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He went to go to Jews-- to kill the Jews. And we know that. One after another came. They want to kill them. They were out of the Jews. And so we went out. We had to-- so long we could do it, we went to Belgium. And we--

What finally--

--we thought we are sure in Belgium that Hitler wouldn't come. But one night they come to Belgium, too. So we had to go out from Belgium. We went to France. We would go to France, but we couldn't go through. And he come to France, too, later on. So we went back to Belgium, and there we were a few weeks.

And then we went in another city, a little city. The name is Spa, and we asked the lawyer if we could do that. And he said, yeah, we could go there. He wouldn't be there. And so we lived there a year or more.

My husband passed away in the meantime. He got sick, and I was living still there. And then my son would go back to Brussels.

Let me go back to Leipzig for a minute here. Who lived in Leipzig? You and your husband? And did you have children? Did you have children?

Yeah, one son.

And were your parents living at this time?

What was it?

Where did your parents live at that time?

When I--

When you lived in Leipzig.

It was-- everything was OK till we heard that Hitler is coming, so we tried to go out from Germany.

Well, you left in 1938, right?

Yeah. We had to leave Germany.

What kind of things happened that you remember between 1933 and 1938?

We heard everything, that he is coming and take out of the Jews, only would do the Jews-- very bad to the Jews, killed them. And they had to go to the Gestapo and were beating them, and everything was very bad. So we tried to go out when we heard that everything was so bad.

Did they-- did you ever experience-- what kind of discrimination did you experience? [CROSS TALK]

We didn't experience the bad-- the worst thing was when we were in Belgium we had to live underground. We have to live two years underground.

What made you finally decide to leave Leipzig? What made you decision final that you have to go?

Of course, we knew that Hitler was getting out to kill the Jews, so we wouldn't stay.

So he was just gaining more power?

Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection Yeah. You wouldn't like to get killed from him.

Did most of your friends go, or did you go by yourselves? Did most of your friends leave with you? Yeah. Most of them left with you, went somewhere at the same time? I didn't understand. Most of your friends in Leipzig also left Germany? He was in Germany. We went even-- first I remember we went to Berlin. You went for Berlin first? From Leipzig to Berlin, yeah. When did you do that? From Berlin then after that we had occasion to go to Belgium. How did-- how did you decide on Berlin first? How we decided to go? Yeah, how come you went to Berlin first? Because my parents and my family was in Berlin, so we went to Berlin. Did your brothers and sisters leave with you to go to Belgium? Yeah. And from Berlin we went into Belgium. Was it hard to get a visa? Yeah. To Belgium we had become visa to go there. You had what? We become visa to go to Belgium. Was it hard to get it? Visa, you know? Yeah. Was it easy to get it? How hard was it to get a visa to go to Belgium? Did you try other countries? My husband did that, everything. I didn't do that. But he tried to get a visa, and we got it. We could go to Belgium. We thought in Belgium we are free. We are sure that Hitler wouldn't come. But we were maybe a year in Belgium, and he came to Belgium, sudden, very sudden one night, I remember.

Describe that.

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We were sitting outside, what I told you, in the garden from a nice restaurant, and sudden, the avions came over once and were shooting And everything. It was awful. So we went home, and we decided to go to France. Of course--

Did you decide that night?

Yeah. Of course we thought to France they will not come, but we took a camion, what I said, and our whole family-- we went out from Belgium. And we were weeks on the away till we should stay in France. But they didn't let us through, so we had to go back.

Oh, wait a minute. You were weeks trying to get into France?

Yeah.

But who didn't let you go through? The French or the Germans?

All the police and all these-- they didn't let us go through.

Was it French police or German police?

That was a Belgian, Belgian police.

Belgian police. And they wouldn't let you go into France?

Yeah. So we couldn't-- we had to go back to Belgium.

Were you on a train all that time? Were you on a train all that time?

Yeah, yeah. So we went back to Belgium. We found everything-- our house, everything was OK. They didn't take anything from there. We were not sure. My parents were going to-- Gestapo came one day and took my parents, but they didn't do anything to them. They sent them in a old age home, too, over there.

