Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors Residing in South Florida

I Was Lucky; People Helped

Holocaust Survivor Lucy Lowell's Memoir



As told to Bobbi Kaufman

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Published by
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and The George Feldenkreis Program in Judaic Studies

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The information in this book is presented in good faith. The words in this book are the words of Lucy Lowell as she recalled her personal experience in the Holocaust. This is her story and her truth.

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On the cover: Gerhard, Helaina, Leo, and Lucy Emmerich at the Baltic Sea. 1937.

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FOREWARD

"For the survivor who chooses to testify, it is clear: his duty is to bear witness for the dead and for the living. He has no right to deprive future generations of a past that belongs to our collective memory. To forget would be not only dangerous but offensive; to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time.…

"... I have tried to keep memory alive…I have tried to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget we are guilty, we are accomplices."

- Elie Wiesel

As time goes on, the number of Holocaust survivors alive today is rapidly dwindling. With their passing, the incomprehensible cataclysm known as The Holocaust, or Shoah, is fast morphing from a 'lived memory' into a 'historical memory'; from a personal experience of 'those who were there' into impersonal commemorative monuments and museums.

All too soon, there will be no one left to offer first hand testimony of what it was like to actually be there when all hell broke loose; all too soon, even those who knew and heard directly from the victims of the Nazis and their collaborators, will be gone.

It is, therefore, a matter of great urgency that we gather and preserve for future generations as much primary documentation and testimony as possible about the lives and experiences of those heroes who survived the Holocaust, managed to build new lives, and were willing to tell their stories.

Memoirs serve as a very important means of preserving these testimonies. Several years ago, Holocaust survivors began approaching Bobbi Kaufman, asking for help writing their memoirs, describing their lives before, during, and since the Holocaust. She began working with the Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach (HMMB), writing the memoirs of Holocaust survivors who were docents and contributors to the memorial. This collaboration was instrumental in her developing a series of in-depth, book-length memoirs. Six books were completed and uploaded onto the HMMB website and the HMMB created lesson plans for each book to be used in teaching about the Holocaust.

Now, in collaboration with the HMMB, the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies, and the George Feldenkreis Program in Judaic Studies of the University of Miami, the series has been named Memoirs of Holocaust Survivors Residing in Florida. The existing books were graphically redesigned and several new books have been added to the collection, with the objective of continuing to expand the series. The complete series is available now at no cost on the The Sue and Leonard Miller Center's website: **https://millercenter.miami.edu**

Our hope is that this series will make a significant contribution to the growing literature of Holocaust survivors' memoirs and serve as a tribute to their ability to make new lives for themselves while never forgetting.

Dr. Haim Shaked
Director, The Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies and the George Feldenkreis Program for Judaic Studies
University of Miami

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the memory of my parents
Leo and Helaina Emmerich and my brother Gerhard Emmerich
who died in the Holocaust.

And to my husband Frederich Lowell who survived.

- Lucy Lowell

I was born November 25, 1921, in Berlin, Germany. My name at birth was Luzie Frederika Emmerich. I had one brother, Gerhard Ludwig Emmerich. He was born September 26, 1920. We were very close.

On October 21,1941, my family was deported from our home to the Lodz Ghetto and from there to Auschwitz. I am the only one of my family to survive the Holocaust.

MY CHILDHOOD HOME

We lived in a very lovely area of Berlin. Our address was Berliner Strasse 103, Berlin Charlottenburg. We had a very nice apartment. It had central heating, hot water for taking baths, and an elevator. We had a very good radio that was able to get broadcasts from outside the country, so we were able to get some news. We also had a telephone. It was very civilized. My brother had his room; I had my room; and my parents had their room. There was also a maid's room. We had a maid, but that was customary.

There was always music in our house. We had a beautiful gramophone with records of all the famous singers. The gramophone was a big, clumsy piece of furniture—not like today! We listened to the opera in Italian, French, and of course, German. We learned popular music from our maids. On their days off they went dancing and would come home and sing some of the dance music. Later, when I was twelve years old and my brother and I were allowed to go to the movies, we bought the records of whatever songs were in those movies. As teenagers we had all the popular dance records.

There was a movie house at the end of the famous street, Kurfürstendamm. They played mostly foreign movies, so my brother and I saw many, many American movies. I saw *Gone with the Wind* and of course *The Wizard of Oz*. I saw famous actors: Ingrid Bergman, Robert Taylor. My father was not so enthusiastic about movies—too much fantasy. But we said there are German subtitles and it was a nice way for us to learn English. So of course we went.

When we went to the movies we would be given a beautiful program with excerpts of the contents of the movie, the words to the songs, and pictures of all the people who appeared in the movie. I had a beautiful collection of these programs from all the movies—German and American. I would read them again and again. We kept them, along with the programs with the text from each opera we were seeing, in a room in our home you would call a little library. When we were deported everything just remained; they sealed the door and that was that.

My parents had a subscription to the opera. When Hitler came to power and Jews could no longer go to the opera or other public performances, Jews founded Culture Clubs. The Culture Club was for Jewish people and had only Jewish artists. We went very steadily to their performances. They did theater, concerts, opera. But then, slowly, it dwindled down as some of the artists were arrested or left Germany.

Maybe twice, my brother and I took my father's binoculars—they were his very sharp, beautiful binoculars from World War I— and we went to the German opera. We didn't tell our

parents because they wouldn't let us go. We were afraid that if somebody recognized us they could maybe denounce us to the Nazis, so we stood in the last row of standing-room where we thought nobody would know us. With those binoculars it was like sitting in the front row!

MY MOTHER'S FAMILY

My mother's name was Helaina Kurnitski Emmerich. They called her Lainy. She was born December 3, 1889. She had one brother and two half-brothers.

My mother's mother was born May 8, 1858 and passed away November 16, 1929. Her name at birth was Martha Wermoth. She married Kurnitski and had two children: Eugene Kurnitski and my mother, Helaina Kurnitski. When her husband passed away, my grandmother married Levinsohn and had two sons: Herman Levinsohn and George Levinsohn.

My mother's oldest brother, Eugene, and his wife lived in Hamburg, Germany. I remember visiting them when I was a child and going to the Hagenback Zoo. I was so amazed that the animals were not in cages. I also remember my uncle giving me a beautiful doll. Eugene and his wife remained in Hamburg, Germany, and did not survive the war. They had no children.

Shortly after Kristallnacht my mother's younger half-brother, Herman Levinsohn, was arrested in Lubben where he had a textile store. He was released, and in 1939 Herman and his wife, Irene, went to London where they survived the war.

They had no children.

My mother's youngest half-brother, George Levinsohn, was a young soldier in World War I. He died in November 1918, just days before that war ended. The family were very proud of him. My mother grieved for him. I believe she named my brother for him.

MY MOTHER

Like most women at that time my mother was a *hausfrau*. I never saw my mother getting up and being in a robe—she was always dressed right away. She could receive anybody anytime. She kept everything in order. Her work was taking care of the home, taking care of us, and training and supervising the maids. She did the shopping and the cooking. She was a very good cook.

For meals we would all sit down together. Everyone had their own special seat, of course. Our big, heavy meal was at lunch time. When we came from school it would be goulash or potatoes. My father would sometimes be with us or sometimes he went to a restaurant for lunch. At night we had something light like sandwiches, but my mother often made a steak for my father.

My parents would have dinner guests, friends and relatives, for birthdays and holidays. My brother's school friend's parents, the Lanzkes, were often guests. The Lanzkes would take me in after the war. Our dining room had a table big enough for twelve people. The table would be set with beautiful porcelain

plates. When we were small my brother and I would greet the guests then had to disappear!

My mother corresponded regularly with relatives and friends in Europe, the United States, Guatemala, and Honduras. When it became dangerous to stay in Berlin, she wrote to cousins asking them to sponsor us to get to America.

MY FATHER'S FAMILY

My father's name was Leo Emmerich. He was born in Steinheim, Germany, April 23, 1883. His mother was Ida Emmerich. I believe her maiden name may have been Loeb. She was born in 1848, and passed away December 16, 1934.

My father had a brother, Robert Emmerich, and a sister, Hedwig Emmerich Steinberg. While my parents, my brother, and I were in the Lodz ghetto, Robert and his wife, Channa, informed us through the Red Cross about Hedwig dying in the Jewish hospital in Berlin. That may have been better for her.

Robert and Channa lived a little outside of Berlin. They had some ground there so maybe they could grow some food or have some chickens which allowed them to survive for a while. They had two children: Miriam and Walter. They sent Miriam and Walter to Palestine where they survived. I recently learned that Robert and Channa were deported a few months after my family was. The wife and husband were not even deported together in the same transport. One was one day and the other was on the next transport. Robert and

Channa were deported to Auschwitz and did not survive. This information came to me from relatives, Stanley and Shauna Rockson, in California who found it in the 1945 Harrison Report.

On a visit to Israel for my cousin Miriam's 74th birthday I met her three children in Haifa. We always corresponded and telephoned for our birthdays. But one day I didn't hear from her anymore. I surmised she passed away. I don't have the addresses of the children. They are my only surviving blood relatives.

MY FATHER

At first, my father thought that since he was an officer in World War I, and our name was not Jewish, and we did not look Jewish, and we felt like we were Germans, we would be safe. My father believed that Hitler's plan for the Reich would, "last a few years and then be over." He quickly came to understand the danger.

