

REINHARDT, Frieda and Adolf
Germany Documentation Project
German
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Tape 1, Side A

In this interview, the former railroad officer and World War II soldier Adolf Reinhardt and his wife Frieda Reinhardt talk about Adolf's capture by partisans on the Eastern Front, his living conditions as a captive in a Russian labor camp, and his later release and return home. Frieda Reinhardt focuses on her experiences during the occupation by French Moroccan forces and the fate of one of her brothers, who was an active supporter of the Nazis and was shot by a sniper on the Western Front. In addition, they discuss information regarding the existence of concentration camps, death transports and the extermination of mentally disabled persons in Grafeneck, which was considered to be rumors at that time.

[1, A:] 0:14 – [1, A:] 10:07

Adolf Reinhardt discusses his birth and youth in Reutlingen; mentions his occupation in the voluntary labor service, "freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst," following his apprenticeship as a carpenter and his subsequent training for the state railway; Frieda and Adolf Reinhardt mention the unemployment of Adolf Reinhardt; they name several localities in the Neckar Region near Stuttgart; mention the employment of Adolf Reinhardt in Mehrstetten; Frieda mentions the military draft of railway officers including Adolf Reinhardt; they speak about the beginning of his life as a soldier in Strasbourg; talk about his training in **Ostrov [Ostro, Ostrow]**, south of Pleskau in Russia in the infantry as a grenadier; mention his assignment fighting partisans; comment on his capture by Russian partisans during a watch; talk about his general treatment during captivity; he remembers a Russian providing him with bread; mentions the good treatment by the Russians; talks about his work as a carpenter in a labor camp.

[1, A:] 10:08 – [1, A:] 20:14

He talks about hunger, a breakdown and his transfer to a military hospital; comments on the general conditions in the infirmary and in the labor camp; mentions the good treatment by a Russian doctor; talks about his release from the labor camp and his transfer back to Germany on July 31, 1945; talks about his arrival in Hoyerswerda near Dresden; talks about his crossing of the internal German occupation zone border; talks about a conversation on a train with a man, who was the replacement for Reinhardt's company commander; mentions the impossibility of writing letters back home from July 31, 1945, on only due to the lack of pen and paper; talks about his transfer to the West and his release; repeats information on his experience with the man who was the replacement for his company commander; mentions the story about this company commander being sentenced by a military court afterwards for not opposing Reinhardt's capture; mentions **Dragezianka [Dragizianka, Drankizianka, Tragezianka]** in the Urals as the starting point for his travel to the West; repeats the story about his crossing of the internal German border; mentions the help of seasonal harvest workers regarding getting directions to go back home.

[1, A:] 20:15 – [1, A:] 30:12

He talks about his journey from Neu-Ulm onward to Pfullingen; talks about his visit to the Red Cross in Stuttgart and his travel through Mittelstadt/Reutlingen to Reutlingen; she talks about the different zones in Germany after the war and the difficulties to travel from one zone to another; he talks about the support of a mutual friend he met by chance; talks about his arrival home after two years of absence; she talks about the military draft of her husband at short notice as mentioned before; mentions the lack of news from her husband and his permanent change of location; comments on a question regarding the location of his capture; they answer the question regarding the location of Pleskau; he mentions the capture alive of partisans and their being turned over to superiors; explains that he has no information regarding the fate of the captured partisans; repeats his experience in the Russian labor camp; she talks about the general situation in Russia and weapon supply by the American forces during the war; he mentions Mehrstetten as his place of employment from the time of his return; she comments on the work of her husband as a station master from the time of his return until the year 1950.

[1, A:] 30:13 – [1, A:] 40:13

She talks about the transfer of her husband to Pfullingen and their building their own home; remembers the destruction of their house, their move to another place; talks about their six children; answers a question regarding their life in Pfullingen; mentions Münsingen as a military training area and detention area for prisoners of war; talks about the behavior of the prisoners of war; remembers the invasion of French Moroccans and their behavior towards women; talks about rape and violation of other women by the Moroccans and the eventual pull-out of the Moroccans; talks about her work on a farmer's field and her meager compensation through the receipt of food; comments on the question regarding how the Reinhardts got to know each other first in Pfullingen in the protestant church choir; they mention an apartment in **Aiach [Eichach, Aichach]**; remember the dates of their marriage and the dates of birth of the children; comment on the question regarding the education and career of their children; talk about their offspring and family.

[1, A:] 40:14 – [1, A:] 45:59

They talk about the permanence of their marriage; speak about the construction of their house by their own labor; discuss the disinterest of their grandchildren in stories from the time of World War II and the ignorance of the younger generation regarding the consequences of the war in the personal sphere of the family; comments on the question regarding the familiar backgrounds in their youth; talk about a mentally disabled sister; comments on the question regarding memories about the year 1933 and the rise of Hitler; remembers her mother preventing her participation to bar the participation in the League of German Girls, "Bund Deutscher Mädchen," (BDM); mentions her secret participation in the BDM once.