Over where?

In-- I think it was in Brussels.

In Brussels?

In Brussels, yeah.

Were you able to visit them there?

Yeah.

So it really was an old age home.

And then after this we went to Spa. That's a little town. We went there because they said that Hitler wouldn't come and take the people out from there. Yeah.

How long did you stay in Brussels before you did that?

In Brussels we were about a year or two, two years about.

How did life change when the Germans entered? How did life change when the Germans entered? What kind of daily things changed?

They took out the people from the houses and sent them away to Poland and put in the gas chamber.

Were you registered as Jewish in Brussels?

And so they knew that you were Jewish?

They knew we are Jewish, yeah.

When did you go underground?

Yeah, yeah.

We went in from where we went, and it's a long time. I can't remember. It was but I know we were in Spa long time. And then we had to go underground, to live underground. There were people, a couple, who took us for money. And we could stay there and not going out on the street.
My husband passed away in the meantime, but my son and me we were staying by these people, but his couple. But we couldn't go out and stay. My son went out only in the evening for 10 minutes for the door to take a little bit air. So we are staying there a long time.
How old were you son?
With my son I was staying there.
How old was your son?
He was about 14 years old.
14 years old?
13, 14 years old, yeah.
Were you afraid to let him go out for those five or 10 minutes?
Yeah. Not I was afraid. Everybody was afraid.
Yet you let him go anyway?
And one time came people from the Gestapo, and there were another couple living with us in the same apartment with these people. Of course we knew he is not against the Jews. So from these people one time came the Gestapo, and this man they took with them. And we never saw him again.
So they knew he was there, but they didn't know you were. Where did you hide?
He never came back because the Gestapo took him already where everybody in Poland where everybody was. They killed him in the gas chamber.
Was it just him, or did he have a family?
And we were running away. My parents didn't live far, maybe two blocks, so we ran the two blocks and went to my parents. And the other lady from this man was with us, and we heard that the gestapo came maybe 15 minutes later in this house where we were living and was asking everywhere where these people is, the Jews, where the Jews are.
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And the old people in the house said they don't know. They were very nice because they said, we don't know. We don't know anything about these people.

But they did find the one Jew-- the Gestapo did find the one Jewish man?

Yeah.

What about his family?

My family?

No, his family, the man they found.

My parents they took some time in the Gestapo. But then was the time when they took old people in the old age homes, so they came in the old age home. But it was already after a long time, and sometimes they said, now they lost-- Hitler lost everything and he can't do anything anymore.

So my parents-- we were going, picking up my parents from the home, and then it was OK afterwards. But we suffered--we suffered very, very much.

So did your parents--

And I lost my brother. I lost-- he went from Holland with the big boat. He would go to America and would take us all after that. But Hitler put already mines in the water, and the boat, the big boat-- it was from Holland. It sunk. And they had a savings boats.

They had a little girl from six year. The boat went down with the girl. Then there were-- my brother and his wife were in a big boat, and it went down. And my brother said, I can't swim, so you keep on my feet, and I will swim. But he got a heart attack. I know it because the sister-in-law-- she is living, and she told me that he got a heart attack and went down.

So she was trying to hold on on something-- I don't know but it was-- until a boat came, a big boat, about 14 hours, and took her when she was naked and nothing anymore. Everything was going in the water down. And she was hurt in the leg very much. She was 14 months in England in a hospital.

So an English boat picked her up?

Yeah. So then her mother took her to Florida. The mother was in Florida. She took her to Florida. But my brother I lost. He was about in the 30s, maybe 34 years, so young.

How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Two brothers. I had one brother was in America later. He passed away here. I have now a sister. She lives in Florida.

So you all were together in Brussels or in this little town in Belgium?

Yeah.

And when the Gestapo came and got that man, you weren't in the house because you'd gone to visit your parents in the aged home?

The Gestapo never came to us. Only they came to us, but, they took this man out from the other lady.

But they were looking for you, too.

Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection Yeah. They were looking for all the Jews, but he didn't know-- he should take only this man because he didn't come to work and because he was not there, so he took this Jew out.