My father went to school in a Benedictine cloister where he learned Latin and Greek. His hobby was collecting stamps. His stamp collection would help us survive for a while.

My father's business was paper, all kinds of paper: napkins, toilet paper, packaging paper, cash register receipt rolls, wax paper, whatever. He dealt with the factories that manufactured the paper things and delivered everything to businesses that needed them. He was in wholesale; he did not have a regular store. My father was in business for a time with his brother

Robert. The name of the business was *Gebruder Emmerich*; it meant two brothers. The office was on a very famous street just beyond the Brandenburg Gate.

I don't want to say that my family was rich—we were good middle-class. We could afford a nice home, nice clothing, and good food. We took wonderful vacations.

VACATIONS

In July of 1933 we went to the Baltic Sea for our three week summer school vacation. I loved to swim in the sea. My father brought us there, but he couldn't stay because he had to get back to his business. He would come to visit but just for Saturdays and Sundays. In the pictures he is on the beach wearing his business suit! My mother sent a picture of us on the beach to her aunt, Pauline, in New York which is how I have the picture.

In 1934 or 1935 we vacationed in the Alps where they wore dirndl dresses and of course I had to have one! But when Hitler came to power I did not wear it because it was just like what the German girls in the Hitler youth would wear.

In 1936 my parents went on vacation to Italy. It was the first time they didn't take us along. The sent us instead to a Jewish youth group in Denmark to enjoy ourselves amongst the same age people. We each had a bicycle and we had a good time. But, I am a slow eater and they were all very fast. They served the food, like sandwiches, on a big plate and until I ate one they had finished all the others. I went home very skinny. My

parents always regretted not taking us with them. My brother and I never went to Venice, or Rome, or Florence. My mother did bring me a very beautiful dress with a white coat from Florence, though.

In 1937 we went to Prague and from there to Budapest and then to a resort near a big beautiful lake. My mother wrote to her family in New York, "We still enjoyed vacations this year, next year, who knows? It looks already now a little more serious." It was the last time we would ever have a family vacation. By 1938 we no longer had a passport. Then, in November was Kristallnacht.

OBSERVING JUDAISM

The neighborhood where we lived was not so Jewish. There were no Jewish stores near where we lived. I don't think there were any other Jewish people in our building. In school there was only one other Jewish girl in my class. We were all friends with everybody—there was no difference. We invited each other to our homes. I never felt any discrimination until the war started. My father was a very free thinker. He was very knowledgeable about Judaism. He was Bar Mitzvah, but he was not very much for keeping the Jewish traditions. He knew more about the Catholic religion because he went to school with the Benedictines. My mother grew up in a kosher household, nothing orthodox, but kosher. Since my father did not grow up eating like that, and didn't want it, she let it go. So, I did not grow up with all the customs and rituals. Often, on Friday nights, however, we would go to my father's brother, Robert, and his wife, Channa, who were more traditional.

My family belonged to a synagogue, but we did not go every week. Sometimes we would go to the synagogue where my father's father and sister belonged. At that synagogue they did more traditional things. Men and women did not sit together and when they danced the Hora, the men and women were separate. I didn't like it. I felt dancing belongs for men and women together, not separate.

On the High Holidays and on my brother's Bar Mitzvah, we went to the temple where we belonged. At our temple the children were in a separate building and had different hours. When we were finished we would sneak in and sit with our parents—women upstairs and men downstairs. Later, when we were teenagers, my brother and I went to a Reform synagogue where there was no upstairs. We didn't want the boys here and the girls there, we wanted to sit together.

Even before Hitler was in government I didn't like to wear a Magen David. For some reason I just didn't feel like showing I was Jewish. I don't know why. I always thought of myself as Jewish, I didn't need to hide it, but I didn't want to show it either. I especially did not want to wear the yellow star when we had to wear it to be known and persecuted because of it.

TEENAGE YEARS WITH MY BROTHER

My brother, Gerhard Ludwig Emmerich, and I were born just fourteen months apart. He was born in Lubben, a smaller city maybe three hours away by train from Berlin. My maternal grandparents had a big textile store there.

Gerhard and I were very close, very close. His friends were my friends and my girlfriends were his friends. We were one big group. We would sometimes go out to eat—to places which were not for sitting down—the automat, the ice cream parlor. We did not really date. I remember playing the game musical chairs and if you didn't get a seat sometimes you had to give a kiss, but never a date! I may have liked a boy and my brother may have liked a girl, but we never dated just alone. If a boy wanted to be with me, my brother had to come, too.

I did not like to carry handbags at the time, but I always had my brother to carry my mirror, my little comb, and my lipstick! My brother and I chaperoned each other. Nobody ever had to take me home—my brother took me home, right up to the door to my bedroom.

My parents kept us very innocent. They kept us very childlike. They never told us where babies came from, but we heard from other school kids. When my mother finally told me what could happen to me, I didn't let her know that I already knew!

I had piano lessons; my father's sister was my teacher. When my brother started to learn violin, I said I wanted to, too. Sometimes, when our parents got together with family and wanted to show us off, there would be a violin competition between my brother and I and our young cousin who was really gifted. I wanted to study ballet, but my parents said it was not proper. My parents wanted us to have all the social graces.

My brother and I always liked dancing, ballroom dancing. My parents actually sent us to a dance studio when I was fifteen and my brother sixteen. Usually they would wait until a girl is sixteen, but because my parents were hoping to get out of Germany and perhaps would not have the money to pay for dance lessons wherever we landed, (we always had America in mind). My brother was very good and I was very good. He would dance around the dining table. We had records at home and we would practice together.

At home I learned to knit and crochet. I made myself a lovely sweater and I knitted one for my brother. During the war, when I was a prisoner, I was able to knit a dress for myself. When I was fifteen or sixteen years old my parents sent me to a two-month-long cooking course. I learned how to cook, how make sherbet, how to decorate plates, and how to set the table. I would never have an occasion to use any of it.

In 1936 I went twice to the summer Olympic games with a friend whose father worked for Audi. I went to the soccer match between Italy and Austria and I went to the track and field competitions. I did not see Jesse Owens run and I did not see Hitler there. I knew Hitler was upset because Jesse Owens winning all those gold medals contradicted his idea of Aryan racial superiority.

I liked to draw and I liked pretty clothing. Maybe I had a little bit of talent for drawing. In our living room my parents covered a whole wall with pictures I did at school. When we were sent to the ghetto our apartment was sealed and my artwork stayed on the wall. All I have is one sketchbook from

the 1930's that my parents sent to family in New York before the war. It was customary at the time to correspond with relatives in other countries and send pictures of a new baby, or a wedding, or a first day of school. This is the way I have the sketchbook and some pictures of my family.

As the war went on there were more and more restrictions on Jewish people. When Jewish people could not have a telephone anymore and my brother and I wanted to meet our friends, we gave them a telephone number from a public telephone booth on the street and they did the same. We would say something like, "Thursday evening six o'clock." When Jews could not go out to public places anymore we just made arrangements to meet at each others' homes. When the eight o'clock curfew started it was more difficult to be together.

One summer day in 1938 my brother and I planned to go to a lake in Berlin. There was a nice little beach there so we usually took our bicycles and pedaled out there on Sundays. Jewish youngsters gathered there and we enjoyed the day swimming and having fun. That day my parents said we could not go there because something was coming. There was a raid at the lake and they arrested all the Jewish young people who were there. They were arrested, but not for long—maybe three days. So we were spared. One of the young men arrested, Hans, got out of Germany earlier than I did. Later, in New York he would marry my future husband's niece.

SCHOOL

When I was first starting school my parents took me shopping at a beautiful children's specialty store and I couldn't make up my mind between two dresses. One was a maroon color velvet with embroidery. The other was a tomato red with a white collar and white cuffs. Because I couldn't make up my mind, my father bought me both! I wore the maroon one to my first day of school. I was six years old. I liked school.

Once, when I was a teenager, my father bought me a dress from the store where my mother got her dresses. The dress I chose had two pockets, and that is what I loved because with pockets I didn't have to have my brother carry my mirror, little comb, and lipstick. I was very happy with that.

THE HITLER SALUTE AT SCHOOL

Gerhard and I went to public school. My brother went through to gymnasium, the highest form of secondary school. My brother's best school friend was Rolf Lantzke. His parents were Gretel and Gerhard Lantzke. Gretel was Jewish, Gerhard was Christian. They survived and Gretel and Gerhard would take care of me after the war.

I went to Lyceum which was the highest form of education for women. It was a very good school with an emphasis on music. When Hitler came to power it became that when a teacher entered the room we had to stand up and do the Hitler salute. There was only one other Jewish girl in my class. The teacher knew we were Jewish, so she did not make us do the salute;

she allowed us to just stand and keep our arm at our side. The worry was what would happen if there would be a new teacher who did not know us yet. It was time for me to go from there.

One day after the war started I saw one of the girls from school walking on the street and she was not permitted to wave to me because it would be bad if somebody would see that. It was very strange because we used to be friends and be in each other's homes, and now we had to look away.

Next, I went to a Jewish school with an emphasis on languages. I studied French and English there. My parents felt that in school we were learning mostly grammar and reading, so they hired a lady from Belgium to come to Sunday lunch so we could learn more French conversation. They tried to give us a good education. I was a very good student. I learned fast.

