

## Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project

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

**Name of interviewee:** Calder, Alice

**Date of interview:** 2/24/1990

**Summary:** (Deceased 30 December 2004)

Alice was born in 1920, in Hamburg-Altona, Germany. She was an only child. Her father was a merchant and her mother was unemployed. Her father left when she was nine due to a separation in the marriage. Her grandfather, who was very religious, and an uncle lived with Alice and her mother. She was enrolled in an all-Jewish girl's school. She stated that when Hitler came into power he forbade all Jews from going to German schools. It resulted in her school being overcrowded. She did not think much of it. Growing up Alice didn't have too many Jewish friends. Her family lived in a German neighborhood, so that's whom she played with.

On April 1, 1933 anti-Semitism started to occur. There were weekly boycotts on all the Jewish businesses. Jews were eventually forced to close their stores. Neighbors and friends of Alice were afraid to talk to her and her family. The Germans were deathly afraid that the Nazis would hurt them if there was any interaction with Jews. It did not bother Alice, now thirteen. She had lost all of her German friends, and she had many Jewish friends to play with.

Most Jews, including her grandfather always thought nothing worse could happen after the boycott. Then, in 1935, came the segregation. Signs were posted saying, "Jews unwelcome." Jews could not go to clubs, the movies, or even theaters. In 1938 a law passed stating all Jews had to give up their valuables.

The "beginning of the end" happened on November 10, 1938 with Kristallnacht. Alice was working as a stock worker for a Jewish-owned business. On the way to work she saw all the windows owned by the Jewish merchants broken and the merchandise thrown out on the street. She passed by a synagogue that was still burning. Once she got to work she discovered all the men of the business had been arrested. They were beaten and treated horribly.

After this event she knew she needed to get out. A friend wrote her in 1939 telling her she could get a domestic job in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England. So, Alice filled out the paperwork and left Germany. Her mother stayed in Germany because she would never leave Alice's grandfather. Her mother and aunts were deported and killed. Her father was deported to Auschwitz, where he also died. Her grandfather was able to stay in Germany. He was put in an elder home and died on September 4, 1942; the day Alice married her husband Hans Kohn (Roy Calder).

Alice has no desire to go back to Germany. She has no family left and she fears running into somebody from that era. Alice and her husband lived in England for twenty years before the United States accepted them. In January 1953 she moved to the United States on an affidavit from husband's uncle. Her son, Michael, was nine and her daughter, Jackie, was three.

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