So he was working, and that's how they knew he was there.

So why did you--

But we were lucky. He was staying behind here something, and that was very-- they thought that somebody what's not right, but this-- they took him. And we were quiet, so they didn't think that we were Jews.

What did they tell-- what did-- you were living with [INAUDIBLE] neighbors. Did they say that you were [INAUDIBLE], or what did they say?

What? We take-- that they take--

Or did they just hide so--

--them out. But of course they took out these other men from the couple, was we save thing in the apartment, yeah. And he was not there. For this they took the Jew out.

Once they found a Jew that was living there, did they punish the couple?

No. No, they didn't-- he was not there, and the wife they didn't punish. But we had to go out later. We couldn't stay anymore in this apartment by these people.

After they did--

After that we were staying by my parents. They were only two blocks away about. And after this we couldn't stay any more by my parents either, so we were staying by the mother from this lady where we were living. And she took us. She had a grocery store, and she took us in. And we were sleeping in one bed with a big dog.

So how long did you live there? Was that the same town?

It was a few weeks. We had to stay there. And then we went back to this couple where we were before.

And did you have to be paying them this whole time?

Yeah. Yeah, we had to pay.

How did you get money to pay?

We got money-- I tell you. We got money-- we got it in a pot, and we had dollars, dollar bills, and put it a butter pot, big pot. And there we put the money inside and covered it that it was looking like butter, like butter pot. And there we had a lot of dollars in.

And so that's how you paid.

But how did you--

We had to pay a lot. We had-- if you didn't have money, you couldn't do anything. You had to have money.

What would happen if you didn't have money?

Then we had to-- the whole time we had money to stay there. And then we were staying so long till Hitler was going

away. But he was-- he killed himself the last time. Yeah.

What I not understand till today-- I don't speak good English. I still speak better German still. It's hard for me to speak English. So you see, what I would say-- once Hitler-- yeah, he took himself. He took poison.

But I wonder that everybody didn't know that he's crazy. Even in America they were with him. England was with him. Nobody knew that was a crazy man. He was crazy. And the whole world was with him. I can't-- until today I can't understand it.

What kind of hardships did you experience--

The two years, to stay in, not to go out. And the food was bad. The people had to cook for us and had to go out for food. And they got only stamps for food to get, and so many stamps they didn't get. So it was hard to have to eat. And we had to buy it. The butter and the bread-- we had to buy-- 100 franc for bread and 100 franc for a little bit butter. So it was good we had the money. Otherwise you couldn't get through this.

How did you get the money? Did your husband get it from selling his business or how?

We got money-- my husband did very good business with furs, furs business, and we had a lot of money. We were rich people, so we had this money. And the money was-- even after that I was out I had still money to live. When the war was over I had still money to live, yeah.

So how many people lived in this place with you? Just a couple and your-- you, and yourself, and your son?

A couple. It was a couple.

And were they an older couple or a young couple?

Pardon?

Were they an older couple or a young couple? Did they have children?

No, they didn't have children.

Was it-- how big was the apartment?

It was a couple, but there was no children. They took in us, two couples, at that time my son, and me, and this other couple. But this man-- he was gone. Sometimes Gestapo picked them up. We were looking that he was gone. We knew he comes not back. When the Gestapo has somebody in their hands, they didn't give it back.

What happened to your parents?

To what?

Happened to your parents?

My parents?

Yeah.

They were-- to the last moment, until Hitler was gone, they were in the old age home, and they were saved.