I did not graduate from the Jewish school. I left and went to art school instead because my parents thought it was important that I learn a trade. They worried that they would not have the money for me to study if we made it to America. I was always interested in fashion. When I was sixteen or seventeen I was already designing women's clothing—so instead of learning a little bit more English or a little bit more geography I went to art school. At art school I learned how to cut and manufacture clothing. I made myself some very nice clothes at school.

KRISTALLNACHT
THE DANGER INCREASES

Kristallnacht, literally meaning the "Night of Broken Glass," was a series of anti-Jewish attacks that occurred throughout Nazi Germany,

Austria, and the Sudetenland on the night of November 9-10, 1938. Jewish shops and synagogues were burned and looted, and over 20,000 Jews were arrested. The vast amounts of broken glass littering the streets outside the Jewish shops gave the night its name.

Kristallnacht marked a major turning point in the lives of the Jews in Germany. What had been legislative discrimination and restrictions quickly escalated to systemic physical terror that paved the way for the Holocaust.

There were no Jewish stores in my neighborhood, so from where I lived as I went to art school in the morning, there was nothing for me to see. I did not see any of the devastation from Kristallacht. I never saw anything, and did not know what happened during the night. When I got to school I was immediately told to go home. Then, of course, I heard the news. Later I could see the ruins like a temple demolished and maybe stores with no glass.

After Kristallnacht we had to wear the yellow star on the front left side of our clothing. We had to sew it on. My family did not look Jewish, but now we were marked. In Germany the star was outlined with black lines and the word JUDE was in the middle in black letters. In Poland the star was only yellow and was worn in the front and the back. My father must have gotten the stars, he took care of those things—what did I know?

Beginning in September 1939 an eight o'clock curfew was imposed on Jewish people. More and more restrictions were put on Jews: food was rationed and access to public buildings

and transportation was limited.

Jewish people were no longer permitted to go to the basement bomb shelters. So when the alarm sounded during the night I knew subconsciously there was no need to get up, so I slept very well. The next day at school I was awake and the other kids were tired. We were lucky that our building was not struck.

The Nazis began confiscating personal property. We had to give up all our jewelry, gold, and silver. I think my father had to bring everything to a collection place. I remember I had a nice little golden wristwatch and when the Nazis took it, my father bought me a very beautiful steel watch. When I landed at Auschwitz I had to give up the steel watch.

It was very customary at that time in Germany for every house to have a big silver tray and on it there was a silver coffee pot, a tea pot, a milk pitcher, and a sugar container. My mother had a beautiful set that stood on the buffet in the dining room. The Nazis took it all.

My father could not do business anymore. The people in our apartment building were all very nice to us. We had a very nice butcher in the building who lived with his family on the first floor, just opposite us. We had always been very good customers, so when it became that we could not buy the meat, he brought us the meat. Our landlord let us stay for three or four months without paying any rent. My father gave his valuable stamp collection to our landlord to keep for us. The landlord did sell some stamps to give the butcher some money, but he took little for himself.

ENGAGED

While I was at art school I got engaged. His name was Kurt Sussman. He saw me coming out of school but he didn't want to approach me—he didn't want to do it that way. So, when he saw another girl coming out from the school he asked her if she knew me and my name. So, the next time I came out he was waiting there and he approached me by my name. So we talked, maybe we talked about the theater. I liked him and we became friends. He came to our home and my parents met him. He was an opera singer, a baritone. He had a good friend who was a tenor. They would come to our house and we played records and there was singing.

My parents liked him very much, but they would not permit us to get married because the situation with the war was becoming quite serious. They had us agree that we would promise each other that one day we would get married. In 1941, before we were deported, we became engaged. Yes, we kissed, but I don't even remember if we kissed like you kissed your father. He was very respectful.

Kurt's mother and older brother were already in England. He had no family in Berlin; he was more or less alone. I don't know why he did not go to London.



My mother.



My parents. I think this is their engagement photo.



My mother's mother. She was born in 1858.



My mother's youngest brother, George Levinsohn. He died November 19, 1918, just days before WWI ended.



My brother as a child.



I believe this could be my brother's Bar Mitzvah picture.



My father's mother, Ida Emmerich.



My father's sister, Hedwig Emmerich Steinberg. She died in the Jewish Hospital in Berlin in the 1940's.



My brother and I.



My brother and I at the Baltic Sea.



My brother and I.



Once when I was a teenager, my father bought me a dress from the store where my mother got her dresses. The dress I chose had two pockets, and that is what I loved.



We vacationed in the Alps where they wore dirndl dresses and of course I had to have one!



I am wearing a maroon dress my father bought for me for my first day of school. I am carrying a candy. It was traditional to give children candy on the first day of school so they would not be sad leaving their parents.



I am with my brother, my parents, my mother's mother, my aunt and uncle, and cousins in Berlin.



My family at the Baltic Sea in July 1933.



With my family in Prague in July 1937.



My family at the Baltic Sea in 1933.



My mother in Venice in 1936.



My father in Venice in 1936. This was the only trip my brother and I did not go on with our parents.



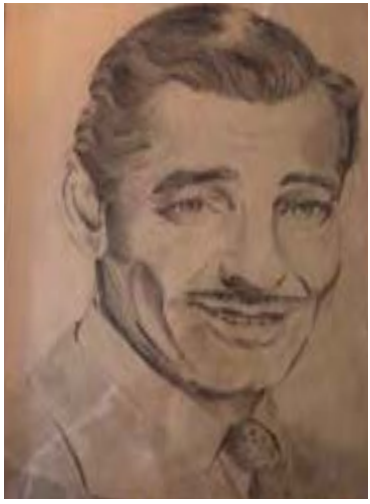
My parents.



This is a sketch of a ski outfit I designed.
When we had just minutes to leave our home
I chose to wear a similar warm outfit.



I liked to draw and I liked pretty clothing.
Maybe I had a little bit of talent for drawing.



My brother and I saw many, many American movies.
I did this sketch of Clark Gable.

These are drawings I did before the war. My parents sent my sketch book to relatives in New York in the 1930's.
That is how I have the drawings now .




















A letter from my mother to her relatives in the United States in 1937. The Nazi stamp and writing on the back shows that the letter was read and censored.



In Germany the star was outlined with black lines and the word JUDE was in the middle of the black letters.

FORCED LABOR

When I turned eighteen I had to leave art school to do forced labor for the Siemens Company. My brother also had to do forced labor. He did something like repairing elevators. We went to work every day, but we continued to live at home with our parents. Our mother and father did not work. My brother and I were paid a fair salary so we were able to buy some food.

I went to work at Siemens by streetcar. We had to assemble in a big area at six thirty in the morning. At a quarter to seven a Nazi woman would lead us, as a group, to where we were working. We worked until six in the evening. The group I was with was all women.

We had to work with tweezers, something very small, minute things to fill them into something very, very small. We did not know what the finished piece was or what it was for. It was some very precise work. We had to have good eyes and no jiggle in our hands.

They did not give us food—we had to bring our own lunch. There was a man, not Jewish, who came with a cart to do deliveries, or something, and when we had a break to go to the bathroom he was always waiting there and gave me some food: maybe an apple or candy. I always brought it home to share with my family. I never ate something just by myself.

The head of the department was a nice guy, a very much like how Oskar Schindler was in the movie *Schindler's List*. When he learned I was from the art school he gave me a job painting.

I had to paint what looked like little batteries, the insignia of Siemens. All the insignias were hand-painted on a little piece of metal. It was tiny and it had to be precise. I liked this job.

When I went back to Berlin after the war and needed proof that I worked at Siemens in order to get restitution, this man gave me a very nice letter.

MY FATHER IS ARRESTED

One night in the summer of 1941 my fiancé was at our home when the Nazis came around checking on people. Because it was not permitted for him to be out of his own home after the eight o'clock curfew, they arrested him.

The Nazis then checked in our kitchen for any food Jewish people should not have. They wanted to starve us. That night they found some food in our home—something like a tomato—and they arrested my father also.

My mother was a nervous wreck.

The sister of a school-friend of mine somehow knew where my father and fiancé were being held. She told us they were not too far from Berlin and that they were together. Marriage was out of the question at that time.

After about two months they were released. They came home emaciated and greatly weakened. The butcher brought us even more meat but there was such a short time until we were deported that they had not gained enough strength to withstand

the crisis of the typhus epidemic they would face in the Lodz Ghetto.

I worked for Siemens for about 18 months, until the day we were deported which was October 21, 1941.

ASKING FAMILY TO SPONSOR US TO GO TO AMERICA

By 1938 we no longer had passports. We wanted to leave Berlin and go to America. My parents wrote to relatives asking for help, hoping they could send an affidavit to sponsor us to come to the United States.

My mother's aunt, Pauline, offered to help. Her family had left Germany in the late 1800's and moved to London and then New York. My mother never met her in person, but they always corresponded. Pauline's son, Alfred Koppe, sent an affidavit for the four of us to come to the United States. The American consulate said this affidavit was not acceptable because the American family was four people (Alfred and his wife had two daughters) and we were four people, and the American family may not be able to be responsible for eight people. My parents thought of just sending my brother and me to New York, but it turned out that our family decided not to be separated. Maybe that was wrong.

