

Interviewee:	<u>SOMMER</u> , Hurst	Date:	October 19, 1991
Interviewer:	Gerry Schneeberg		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Hurst Sommer, born in Berlin, Germany on July 23, 1929, was placed in a Jewish orphanage by his divorced mother where he lived and was educated from ages five through eleven. While there, he experienced *Kristallnacht* both as victim and observer. His stepfather, a Jew who worked for the German government in procurement, was able to flee with his new wife to Shanghai. Hurst and his brother eventually followed after being sent to London on a *Kindertransport*. From 1942-43, he and his family lived in the International Settlement, largely on the money his stepfather had smuggled out. In 1943, the Japanese ordered all Jews out of the Settlements and into Hongkew. The family lost their income and Hurst apprenticed to an electrician. He joined BETAR, a Zionist organization.

With the surrender of the Japanese in 1945, Hurst found work on the American air base. He obtained a position with the Foreign Liquidation Commission, a front for the OSS, later the CIA. Through his connections with the Americans, he and his family emigrated to San Francisco in 1947. He traveled to Palestine, fought in the Israel War for Independence and then returned to San Francisco. In 1950 he was drafted into the U.S. Army and fought in Korea.