So they--

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They came out then, too, yeah. They were saved. But they were in America, too. My other sister, my sister-- she came to America, the first one, after my brother didn't come, and she was the first one. And then she took over my son first, and my other brother went to America. He was first in Cuba. Then he got to America. And then my husband, my second husband and me-- they took us to America. When did you meet your second husband? When-- pardon? When did you meet your second husband? I meet him a few years after my first husband passed away in Belgium. My husband passed away in Belgium, and I met him years later, maybe five, six years or more later. And I married the second husband. Was he Jewish, too? And he was here with me, and he passed away here. Was he Jewish? Was your second husband Jewish? Yeah, yeah. He was Jewish, too. And so he survived the war, too? He was not much working here. He was in Brussels in cloisters. In cloister he was very, very long time. But then he had-- what should I say? He had money. He worked. I don't know anymore. But he had a business, so he worked. But I met him after Hitler was long, long away. The war was over. How did he-- how did he survive the war? How did he survive the war? How he survived? Yeah. He was in cloisters. He was in what? In cloister, where the nuns are. Oh, he lived--I don't know what the name is for cloister. Oh, you mentioned something about-- you went to a convent you think--He was-- you know where the nuns are? Yeah, that's a convent. There he was.

So you-- but you said that you also--

https://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection But I met him after the war was over. I didn't--So he spent the whole war with them? Not during the war, no. But he spent the war being hidden by the nuns. Yeah, he was already out. So he was saved through the cloisters because the nuns helped him to be there. But you said that at one point you and your family went to a convent for help to the nuns and they turned you away. Yeah. Tell me about that. What? Can you tell me about that? What happened? Where were you? Well, I was still in Belgium. Were you [CROSS TALK] We went back-- we went back to-- we were in Belgium the whole time, yeah. And when did you go to the convent? Yeah, convent. That's cloister. Yeah. When did you go there? I don't know because I didn't know him when he was in the convent. No, no no, not him. But you said that you at some point, you and your parents-- they took a lot of people in the convents. But they didn't take you? No. Did you try? We didn't-- we didn't know about. We didn't know about. Somebody recommended me to this couple. They take us for money. So we went there. Oh, OK. So I thought that earlier you said that some nuns turned you away. Yeah. Did they?

Yeah.

When?

When? I don't know anymore when. But it's also a long time ago. I'm here already over 20 years. I'm in America so long. So you forget. When you are old you forget even more. When you are young you keep your memory, but when you are old you forget these things.

When your husband died, how did you bury him?

How did I--

How did you bury him?

They put him in a cemetery, where the soldiers were, not in a Jewish cemetery. They have to bring to Liege. That was another city. They brought him to Liege, and there were all these soldiers from the other guard from the other wars were there lying. And they put them there.

Then we sent money maybe four or five years. After this they wrote us we shouldn't send money anymore because they put the grave out.

They tore the graveyard up?

So I don't know. After that, we didn't hear anymore because that's in Belgium. Nobody went to Belgium anymore. My son went one time, but then there was-- this cemetery changed, all changed.

What is your son doing now? What happened to your son after the war?

After the war he was in Brussels. He was in leather working.

Where?

In leather good, he was working, yeah. And after that he was in Brussels. He was working. He worked all the time until he-- he was the second one to go to America after my sister. She took him over there. My parents went later, and first my son, then my parents. And then my husband and me-- we were the last one. I wouldn't go to America.

How come?

Because we had a nice life in Europe. So we didn't-- we were the last one to come here, but I came here because I had my parents here, all my family. So I had to come. My son was here. So we came here.

And the first year I was not happy. I was very unhappy. But my brother-in-law told me, when you are here a half a year, you will feel very good, and you are very happy. And it was true.

Really?

I wouldn't go anymore back.

What changed your mind?

Pardon?

What changed your mind?

Because I liked it here then. It was the first time-- everything was strange for me.

# https://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection What was real hard to get used to?

memories come to your mind first?

It's not so easy. As a country, when you come from Europe, to go to America, Everything change, Yeah, It was so-- but

then when I was longer here I liked it, and I would never go back now, not when you give me \$1,000,000.
Did you first come to San Francisco?
Pardon?
Did you come to San Francisco first?
No. We came to Denver, Colorado.
Then how long did you live there?
I was in Denver, Colorado. We were many, many years. And then my son was in San Francisco. That was the reason we came to San Francisco. Yeah. And we were a short time here, only a few weeks, four weeks in San Francisco my husband got a heart attack and passed away, the second.
When did you come when did you come over from Europe to Denver?
From Europe?
To Denver.
Oh, 1930, maybe, something like that. When was Hitler gone? When was the war
The war ended on
When was the end of the war?
'45.
Then we went over.
Right away?
It was yeah. No, maybe a year later, yeah, we went over.
And then when did you move
Then I was 45 years old. Now you know I'm 90 year old [INAUDIBLE].
Then when did you move to San Francisco?
Pardon?
When did you move to San Francisco?
I moved to San Francisco maybe 10 years later, 55 maybe.
What are your when you think about the war, what are your strongest memories? When you think about the war, what

That we were underground living.