Tape 1, Side B

[1, B:] 0:33 – [1, B:] 2:41

She explains that only girls of bad reputation volunteered for the BDM.

Tape 2, Side A

[2, A:] 0:12 – [2, A:] 9:13

She remembers the foundation of the Women's League, "Frauenschaft," along with other women; talks about her employment as head of the Women's League in the village against her will; mentions her exemption from this duty due to her pregnancy; mentions her unawareness of the intentions of Hitler and the Nazi Party; mentions her lack of awareness of the existence of concentration camps during the war; remembers a concentration camp near the town of Marbach after a query; remembers the concentration camp in Grafeneck as an extermination camp; mentions the stench at the station of Marbach as a result of the burning of corpses; reports about a friend named **Martin Becht** who was sworn in as a railwayman and was threatened with death if he broke his silence as to his knowledge of the transport of dying detainees to the camps; remembers the detainees of the camp in Marbach being disabled persons; mentions the evacuation of a hospital for mentally disabled children in **Maria Berg [Mariaberg]** near Trochtelfinden and Gammertingen; reports about her brother being a committed soldier and his eating disorders on furlough; remembers a priest who preached against the crimes of the Nazis and was never arrested; mentions the inactivity of the church; remarks on the probable lack of knowledge on the part of the church regarding the crimes of the Nazis; reports about a Jewish Community in Bittenhausen near **Aiach**; mentions that Jews were still there until departed in 1941.

[2, A:] 9:14 – [2, A:] 19:54

Both comment on the question regarding a direct experience with the Holocaust; mention their forebodings through the friend working at the railway service and the incidents at the station; she talks about her knowledge of the Holocaust from books and disapproval of it by the children; mentions a visit to a memorial in Grafeneck; mentions the name Reinhardt on a gravestone in Grafeneck as being a typical Gypsy name; talks about her own family tree and family origin; he comments on the question about a membership in youth organizations; talks about the membership in a church organization; she mentions her twice visiting the BDM; remembers the incorporation of the church youth organizations in the Hitler Youth in the year 1934 as part of the policy of consolidation, "Gleichschaltung"; he comments on the question about the treatment of prisoners of war and partisans; answers a question regarding executions of partisans; comments on the question about knowledge of executions of civilians, Gypsies, and Jews from time to time.

[2, A:] 19:55 – [2, A:] 30:02

She reports on stories about the death transports; talks about indirect knowledge, rumors and her forebodings regarding the transports and executions in the camp; comments on the execution of a mentally disabled child from the neighborhood in the camp; mentions the fear of talking about the camp; remembers the execution of a farmer's daughter, who was apparently taken away and executed for having contacts with a German prisoner who was a Russian prisoner of war; answers a question regarding her electoral behavior and the political orientation of her parents in the Weimar Republic; comments on the question of Adolf Reinhardt's reunions with his former comrades in arms; answers a question regarding her knowledge of the exhibition "Verbrechen der Wehrmacht" (Crimes of the Wehrmacht);

answers a question regarding the participation of their children in compulsory military or civil service.

[2, A:] 30:03 – [2, A:] 39:44

She talks about the careers of their children; comments on the question regarding the disapproval by her children regarding their parents' conduct during the time of the Nazi regime; talks about listening to enemy radio, "Feindsender," during the war and the fear of possible consequences by the Nazi authorities; mentions the existence of relatives in the U.S.; reports on the sending of care packages by the relatives from the U.S.; he answers further questions regarding his capture by the Russians during the war; answers a question about interrogations by the Russians during his capture; answers a question about membership in an antifascist organization while he was in captivity.

[2, A:] 39:45 – [2, A:] 46:07

He talks about his proper treatment by the Russians during his capture; she mentions an interpreter for the Russians who had studied in Germany; mentions stories about others who suffered ill treatment as prisoners of war; talks about the confiscation of prisoners' wedding rings during their capture; *[they show pictures of the family and the offspring on request]*.

Tape 2, Side B

[2, B:] 00:28 – [2, B:] 9:40

She remembers an unemployed brother in Switzerland named Gottlieb, who came to Germany to join the auxiliary police, "Hilfspolizei," and support the organization of deployments by the SS and the SA; shows a picture of her brother Gottlieb; mentions Gottlieb later becoming a major in command of a battalion on the Eastern Front; mentions her brother being shot by a sniper on the Western Front during a post inspection; comments on the question of the knowledge by her brother Gottlieb of any Nazi crimes while being a member of the SS; explains Gottlieb being the brother mentioned earlier who was shocked about the execution of children; discusses the death of her brother Gottlieb and the reactions of his son the night he died.