Club of Philadelphia was a club that was formed for refugees from Central Europe. And they had a youth group, they had a building which was right close by to where I lived at the time. There was a restaurant in the building where you could have a cup of coffee or where you could have a whole meal. And it was a nice place to--

place to spend time, and my mother didn't have to worry about me.

When the soldiers came home from the war in 1945, the boys who had been members of the Central Club certainly came back to socialize. We had dances, and it was the opportunity where I met my husband on a hike.

The end of the war, in the summer of 1945, had also brought some very sad news to my family. My father found out that his sister and one of her sons had been murdered in the concentration camps, and that her other son had survived and had returned to Belgium at the time. He immediately had gotten in touch with us upon his liberation. And eventually, he had written his memoirs and sent them to us and thought that we could translate these memoirs and have them published here.

We could not believe what we were reading. It was so painful to my family. I think it helped my father along when he was feeling ill to read such an astounding document of brutality. I think it gave him the rest of the shock that sent him to his grave in November of 1945.

My mother also found out that her family from Berlin, her sister and husband and child and her mother, had been deported as early as October, 1941 from Berlin to the ghetto of Lodz, and from there were deported to parts unknown. One could only conjecture what their end was.

My mother's older sister, who had emigrated to Holland with her husband, had been sent to Sobibor. And I never really discussed these matters with my mother or told her what I have read about these places because I just didn't want to cause her any more pain.

There was not a family among our friends, who were all Europeans and immigrants into this country, not one family who did not lose loved ones to the crematoria of the concentration camps. And it was a hard nut to swallow, I suppose.

It was something that stayed with us all. And it was also a common experience among the friends because we all had loved ones who perished.

After I graduated in January of 1947, I married my husband the following June, and we were married happily for 40 years. We had two children, Joni and Joe, a girl and a boy. And we built a new life in our adopted country. Our children were American born. And I have become, I think, 100% American through the years. I feel at home here. And even though this country, at one time, did not welcome us, eventually we were able to come. We were able to create a new life for ourselves. And that I am grateful for.

I suppose the experiences that I have survived in my lifetime have made me feel that it is my responsibility to speak about it. I am an eyewitness. After my generation dies out, there will be no one else to tell all the stories. It is important that there be a record of these eyewitness experiences. And so I do devote a great deal of my time in this endeavor.

I am 70 years old at this time. I have four grandchildren that are the sunshine of my life, and I am very content in my lifestyle.

A few footnotes, if you will. I have in my possession a letter from a Cuban government official who, through the auspices of our Cuban friends, had written a permit for the Joseph family to leave the ship and to disembark in Havana. The letter is in Spanish on official letterhead paper, and I had it translated into English recently by a Spanish-speaking friend.

My father would not leave the ship because as the chairman of the committee, he felt responsible not to abandon this position of trust that had elected him to be the chairman. And so we never took advantage of that letter.

Another item. In the papers of my mother, who passed away at the age of 92, I found a stack of letters that were sent to my father in response to an ad that he had placed in a German language weekly that is still being published. This newspaper is called The Aufbau, A-U-F- like Fred, B-A-U. It means reconstruction, and this newspaper is distributed worldwide. It's published in New York, but it is distributed worldwide.

In November of 1941, my father had placed an ad in The Aufbau asking former St. Louis passengers if they would like him to try and retrieve the monies that they spent on these illegal immigration permits. And he had a whole stack of letters with replies. Some of them even included a three cent stamp postage for his efforts.

In these letters, the people said they bought their permits from Mr. Goldsmith or Mr. Schwartz or Mr. Goldstein or Brownstein, or obviously all Jewish names. And they paid so much money for these permits. The prices that were paid for these permits all differed, from which I can surmise that Mr. Gonzalez sold these permits to middlemen who would then sell them to people who wanted to emigrate out of Germany who had contacts, who had more contacts, personal contacts with the people wanting to emigrate in a hurry.

And these middlemen then charged prices, whatever they could get, from the poor victims who needed these permits. And it's kind of a little bit of a sad statement to see that Jews were plying on the needs of other Jews and making a profit from it. It was bad enough that Mr. Gonzalez was making a profit from an actually illegal document. Apparently, my father was not able to accomplish anything because I would imagine otherwise, I would have found other correspondence.

Finally, after meeting the Troper family on that day that we reached Europe again, I stayed in touch with Mr. and Mrs. Troper until they died. And the communications were always very, very cordial and very loving in nature, actually. Mrs. Troper had taken a shiner to me, and actually had asked my mother if she could take me back to the States with her to assure my safety. But my father and mother insisted that we are all going to stay together no matter what comes.

To emphasize one more point, at the time that the St. Louis reached Europe again, no one went back to Germany. It has been printed in various publications and books that some people went back to Germany. No, they did not. Nobody who got off the St. Louis in Antwerp on June 17, 1939, nobody went back to Germany at that time.

However, the people who went to France, Holland, and Belgium, and who did not manage to leave Europe before the outbreak of World War II due to their quota numbers coming up, and people who did not manage to escape to a neutral country such as Portugal and make their way from there to the States or to other countries outside of Europe-- those people, unfortunately, were overrun by the Nazis when they invaded these countries and were deported to the extermination camps.

And sadly enough, at the end of the war, I think that most of the survivors were the ones who went to England. Approximately 250 people survived World War II. Some people stayed in England. Eventually they were able to work and make new lives for themselves in England and had children and grandchildren born there. And some people came to the States and so on.

But unfortunately, the survivor group, by now, is down to a very minimal number. In 1989, we had a 50th anniversary reunion in Florida, at which time 29 original St. Louis survivors came. Most of them, including myself, were children on board, although the older generation was represented by perhaps three or four people. By this time, as we face the 60th anniversary of the ship, naturally the number of survivor decreases by each year. I don't have any statistics, but it stands to reason that would be the case.

Captain Schroder] was caught in the beginning of the war with the ship still in this hemisphere. He had to bring the ship back to Germany and managed to do so by January of 1940 by way of Murmansk. Because of his sympathy toward the Jews, his services as a captain were not required. They gave him a desk job. I suppose they didn't have time to give him a trial. And at the end of the war, he was quite destitute since he also had no pension of any kind.

Many of the passengers, the former passengers of the St. Louis, helped him after the war, sent him money and sent him food. He also wrote a small book about the St. Louis trip in German, which he called Homeless on High Seas. In it, he also divulges his feelings of sympathy toward his passengers. And at one point, he quotes that he felt that we were all on another planet as we were sailing back and forth on the ocean and not really having a goal or a destination.

When we had our reunion in Florida, we brought over the only living survivor of the captain's family, his nephew. And he told us many stories about his uncle, the captain. And eventually the captain has been made a righteous among the nations at Yad Vashem and in Jerusalem in Israel.

I think these are all the footnote notes I can think of and hope that you find the St. Louis story one of, in a small way, giving a grasp of the Holocaust. Here were less than 1,000 people, and the handful survived as compared to six million. And a comparative handful survived.