

RG-50.493.0009

Summary

Alice Friedmann (née Alice Edelstein), born in 1919 in Hostoun, Czechoslovakia, describes her family originally being from Vienna and moving back to Vienna when she was 2 years old; visiting her grandparents in Czechoslovakia for two months every summer, and she can speak both Czech and German; living in the Vienna ninth district; her dad serving in WWI, then losing all of his money to inflation after WWI; how she couldn't find a job after finishing school so in 1936 her dad let her work for his wholesale shoe business for two years; starting another office job in 1938, shortly before Germany annexed Austria in the Anschluss; SS men in uniform visiting her company's owner, which scared her into leaving the job after one month; Nazis robbing stores, hitting people and putting rich people in concentration camps; her older brother, Wilhelm Edelstein, being taken away by the Gestapo, put in Vienna jail for having a girlfriend who wasn't Jewish, then being released on the condition that he leave Austria within 30 days; leaving her parents to move to Prague in 1938; her father losing his business and being put in jail; her brother in 1941 getting deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto north of Prague and later dying in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp; being deported in 1942 to Theresienstadt, where she met her uncle, who said her transport was bound for another destination and that she only could stay if he declared she was his bride, which he did, and she stayed; her parents joining her in Theresienstadt; people having lice; being sent to Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp in Poland; her father getting sick and dying, and being separated from her mother; being sent in 1944 with women to work in Hamburg, Germany, cleaning up after bombardments, throwing bricks, then being sent to Hamburg-Neugraben to build a road, then to a cement factory in Hamburg-Tiefstack to make bricks; being deported to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where she was liberated by British forces in April 1945; returning to Prague then moving to Canada, where she met her husband, John Friedmann (see RG-50.233.0029), and moving to California, where they had a daughter, Joyce.