We would need an additional affidavit. My father's cousins, Richard Loeb and Dr. Felix Loeb, a dermatologist, left Germany just before the war and became very well established in New

York. When we needed another affidavit my parents contacted the Loeb cousins. (My parents did not contact them earlier because they were more in touch with the Koppe family and not so much with the Loeb family.)

Richard Loeb sent us the additional affidavit, but it did not arrive in time. It came after the American Consulate in Berlin closed so there was no more American consulate to give us the visas. We were stuck. The German's had nothing to do with it—the Germans wanted us to leave; they said, "If you can go, go!"

We had everything crated and packed—the living room was full of boxes ready to be shipped. Nothing got shipped—it all remained in the apartment.

DEPORTATION

We knew there were going to be deportations. My brother worked in forced labor with a young man whose father worked for the Jewish organization and from him we learned there was a deportation a week before. We were somehow alerted, but we did not know we were going to be picked up just a week later. Who could know that? We were in the second deportation. If my brother would not have heard from this young man, we would have been completely surprised. So we knew something bad was coming, but we couldn't protect ourselves.

It was October 21,1941 at 8:15 PM when there was a knock at the door. They knew where to find us and that we would be home because of the curfew.

We had just finished supper; I don't even know if my mother had finished in the kitchen. Two Gestapo officers came in and said, "We have to evict you from your home to deport you to Poland. You have a half hour to pack whatever you can carry because there are no bellboys." They were very polite. They even asked if we would not mind if they took our bed linens and towels. They said, "You many not need them anymore so would you mind if we take these?" What could we say?

When one of the officers saw that I wanted to put beautiful high heeled shoes into my suitcase, he said, "Those would not suit you where you are going. It you have boots that would be better."So I left my shoes there and I packed sturdy shoes and galoshes to put over my shoes in the rain and snow. Then I packed a training suit which was a warm suit to be worn for snow skiing and ice skating. I put pants on first, then I put on a narrow skirt, and over that I put a pleated skirt. I put on a blouse and a sweater and a jacket and a winter coat. Whatever I could I put in a suitcase and a backpack.

We could not take our bedding because at that time we had big heavy feather beds. We did take our camelhair blankets.

My mother packed less than she should have because she was busy looking for food and boiling eggs. So, in that hurry she did not put her ID card from one handbag into the handbag that she would take along for the deportation. So she didn't realize that she didn't have her ID card that looked like a passport with a big J on the front. This would become a problem.

The officers were even nice, really. They carried my mother's suitcase and my suitcase to the police station. My father and brother carried their own things.

We were taken by wagon to the police station. My fiancé was not with us when we were taken from home, but he lived in the same vicinity and was brought to the same police station. We would be together the rest of the time.

We would be at the police station for several days until the Nazis collected enough people from our area to fill a truck to take us to the synagogue.

In the synagogue they gave us each a canister and said we should guard it very well because we would need it and we may not get another one. The canister was like silver colored metal. Kind of oval shaped. It had a cover and a handle. Everyone's looked alike. We received soup in our canister. It would be the only way we would get food.

Over several days they brought in more and more people from surrounding areas until we were thousands. They wanted thousands of people for each transfer to the ghetto.

After waiting in the synagogue for three days, we would become the second transport out of Berlin. I brought the canister with me to the ghetto.

THE LODZ GHETTO

On October 24, 1941 we were taken from the synagogue to the train station where we were put on a regular passenger train, not a cattle car. The next day, October 25, we arrived at the Lodz (Litzmannstadt) Ghetto in Poland.

It must have rained very heavily because from the train we had to walk through heavy mud, on unpaved roads, up a little hill, to the barracks where we would be housed. (I was very glad I wore my goloshes over my shoes!) The ghetto was in a very poor, dilapidated, primitive area of Lodz. A cemetery, which may have been a Jewish cemetery, and a Jewish hospital were in the ghetto.

In the barracks were bunk beds, stacked three beds high. My parents slept on the bottom and my brother and I slept on the top. My fiancé was in another bunk. We slept on a straw sacks with only the blankets we brought with us from home. We slept in the clothes we were wearing when we left for the ghetto because at night it was much too cold to take anything off.

There was no running water, just a pump outside that would freeze in the winter. There was an outhouse. We had some kind of dish we could put water in so we could wash our hands. There was a small stove that did not give much heat. There was a kitchen in the ghetto. Our food was served into the canisters we were given in the synagogue. I think we were given one loaf of bread for the week.

I met a nice young woman who already lived in the area that became the ghetto. She gave me a pillow—maybe somebody passed away so she had one to give.

One month after we arrived in the ghetto I turned twenty. It was the saddest birthday I ever had. Somehow I was always an optimist. Because I was still young I felt I had to live. Some people gave up. I just wanted to live.

Because we wore our clothing day and night, and we lived so close to each other, we all got lice. We got typhus from the lice. In March of 1942 my mother and I were taken to the hospital. We had to undress and they took our clothing for disinfecting. I was never before naked in front of other people. Then they shaved our hair. They shaved us wherever we had hair. My mother had beautiful long hair—it reached down to her calf. Sometimes she got a headache from all the pins she had to put in it. My father always teased her, "If you cut it I will divorce you!" Then they gave us a bath—my mother and I together in one bathtub. It was the first time I ever saw my mother naked and maybe the first time she saw me.

Then we were taken to the wards. There were about 18 people in the ward. It was not a private room but at least it was a normal bed. And a nightstand, too. They did not put my mother in the same ward as me. Maybe they knew not to put people together with people they knew would not survive—that we don't witness it. I don't know. I was not with her when she passed away. A nurse came and brought me a little bag with her comb and hair brush.

Without her ID card that she accidentally left at home, when she passed away in the ghetto they did not have too much information about her so they did not put a marker on her grave in the Jewish cemetery. I have never found her grave.

When I was surviving the sickness and I could walk a little, I came across a woman who was in the same barracks where we were housed. She told me my father was also now in the hospital. I learned where he was located. So I walked to this ward and I looked around. I didn't recognize him—maybe because he was bald. Somebody pointed him out to me. He recognized me even though I was bald, too. He was very weak. His food was on the nightstand and he gave it to me. He was too weak to eat.

I did not tell him that my mother, his wife, had passed away. He was in no condition for me to tell him that. The next day when I went to visit him again, the spot where his bed was standing was empty. I saw a bed outside in the hallway, covered…. Before they took him to bury him they put him out of the ward. At least he died in a bed and not in a gas chamber.

My mother passed away on April 7th and my father passed away April 22nd. My father was buried on what would have been his 59th birthday. My parents are most likely in the same cemetery but my brother and I were never able to find them.

My fiancé also got sick with typhus. I would go to see him in the hospital until he passed away on May 5, 1942. He was 26 years old. I never talked about being engaged to Kurt before.

If it is in this memoir, maybe somehow some of his family will read it and know how and where he died.

When I came out of the hospital I was sent to do forced labor. Before then, for the first six months we were in the ghetto, we just lounged around and had nothing to do. We were just lingering around and starving.

After my sickness I worked first on a farm, planting things. The only plants I had ever watered before were on the balcony of our apartment! I had to pick things in the fields. I ate the wheat—like a cow. I put some in my pocket to bring home for my brother. It was possibly a good diet. After two months I was put to work in a factory the Nazis used to make shoes and boots. The factory was up the little hill near where we were housed. My job was tearing old clothing, rags, into small pieces which were glued together, or something, to make house-shoes, slippers, for the soldiers. It was very dusty work. It was not healthy to inhale it.

The Nazis supervised this factory, but the Jewish people were in charge of running it. All the records had to be in the German language. Many of the Jews working in the factory spoke Yiddish, but Yiddish was not good enough for the business books. When they needed someone who could speak, read, and write German correctly they picked me and another woman from the dusty place to work in an office. I was well-off to be there because that office was heated with a stove. Once when I had a raw potato I sliced it and made fried potatoes on that stove. They tasted really good.

My brother also had to work. Every morning he was led through the gate to work at a factory outside of the ghetto. He told me there was a Polish colleague, not a Jew, who would sometimes give him a little food, like a sandwich. My brother would come back in the evening and share it with me like I had shared the wheat with him. Maybe this helped us a little bit to survive.

After so many people passed away, there were some vacancies in buildings that were in the part of the city that was now the ghetto. My brother and I got a room in kind of an apartment building. It was very primitive. There was no running water, no toilet, and no cooking facility. Nothing. There was a pail outside our door where you did your business and the next day brought it to the outhouse. There was only one small cot where my brother and I slept together. It was very cold; we warmed each other.

Our room had a partition, but it did not go all the way to the ceiling. It was not completely closed; the front was open. There was a married couple and a single man who were quartered there with my brother and me on the other side of the partition. We could see each other. We were friendly with the other people in the room. The married couple was from Vienna. When the lady passed away and then her husband passed away, I took one of her dresses. The single man also passed away while we were all living in that room.

AUSCHWITZ

I always remember it was the middle of August 1944 when the war came close to Lodz and the ghetto was being evacuated. We had no idea what was happening or where we were going. I packed a little suitcase with some clothing and whatever belongings I had. Everybody got a loaf of bread.

They put us in cattle cars—standing room only. A pail was in there if we needed it. It took quite some hours before the train stopped. It was not really a station—there was no roof, it was all open. The railroad tracks just ended there. It was Auschwitz.