The underground life.

Two years underground, not going see light on the street, not going out of the apartment, always sitting inside, every day and every night. And in the night still we were afraid they would come and pick us up.

So the constant fear of being discovered.

I couldn't sleep. We couldn't sleep because we were afraid that the Hitler-- the Gestapo-- it was not Hitler, but the Gestapo would pick us up. We were always afraid. And when there were the bombs falling and everything, we were afraid. So we had to go down there in the keller. What is the-- in the caves?

Cellar?

Yeah. There were more people. Then we were afraid that the people that is not Jewish would say there are Jews here. So we were afraid day and night. That was an awful time.

So I guess you didn't dare talk to people. I guess you didn't dare talk to people very much.

No, we didn't have people to talk. We were always alone with this other couple.

Do you still-- after the war did you continue contact with the other couple?

What?

After the war did you continue contact with the other couple?

Yeah, yeah, after the war. Either way we get in contact, yeah.

So did you maintain that over--

Yeah.

And what about the people stayed with? Did you stay in contact with them?

Yeah, yeah. But I don't remember so much anymore. It was worse what I can tell you. It was worse.

What do you think are the lessons of the Holocaust?

What I think?

What do you think are the lessons of the Holocaust? Well, if you could tell people something, what would you want to tell them?

Yeah. Most people, millions of people went in their [INAUDIBLE] in the Holocaust were passing away like that. They put them in the gas chamber. I wouldn't believe it. They told me, but I wouldn't believe it that they do it.

They said, you go to work over there, and I believe that when we were there we will go-- sometimes I said I wouldn't stay anymore here.

You mean when you were hiding.

They should take us to Gestapo. We go over there. We have to work. That's everything. But most of them-- they knew.

https://collections.ushmm.org Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection They said, no, they'll kill you there. And it was true. So people knew, even though--Yeah. When did you find out for sure that people had been killed? When I find out? For sure after the war. No, I find out-- many people told me before that they killed the people and they put them in the gas chamber. I don't know how they knew it, and I wouldn't believe it. I said, that's not true. They said we go to the work, to work there. When did you finally believe? When I find? When did you finally begin believing the stories? It was very late when I believed it because more and more people told me, so I believed it. We had to have a sign here, this--A yellow star? --when you were a Jew. When you go straight and you see the people with the sign, they know they're Jews, and they took them. They took them from the street. Anyway, it was awful. You can't imagine. Nobody can imagine who didn't went through that. I believe you. It was so awful, and we were lucky that we didn't go in the gas chamber. Did you have any after-effects, long-term after-effects of-- like did you ever begin to be able to sleep again? Yeah. How long did it take you to get over being so afraid? Or did you? That I was better again? Yeah. How long it took, you mean? Yeah. How long after the war was it before you stopped being afraid? It took about a year, I think. It took me-- I felt better, more quiet. It took about a year because we were always thinking

Did you remember the war much during the last 40 years? Have you thought about the war very much during the last 40

in this awful time.

years?

