

Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

P.O. Box 25506, San Mateo, CA 94402

Name of interviewee: Abrams, Ann

Date of interview: 10/3/2001

Summary: Ann Abrams was born Hertha Fromme on November 17, 1913 in Hamburg, Germany to William and Hanchen Fromme. She came from an upper-class family. Her father was a pharmacist who ran his own practice. Her early memories are quite vague. She remembers her first experience with anti-Semitism when a boyfriend dumped her because she was Jewish. She also remembers Kristallnacht, when the Germans made her father sign over his practice to the government. He was jailed for two weeks before he agreed to sign the papers. Also during that night, her mother was taken and never heard of again. The family had to take whatever riches they had in their business and home in order to survive. George, her brother, had a friend who gave them an affidavit for Holland, and they moved there in 1937.

They lived in Holland for two years, and immigrated to Shanghai, China in 1939. During her time in Holland, Ann married, and she lived with her husband and brother in China. They borrowed money and lived day by day. They would eventually borrow enough money to open a tailor and dress shop in Shanghai. Ann said that the Chinese were very kind to them. She remembers doing good business with them because they would let them front the goods. She and her husband would eventually make lots of money opening a jewelry store there. They would move to the U.S. many years later to open another jewelry store and eventually a restaurant.