When my brother saw where we landed and the high fences that were electrical, and he saw a person stuck on the fence, he said, "We are in a concentration camp." I was so naive I didn't know what that meant and I didn't think too much about it. I had never even heard of Auschwitz.

There were Jewish young people there. They were dressed more or less normally. They had armbands that said KAPO. They were in charge to lead us, command us, "Out, out, out! Quick, quick, quick! Men here, five in a row. Women here, five in a row." Sometimes they said to a young mother if she carried a child, "Give it to an old lady, it will be better for you." The women didn't understand that it meant their lives. When the child would start to cry, the mother wouldn't hand her child away. They would go into the oven together.

I had a nice pin, shaped like a horseshoe which meant luck. I always put it on every jacket I wore. Although it was summer, I was wearing a jacket because we took whatever we could wear or carry. The *kapo* said, "Give me this pin." I said, "No, I don't want to." And she said, "You don't need it anymore." And she took it. I really didn't need it anymore.

In the rush, people left their suitcases in the cattle car. How could you jump out with it? My brother and I took our bread. My brother went back because some people couldn't take their bread. He got another bread and gave it to me.

When the men and women were separated I lost sight of my brother. They started marching us and I didn't see him anymore. There was a wagon that the people who received us said we should go on if we could not walk. Knowing my brother was weaker than me and was looking for some comfort, I thought that maybe he went on the wagon. Nobody knew at the time that the wagon took you straight to the gas chamber because you were showing you could not work. I always thought that is what happened to him, but very recently I learned the truth.

I was directed to the left and other people were directed to the right. I did not know what that meant. Then we got to a huge hall. There were young Jewish women prisoners working there. They told us to disrobe because we were going to have a shower. We had to drop our clothing where we were standing. Then they checked us for lice and shaved us wherever we had hair. One of the women recognized me and asked me if I saw her sister who was a classmate of mine. I said there were thousands of people and I did not see anybody. Since my hair

was clean this woman cut it only like for a very young boy's haircut. Two women from Czechoslovakia I was friends with from the ghetto also kept some hair. Then we finally got to shower. After that they threw us some *schmatas*, rags, to cover ourselves. They fit or not, it didn't matter.

Then we were marched to a huge, very long barrack. Possibly there may have been bunk beds before, but now the barrack was empty. We were just sitting on the cement floor, five in a row, really not doing anything at that time. To sleep we had to sit on the cement floor with our legs open like a V. The woman behind me would sit with her legs apart and I would sit between her legs and lean back against her. I would open my legs and the next woman would sit between my legs and lean back against me. No blanket, no pillow, no nothing.

In the morning, I think it was like five o'clock, we had to assemble outside the barrack and line up again five, five, five. They called it *Appel*. We had to stand there without shoes, we had no shoes. After about an hour they marched us to another barrack which had the latrines. There was a long cement slab about two feet high with rows of back to back holes in the top over a sewage gutter underneath. There were sinks on the wall with cold water. There was no paper and no privacy. Today I don't have any unusual worries about food and I don't get frightened when someone knocks on my door, but to this day I am always aware of toilet paper!

After that we waited for our soup to come. Sometimes it came at eight, nine, ten o'clock, sometimes noon. We had our bread that was for the week. I think I probably still had the canister

they gave us in the synagogue in Berlin because somehow I was able to get some soup. I don't think they had more canisters or bowls to give out, and without a bowl of some kind, a person could not get any food and would die.

We did no work at all. I was in Auschwitz for about three months. Then, around October 25, 1944, there came a delegation of Nazi women who had to select twenty women to be shipped to a labor camp—to a factory where they needed workers. Out of the big barrack with about 800 women, they selected 20 and I was one of them. I was lucky that I was not that long in Auschwitz. I credit my survival to having some hair. Maybe I was more presentable. Those two Czech girls I was friends with in the ghetto were selected, too. The two Czech girls who had some hair survived also.

I am fortunate I did not get a number. We were to be tattooed the following day after we were taken out from there. I was relieved—I was young and a little vain.

So, we got another shower, another *schmata*, and some shoes whether they fit or not. We got into a real train, not a cattle car, and were transported to a factory that was in what was formerly Czechoslovakia. When the Germans took the area they called it Sudetenland.

We slept in bunk beds that were two levels high. There were maybe ten people in one room. In bed we could talk to each other, but we didn't have too much time to talk because we were tired and had to get up early to work. One of the Czech

girls, her name was Lucy Kafka, had a beautiful operatic voice. Sometimes in the evening we would make her sing to entertain us.

From the bad fitting shoes I got an infection on my feet. It was very hard to walk. They put me in an infirmary room in the factory where I stayed for about a week for my feet to heal. I had a bed, not just a bunk or a cot. The director of the factory treated us humanely.

I did minute work that needed good eyes and steady hands. I think it had something to do with gas masks, but I never knew what the finished product would be. Other workers made burlap sacks. This was heavy, more physically exhausting work. So I was lucky.

The director of the factory was very decent. He gave us knitting needles and some of the burlap yarn. I knitted myself a dress because I only had the *schemata* to wear. In any free time I would be knitting. At night whenever there was a light on for a few minutes or whenever there was a shift change I would be knitting. I would wake up in the night and knit a little bit more. I made knee-high stockings and a little vest. Later I added a handkerchief. I wore the dress when I went back to Berlin to look for my brother.

The dress was very heavy and scratchy, so when I went to America I left the dress behind. I didn't want it. Later I regretted it because it could have been for a museum.

LIBERATION

I was liberated at the factory by the Russians in May 1945. I always thought I was liberated on May 5, but when I look at some of my documents they say May 10. We didn't know we were liberated, it was just that the Russians were there and the Nazis were not there anymore. The Russians said, "You are free."

The Russians did not bother us but they did whatever they wanted to do with the German women. They shaved their hair, they raped them, and they stole whatever they had. We protected the director as well as we could, at least.

They gave me a letter in Russian or Czech, I don't know which, saying that people would have to help us on our way as we traveled. If we stopped someplace and wanted some food they had to serve us. We had no money.

One Czech woman with whom I was very friendly was from Prague. She said she had good friends in Prague who could help us. So we got a train to Prague where these friends took us in. They were not Jewish. They gave us clothing especially underwear and a bra. We stayed with them for almost three weeks. When we went out on the street we could not speak German—Germans were the enemy—so were were careful to speak English. I was not comfortable there.

GOING BACK TO BERLIN TO FIND MY BROTHER

After three weeks I felt this was not for me. I had to go back to Berlin because I thought maybe my brother came back to Berlin so I felt I should go to Berlin.

I took the train from Prague. Just before arriving at Dresden, which was very damaged, the railroad tracks were broken and the train could not go through. So we had to get off and walk a distance to where the tracks were repaired. The Russians were there with trucks to drive the people from the train to the fixed tracks. I put my little suitcase, filled with the clothing and underwear the people in Prague gave me, on the truck. When we got to the area where we had to get off, they chased us off. There was no time to take whatever was yours. I left that little suitcase on the truck. And again, like when I got off the cattle car at Auschwitz, I went with nothing.

I did not know what train was going to Berlin and nobody could tell me. There was a cattle car train but I didn't want to go on a cattle car again. I took a chance and got on a passenger train. It was already summer so I went on top, on the roof. A Russian man on the train approached me—I knew some Russian words so I said something like I am Jewish and I came from the camps. He did not rape me, he bought me some food.

It was about two months after liberation when I arrived back in Berlin. I knew the area because my father's office used to be near there, but it was very devastated. There were no buses, no

streetcar, so I walked all day until I got to where we used to live. I was glad I didn't have to carry a suitcase.

I looked for our building, not knowing what I would find. I thought that if my brother survived this is where I would find him. We had said to each other that when the war ended we would meet again where we lived, My brother was not there.

This spring my nephew, Dr. Stanley Rockson, learned from the 1945 Harrison Report that my brother was only two weeks in Auschwitz and was then shipped out to Buchenwald. After two or three months of work in Buchenwald they shipped him back to Auschwitz where they put him in the oven.

MY TIME IN BERLIN

The building where we lived was bombed out; it was uninhabitable. So I went to the police station. An older policeman who remembered my father called a younger officer who had a motorcycle and told him to take me to his home and have his wife draw me a bath and take me in.

They were very accommodating to me. I stayed with them for about three weeks. They had a young boy, eleven or twelve years old. One day I asked if I could borrow the boy's bicycle.

I wanted to find our landlord and the butcher who helped us so much during the war. The police department gave me the addresses where they lived now because they were very accurate in Germany, precise.

When the butcher's wife opened the door of their home she was wearing a dress from my mother. I was shocked! She apologized that she wore the dress saying she didn't think anybody was coming back. But I understood—they also had damages and could not buy new things. She gave me back some of the things my parents had given them for safekeeping. She gave me back the beautiful dress my parents bought for me in Florence, Italy, when they were there on vacation. I still have the dress hanging in my closet. I found the landlord. He had the stamp collection my father gave him to keep for us and he gave it back to me. When I came to this country I sold it.

I wanted to find the family whose son was my brother's best friend at school. I was thinking they could have survived because although the wife was Jewish the husband was not Jewish and their name was not Jewish. I went to where they had lived, but their once beautiful home was damaged. But somebody told me they were now living in an apartment in the American zone. I went and I found them—Gretel and Gerhard Lantzke and their son Rolf who was my brother's friend. When Gretel saw me she thought she saw a ghost. Of course they took me in and I went to live with them.