Yeah.	Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection
Do you think about it a lot?	
Yeah.	
Do you talk about it much?	
Yeah, we talked a lot about	, sure.
Who did you talk about it to	0?
	t when we were in America, but before so long we were in Europe, we were talking about. with my family together so we weren't much talking about it anymore.
But that was in America?	
Yeah.	
But did you stop thinking al	bout it?
Yeah.	
You stopped thinking about	it, too?
Yeah.	
Do you think that it affected	d your life, the rest of your life?
Pardon?	
How do you think it affecte	d the rest of your life?
I don't think any more abou	t it.
No, I mean how do you thir	nk that your experiences in the war affected the rest of your life?
Since I'm here the first year	ar maybe I was thinking about but then I forget. I don't think anymore about
You don't think it affected y	your life?
	on't know anymore. I don't think, no. I sleep right since the earthquake. I sleep all right every aid. Before I couldn't sleep because I was afraid always
When you invoved	
they come and take us. Bu	at here nobody takes me, only the earthquake.
Yeah, really.	
Since that time I'm not feeli	ng so 100%.
You and a lot of other peop	le. Did you know anybody who collaborated?

If I know somebody
who collaborated.
Who
collaborated with the Germans. Do you know anybody who collaborated?
There were people, yeah.
But did you know any of them?
There were people, yeah, but I know any more the name that we had one man he was with the Gestapo. He brought over everything. He was talking to the Gestapo to pick up the Jews, they live there, and live there, and live there.
He was kind of
There were people like this, yeah.
He was an informer. What happened to him after the war? What happened to him after the war?
Some they find, and one was even he passed away now. He was about over 90 years or 99. They had him in Berlin in Spandau. They had him for so many years, maybe 50 years or longer. He was inside.
And there are more. They find afterwards they found more and more, but they got punished. They got punished. Of course that was awful to do that with the Jew we are Jews, and from the Jews one should do that.
One should do what?
One should do to tell the people if stay the Jewish people live their lives there. They did that and they themself the were Jew to get good with the Gestapo. That they were safe they do that, that they feel safe for themself. But they did that. They told where other Jews are living, and that was very bad.
But they got punished after the war, and they find out a lot of them that did this. How can they do that, people, to their own folks? It's a very bad character.
What do you remember? What person do you remember most about the war?
Pardon?
What person stands out the most in your mind about the war?
I had friends there, but they are still not in Germany but in Europe. They are in Belgium. I had friends a long time, but now we don't come anymore together. I have not now anyone anymore in Germany.
Did you ever visit Germany after the war?
Pardon?
Did you ever go back to Leipzig and visit Germany after the war?

No, I was never there, no. I wouldn't go there, no. They didn't-- weren't so good to us that I have to go there. No. No, it

wouldn't. Most people didn't want to go anymore to Europe.

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Were most people indifferent, or were most people-- did they care, in your experience?

What?
In your experience, were most people indifferent, or did people care?
In my
experience.
experience?
Yeah.
They have other experience. Maybe they were staying longer, and in the Kristallnacht they put everything they throw everything out from the stores and killed people. It was awful. But we were not there anymore. We were already in America.
We went once back. We were already in Belgium, but once we went back and put our things. Maybe we could take something here to Belgium. But then we started over. We had everything. My son and my parents everybody was in Belgium. Then we didn't know and as we came back. And we didn't we left everything what we had.
And it was the right time because after that, maybe two months later, there was the Kristallnacht where they killed the people, and it was awful. So we were safe this time.
OK. Well, Thank you.
You're welcome.
We really appreciate this.
Now I'm tired.
I bet you are.
Talking so much.
Yeah, it's not easy.
And it's hard to remember when it's so long years. You should ask me when I came here five years ago when it was better. My memory was still better.
Well, this is a very hard thing to remember.
Yeah.
Oh, OK. I was born in Minnesota, and then I moved to North Dakota. I mean my family lived in North Dakota. So we lived right outside West Fargo, North Dakota. And my family scattered all over all those little towns in North Dakota,

That helped too when you blocked it out from the window that got rid of that color. Why don't we do that? We have three other cards, two other cards.

Well, I don't want to block it out too much. I like a little bit of that [INAUDIBLE] like it like that, for instance.

and my father--

Yeah, that might be the way to handle it. OK, good. Please, more talk.

Oh, OK. And yeah, my father's the only person I know who knows how to pronounce Minot, North Dakota. And then we moved-- when I was about seven we moved to Washington state, and everybody in North Dakota moves. Nobody stays in North Dakota. You want me to still keep talking?