

Interviewee:	<u>SILBERSTEIN</u> , Walter	Date:	November 9 and 17, 1981
Interviewer:	Josey G.Fisher		
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SUMMARY

Walter Silberstein, was born November 9, 1902 in Stargard, Germany, son of the only rabbi serving that area. He studied engineering and economics in Berlin and Leipzig and nearly completed his doctorate when his University of Leipzig professors were fired for their political views in 1933. After a brief business venture in Prague, he returned to Berlin in 1934, where he lived with his parents until July, 1939, when he left for Shanghai without a visa.

He describes in detail his voyage on a German luxury liner and the shock of arrival in the Hongkew district of Shanghai during a cholera epidemic. He notes the character of the native and newcomer Jewish communities and the political subdivisions of Shanghai. In 1940, his parents arrived, with Japanese visas, and his father served as rabbi to the refugee community. He gives an eyewitness account of their life after the December 1941 occupation by the Japanese, who did not persecute Jews, despite pressure from the Germans. He describes serving with other Jews, Russians and Chinese in the *Pao Chia*, as air-raid wardens and ghetto guards in summer, 1945. He notes a contented life between the American liberation on September 6, 1945 and the Communist takeover in 1949. In 1950, he left with his mother on a year's odyssey until returning to Germany. They lived in Displaced Persons camps at Rhön and Föhrenwald; on October 29, 1951, they arrived in the United States.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War II- 1939-1945 Jewish personal narratives
World War II- 1939-1945 Stargard, Germany
World War II- 1939-1945 Berlin, Germany
Germany - Emigration and Immigration, Berlin to Shanghai, China
Jewish-Chinese relations
Jewish Ghettos - Japanese in Shanghai, China
Refugees, Jewish