Because the Germans had to give precedence to the victims, I was given an apartment in the same building as the Lantzkes in the American occupied zone of Berlin. The Lantzkes lived on one floor and I lived on the floor above them. The apartment was not part of a Displaced Persons' Camp. As a Holocaust survivor I got a red ID ration card so I was given

precedence. I got the biggest ration—and a second one of a smaller ration. Of course I shared everything with them.

THE AMERICAN SOLDIERS

Across the street from my apartment building was a similar building that housed American soldiers. This was the American Zone and they were the occupiers.

One day we were at the little grocery store to buy our rations when a soldier on patrol with a gun over his shoulder walked up to us. Gretel was very shy, but somehow she spoke to him and told him I was a survivor from the camps.

His name was Morris Goralnick. He was an American soldier living in the apartment building across the street from the building where I was staying. He lived with two friends, Jewish friends, Lou Alexander and Sammy Silverman, so there were three Jewish soldiers living right there! That evening all three came over with chocolates and all kinds of goodies. They also brought their guns. All three were married; they always behaved like gentlemen.

They brought us packages, and through them I got packages from my family in New York. The soldiers had their wives send me clothing so I was the best dressed girl in Berlin. They sent me beautiful things. They sent me nylon stockings which were unheard of in Berlin at that time.

After a few months a big beautiful home with a beautiful garden became available for the Lantzkes in the next suburb,

Dahlem Siegendorf. I moved with the Lantzkes and their son, Rolf, and lived with them like I was their daughter. The soldiers would come to the Lantzke house and we would all have a good time. They loved being in a family home.

Later, when my husband and I became established in America we sponsored the Lantzke family to come to the United States. Here they changed their name to Land. They remained close to us all their lives.

I did not want to stay in Germany. At the time it was very devastated. The German women had to help clean up all the rubble. I was having a good life with these soldiers. I had all the food from the soldiers' care packages and all the beautiful clothing. We went dancing, had parties, they drove me around in their jeep (which they were not supposed to do). They went with me to synagogue. But my goal was always to get to America.

Many organizations helped survivors, but in my case it was mainly the wives of these soldiers who got everything rolling for me get to the United States. The soldiers' wives actually got in touch with my relatives.

LEAVING FOR AMERICA

It was the Koppe family who would sponsor me to come to America. They wanted to help my family during the war when they sent the first affidavit that was not sufficient for four people. Now they wanted to help again. Aunt Pauline's

mother and my mother's mother were sisters. Pauline and her husband, Louis Koppe, had a son, Alfred, who was born in London but grew up in New York. My mother and Alfred never met, but they corresponded all their life.

From Berlin I took a train to Bremen and then boarded a ship from Bremerhaven, Germany to New York. The ship was named for the American journalist, Ernie Pyle, who died in the war. The ship was not luxurious; it was a soldier transportation ship. The passengers were all refugees. We slept in bunk beds and the dining room was not elegant. It was all rather primitive. It was cold, but I was young! I wasn't so spoiled then! It was nice, kind of fun. The crew was very nice, accommodating. They woke us up at around six o'clock in the morning to see the Statue of Liberty. I arrived in New York on the 17th of February 1947.

Alfred and Ruth Koppe, and their daughters, Lois and Barbara, met me at the pier and took me to their home in Flushing, New York. I lived with the family for several months. The daughters were 13 and 15. My English was quite good when I got there, but they had New York accents and I tried to imitate them! I even picked up a bit of the slang. I got along.



I am with Rolf Lantzke and his dog Blane in Berlin in 1947. I am wearing a coat made from a rug.



I'm in the American Zone in Berlin wearing the dress I knitted when I was a prisoner doing forced labor.



The magistrate of Berlin recognized me as a victim of fascism.



Because I was a Holocaust survivor I got a red ID ration card giving me precedence.



Because the Germans had to give precedence to the victims, I was given an apartment in this building. The Lantzkes lived in the same building. The American soldiers lived in an apartment building across the street.



Morris Goralnick was an American soldier living in the apartment building across the street from the building where I was staying. He lived with two friends, Jewish soldiers, Lou Alexander and Sammy Silverman.

All three men were married and lived in New York. Along with their wives, they helped me get to America.



Morris Goralnick and Sammy Silverman.



Lou Alexander.



I am with Gretel Lantzke in Berlin after the war.
I am wearing the dress I knitted while in the labor camp.



After a few months a big home with a beautiful garden became available for the Lantzkes in Dahlem. I moved with them and their son, Rolf, and lived with them like I was their daughter.



The soldiers would come
to the Lantzke house and
we would all have a good time.
They loved being in a family home.



I am with Morris Goralnick. You can see the destruction of Berlin in the background.



I went dancing and to parties with my soldier friends. They drove me around in their Jeep (which they were not supposed to do).



Alfred Koppe sent the affidavit for me to come to the United States.



In November 1946 the United States Consulate in Berlin issued me a certificate of identity in lieu of a passport. It lists my occupation as a fashion designer.



My immigration visa. On February 18, 1947, I was admitted permanently to the United States.



My embarkation card.


UNITED STATES LINES COMPANY

71210

ERNIE PYLE

2/7/47

FROM BREMEN

NEW YORK

EMMERICH, LUCIE F 24 CE C3 200 — 8 —

TOTAL OCEAN FARE $ 200 —

HEAD TAX 8 —

TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED $ 208. —

BREMEN

1/29/47

MINT

My passenger ticket to sail from Bremen, Germany, to New York on the Ernie Pyle February 7, 1947.


UNITED STATES LINES

BAGGAGE SHOULD ARRIVE AT PIER ONE DAY BEFORE SAILING

(NAME OF PASSENGER)

Steamer ERNIE PYLE

Room No. C 2 C 3

Sailing Date 2-7-47

From BREMEN Pier No.

Booked to

Via

Full Foreign Address

HOLD

UNITED STATES LINES

E

to ALL EUROPE

My luggage tags.



The Ernie Pyle, the ship I sailed on from Bremen, Germany, to New York. The ship was named after the American journalist who was killed in action in 1945 while reporting on the war.


E- 560

LUCIE EMMERICH
40-53 172 ST.
FLUSHING L.I.,NY
C/O KOPPE

0300-K- 69285

B-300 5/19/47

11/25/21 GER. 8/18/47 NY

My application for naturalization in the United States. 1947.



Alfred and Ruth Koppe, and their daughters, Lois and Barbara, met me at the pier and took me to their home in Flushing, New York.

Later, Barbara would marry Arnold Wein and have three children: Susan Wein, Bradley Wein, and Deborah Wein. Deborah married Howard Patterson and now lives in Phoenix, Arizona. I am still very close to her.

After about three or four months living with the Koppes they helped me find a job at a fashion design studio in the Wurlitzer Organ building near Times Square. The owner of the fashion studio sent us to the big library in New York on 42nd Street to look at fashion from different eras: Rocco, Empire… We had to sketch some of the fashions and she would take ideas from those designs and design something new that was her own creation. That was part of my job. It would be my only job.

A young man, who had left Berlin in time, read in the newspaper that I was a survivor. He contacted my relatives in Flushing and was the first person since I arrived to come visit and take me out on a date. He lived in Washington Heights and I lived in Flushing so if we went out in the evening he would have to take me home to Flushing. It was too much. So I felt I had to move to Manhattan.

I moved to a rooming house on the Upper West Side at 95th street just a few steps from Broadway. The subway was a block away and the cafeteria was on the corner. The rooming house cost $10 a week. There was a kitchen but I mostly ate at the cafeteria.

Richard Loeb was a first cousin of my father. He is the cousin who sent the second affidavit that arrived too late. Richard

Loeb and his wife lived on East 55th Street He was very good to me in New York. Most Friday nights he invited me for dinner and would give me ten dollars for my room rent. I earned $12 a week at the fashion studio. Dr. Felix Loeb lived on the Upper East Side on 93rd Street. I was young and new to this country and both cousins looked after me a little bit. This was much easier for me than living in Flushing.

MEETING MY HUSBAND

I arrived in this country in February 1947 and on November 9, 1947, I was invited to lunch by Dr. Felix and Gerta Loeb. I wanted to go home after lunch but she said, "No. Tonight we expect visitors from the family. The father is bringing his children. I want you to meet them." I said, "I am not so interested to meet people. I have to get up the next day for work. And I want to go home." She said, "But you could help me a little bit to serve something." So I could not say no. So I stayed and the family came. I was expecting children more my age, but they were all many years older than me!

The son, Frederich, was born in 1896, he was 25 years older than I, but he looked much younger. He sat down next to me and talked to me about life in America. He had a lot to say and it was a very nice evening. He said to me, "I would like to take you out next Saturday. Where would you like to go?" I said I would love to go to the Metropolitan Opera. I had heard so much about this famous opera house. He said, "Okay, I'll pick you up and I'll take you there." I was living at 95th and Broadway and he lived on Riverside Drive. It was our first date. The program was *Carmen* which was always my

favorite opera. I dated him again the following Saturday. I only knew him for two weeks when he invited me to come to the birthday party for his father who was turning 80 or 81. I met his father and his sister, Hedy and her husband Martin Harvey, and I was very impressed by the family members. It was not love at first sight, it was love for the whole family.

Frederich had two sisters: Hedy and Sylvia (Selma), and one brother, Richard. Hedy would have two children, Margo and Fred. Fred and his wife, Natalie, would have two children: Andrew and Neal.

At the party there was a young man I knew from Berlin. I was so surprised to see him. His name was Hans. He was a good friend of my brother. We would spend time together in each other's homes on Saturdays when we couldn't go out anymore. I knew he left for America in time, but I did not know where he went. I said, "What are you doing here?" And he said his wife was Margo, the granddaughter of the birthday man—my future father-in-law! His name in German was Hans George but here he called himself George Rockson. George and Margo had two children, Stanley and Gilbert. Stanley, became a cardiologist in California. Stanley and his wife, Shauna, have three children: Hayden, Ned, and Colin. Colin has power of attorney over my affairs today.

That July we were at Rockaway with Frederich's sister, Hedy, and her husband, Martin Harvey, when they were invited to an engagement party. They could not take us with them to the party because bringing a girlfriend was not appropriate. So Frederich said, "Tell them we are getting engaged today."

They said, "Okay, then we can celebrate a double engagement."

Then Frederich wanted us to take a vacation alone together. Checking into hotels, and he was so much older than I, it didn't look right. So we got married July 28, 1948—two weeks after the engagement! I was 27, he was 52. It was the best thing I ever did.

We had a civil wedding and afterwards a luncheon at the Waldorf Astoria with Frederich's father Leopold Loeb, Hedy and Martin Harvey and their son Fred, and Richard and Elizabeth Leland.

We planned a religious wedding ceremony, but Frederich's father was very sick and passed away a few days before we were to have our religious wedding. We disinvited everyone. I had had one fitting for my bridal dress—I never picked up the dress. We never had a religious wedding. A few months later we had a party to celebrate our marriage, but not in a bridal gown. My husband and I did not talk about what we experienced in the war—we enjoyed our life!

MY HUSBAND

As a young man my husband went to school in Strasburg where he had relatives, so he grew up with French and German. He then went on to study economics at the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1936 when he traveled home to Berlin to be with his family for vacation he was arrested upon arrival and put in prison. Maybe something was wrong with his passport. I never really knew. From prison he was taken to Dachau and later from

Dachau to Buchenwald. In those camps they did not have gas chambers yet. It was hard work and sometimes they tortured people. He never talked about the labor he did.

When the Nazis released him they said if he did not leave Germany within seven days they would re-arrest him. His father and his sister in Berlin already had all the things ready for him to get passage to America. At that time if you could leave, they let you leave. He arrived in New York in January 1939. He was emaciated and needed months to recover.

My husband's younger brother, Richard, was in Amsterdam when he heard that my husband got arrested. Richard did not go home to Berlin, he went right away to America.

In America Richard called himself Leland. My husband did not like Leland, so he chose Lowell. So the two brothers had different last names.

MY HUSBAND'S BUSINESS

My husband's business was heavy chemicals. He knew his business from Germany so he tried to do the same thing here. He borrowed $80 from a friend and bought an old car. The war by then had broken out and getting a new car wasn't easy. As soon as he made his first money he gave back the $80. He was only rich with his knowledge.

The business was chemicals like floor waxes, disinfectants, and cleaners. Our customers were mostly big institutions who often did not need to meet with us at all. So we took advantage

of it. We worked together from our car. We traveled a lot to see customers. He drove, I read the maps. I would write down the orders and mail them to our office in Chicago. Then the office would execute the orders.

We were on our own. We did not have to start work at 9 AM, we started whenever we wanted. I liked to sleep and my husband would never wake me up to work—he made the client wait. It was business with pleasure. We saw pretty much all of the United States. It was interesting and educational.

As the business grew we were comfortable enough and could afford nice hotels, good food, vacations, and nice clothes.

Our Chicago office had a large front room and a private office with a small kitchen in the back. We were one of the first in our neighboring offices to have a television. It was like our second home, but we were still living in a hotel. We were still traveling while our secretary took care of the orders.

We had a good secretary in Chicago. One day the secretary's husband was transferred to Los Angeles. She said to us, "If you want me to keep working for you, you have a to open an office in California. For us she was really worth it plus I always liked palm trees! We could to business from there, we did not have to be in Chicago. Our warehouse was in Chicago and everything was shipped from there anyway, but we didn't need to be there. So we moved to Arcadia, California. We lived in a hotel almost across the street from the office. California would be our home from the summer of 1959 until summer of 1984.

ENJOYING LIFE

I once saw a movie of Esther Willams water skiing. When we came to Acapulco the first time and I saw the water so beautiful and they had boats and skis, I said, "I can do that." And that is how I started. I was 31 years old. I started to ski on one ski, not two skis. I started to perfect myself. I did all kinds of tricks: my leg up, backwards on a disk… So I gave the hotel guests a show every morning. They sat on their balconies waiting for breakfast and to watch me skiing. If I sat out a day they complained!

The second time we went to Acapulco we stayed for three months. The food, hotels, and everything was cheaper there than living in the United States. My husband's sister and her husband would sometimes be with us. I have a picture of them on the beach with Liberace. I really liked Liberace and I was really upset that I didn't get to meet him, but my husband said we could not go to the beach that morning because we had to attend to the mail from the office.

In 1952 we went on the maiden voyage of the *SS United States* from New York to Le Havre. From there we went to Paris to visit my aunt and cousin on my father's side. From Paris we went for a vacation on the French Riviera. I had just turned thirty and thought that when you are thirty and you don't do those things—you are finished!

My husband and I were always together, I was never alone. I was very used to that. When I went shopping he came with me. We always had a joint bank account. If I wanted something

he would get it for me. I really had no women friends— only my husband's sister. She became my best friend and also kind of like a mother to me. We were very close. I never had a chance to have women friends to go shopping with or to luncheon with. No.

I didn't even have a steady home until 1972 when we moved into an apartment but we still traveled a lot for pleasure and spent a lot of time in hotels.

We did not have children. I was worried that my husband was so much older—I was a little bit afraid, really. We did not choose to have children or not have children. If it happened, it happened. Our lifestyle did not really permit it. We did not even have a steady home. We lived in hotels and ate in restaurants. If we had children I would not be able to travel with my husband. It would not be good.

After what I saw in the ghetto and at Auschwitz I was not crazy about having a baby. I watched a woman give birth there with no help. Screaming. And they took the baby and we never saw the woman anymore. I felt to put babies into this world is not good.

I do not think they did anything to me at Auschwitz so I could not have children. I was never touched there by anything. In the ghetto my menstruation had stopped. I don't know if they put something into the watery soup or because of the undernourishment. It didn't come back until I went back to Berlin after the war.



My husband was a soldier in World War I.



My husband is wearing the Iron Cross which was awarded for bravery in battle.



My husband's niece, Margo, married my brother's school friend. George (Hans) Rockson.



When my husband and I became established we sponsored the Lantzke family to come to America. Here they changed their name to Land.



Our guests at the reception at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel following our civil wedding included Martin and Hedy Harvey, Leopold Loeb, Elizabeth and Richard Leland, and Fred Warner. 1948.



We had to cancel our religious wedding because my husband's father passed away, but we did have a luncheon. Our guests included Sylvia and Kurt De Gross, Maxine and Sander Hyman, Lois and Barbara Knoppe, Hedy and Martin Harvey, Fred and Natalie Warner, Ruth and Alfred Knoppe, Gretel and Felix Loeb.



My husband and I had a party before sailing to Europe for vacation. Our guests included Gretel Lane, Margo Rockson, Fred Warner, Andrew Warner, Gerhard Lane, Barbara Koppe, and Ruth Koppe.



My husband and I in Paris.



My husband and I had a good life together.
He passed away in 1987.



Margo, Martin, and I at Malibu Beach.



Hedy and her husband with Liberace. I really liked Liberace and I was upset that I didn't get to meet him, but my husband and I had to work that day.



I put on a ski show every day in Acapulco. 1952.



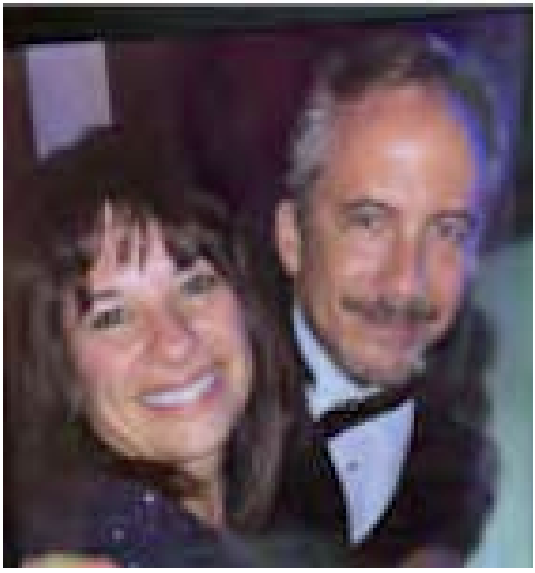
Celebrating my 71st birthday with my partner of 30 years, Carlos de la Fuente.



I was 100 years old when Carlos passed away.



Shauna and Dr. Stanley Rockson. Stanley's father is Hans Rockson, my brother's school friend. His mother is Margo, my husband's niece. Shauna and Stanley have three children: Hayden, Ned, and Colin.



Howard and Debbie Koppe Patterson, Debbie is my only relative from my mother's family.



In May 2025 researchers brought me a gift of lost books from my childhood, books I had not seen in over 80 years. I was shocked.



I was 103 years old when I was reunited with my childhood books taken by the Nazis.

RETIREMENT

My husband retired in 1972 and about two years later I noticed he started to forget things. One time when he got lost and a stranger found him, I saw it was dangerous. My sister-in-law said we should leave California and move to Miami where we had relatives who could help us. We moved to Miami Beach in September 1984. (I still live in the same building.) I hired help to care for my husband and the relatives also helped very much. He needed a wheelchair. He could not be left alone.

My sister-in-law taught me how to cook and how to run a home. I was pretty good! Hedy was only two or three months older than I, but she was like a mother to me. We had Friday night dinners with Hedy and her husband, and a nephew and his wife and daughter. So we had a family. We did okay.

I went to Germany in 1982 when the German government invited the people they threw out and gave us the red carpet treatment. By that time Berlin looked quite different with skyscrapers in the center of the city. There I met second cousins who came from Brazil. I hadn't seen them since we were teenagers.

Because my husband had Alzheimer's it was very difficult for me to venture out on this trip; I was too worried about him. I couldn't go to the Jewish Cemetery because there was still the Berlin Wall and the cemetery was in the East zone. We were married just a little bit short of 39 years when my husband passed away on May 5, 1987. He was ninety years and eight

months old. We had a nice life together. Together we saw almost all of the United States. All good things. It was a very good marriage. I was lucky to have been married to him.

A NEW CHAPTER IN MY LIFE

I was very much with family, which was really Frederich's family. Margo and Hedy both lived in my building. Downstairs in our building we had a women's club and a men's club so we had dancing, we had movies, we had lectures. I often went downstairs to the entertainment with the family. Some people from the dancing introduced me to a place on Collins Avenue that had nighttime dancing. I went there and I had a nice time. There would be a half hour of teaching the steps before they started dancing. One evening after they had paired everyone one man was left over. I had just come in, so the owner said, "Lucy, you dance with him." And we started dancing.

His name was Carlos de la Fuente. He was very nice, a good dancer, a good companion. We went dancing five nights a week. I was a good dancer and he was a good leader. After dancing we would go for a midnight snack with friends to Wolfies, the Rascal House. He was many years younger than I.

We really didn't date; we would go dancing and people from the building would bring me home. In 1992 when Hurricane Andrew damaged where he lived he asked me if he could stay with me. He had no family, he was alone. Before, I would not do those things, but I wanted to be helpful and I said yes, but it was to be temporary. That temporary turned out to be

thirty years. We were a couple. We lasted! Carlos passed away September 14, 2022, a week before turning 87.

Since he passed away I spend much of my time reading, watching television, and keeping up with politics and the news. I also keep a close watch on the stock market. I still love beautiful clothes and I get my hair done every week—of course! I am enjoying my life now and I am happy.

RESTITUION

The only time my husband and I talked about our experiences in the Holocaust was when we applied for restitution and we had to talk about it. They required a lot of witnesses which we could hardly bring because they were all murdered. So we had to talk and work a little bit more about it. We did receive restitution. After my husband passed away I was faced with having to answer a lot of questions to get more restitution regarding my parents' life insurance, but I just said no. If my husband were alive he would have worked on it and I would have gotten some money.

My relatives, Stanley and Shauna Rockson, were instrumental in having researchers find some of the things I lost in Germany. In May 2025 researchers brought me a gift of lost books from my childhood, books I had not seen in over eighty years. I was shocked! Shocked! There was a book of Biblical pictures I received as a reward for good behavior when I was 8 years old. Another book was a Bar Mitzvah gift to my brother. I remember very well the beautiful party and the dress I wore. The books brought back a flood of painful memories. Researchers found

the books in a private collection of over 10,000 stolen Jewish books owned by an antisemitic newspaper publisher. After all this time it is rare that a book can be returned to its rightful owner. The researchers wrote: "This is one of the rarest restitution cases to a previous owner who is still alive. I do not dare to imagine what her feelings might be, but please let her know that I am humbled and privileged to be the messenger of such treasures."

SPEAKING ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST

It was the books that came from Germany that started me speaking publicly. My friend and neighbor, Pamela Mayer became my agent! She contacted a journalist, Lauren Costantino, who wrote the story of the returned books for the newspaper. After the newspaper story came out Pamela had me attend a gathering of survivors at the Jewish Museum in Miami Beach. I went there and people talked about their experiences in the Holocaust. There were several tables with survivors at each table. I was willing to speak at the table, but I would not want to stand at a podium and talk to everybody. I never want to talk in front of young people—I would cry too much.

When Stephen Spielberg interviewed survivors after he made *Schindler's List* in 1993, I did not want to to talk because I knew I would start to cry. Now I am doing this memoir and I just agreed to do a Steven Spielberg interview after all. Next week the Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach is sending someone to my home to help prepare me to do interviews and to speak.

It is very painful to talk. I was not in pain before I did these interviews. I used to be a good sleeper, but since I have been talking a little I now wake up during the night and think so much more about things I never before used to think about. I wake up and I don't often go back to sleep. Now I have it constantly on my mind which formerly I didn't.

My husband did not talk to me about his miserable experience in the Holocaust—much harder than my experience. Maybe he didn't want to make me sad, to make me remember. We put the Holocaust behind us and built a new life together. We did not even register our family's names at the Holocaust Memorial. I never told my whole story to anyone. I don't know if I ever gave my husband such details as I am talking about now for this memoir.

Now as I am reading memoirs of Holocaust survivors and I see how other people suffered, I see how very lucky I was. When people read this, what will they think? It was not so bad after all? Where is your number? Where is your proof? I know my brother suffered real hell, but I did not suffer physically so badly. I was lucky. I saw horrible things there, but, if I am honest, I survived because I had people who helped me. I was lucky.

ABOUT THE WRITER

I began writing for Holocaust survivors in the 1990's when survivors I met on The March of the Living asked me for help writing about their feelings on returning to Poland for the first time. Later, survivors I interviewed for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation asked me for help writing down all the things they did not speak about in their interview. Soon, other survivors began approaching me seeking help writing a book about their experiences in the Holocaust. I met with the survivors, recorded our numerous conversations, organized and wrote the stories in the survivors' own words, printed the books, and then handed the books to the survivors as my gift to them. The books were written solely for the survivors and their families; they were never intended for publication. They are being published now because my friends, Carol and Jaime Suchlicki, recognizing their historical value as first-person testimony, introduced me to Dr. Haim Shaked to discuss finding a wider audience for the books.

Thank you to Dr. Haim Shaked director of the Sue and Leonard Miller Center for Contemporary Judaic Studies at the University of Miami for agreeing to publish the books and for your guidance and patience as we worked together on this project.

I am grateful to the March of the Living for introducing me to the world of Holocaust education and finding a role for me in it.

Thank you to the Shoah Foundation for choosing me to be an interviewer and for mentoring me through more than thirty interviews of Holocaust survivors. Your training led me to do the work I do today.

Thank you to the Holocaust Memorial Miami Beach for encouraging the docents at the memorial to work with me to write their memoirs. I appreciate your confidence in me and your respect for my work.

Thank you to the my dear Holocaust survivors for sharing your most painful as well as your most joyful memories with me. Thank you for answering questions that no one should ever have to ask or answer. Thank you for trusting me to write your memoirs accurately and respectfully. It has been my honor and pleasure to work with you.

—Bobbi Kaufman



"As I am reading memoirs of Holocaust survivors and I see how other people suffered, I see how lucky I was. I saw horrible things, but I survived because I had people who helped me. I was lucky."

— Lucy Lowell

Lucy Emmerich Lowell was born in Berlin, Germany, in 1921. Her family was upper-middle class—living in a modern apartment and taking regular vacations throughout Europe.

Lucy left school when students were required to stand and do the "Hitler salute." A talented artist and designer, Lucy then enrolled in art school. Her training as an artist would soon help to save her life.

At age 18 Lucy was conscripted to do forced labor for the Siemens Company in Berlin. On October 21, 1941, Lucy, her parents and her brother were deported to the Lodz Ghetto where Lucy and her brother would would do forced labor until they were transported together by cattle car to Auschwitz in August 1944.

Lucy was liberated by the Russians in May 1945. She made her way to the American occupied zone of Berlin where family friends and American soldiers helped her immigrate to the United States.

In 1948 Lucy married Frederich Lowell, also a survivor. They had a very happy marriage, enjoying life together until he passed away at 90 years old.

Lucy spoke about her experiences in the Holocaust for the very first time when she was 103 years old.

There is a concept in Judaism of a positive commandment, something that is time dependent, something that must be done *now*. One must, accordingly, applaud this important effort by the Miller Center and Feldenkreis Program of the University of Miami to collect and publish Holocaust survivors' memoirs as there will soon—too soon—come a time when the last survivors will be no longer. Sadly, tragically, this testimony is not only urgent but timely because the world in which we live echoes their world and the quality of their witness. The very nature of their survival has much to teach today's generations. One must express gratitude for this project and in the sagacious words of Hillel say: "If not now, when?"

Dr. Michael Berenbaum
Professor of Jewish Studies
American Jewish University
Former President and CEO
Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation
(Now USC Shoah Foundation Institute)